

Shutesbury Emergency Management Team Virtual Meeting Minutes

Wednesday July 10, 2024

Members Present: Emergency Management Director (EMD) Leonard “Lenny” Czerwonka, Deputy Emergency Management Director (Dep. EMD) / Police Chief Kristen Burgess (via Zoom), Select Board (SB) Co-Chairs Melissa Makepeace-O’Neil and Rita Farrell, and Select Board Member Eric Stocker, Highway Department Superintendent Stephen Sullivan, Town Administrator (TA) Rebecca “Becky” Torres, Team Secretary Leslie Bracebridge, recording.

Guests: None.

Meeting opened at 6:45 PM by EMD Leonard Czerwonka.

1. **Introductions:** Everyone in attendance knew everyone who was present.
2. The **minutes of the May 15, 2024 meeting** were reviewed, factually amended, and approved as amended.
3. **FFY 2024 EMPG (Emergency Management Preparedness Grant) – EMD Czerwonka:**
 - a. The (FFY 2023) thermal imager was purchased and the reimbursement paperwork was approved, signed by the Select Board, and submitted to the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA).
 - b. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funds the Emergency Management Preparedness Grants (EMPG) and the funds are distributed to local cities and towns through the MEMA.
 - c. Tomorrow (July 11, 2024) a MEMA representative will work with EMD Czerwonka to review preparation of the FFY 24 grant application paperwork:
 - i. The previous year’s Code Red and other funds used for regional services can be used as Shutesbury’s matching fund expenditures in order to qualify for the EMPG.
 - ii. Shutesbury can apply to purchase anything on a list of authorized items. While the coming year’s list is not yet available, based on the previous year’s list, both EMD Czerwonka and Dep. EMD Burgess favor using the funds to purchase cell phone boosters for all emergency vehicles, across all emergency services departments, over a series of years, as funds will allow - perhaps purchasing 2 boosters per year - until all town vehicles in which boosters would be useful, are so equipped. There are multiple zones in Shutesbury, where cell phone coverage, needed in emergency situations is still not available.
 - d. All members of the Emergency Management Team present at this meeting favored this use of EMPG funds, assuming the boosters will also be on the coming grant years’ lists of allowable items.
4. **Dam Action Plan update (Emergency Action Plan - EAP) – EMD Czerwonka:**
 - a. The Lake Wyola Dam Emergency Action Plan (EAP) needs to be up-dated in its entirety by August.
 - b. EMD Czerwonka is still seeking volunteer assistance with this work.
 - i. Dep. EMD Burgess offered to help EMD Czerwonka accomplish the task.
 - ii. They will meet on Thursday, July 18 at 10 AM.
 - iii. EMD Czerwonka will email the current plan to Dep. EMD Burgess.
5. **Reports of Boards and Committees - SB Co-Chair Farrell reported on a recent Select Board meeting, well-attended by Lake Wyola area residents, and received initial input of Emergency Management Team members:**
 - a. Lake Wyola area residents, requested Select Board support with a growing safety concern regarding motorized and non-motorized boat usage and safe swimming at Lake Wyola. The request follows a boat collision on the Lake earlier in this summer season:
 - i. The current Bylaw governing use of the Lake was last up-dated and approved in 2014.
 - ii. Area residents report increased recreational use of the Lake in the ensuing 10 years.
 - iii. Ideas expressed at the Select Board meeting included increasing safety and boat speed signage, general water safety public education, and a review of the current bylaw.
 - b. Emergency Management Team input included Lake area safety concerns specific to the dam:
 - i. Increased unsafe and/or improper use of the dam by random members of the public such as:

1. Uninformed swimmers near the nonvisible sluice-way opening on the Lake-side of the dam, could be caught-up in sluiceway whirlpool currents in the lake with the potential for underwater swimmer entrapment against the sluiceway grate during times of heavy flow.
 2. Removal of rocks placed during the dam reconstruction, to protect the dam from erosion.
 3. Throwing rocks from the dam, into the Lake, over the dam, and onto the spillway.
 4. General recreational use of the dam and surrounding area – both public and private, without proper public sanitary facilities.
 5. The inherently high drop-off on the west side of the dam.
- ii. These conditions and activities are deemed by some, as safety reasons to close public access to the dam, except for its functional use of controlling the water flow. Elimination of dam uses for recreation, such as fishing and swimming has caused ‘significant pushback’ from others. There is no immediate solution.
- iii. The costs of a security camera will also be researched.
- c. Research will be done as to what other towns with dams and lakes have for safety bylaws.
 - d. The Select Board voted at their meeting with the Lake Wyola residents, to create a charge for, and appoint a committee to review current Lake Wyola usage, signage, and the current bylaw, and then make recommendations to the Select Board.
 - e. Along with representation of motorized and non-motorized boat users, and Lake Wyola area and non-area residents on the committee, Dep. EMD Burgess noted the need for the expertise and representation of the Police and Fire Departments on the proposed committee also.
 - f. The Select Board will be discussing the charge and the committee make-up at their July 16 meeting.
6. **Business not reasonably anticipated 48 hours prior to the meeting:** None.
 7. **Next Meeting Date:** Wednesday, October 9, 2024, 6:30 PM at the Shutesbury Fire Station, 42 Leverett RD.
 8. **Vote to adjourn at 7:30 PM:**

Respectfully submitted, as approved on October 9, 2024,

Leslie Bracebridge, Secretary

List of Documents used at the Meeting:

1. Emergency Management Team Meeting agenda for July 10, 2024.
2. Draft minutes of the May 15, 2024 meeting.