

# **TORRANCE COUNTY LEPC**

## **GENERAL MEETING MINUTES**

**June 25, 2024**

**Commission Room**

**205 S. 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Estancia, NM**

\*Note: Due to a lack of quorum at the beginning of the meeting, actions items could not be addressed until later in the meeting. Therefore, the agenda items are shown out of order.

1. Call to order – Chairperson Stephen Garrett called the meeting to order at 9:05am.

2. Pledge of Allegiance – Chairperson Garrett led the pledge.

3. Welcome and Introductions

4. Approval of Agenda – Unable to approve meeting agenda due to lack of quorum.

5. Approval of Minutes –

a. April Meeting – Unable to approve meeting minutes due to lack of quorum.

b. May Meeting – Unable to approve meeting minutes due to lack of quorum.

6. Membership Applications –

a. Torrance County Emergency Manager Samantha O'Dell informed the group that there were member applications available on a table in the back of the room. She said if people attend the meeting regularly, it would be helpful if they submitted applications to become LEPC members.

7. Nominations and possible appointment of LEPC Secretary – Unable to conduct nominations due to lack of quorum. Emergency Manager O'Dell said Cheryl Allen had to vacate the role of secretary, as she has taken a position with the Town of Mountainair.

8. Treasurer position and non-profit discussion – Emergency Manager O’Dell told the group that the county has advised her that the LEPC is not permitted to accept donations and that it must become a 501(c)(3) organization.

10. Agency Presentation

a. BCARES Group (Amateur Radio) to give presentation - Emergency Manager O’Dell introduced Tom Russell from Bernalillo County Amateur Radio Service (BCARES). Mr. Russell told the membership that he wants to serve as a mentor for Torrance County, as we need to improve communications. Also in attendance was Maurice Rodriguez, a retired radio operator for emergency preparedness with the New Mexico Department of Health. Communications and Radio Specialist Carol Sugars said she has experience in emergency communication scenarios and would like to assist Torrance County as we work to build a ham radio network. Mr. Russell said that Torrance County currently has 90 ham radio operators in Torrance County, but there are a few things that we need to do:

1. Recruitment – Torrance County needs to get new ham operators or contact the current operators. The program needs to be built from the bottom up and needs to have knowledgeable people willing to mentor new operators.

2. Practicing skills is important - The Bernalillo ham organization operates under the direction of the Bernalillo County Office of Emergency Management.

3. Exercises – It will be important to have regular ham radio exercises to hone skills.

4. Equipment – Bernalillo CARES has been conducting assessments to determine what equipment Torrance County currently has and what is needed.

\*Quorum was achieved at 9:25am

4. Approval of Agenda – MariLynn Lamb made a motion to approve the agenda. Second by Todd Brogowski. All in favor. Motion passed.

5. Approval of Minutes –

a. April Meeting – Samantha O’Dell made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 2024 meeting. Second by Maria Martinez. All in favor. Motion passed.

b. May Meeting – Todd Brogowski made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 2024 meeting. Second by Maria Martinez. All in favor. Motion passed.

7. Nominations and possible appointment of LEPC Secretary – Emergency Manager O’Dell restated that Cheryl Allen had to resign her position as secretary and that the group would need to fill that role with someone else. Torrance County Fire Chief James Winham said he would be willing to serve as secretary and made a motion stating the same. Second by Tracey Master. All in favor. Motion passed.

8. Treasurer position and non-profit discussion – Emergency Manager O’Dell restated she has been told by the county that the LEPC will not be permitted to accept donations and that the group must move toward becoming a non-profit. Since there was not enough information to move forward at this time, Todd Brogowski made a motion to table the discussion to the next meeting. Second by James Winham. All in favor. Motion passed.

9. Emergency Manager O’Dell requested that members provide information about upcoming events, so she can try to do more community outreach. The group offered information about events in Moriarty, Mountainair and Estancia.

10. Agency Presentation

b. Kinder-Morgan Presentation – Emergency Manager O’Dell introduced Ed Humada, the public outreach officer for Kinder-Morgan. Mr. Humada discussed CO2 operations as well as general summer safety surrounding natural gas and CO2. He explained that one billion cubic feet of CO2 travel through between 8” and 30” pipeline in Colorado, New Mexico and Texas. Mr. Humada also provided a primary contact number for all pipeline emergencies, 1-877-390-8640, and said that third party excavation is the biggest threat to pipelines, reminding the group that everyone is required to call 811 before digging. He said that Kinder-Morgan sends mailers and does addition outreach regarding the 811 hotline, and that there is a public awareness campaign because the company wants people to be

aware of the CO2 pipelines and facilities, as well as how to react to emergencies. Kinder-Morgan supports Homeland Security efforts and encourages people who see suspicious activities to call 911.

11. Agency Presentation Sign Up Sheet – Emergency Manager O’Dell said there is a sign in sheet in the back of the room for any agency that would like to make a presentation to the LEPC.

12. Exercise Requirements – Emergency Manager O’Dell told the membership that if the LEPC can help any of their agencies with training to please let her know so that she can try to assist.

13. Public Forum –

Willard Mayor David Dean thanked the LEPC for working to be proactive and not reactive to emergency situations. He said communication is critical and that the New Mexico Department of Transportation needs to do something to improve the roads and culverts on the state roads in the county.

Chairperson Garrett expressed concerns regarding the electric grid as it pertains to the pipelines and Mr. Humada said Kinder-Morgan has many response plans in the event there was an emergency.

Emergency Manager O’Dell said that there was a flyer on the back table regarding the Community Wildfire Protection Plan. She is working with the Claunch-Pinto Soil and Water Conservation District to update the plan, but they need some community input. She asked the group to please complete the survey as they need to capture involvement. There will be community meetings held in July or August.

Emergency Manager O’Dell also said that some agencies do not participate in the LEPC because they have their own plans, but that the LEPC doesn’t replace local plans. She said it is important to have representation and participation from as many agencies and organizations as possible. She understands that not everyone can attend in-person meetings, but reminded the group that there is a Zoom option.

14. Next General Meeting July 23, 2024 @ 9:00am.

15. Chairperson Garrett asked for a motion to adjourn. Todd Brogowski made the motion. Second by Tracey Master. Meeting adjourned at 10:32am.

Approved on \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

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Stephen Garrett, LEPC Chair