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MATTHEW BELSITO
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IAIN MCGREGOR
VICE CHAIR

**MASSACHUSETTS TECHNICAL RESCUE
COORDINATING COUNCIL**
January 24, 2024
Approved

The Massachusetts Technical Rescue Coordinating Council held a virtual meeting in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. c. 30A § 20 on Wednesday, January 24, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. and open to the public virtually through Microsoft Teams videoconference.

Present at the meeting were the following Council members:

Chief Matthew Belsito, Chair
Iain McGregor, Vice Chair
Jason Saunders
Maribel Fournier (Designee)
Susan Terrey

Fire Chiefs Association of Mass.
Professional Fire Fighters of Mass.
Professional Fire Fighters of Mass.
Deputy State Fire Marshal
Deputy Secretary for EOPSS

Absent from the meeting were the following Commission members:

Jon Davine
Chief Michael Mansfield

State Fire Marshal
Fire Chiefs Association of Mass.

DFS Employees in Attendance:

Maribel Fournier
Glenn Rooney
Rachel Perlman
David Clemons
Jeff Winn
Paul Betti

Deputy State Fire Marshal
Legal Counsel to the Board
Deputy Legal Counsel to the Board
Director of Operations
Director of Hazardous Materials Response
Deputy Director of Special Operations

Other Attendees

Mark McCabe
Shawn Simmons
Paul Morrison
Francis Otting
Jon Martin
Daryl Springman

Region 1
Region 1
Region 2
Region 2
Region 3
Region 4

Administrative Services • Division of Fire Safety
Hazardous Materials Response • Massachusetts Firefighting Academy

1. Meeting Opening and Introductions

Chief Matthew Belsito, Chairman, opened the meeting at approximately 10:05 a.m. The Chair introduced himself, followed by the introductions of the Council members, Department of Fire Services' employees, and public members in attendance.

2. Approval of December 27, 2023, Meeting Minutes

Iain McGregor made a motion to table the minutes approval to next month to give council members more time to review. Deputy Marshal Fournier seconded the motion, unanimous roll call vote was completed. No further discussion.

3. Discuss Tech Rescue Correspondence

Iain McGregor discussed that Senate Bill 2535 would be going to the Joint Public Safety committee on Tuesday 1/30 at 11:00am. PFFM has asked Iain McGregor to testify on its behalf.

4. Subcommittee Reports

- a. Equipment – nothing to report
- b. Policy/SOG – Chief Belsito indicated that they didn't have quorum, so the meeting has been postponed until February.
- c. Training – Jason Saunders indicated that the joint meeting with membership happened on 1/23. Circled back on activation flyer, they are going to use the Bristol County template. For future meetings they are going to look back at team size. Now that water rescue is one of the 5 response disciplines, they need to add that update to the training matrix.
- d. Membership – joint meeting with Training
- e. Mobex – Iain McGregor indicated that their meeting was held on 1/9. The subcommittee was presented with the decision that was made in the December coordinating council. Committee is going to pause for now and only meet every 3 months starting on April 16th. A letter was sent to the team and the National Guard postponing the Mobex.

5. Regional Reports

- a. Region 1 – Mark McCabe stated that there had been some activations and ongoing training. Barnstable County wide area searches in Falmouth & Eastham as well as crane training as part of structural collapse. Bristol County had a horse rescue in Freetown and a missing person in Fairhaven. Plymouth County had a horse rescue in East Bridgewater and Plympton. Norfolk County called to Bellingham to shore up a building with a vehicle in it. Dukes County continues to drill, they completed rope in December.
- b. Region 2 – Paul Morrison stated that they made some adjustments to their steering committee, Francis Otting is staying on as coordinator and Paul Morrison moved into the training coordinator role. Region 2 supplied Paul Betti with a list of team members. Training ongoing at the company level.
- c. Region 3 – Jon Martin reported that D7 continued their monthly training, no call outs this month. D14 had 4 call outs over the month, 3 for structural collapse and 1 for extracting a person from a house.
- d. Region 4 – Daryl Springman stated that they had ongoing training in January with the topic of ropes. They had 1 call out for a rope rescue that was cancelled while enroute. They are working on bringing on 4 new members and held a

steering committee meeting. Member list sent to Paul Betti already.

- e. Region 5 – Iain McGregor reported that they had 1 call out for swift water that ended up becoming a body retrieval. They constructed a highline system to work with the inflatable boats. They had 20 members on scene for this event with a duration of about 3 hours. Rope drill coming up at end of January. In February they are doing joint training with the National Guard at camp Curtis Guild on structural shoring. Onboarding 4 new members this month.

6. **Old Business**

- a. Budget discussion

Iain McGregor explained the detail of the current draft budget. Team size was set at 80 members per region with 5 regions. Member stipend set at \$5000 per member, with additional stipends for team coordinator, assistant team coordinator and equipment coordinator. Overtime hourly rate set at \$65 with 150 admin hours per regional team. Team training set at 110 hours per member. Team responses per regional team were based on 7 responses at 4 hours with a 40% attendance rate. This came from response data collected from 2017 to 2021. The current budget total comes to \$5.47M. HazMat response budget is currently at \$5.6M. Maribel Fournier stated that she met with Iain McGregor and Paul Betti to review state requirements for budget submission. Chair Belsito asked what the budget number is we should strive to get to, Maribel Fournier stated that it is hard to define a number but that the data should dictate the budget. Iain McGregor stated that we needed to get updated response data for 2022 & 2023. We need to look at response numbers as well as the number of responders. Maribel Fournier asked us what the current cost of each regional team is now, this is something that Iain McGregor and Paul Betti will be looking into to. We will also compare the existing data to figure out what responses would warrant a 12 member activation versus a 30 member activation. 88% of the existing budget is spent on training and stipends, with 12% on responses. The budget number can only be reduced by reducing either training hours or team membership. Chair Belsito asked about the status of D4H, Paul Betti stated that there is \$ allocated in Special Operations budget for FY25. Daryl Springman asked about equipment cost as that is not in the current budget. Paul Betti answered that this would be a future DFS budget item for capital requests. Iain McGregor stated that there was \$10,000 in the budget for supply costs. All budgeted items would then have to be broken out into object codes before any money could be spent, this would be Paul Betti's responsibility. Paul Morrison stated that the data needs to come from something other than MFIRS. In Metro the calls are harder to track as some things are handled internally without calling out a regional response. Dave Clemons stated that the reporting data should only reflect when the team is activated, like HazMat the Tech Rescue team will be called out more often when they realize the state system is available. Mark McCabe stated that he didn't see anything missing from the budget. Paul Morrison asked if state Tech Rescue equipment could be used by members of a department, Maribel Fournier stated that municipalities wouldn't be allowed to use it once it has been moved to the state system. Chairman Belsito stated that the budget would come back to the council for review after Iain McGregor and Paul Betti adjust based on the data.

7. **New Business**

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

Iain McGregor asked if there was interest in sending a letter of support for Senate Bill 2535

going to Joint Public Safety committee on January 30th. Chairman Belsito asked for the status of the original letter of support for Bill 1596, Paul Betti stated that DFS legal helped him draft it and that it needs to be resent to the Chair & Vice Chair for review. Glenn Rooney explained the main points of Bill 2535 as its referred to the complex legislation. It would make Tech Rescue system a state asset, it would fall under DFS, the division would be renamed to Special Operations as well as a creation of an advisory council. It would mirror a lot of the existing HazMat response system. The simple legislation is naming the Marshal co-administrator of the Tech Rescue services fund. Chairman Belsito made a motion to support Bill 2535, this was seconded by Jason Saunders. Chairman Belsito, Vice Chair McGregor and Jason Saunders voted yes, Deputy Secretary Terrey and Deputy Marshal Fournier abstained from the vote as the must follow the lead from EOPSS.

9. Future Agenda Items

10. Determination of future meeting date

Next meeting will be on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 10:00am virtually.

Iain McGregor made a motion to adjourn, Jason Saunders seconded the motion. Roll call vote was made unanimously. Meeting adjourned at approximately 11:43am.