

**Northwest Central
Joint Emergency Management System
Board Meeting Minutes**



Minutes

March 09, 2020

901 Wellington Ave, Elk Grove Village, IL 60007

Lower level meeting room ABC on the Charles J. Zetek Municipal Complex

1) Call to Order

Mr. Ray Rummel called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

2) Roll Call

Ray Rummel – Elk Grove Village
Randall Recklaus – Village of Arlington Heights
Sam Trakas – Village of Inverness
Michael Cassady – Village of Mount Prospect
Reid Ottesen – Village of Palatine
Barry Krumstok – City of Rolling Meadows
Brian Townsend – Village of Schaumburg
Mick Fleming – JEMS

Also Present:

Andrew Larson – Village of Arlington Heights
Mark Aleckson – Village of Arlington Heights
Nick Pecora – Village of Arlington Heights
Mike Baker – Village of Buffalo Grove
Joe Weiser – Village of Buffalo Grove
Scott Eisenmenger – Village of Buffalo Grove
Richard Mikel – Village of Elk Grove Village
Michael Sharp – Village of Elk Grove Village
Nick Olson – Village of Elk Grove Village
Chuck Walsh – Village of Elk Grove Village
Michael Gaspari – Village of Elk Grove Village
Mike Baker – Village of Buffalo Grove
Pat Fortunato – Village of Hoffman Estates
Kasia Cawley – Village of Hoffman Estates
Ryan Buckel – Village of Hoffman Estates
Sarah Marcucci – Village of Hoffman Estates
Mike Hish – Village of Inverness
Brian Lambel – Village of Mount Prospect
Jim Miller – Village of Mount Prospect
John Koziol – Village of Mount Prospect
Scott Andersen – Village of Palatine
Scott Mackeben – Village of Palatine
Dave Daigle – Village of Palatine
Ed Kemper – Village of Palatine
Don Wenzel – City of Rolling Meadows
John Nowacki – City of Rolling Meadows

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Ben Dwyer – City of Rolling Meadows
Jim Walters – Village of Schaumburg
William Clark – Village of Schaumburg
Daryl Syre – Village of Streamwood
Chris Clark – Village of Streamwood
Marv Kramer – Village of Streamwood
Shawn Taylor – Village of Streamwood
Kurt Metzger – Harper College
Kaitlyn Weitzel – Cook County Department of Public Health
Dave Olson – Cook County Emergency Management and Regional Security
Matthew Jordan – Northwest Community Hospital
John Ferraro – Northwest Central Dispatch System
Kevin Dulia – Northwest Central Dispatch System
Christine Zats – Northwest Central Dispatch
Doug Hoyt – Joint Emergency Management System
Bob Kukla – Joint Emergency Management System
Paul Mazzeno – Lake County Emergency Management Agency

3) Public Comment

A. No Public Comment

4) Joint Emergency Management Coordinator Update

- A.** Mr. Fleming explained to the JEMS board members that the reason for holding a special meeting was to discuss the issues associated with the recent identification of the third of fourth COVID-19 positive patients within the JEMS member communities. One of the two positive patients had been treated at a local hospital and the other was self-isolating at home. The cases were brought to the attention of the municipality where the two individuals reside when it was suggested that a trailer be placed at the premise of the two individuals to accommodate a third person who lived in the same household but who had not tested positive for COVID-19. This type of housing issue is also being addressed through a document which IEMA required of all accredited emergency management organization for alternative housing.
- B.** Mr. Fleming explained that IEMA was mandating that all accredited counties and local jurisdictions develop a plan for how they would house COVID-19 positive, presumed positive and asymptomatic persons. The plan essentially puts the responsibility of housing individuals with COVID-19 on the emergency management agencies across the state even though the issues are health related. It was advised that these facilities may be established in any of our jurisdictions and that it would be advisable to be aware of these facilities if they should be activated. Finally it was noted that JEMS sent a email to Cook County Emergency Management and Regional Security stating that rather than develop a separate plan from the County it would be preferable that instead the local jurisdictions fold into the broader County plan and provide support where possible.

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- C.** As part of a follow-up from the Executive Committee meeting, Mr. Fleming explained that there were a number of things that each community should review and prepare for as part of the ongoing potential for a COVID-19 impact to the communities. The first part was a review of the declaration and/or proclamation language which exists in each municipal code. As the potential threat from COVID-19 increases so does the likelihood that a community may need the emergency powers which are outlined. The steps to making a declaration or proclamation should also be reviewed. It as noted that the initial declaration for any community cannot exceed seven days before it must be re-affirmed by the Council/Board members. A copy of the declaration language that is typically used in training will be sent to the managers following this meeting. The second item from the executive committee was the importance of reviewing the Continuity of Operations Plans, which were mostly in place in each community. Although some were in draft form, they were complete enough to begin discussions on how departments might have to operate with less staffing as a result of COVID-19 impacts to the municipal workforce. It was suggested that all departments review what information they added to their sections of the respective plans and determine what the most essential functions for continued operations might be.
- D.** Finally, Mr. Fleming asked that the counties which cover our area consider including a premise alert form or process as part of their response as they identify new COVID-19 patients in the respective communities. At this point, we have been made aware that dispatch centers which boarder our communities are being provided information by their county health department but that has not been the case for those who are being quarantined in our communities.

5) Other Business

A. COVID-19 Discussion

- Reid Ottesen commented that the communication for setting up an alternative housing accommodation for someone who may not have a place to stay while they are dealing with COVID-19. Up till this point the communication from the various stakeholders at the county has not been acceptable given the circumstances. At the same time what other information can we be sharing back to make sure that we are working well together. In regards to the alternative housing, Mr. Ottesen stated that those issues should be coordinated with the counties and that it would only make sense to work together rather than separately. Kaitlyn Weitzel commented that there were conversations about next steps and planning that were taking place at a higher level. Kaitlyn explained that isolation and quarantine orders would come from the County when someone tested positive for COVID-19. Those authorities are given to the counties through the Illinois Department of Public Health. Kaitlyn noted that she would take questions about isolation, quarantine, and housing back to her

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bosses at the County. Mr. Fleming noted that a question originally posed to the counties was about how isolation and quarantine orders would be issued and then how would they be enforced if no one was made aware that these individuals were being quarantined. An additional questions was on the legal authority to enforce or request that local agencies enforce a quarantine order. Similarly, if there is a 911 call for service how are the first responders made aware of the fact that a quarantine order is in effect for individuals. Kaitlyn did note that the provision of information regarding individuals under quarantine was something that was discussed at Cook County and that a determination was made that the provision of information to dispatch centers would be a HIPPA violation and that is the reason they have decided not to provide the information. Kaitlyn also added that it might be the responsibility of the hospital to provide the quarantine information to the dispatch center as they become aware of individuals who are COVID positive. Mr. Fleming added that he would ask Kaitlyn in an email to bring up the voluntary premise alert concept to the County Health Officials. The purpose of a voluntary premise alert is to allow individuals to share their information to a dispatch center and the information is then protected so that the only time it is ever accessed is when a call for service is at the individuals address. This would prevent the information from being freely accessible and would give the individual the ability to choose whether their information would be included in a premise alert database. Kaitlyn agreed to take the question back to the County. Kaitlyn also mentioned that it would be beneficial to have the dispatchers ask callers travel questions which might indicate whether someone has COVID-19. John Ferraro from Northwest Central Dispatch commented that the dispatch center has in fact added additional questions in coordination with the hospital's medical director. John did note that in DuPage County the health agency and the dispatch center felt that the impact to the responders outweighed the potential ramifications of HIPPA protections. Randy Recklaus asked if it was better to ask that IDPH allow the information to be shared with our dispatch agency as opposed to working through the respective counties.

- Tom Tilton of the Cook County Department of Emergency Management and Regional Security joined the meeting and commented on the alternative housing plan, which had been mentioned earlier in the meeting. There is an effort at the County to identify stakeholders from across the County to incorporate into a planning team. The goal is to have a process that would meet the needs for more than the 25-person minimum established by IEMA. Kent Studnicka and Kim Nowicki are working to

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start putting that plan together but they have already identified some apartment, home, and hotel assets that would fit the criteria for the alternative housing mission. In regards to the sharing of information, it is the intent of the county emergency management to provide information directly to the local jurisdiction when there is a plan to place someone into an alternative housing arrangement in a particular jurisdiction. Information should be flowing to and from the north regional coordinator.

- A question was raised as to what kinds of people would be housed in these alternative housing settings. Mr. Tilton explained that the goal of the IEMA driven housing solution was to place individuals who are not positive and who may have been exposed but need to be placed in alternative housing. On a broader planning scale we need to have a range of housing options as hospitals discharge people who are not critical or when they need to free up beds. Alternatively, there may need to be housing for quarantine housing as this situation evolves. If there are facilities in any community that might be useful for these kinds of housing establishments then we would like to work together to determine how to move forward in incorporating those facilities into our planning cell.
- Don Wenzel asked when does it become a local responsibility to house individuals who do not want to be in their own home due to exposure concerns with family members? What are the criteria for evaluating these requests? A discussion took place on when it would potentially be needed to place someone into an alternate housing or sheltering situation to minimize the risk to the uninfected or their families. The conversation concluded that it would be case by case and that those thresholds and action points would need to be established across the state for consistency.
- Lake County Emergency Management was able to provide clarification on how they intend on providing information to their local entities through their existing communications platforms. Additionally Lake County had been working on identifying adequate housing sites but has not been able to lock a facility into a contract now. In the event that they selected and opened a facility that information would be coordinated directly with the municipality.
- Dr. Jordan from Northwest Community hospital explained that from the hospital they were working on increasing their testing capacity but also their public information. They are currently not able to give everyone a test and that there will need to be a prioritization of individuals with particular symptoms and risk factors for testing. In regards to asking additional questions on dispatching Dr. Jordan explained how the dispatch

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center and the hospital worked to add travel and quarantine questions into the call taking process. He also explained that these questions would likely be with us for a long time due to the questions likely being relative on the down side of the virus when people continue to travel or visit places outside of the country.

- Kaitlyn Weitzel from Cook County Department of Public Health explained how Points of Dispensing (PODs) could play into the overall picture of COVID-19. Although the facilities and plans are not being explored right now due to a lack of vaccine, there are still plans to use the facilities if needed. All of the planning that we have been doing to identify our POD sites and build out our teams will provide a good foundation for how we would actually have to dispense vaccines for this particular pandemic. Without details on the type of vaccine or how it is administered it will likely be some time before we have a clearer idea of how we will be able to use PODs. As there have not been more than a handful of cases, it is impossible to say what actions the County might take such as social distancing or limiting public gatherings.
 - A question was raised as to how the County would determine if an event would be canceled and what authority local units of government would have or what say they would have to shut down or keep open meetings or events in their community. Would these be limited by IDPH or would it be the County Health Department that would make the determination? Kaitlyn explained that restrictions could be made at the lowest form of government if the decision was needed to shut down an event but that each level up to the federal government would have the ability to create some sort of restriction on gatherings if there were enough cases. A statement was made that due to the lack of information thus far it would be important to know that these types of decisions would be coming.
- Mr. Fleming concluded on by discussing the limits of supplies that were currently being held by ILEAS and other state agencies. At this point in time there is not clear guidance on who can ask for masks nor which types of masks may become available. The process for making a disaster declaration was covered once more and it was explained that it may or may not be necessary to declare a disaster to gain access to certain supplies of equipment going forward and that we would be looking for clarification on the topic as we moved into the next phases of this unique situation.

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- Mr. Recklaus made a comment on communications with the community and coordinating communications across all stakeholders. He explained that there was a great deal of conflicting information and different authorities taking opposing stances on similar discussions. He mentioned that we needed the public information staff to do a better job to make sure that we are all speaking on the same set of facts. Kaitlyn Weitzel explained that as a novel virus the information will change daily and that by its novel nature there is a great deal of information that does not exist on the virus and that the information will get better with time.
- A final set of questions were asked to the Cook County Health Department on their ability to communicate to the first responding agencies when individuals were being sent home on quarantine or isolation orders. Additionally it was asked that the County provide any information they could to the 911-dispatch center as it had been done in neighboring counties.

6) Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn made by Brian Townsend
- Motion seconded by Reid Ottesen
- Voice Vote: All Aye