Massachusetts Tech Rescue Policy/SOG Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 15, 2024 at 11:26 a.m.
Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

A Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams of the Massachusetts Technical Rescue Policy/SOG Subcommittee was opened at 1126 by Chairman, Chief Matthew Belsito.

Members in attendance remotely. Roll Call taken:
Matthew Belsito, Fire Chief -Sutton
Paul Betti, Deputy Director of Special Operations, DFS
David Randolph, Deputy Chief-Brookline
Jon Martin, Lieutenant-Auburn
Linda Crowley-DFS
Cheryl Barker, Guest-Sutton

Having a quorum the Chairman, Chief Matthew Belsito, was able to call the meeting to order at 1126.
Roll Call Taken:
Betti-present; Randolph-present; Martin-present; Belsito-present.

Approval of Minutes:
Motion: A motion was made by Jon Martin to accept the minutes of the **March 14th** meeting. The motion was seconded by Chief Randolph and with no further discussion passed unanimously. Roll Call Vote Taken; Betti-yes; Randolph-yes; Martin-yes; Belsito-yes.

MTR SOP Subcommittee Correspondence: None.

Update on Tier Responses:
Chief Belsito and Director Betti wished to update the membership on what transpired at the recent meeting of the Membership and Training Committee meeting which they were invited to attend:
The Activation Flyer-The information provided was not reinvented just cleaned up. There are five (5) Disciplines and Twelve (12) different types of activation, (see handout). An incident would start with the type of incident, then where the incident is located and the Tier Level needed. There was discussion on changing the labels from Tiers so that there would be no confusion with Haz Mat. Mr. Betti stated that he was still kicking around ideas. All of the teams had the capability to respond to all with the exception of the Western Teams. They are not Large Animal trained. They will train on this at a later date. The balance of the meeting was discussion on Team Size, which became volatile at times. Ian McGregor surveyed data from the last seven (7) years and from that data he found the following: there were 316 callouts across four (4) regions (Regions 1,3,4,5), after doing the numbers the result equaled four and one half calls per team per year (4½ calls/team/year). Staffing models show four (4) members per team. Dir Betti will compile additional data on area by population and density in addition to data on Call/Volunteer departments to track more information. There is still a lot of discussion needed. Director Betti advised that the discussion was left at him needing more help to be able to justify funding to his management. Chief Weir offered good ideas. He needs additional information and ideas to bring the numbers up. They are struggling to come up with justification for a $5.4m budget, when HazMat funding is around $4.8m which would include salaries for Administration Staffing as well as clerical. A cost saving could come from Region II not wanting to participate in this new system. They will continue to respond as needed. They also do not wish to be a part of the stipend system. This brought our numbers down substantially.

Chief Belsito asked if anyone had any questions.

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Tiered Response, cont'd-**Chief Randolph** is not in agreement with the Tiered Response. He feels this should mimic the FEMA model. He has a document that shows the type of teams and manpower information. Dir Betti stated that he is familiar with this document and agreed that this document could be used as a reference. Lt. Martin stated that decisions need to be justified but it is difficult to justify expenditures when you're a preparedness business vs a reactive business. He understands the need for compiling historical data. Dir Betti has informed his management that the decision cannot go by data alone. So he decided to expand his search to geographical data, ie how long it took team members to arrive on scene, was it fast enough to do a save vs a body count. Dir Betti offered Daryl Springman's area as an example. Dir Betti needs to play with callback numbers. They were using a 40% callback based on HazMat numbers. This needs to be tweaked to get the numbers down, possibly depending on the size of the request and geographical size. Dir Betti asked why they couldn't have adjustable team numbers based on variables specific to their location.

Lt. Martin discussed the training of the teams going forward. Members of the teams must train for five or six capabilities to be eligible to be appointed to a team but they then have to wait sometimes for years before there is an opening on a team, in the meantime the many hours of training is wasted. This does nothing for the future of the teams.

Dir Betti stated that Haz Mat has six weeks of training before they can apply for a position but their training is dedicated specifically to Haz Mat response whereas Tech Rescue has multiple capabilities to train for. In the future, the availability of training classes needed by Tech Rescue Members will have to cater specifically to the Tech Rescue Teams. People do wait years to get into these classes and training anyone eligible to get into MLS first. He also stated that MFA could offer one class to Haz Mat Responders and another as open enrollment. This could also be done with Tech Rescue Training.

Discussion-Equipment
Who has what equipment? District 7's equipment is from Homeland. If the State is to have a team where would their equipment be coming from? Dir Betti questioned whether Homeland equipment would be donated to the State. This is one of the reasons that the State is trying to build an Equipment Committee, to solve some of those questions. A Fleet Manager would also be able to determine a vehicle unsafe.

Chief Randolph is leaving the meeting.
Meeting will end due to lack of a quorum.
Meeting adjourned at 1201.

Minutes prepared by Cheryl Barker, Admin Assistant, Sutton Fire