

Shutesbury Emergency Management Team Virtual Meeting Minutes

Monday September 20, 2021

Members Present: Emergency Management Director (EMD) Walter Tibbetts, Assistant Emergency Management Director (Asst. EMD) Mark Foster, Select Board (SB) Member Eric Stocker, Board of Health (BOH) Member and Shutesbury’s Representative to the Mohawk Area Public Health Coalition (MAPHCO) Steering Committee Norene Pease, Board of Health Member Garrett Simonsen, Public Information Officer (PIO) David Perlmutter, Town Clerk (TC) Grace Bannasch, Town Administrator (TA) Rebecca “Becky” Torres, Team Secretary Leslie Bracebridge, recording.

Guests: None.

Meeting opened at 6:34 PM by EMD Tibbetts.

1. **Introductions:** Everyone present at the meeting knew everyone present.
2. The **minutes of the August 16, 2021 meeting** were reviewed and approved with 1 abstention by David, who had not been present at the meeting.
3. **FFY 2021 EMPG (Emergency Management Preparedness Grant)** – EMD Tibbetts:
 - a. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Emergency Management Preparedness Grant (EMPG) funds are distributed to local cities and towns through the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA). Shutesbury can purchase anything on MEMA’s Condensed AEL (which was distributed to members by email with the agenda for this meeting) for the FFY 2021 EMPG round.
 - b. In recent years, these funds have been used to purchase emergency shelter supplies and radio equipment.
 - c. Ideas sought for FFY 2021 included:
 - i. A small unmanned aircraft: Using “drones” for public safety involves extensive training and costly drone pilot licensing.
 - ii. Extra hard drives.
 - iii. Batteries and UPS’s (Uninterruptable Power Supplies) – Take inventory of what is on-hand.
 - iv. Solar-powered Electronic Signage for COVID messaging – May be more expensive than funds available through this grant.
 - v. Portable battery packs to run computers at emergency sites – May already have what is needed.
 - vi. Improvements for Town Hall Cooling Center – Specifics were not identified. Review list for ideas. Building modifications are not allowable uses for EMPG funds.
 - vii. PPE’s (Personal Protection Equipment) – Take inventory what is on-hand, and what might be useful, against the list.
 - viii. Authorized training supplies.
 - ix. Software security enhancements – Hard drives already in use. Getting Cloud back-up could cost upwards of \$15,000, which is beyond the scope of these funds.
 - x. Town-owned amateur radio equipment – Terms of grant may require all communications equipment be interoperable; but this option will be explored.
 - xi. Trail bikes as the Police Department already have – How much use would another bicycle get? An ATV (All Terrain Vehicle) would be very useful to assist with transporting injured people out of the forest. ATV costs are beyond the funds available through the EMPG.

A motion was made and accepted to authorize EMD Tibbetts to review MEMA’s condensed list and make decisions and proceed with the grant application according to what in his opinion best meets the current emergency management equipment needs of the Town of Shutesbury. Unanimously approved by roll-call vote.

4. **Locks Pond Road Culvert Replacement updates:**
 - a. The original start date would have been in August, but the materials were not ready.
 - b. The second start date was September 7, but it was discovered that a utility pole needed to be removed before work could begin.

- i. Wait time on National Grid’s ability to move the pole is several weeks, which could stop the project for this year.
- ii. State Representative Jo Comerford has been contacted to help speed the preparation time up.
- iii. **The cut-off date for the project to occur this fall will be weather dependent.**

5. **COVID-19 Updates** - Norene Pease:

- a. A new message was sent out on town announce reporting that cases are up.
- b. The BOH plans to resume weekly messaging.
- c. The Franklin Regional Council of Governments is not wanting to be involved with a third round of vaccines for booster shots.
- d. The BOH will discuss options for boosters – will likely be local hospitals, Commonwealth health centers and pharmacies.
- e. Discussion of local testing options included at home unsupervised options, results of which are not mandated for reporting.
- f. Discussion of vaccinations of town officials:
 - i. All Fire Department personnel are vaccinated.
 - ii. BOH – access to vaccination/positive testing information consistent with confidentiality.
 - iii. Select Board is in process, updating their policy concerning vaccinations for town officials:
 - 1. Options include: vaccination, regular testing, use of sick time versus “COVID time”
 - 2. Select Board will likely stop short of termination.
- g. Booster shots may be officially sanctioned soon. Boosters may be limited to people with significant underlying circumstances.

Member Eric Stocker left the meeting at this point stating that Monday night meetings are not ideal for him.

- 6. **Reports of Boards and Committees:** BOH member Pease: MAPHCO may be conducting an in-person, after-action review meeting at the Olver Center in Greenfield on Oct. 18 from 4:30 – 7:30 PM, which as many regional representatives as possible will be invited to attend. Norene will work with TC Bannasch for proper posting.
- 7. **Business not reasonably anticipated 48 hours prior to the meeting:** None.
- 8. **Next Virtual Meeting Dates (for Shutesbury Emergency Management Team):** Monday, October 18, and November 15, 2021 at 6:30 PM. If the meetings are not needed, they will be canceled.
- 9. **Unanimous roll-call vote to adjourn at:** 7:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted, as approved on May 15, 2024,

Leslie Bracebridge, Secretary

List of Documents used at the Meeting:

- 1. Emergency Management Team Meeting agenda for September 20, 2021.
- 2. Draft minutes of the August 16, 2021 meeting.
- 3. Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency’s Condensed allowable list of equipment, as updated 7/5/2018.

