

# SWEET GRASS COUNTY

## Local Emergency Planning Committee (L.E.P.C.)

### All Hazards and Emergency 9-1-1

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#### Minutes

Date of Meeting: **October 24, 2019 11:30 AM**

Location: **Ambulance Hall, Meeting Room; 220 W 1<sup>ST</sup> AVE; Big Timber MT**

#### Attendees:

Bill Wallace, SG Commissioner  
J.V. Moody, SG Commissioner  
Melanie Roe, SG Commissioner  
Alan Ronneberg, Sheriff  
Ron Swanson, Undersheriff  
Brad Howell, CEO Pioneer Medical Center  
Rob Farnum, Ambulance Manager  
Jennifer Chappell, Public Health  
Amber Blake, Community Health

Dan Tronrud, Community Health  
Cory Conner, SG Public Works  
Lindsey Ellis, Victim Advocate  
Kris Novotny, City Fire Chief  
Cliff Brophy, DES / 9-1-1 Coordinator  
Jeff Durham, Editor Pioneer  
Bob Fry, MT DES  
Tom Frieders, NWS  
Aarin Gilstad, NWS

**The meeting was called to order** by Clifford Brophy DES / E9-1-1 Coordinator at 11:30 AM

**The pledge of allegiance to the US Flag** was recited

#### **Welcome and self-introductions**

#### **Local Emergency Planning Committee (L.E.P.C.) Topics:**

Cliff Brophy asked the attendees if the stated meeting dates and the location were still acceptable. No objections were indicated.

Cliff reported that the LEPC annual report submitted as required by the State Emergency Response Commission. If anyone was interested in reviewing that report, please contact him.

SERC Conference and Training (Nov 18 – 20, 2019) was announced. If anyone is interested in attending, please contact Cliff Brophy or the State DES. Bob Fry added that the training this year will be very good. They have some interesting topics this year.

Cliff handed out a copy of LEPC Duties and Obligations. This was given out for the benefit of the members. We will be reviewing the county emergency operations plans (EOP) in the near future and the duties will guide us in that project.

**Disaster and Emergency Services (D.E.S.) Topics:**

**Recent Weather Impact:** Tom Frieders encouraged everyone to call the National Weather Service (NWS) if we need their help for an actual event or even pre-planning. The NWS can share their input with responders during the preparation of an event. NWS personnel can remote call in if needed.

Tom also spoke about emergency notifications. The NWS can assist in sending out notifications to communities. Tom is on the State Committee that coordinates the implementation of these systems. This includes IPAWS.

**Grant Updates and "Needs" Requests:** Bob Fry spoke about the various grants available from the state. Most are specific to DES. Some of the Homeland Security grants may be available to jurisdictions for communication systems.

Rob Farnum stated that the radio communications system for the county is in need of replacement. Much of the repeater equipment is at its end of life and it's hard to locate parts. Several members mentioned that a repeater tower is needed in the North part of Sweet Grass County. The county does not have its own service in that area. Information was announced that DNRC has portable communication trailers that could be set up for specific events. Surrounding counties also have similar types of trailers. Some of these trailers have satellite phones and other communication systems.

**Upcoming Training and Conferences:** Bob Fry reminded everyone that the State DES sends out weekly reports that list various trainings and conferences. Cliff Brophy offered to forward it to anyone that may want to review the lists.

**Local Exercise:** Brad Howell announced that the hospital will be having their required annual exercise in the next few weeks. They will have the table top and then a full scale after that. They are required to include other agencies and the public.

Cliff reported that the Sheriff's Office will be looking at an Active Shooter exercise in the coming months.

**Local Training Requests:** Various members commented that they would like to have the Montana Department of Transportation attend one of our LEPC meetings to review the plan that was in place to guide local responders during road closures.

**Emergency Operations Plans (EOP)** Cliff stated that the county EOPs will need to be reviewed the first of next year. Members were encouraged to review these plans and identify any changes needed.

**Emergency 9-1-1 Topics:**

**Update on State Assessment of PSAPs in Montana:** Cliff reported that the state wide assessment of PSAPs in the state had been completed. The state recently held Town Hall meetings throughout the state. The state announced in these meetings that a lot of emphasis will be placed on cyber security. They are also working at getting PSAPs ready for upgrades for the Next Gen 9-1-1. These upgrades will be based in part on the results of the PSAP assessment.

**Communications issues:** Cliff reported that Industrial Communications and Electronics (ICE) submitted a price quote to replace repeater radios. This does not include portables and mobiles. The project was specked out in 5 phases. Much of the equipment has exceeded its shelf life. The other equipment will reach its shelf life at the end of this year. This means that the manufacturer will no longer make parts for it and they will not provide software upgrades. The equipment can still be repaired as long as surplus parts are available.

**Communications Issues or Deficiencies:** As discussed previously under the topic of “grant updates and needs request”, several officials and department heads stated that the radio repeaters need to be replaced soon. They would also like to place a repeater in the North part of the county. Currently, responders use Wheatland County repeater in the Northern part of Sweet Grass.

**Public Health Topics:**

Jennifer Chappell gave an update on the recent State Wide exercise. The exercise consisted of the drop-shipment of flu vaccination to her in Big Timber. She then distributed it by going to the schools in Big Timber and giving flu shots. She reported that it went well.

Ron Farnum reported that the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) needs some more pagers. DES has some available for use. He also reported that their response call numbers are down to about 1 trip per day.

**Fire Topics:**

Kris Novotny reported that the numbers of fire calls were down this year because of the conditions. He also reported that he has absorbent pads for Hazmat. These were left over from the Laurel oil spill.

**Comments from Members:**

The county will be replacing a bridge on the Swamp Creek Road. This project will begin the 4<sup>th</sup> of November and finish about the 15<sup>th</sup> of November. The bridge itself will be put into place on or about the 12<sup>th</sup> of November. Notice will be put out on Face Book, The Pioneer Paper and Reverse 9-1-1 Emergency Notification System.

Dan Tronrud announced that Sweet Grass County had started a Community Health program. He and his supervisor Amber Blake, would like to be a part of the Emergency Operations Planning.

**Select Next Meeting Date:** To avoid conflicts with Holidays, the next LEPC meetings will be November 21, 2019, at 11:30 AM and December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at 11:30 AM.

**Public Comments:** None given

**Adjourn:** 1:15 PM

Submitted by

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Clifford Brophy". The signature is stylized with a large, looping "C" and "B".

Clifford Brophy  
DES/911 Coordinator