**MASSACHUSETTS TECHNICAL RESCUE**

**COORDINATING COUNCIL**

**September 19, 2019**

**APPROVED MINUTES**

The Massachusetts Technical Rescue Coordinating Council held a meeting on Thursday, September 19, 2019 at 1:00 p.m. at the Department of Fire Services, Boards and Commissions Room, Stow, Massachusetts.

**Present** at the meeting were the following Council members:

Chief Kevin Nord Fire Chiefs Association of Mass.

Iain McGregor Professional Fire Fighters of Mass.

Jeanne Benincasa Thorpe Undersecretary for Homeland Security, EOPSS

Peter Ostroskey, State Fire Marshal Department of Fire Services

Chief Michael Mansfield Fire Chiefs Association of Mass.

Peter Jerusik Professional Fire Fighters of Mass.

Santiago Lasa Representative, Member of the Statewide Technical Rescue Team

**Absent** at the meeting were the following Commission members:

None

**DFS Employees in Attendance:**

Maribel Fournier, Deputy State Fire Marshal Department of Fire Services

Steven Rourke, Esq. DFS General Counsel and Legal Counsel to the Council

David Clemons, Director of Operations Department of Fire Services

David DiGregorio, Director Hazardous Materials Response and Special Operations

Korina Senior, Program Coordinator Hazardous Materials Response and Special Operations

**Other Attendees**

Samantha Phillips, Director Mass. Emergency Management Agency

Marty Spellacy, Director Homeland Security, Office of Grants and Research, EOPSS

**1. Meeting Opening and Introductions**

Attorney Steven Rourke, acting as Chairman Pro Tem, opened the meeting at approximately 1:10 p.m. The Chairman Pro Tem introduced himself, followed by the introductions of the Council members and Department of Fire Services’ employees in attendance.

**2. Nomination and Election of a New Chair and Vice Chair**

Attorney Rourke opened the nominations for the members to elect the Council’s first Chair and Vice Chairman in accordance with M.G.L. c. 22D § 6. Chief Mansfield made a motion to nominate Chief Kevin Nord as Chairman of the Council, for a term of one year. No other nominations were made. A vote was taken and Chief Nord was unanimously voted as the new Chairman of the Commission.

Mr. Jerusik made a motion to nominate Iain McGregor for Vice Chair, also for a term of one year. No other nominations were made. A vote was taken and Iain McGregor was unanimously voted as the new Vice Chairman of the Council.

For the purposes of today’s first meeting of the Council, Chief Nord requested that Attorney Rourke continue to run the meeting as Chairman Pro Tem.

**3. Legal Overview of Legislation**

Moving to the next agenda item, Attorney Rourke gave an overview of the legislation that created the Council, as well as the background and organization of the Council.

The Technical Rescue Council falls within DFS but not under its control. There are 5 Technical Rescue Regions already established. The Board consists of 7 members in the council 4 is a quorum.

Attorney Rourke reviewed the duties of the Council, which include:

* Annually elect a Chair and Vice Chair.
* Develop uniform standards, rules & regulations for cost recovery and the operation of a **statewide** regional technical rescue services program.
* Assist in the coordination of all persons/agencies concerned with technical rescue services
* Oversee collection/management of Trust Fund $$ and authorize appropriate expenditures that fall within the scope of the Trust Fund.
* File annual report to Secretary of EOPSS, including accounting of all funds collected & distributed from Trust Fund.

Attorney Rourke also did an overview of the newly created Trust Fund,

M.G.L. c. 29, s. 2ZZZZ:

* Funding Sources:
  + - Compensation under contract for technical rescue services, including designation of departments as standby rescue teams to meet requirements of 29 CFR 1910.
    - Funds collected as cost recovery for technical rescue services.
    - Federal, state or private gifts, grants, donations or appropriations.
* Trust shall consist of:
  + - Any or all other public or private monies; and
    - Any interest earned on such funds.
* Expenditures
  + - Maintenance and operation of statewide technical rescue regions;
    - Acquisition and maintenance of technical rescue equipment;
    - Initial and in-service technical rescue training; and
    - Payment of backfill and overtime for technical rescue personnel engaged in training.

Following the overview, Attorney Rourke fielded questions from the Council and confirmed that DFS has no operational oversight, only administrative oversight. Chairman Nord indicated some concern regarding communication between the Council and the Administration. Director DiGregorio responded, indicating that it is envisioned that the Council would have subcommittees and steering committees, similar to the setup of the Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Advisory Board.

Marshal Ostroskey discussed for Council consideration, the creation of a standards sub-committee, which would have at least one member of the council on the subcommittee to relay information back to the larger Council. Marshal Ostroskey also suggested that the Council engage with existing Technical Rescue Teams and their leadership, as subgroups representing geographic areas from the map of the 5 Technical Rescue regions.

During the discussion of the Council’s creation, Marshal Ostroskey introduced

Undersecretary Jeanne Benincasa Thorpe, the designee of Secretary Turco, of the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (“EOPSS”).

Undersecretary Benincasa Thorpe stated that EOPSS was very excited about this new statewide asset and to be able to coordinate with them the event of a disaster. Undersecretary Benincasa Thorpe introduced Samantha Phillips, Director of MEMA and

Marty Spellacy, Director of Homeland Security, Office of Grants and Research for EOPSS. Mr. Spellacy will be helping the Council secure funding for the Council and for technical rescue teams across the state and will help us with coordination of the same to enhance securities and mitigate disasters.

**4. Department of Fire Services Staffing Overview**

Marshal Ostroskey reconfirmed that the Department of Fire Services (“DFS”) received no additional funding resources for the creation of the Council or its day to day operations. He stated that DFS would be providing personnel and help to the Council within the existing budget limits. In addition, while the Council’s Trust Fund has been established, there is currently no means of appropriation to fund the Trust Fund right now.

Upon the creation of the Council, DFS tried to determine where to position it within existing DFS operations. The best solution was to place Technical Rescue under the existing Special Operations Unit, and move both under the Director of Hazardous Materials Operations. It is Marshal Ostroskey’s hope that funding can be secured for a Deputy position for Special Operations, including Technical Rescue.

Chief Nord and the Council went on to discuss establishing a vision, strategy, work plan, running cards, standards, protocols, administrative policies and procedures. Discussion continued regarding the process, input, and support needed, as well as where the Council should start with implementing the Technical Rescue program.

Attorney Rourke suggested that as a first step, the Council should poll each of the Technical Rescue teams to determine what equipment and training currently exists, and to determine whether current members have certain certifications; does each group have a list of equipment in their possession; and what do they have for their FEMA list? Director DiGregorio stated that he will work with Chairman Nord to figure out how to collect the data from the teams.

A formal motion was made by Attorney Rourke to direct DFS staff to draft a letter from the Council to the Technical Rescue teams statewide to collect fact data, to include the level of training, call volume, inventory, identify who paid for what, standardization, and credentials. A vote was taken and it was unanimous decision for DFS Staff to draft the letter.

**5. New Business**

Marshal Ostroskey invited the Council members to notify all the Tech Rescue teams across the state that the Council meetings are open and that anyone is invited to attend and to see how the process is being handled for the establishment of the Council and its operations. Marshal Ostroskey feels important for the teams to see this as an open process.

**6.** **Any matters not reasonably anticipated by the Chair**

None.

**7.** **Future Agenda Items**

Establish a vision statement for the Council and continue to gather information on existing manpower and resources, and layout future goals.

**8.** **Determination of Future Meeting Dates**

The Council will meet once a month for now on the last Tuesday of the month. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, October 29, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. in the Boards and Commissions Room at DFS.

Chief Mansfield made a Motion to adjourn the meeting. Lt. Lasa seconded the motion. Motion to adjourn was approved by unanimous vote of the Board at approximately 2:57 p.m. Meeting adjourned.