

**BETHEL TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
EMERGENCY RESPONDER MEETING MINUTES
October 25, 2017**

The Bethel Township Board of Supervisors Emergency Responder meeting was called to order by Chairman Jacob Meyer at 7:05 p.m. in the Bethel Township Meeting Room, Bethel PA.

Attending the meeting were Mike Graby and Jake Meyer, Supervisors. Also in attendance were Corey Houser, Carl Weaver, Lee Groff, Les Kegerreis, Robert Hummel, James Fox, Galen Hoover, Nelson Martin, Todd Szkwarek, Randy Behney and Township Manager Jayne Seifrit.

Emergency Management Coordinator – Randy Behney

Randy Behney attended training on October 24, 2017. He said they talked about the Steer Clear Law that is in effect since September. So if anyone encounters a problem the best thing is to try and get license plate and description of driver and vehicle to give to the police.

Randy Behney is concerned with the private use of the emergency gate on Airport Rd. He doesn't believe the code should be given to private citizens. Jayne will contact the Berks Park Industrial Association manager concerning having the code changed. There was also discussion on placing signage stating emergency access only; may be added to traffic ordinance so it would be enforceable.

Randy Behney commented on the "Witches of Bethel" event and stated a meeting with her and first responders is suggested so a plan can be in place. Jayne stated a letter to Diane Gible has already gone out.

Meeting Randy Behney attended brought up a couple of points: Water Buffalo – Carl Weaver stated they no longer have one. The issue is making sure the water is pure, so they are no longer being used widely; instead they are using bottled water. Picture taking at scenes was also discussed. It is recommended the entity has an appointed photographer. Randy Behney said there could be a need for an Ordinance allowing public officials to enter a property for disaster evaluation or recovery. If the Ordinance is in place they don't need to waste valuable time in the event of a disaster.

Ambulance

Carl Weaver stated they are down to one station. He said volunteers are always needed. They have one paid person they sub-contract from Schuylkill Valley.

Nelson Martin came in while discussion was going on concerning "blue lighters". He stated they have addressed this issue with their personnel. Nelson Martin stated the road closures were many, they knew about several which help them. It is helpful that the Route 183 Bridge project is finished.

Community Fire Company of Frystown

Lee Groff said they received a grant for equipment. They will be purchasing 10 portable radios, 5 each for use with Lebanon and Schuylkill County EMS.

Lee Groff stated they have received money for reducers from the developer along route 645. The pressure is drastically higher than what the apparatuses that the fire company uses so the reducers help to lower pressure.

Corey Houser is getting calls concerning "blue lighters". He is tired of the illegal lights being used by some of the first responders. There was more discussion and it was stated communication with responders is needed and then enforcement if needed. They may need to do a policy.

Union Fire Company of Bethel

Les Kegerreis stated he was very concerned with the Route 183 detouring off onto Old Route 22. He called Penn DOT about the issue. They did place cheap lights on the signage. He doesn't believe that helped too much.

Carl Weaver stated repairs to the dam wall are complete.

Carl Weaver stated the surveillance cameras are in place.

Police Department

Officer Szkwarek was present but he didn't have any items to be addressed. He then said the police department is getting an additional police vehicle.

We asked if Chief Murphy's baby arrived yet. He believes there is a text that came through but he didn't check during the meeting. Chief Murphy is a daddy to a little girl, everyone is doing well.

Unfinished Business

Nelson Martin asked if emergency contacts are the same as they were last year. He was told they are the same for the Township.

New Business

Jake Meyer read who is covered under Act 172. It was also stated it will only cover responders that live in Bethel Township. Jayne stated she has spoken to Tulpehocken Township and Bethel Township, Lebanon County; they are not doing anything at this time as it pertains to Act 172. Jayne also stated there is a discussion group through PSATS; many municipalities are waiting to see how it will work for other Townships. Jake Meyer stated he can see the importance of retaining and recruiting members for emergency responses. Lee Groff provided a policy they used when they received a grant for paying members for volunteering and meeting certain criteria. PSATS also provided a template to help in discussions and implementing. Jake Meyer asked members to discuss at their meetings and come back to the next meeting with suggested criteria. It was stated the criteria needs to be the same for all in the program. Jayne will do some math to see the possible financial implications to the Township. Each entity was asked to send one representative to the next meeting with ideas for criteria.

Jake Meyer stated he has a stupid question... he asked if the fire companies ever thought of merging. There was discussion on other municipality's mergers and how they went and the time it takes.

Public Comment

Workman's Compensation was also discussed as it pertains to when the members are covered.

The next meeting for discussion on Act 172 will be December 13, 2017 at 7:00 pm.

Adjournment

Adjourned about 8:44 after Mike Graby motioned and Jake Meyer seconded to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted

Jayne K Seifrit