

Knox County Local Emergency Planning Committee

Meeting Minutes

April 22, 2025

Regular and Annual Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Brock Schmitt, Randy Hovind, Jim Cueno, Jared Hawkinson, Mandy Dixon, Dan Robinson, Jack Harlan, Travis Kelch, Joe Grodjesk and Jenni Moser.

LEPC Chairman Brock Schmitt called the Regular Meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from the April 23, 2024 meeting were reviewed by Chairman Schmitt.

Chief Hovind made a motion, seconded by Sheriff Harlan that the minutes as presented be approved.

Ayes: Brock Schmitt, Randy Hovind, Jim Cueno, Jared Hawkinson, Mandy Dixon, Dan Robinson, Jack Harlan, Travis Kelch and Joe Grodjesk.

Nays: None

Chairman declared motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

HAZMAT TEAM

Schmitt stated Galesburg Fire has 45 staff now and 23 of them are Hazmat Technicians. As with a lot of other agencies, there are currently a lot of funding concerns. The Validation Exercise with MABAS that was scheduled for May has been cancelled. Approximately 65% of MABAS' funding comes from FEMA, which means MABAS has lost all their funding. This is a huge concern for the hazmat team. MABAS pays for all training costs for the teams. Chairman Schmitt stated there is a bill to get money through the Illinois State Fire Marshal's Office as a contingency plan.

MABAS covers 4.5 – 5 counties in the area. If there is not going to be any funding, we will have to limit to just Knox County.

Chairman Schmitt said they are planning a training with the Water Department in Oquawka.

TIER II REPORTS

Chairman Schmitt presented the hazmat database. He mentioned that we are not at 100% compliance, however 48 facilities have responded and that is the most we have ever had.

KNOX COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (KCEMA)

Chief Hovind is working on a full scale with Knox College. The Mass Care tabletop will take place on May 7, 2025, with GHAS. Captain Grodjesk said there will be a meeting on May 28 to get everyone up to speed. The full-scale drill will take place on June 28, 2025.

Chief Hovind said we still have 11 core capabilities to complete to get recertification. We recently held a Cyber Security Tabletop with the City's IT Department. Some of the other exercises are: Critical Infrastructure with Public Works, Intel & Info Sharin with Finance, Community Resilience Seminar, Threats and Hazards ID, Critical Transportation, Fatality Management Services, Infrastructure Systems, Mass Search and Rescue Ops and Ops Communication.

Currently EMPG funding is also frozen, but KCEMA is still required to submit all quarterly reports. IEMA might see a lot of turnover due to the lack of federal direction.

KNOX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Mandy Dixon said they are working on an Administration Preparedness tabletop. They will have a full-scale drill in the next few years. She said they are also experiencing funding questions.

KNOX COUNTY

Jared Hawkinson stated there will be the first mass battery storage facility added to the Tier II reports soon. The county received construction plans for the facility.

According to Chairman Schmitt, the list is extremely helpful as it has contact information for all the reporting agencies. This information would most likely be the most current as it is updated annually. A huge resource for dispatch when the hazmat team is responding to an incident.

OTHER BUSINESS

Chairman Schmitt mentioned pending state legislation – Senate Bill 0071 which passed unanimously. The bill known as the "School Safety Drill Act" adds Hazmat to the list of required drills schools are to hold. There are approximately 19 schools in Knox County. The bill would require the exercises to be performed, but no funding to help with staffing for agencies that will be called in to perform the training and drills.

INCIDENTS & RESPONSES

Chairman Schmitt said the team is doing well and have only had to respond to small incidents in the last year.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Jared Hawkinson and seconded by Jack Harlan to adjourn the meeting at 2:23 p.m. The vote was unanimous.

NEXT MEETING:

Tuesday, April 28, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.

Galesburg City Hall, 55 W Tompkins St, Galesburg, IL - Erickson Conference Room