

October 16, 2024 Minutes

**Call to Order**

The meeting of the Story County Emergency Management Commission was called to order at 7:030M by Chair Linda Murken.

**Attendance:**

<u>Jurisdiction</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Jurisdiction</u>	<u>Name</u>
BOS	Linda Murken	Ames	Tim Gartin/Rich Higgins
Cambridge	Bobby Chubbic	Collins	Stacey Howell
Colo	Jeff Brinkman	Gilbert	Jon Popp
Huxley	Dave Kuhn	Kelley	Rick Terrones/Jackie Sapp
Maxwell	Dale Higgins	McCallsburg	
Nevada	Brett Barker	Roland	Kurtis Bower
Sheldahl	Rachel Wicks	Slater	Taylor Christensen
Story City		Zearing	Sandy Perisho
Sheriff	Paul Fitzgerald	ISU	Anthony Romero
SCEMA	Melissa Spencer	SCEMA	Josh Harding
Guest	Macy Wing-Gilbert	Guest	

**Consent Agenda**

Approval of July 2024 Minutes

Approval of October 2024 Tentative Agenda

Motion by the Roland, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Cambridge to approve July minutes and October agenda as presented. MCU

**Old Business**

**Generator Grant**

The Commission is not eligible for a mitigation grant to fund the purchase of a generator for the Annex building due to FEMA’s benefit cost analysis. Unless the site is turned into some type of an emergency shelter it won’t pass. Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEMD) was willing to work with us to challenge the process. It would take considerable staff time and the Commission likely would not receive the funds. Spencer outlined three options moving forward with the generator project. Spencer presented preliminary bids from Caterpillar-\$112,000, Cummins-\$119,000, Kohler-\$109,000 and Generac \$100,000. Caterpillar generators are currently used across county buildings and local service is strong. The estimates include the delivery and installation and switching equipment. Spencer recommended the Commission look at purchasing a new generator rather than a used or no generator at all.

**Annex Building Update**

The Commission was provided an updated construction cost estimate for the annex building. The increased costs are due to the hardening requirements for the training/EOC space. The cost provided is an overall average cost for the identified square footage. True constructions costs for

specific spaces such as the offices have not been defined. From discussions with Facilities Management the true construction costs of the offices could be \$125.00 per square foot. We will address funding direction for this project under new business.

## **New Business**

### **Preliminary Budget Direction**

#### **FY26 Budget Direction**

##### **Disaster Fund**

FEMA is scrutinizing Emergency Management Agency purchases on behalf of communities from disaster funds and possibly not granting reimbursement to Commissions. FEMA is putting forth that communities should be incurring the debt and seeking reimbursement. There is nothing in writing about this but it is a discussion from the Greenfield tornado response. The Commission has only expended funds from the disaster fund twice for the train derailment and for riot response equipment for the Sheriff's Office. The funds have not been accessed for any disaster response locally.

##### **State Legislation 29C & Levy Authority**

Another impact to keeping the disaster fund is pending 29C Levy Authority legislation that is coming back in the next legislative session. Part of this legislation is that Commissions can only carry over 30% of their budget annually. The numbers based upon the FY25 budget, the operating costs from June to October are \$100,617.00. The 30% of the operational budget that we would be allowed to carry over is \$100,873.39. The operational costs are high due to contracts, insurance, salaries and benefits front loaded in the year. It is highly unlikely that any of the expenses could be moved back in the year. With the 30% carry over the disaster fund would county against the agency and we would not be able to meet the operational costs from July to October.

Spencer recommends divesting the remaining \$100,000 of the disaster fund into the EOC project. As it is a capital improvement project, CIP projects do not count against the 30% budget carry over. This will bring the budget back into true operational alignment and provide \$328,208 of funding for the annex building project. This funding was already in the budget and there would not be an ask from tax payers for funding and will provide a starting point for the negotiations for the annex building project. This will lastly resolve concerns about holding a significant amount of tax payer dollars in the budget year to year.

Discussion about returning the remaining disaster fund back to each individual community. The disaster funds came from equal taxation across the county. No individual communities contributed funding from their community budget to create the disaster fund. Additional discussion about if the 29C legislation does not go through that the Commission would not be held to the 30% rollover and could keep the disaster fund.

Both of these issues while not resolved, could have an impact on the FY25 and FY26 budget. Spencer is seeking direction from the Commission in order to develop the budgets for the December workshop. The Commission directed Spencer to move the remaining disaster fund

into the annex building project for the development of the FY25 & FY26 budgets to be presented at the December budget workshop.

### **FY25 Budget Re-estimation**

We will use an estimated \$4,388 to realign salaries to catch up the cost of living changes from the last two budgets. There will be an increased cost if the Deputy Coordinator is made exempt that will be discussed next. We have had some budget savings with \$1,685.25 is reimbursement from Story County Public Health to offset the cost of radio fees since we programed the Iowa Health Alert Network (HAN) channels in the radios. We also received a 30% reduction in radio fees due to assistance from the 9-1-1 Board. As a reminder, their assistance will continue to reduce and we always budget the full cost of the radios annually.

### **Deputy Coordinator Exempt Discussion**

Currently the deputy is a non-exempt position. Due to the work load and 24/7 nature of the agency, there is a need to have the Deputy Coordinator present for 40 hours a week. The Deputy has been exchanging out on call and overtime hours for comp time or taking time off during the pay period. This is creating 168 lost hours of productivity a year just due to on call time. Paying out the on-call time, in addition to working 40 hours a week, will create an additional \$5,612.88 expense that is not budgeted for and will only increase annually. Due to the comp time accrual, the Deputy is in danger of losing vacation time as he cannot exchange the time out quickly enough.

Spencer worked with Story County Human Resources and has completed the Fair Labor Standard Acts test. The recommendation from Human Resources is the Deputy position be made exempt and moved to Grade 18 with the current Deputy starting at level F which is the next higher paying step from Grade 17. This will create an additional expense of \$1,349.51 for the remainder of the year and a pay out of approximately \$902.07 for the comp time already on the books. The FY25 re-estimation will cover these increases. Harding was asked if this was acceptable to him. He reported that he preferred the exempt status as his previous position at Jasper County was exempt.

Motion by Maxwell, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Huxley to make the Deputy Coordinator position exempt and set the current salary at Grade 18 level F. MCU

### **December Budget Workshop Date Change**

Spencer is requesting to move the December budget workshop back one week to December 18<sup>th</sup>. Spencer's daughter is graduating from Air Force Basic Training in Texas. Harding has an opportunity to travel out of state right after Spencer returns. The Commission Chair will also be traveling at this time. The Commission agreed to mover the December budget workshop to December 18<sup>th</sup>.

### **Commission Alternates**

Commission members will receive an email in the near future to establish primary and alternates for the Commission. In the past we have done this leading up to the budget public hearing to

ensure elected officials are designated and present in January. Discussion that some city councils won't designate representatives locally until January but will provide information.

### **Iowa Homeland Security Requirement Changes**

Iowa HSEMD has changed due dates for planning, training and exercise requirements to June 1<sup>st</sup> of the year. All of the grant pass throughs are also changed to the state fiscal year rather than federal. They issued changes to the exercise program that will require more staff time and local participation. This is tied to Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) requirements which is a \$39,000 off set to the Commission budget each year. All Story County plan updates have to be completed and approved by the April Commission meeting. We are going to try to divide review and approval between the January and April meetings but there will be an increased number of plans to review quickly.

### **Quarterly Report**

Harding provided an update on the stop the bleed project. To date all of the school districts except for Ames had either been trained or were scheduled for training. Additionally, kits had been distributed to schools that had been trained. With this level of training and deployment 7,344 kids go to safer schools. The next phases of the project include adding kits to schools, school buses (there are 167 school buses in the county) and municipal spaces. Thank you to our partners, the Sheriff's Office, Ames Fire, Mary Greely, and Public Health for making this project a success.

### **Other**

#### **Recognition of Story County Iowa Alerts (SCIA) Competition Winner**

The City of Sheldahl had the greatest increase in registrations for the SCIA community sign up competition, during Preparedness Month, with a 2.4% increase. McCallsburg placed second with 2.2% and a tie for third place with Cambridge and Zearing with 2.02%. City Clerk Rachel Wicks was present to accept the certificate. Spencer thanked the communities for their participation in the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual competition and looks forward to doing this again next year.

Spencer will be on vacation and out of the state from October 18-27<sup>th</sup>. Harding will be in charge while she is gone.

#### **Next Meeting:**

December 18<sup>th</sup>- Budget Workshop

January 15, 2025- Budget Hearing-Elected Officials

**Adjournment: Motion by Roland, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Sheriff MCU Meeting adjourned at 8:04PM**