

Local Emergency Services Study Group
Minutes
Tuesday February 4, 2020
3:00 pm

1. Call to Order & Attendance

Portola City Council member Tom Cooley called the meeting to order. Each attendee introduced themselves, the following were present:

Beckwourth Fire Dept: Dwight Ceresola, Bret Russell
City of Portola: Tom Cooley, Pat Morton, Leslie Chrysler, Lauren Knox
EPRFPD: Jeanne Graham, Bob Frank, Elaine Frank
Gold Mtn. CSD: Cary Curtis, Rich McLaughlin
Sierra Valley Fire Dept: Rick Allison, Wayne Despaine, Vicki Anderson

2. Selection of Chair, Vice-Chair and Recording Secretary

Nominations were made to appoint Tom Cooley as Chair, Cary Curtis as Vice-Chair and Leslie Chrysler as Secretary. All members present voted to approve the above appointments.

A discussion regarding how voting would take place and which individuals would vote ensued. Whether there should be a distinction between agency board members and staff or if voting should be based on who was appointed by each board was contemplated. After discussion it was agreed that when a vote is necessary each agency would have one vote. At this time with C-Road CSD has chosen to be represented by the vote of EPRFPD.

Mr. Cooley reported that there will be an item on the next LAFCo agenda regarding the formation of this committee and LAFCo's role.

3. Set a regular meeting schedule and location

Following a brief discussion regarding suggested meeting times and conflicts it was agreed to hold regular meetings on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 9:00 am in Portola City Hall. Meetings would only be scheduled when there was business to discuss.

4. Discussion of a formal name for the committee

The committee reviewed various options for a committee name noting that the name should be a clear indication of what the group is hoping to accomplish. Following a lengthy discussion, the name "***Local Emergency Services Study Group***" was agreed upon. All 5 voting agencies voted in favor.

5. What do we hope to accomplish?

After review of the list provided on the agenda it was agreed that the committee is not in the position to help with homeowners insurance and that even if that was an outcome it was not action that the committee was able to achieve and should be moved to the bottom of the list.

Mr. McLaughlin indicated the “economies of scale” should be added.

Ms. Frank noted that each agency would have to decide what they wanted to accomplish, she provided a brief update on information she had been able to research. She also commented on the probability of having more paid positions rather than volunteer and suggested replacing volunteer with firefighter in item F on the agenda list.

Mr. Cooley noted that each agenda should include an item to allow for discussion of desired outcomes.

The agenda list was revised as follows:

- a. Provide a higher level of service to the entire area represented*
- b. Reduce redundant administration, supplies and equipment expenses*
- c. Better positioned for successful grant applications*
- d. Create uniform organization for public recognition*
- e. Build a more attractive/enticing firefighter opportunity*
- f. Fashion larger-scale educational and personal development opportunities*
- g. Achieve greater economies of scale*
- h. Create a district that encompasses all private lands (no holdout islands)*
- i. Reduce insurers’ perception of catastrophic fire risk to improve access to homeowners’ insurance*

6. Other agencies to keep informed

There were quite a few suggestions for agencies to add to the agenda list along with a suggestion to remove media outlets. The list was revised as follows:

- a. CalFire
- b. Legislative Offices
- c. LAFCo
- d. Plumas County
 - 1. Board of Supervisors
 - 2. County Assessor
 - 3. County Counsel
 - 4. County Administrator
 - 5. County OES
- e. Plumas County Fire Chiefs Association
- f. Eastern Plumas Hospital
- g. Graeagle Fire

- h. Forest Service
- i. BLM
- j. PCSO
- k. CHP
- l. Lassen County

7. Level of timing for public participation

The need to get factual information out to the public was strongly agreed upon. Members also felt if the public has questions at this point it is best for them to address the individual agencies and be provided information through them. The need for a press release to be distributed as soon as possible was agreed upon. Each agency appointed a primary contact who would be able to approve content and distribution of the suggested press release and other items. Press releases should be sent to the Portola Reporter, Sierra Booster and placed on local public boards.

It was determined that meeting attendance at this time would be limited to agency appointees, agency staff and representatives of the agencies listed in item 6.

8. Split of committee related expenses

The need to develop a fair and equitable split of expenses was discussed. In order to complete this the committee will need to gather data from each agency, Plumas County and possibly other agencies. Once the information is in hand there will need to be discussion on how to use it to determine a fair split.

9. Next Steps

Ms. Anderson asked about agency auxiliaries and how they would fit into a new organization. She noted that residents of the agency will contribute to that local agency but may not be willing to have their donations spread to other areas. It was noted that this would be an area that would need to be addressed in the future.

Items to move forward with are researching grant opportunities through agencies like FEMA and CalFire, gathering of data from each agency, creation of a press release and drafting a letter to the other agencies informing them of the committee.

10. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 pm. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday March 24, 2020 at 9:00 am if necessary.

Respectfully Submitted

Leslie Chrysler, Secretary