

Tuesday, February 18, 2025

Meeting Minutes

Members present: Mason Lindsay (Chairman LEPC), Ron Tower (Vice Chairman LEPC), Mark Conner (Acadian), Ryan Novak (Sasol), Robert Daughdril (LEPC), Paul DeStout (OPH), Sean LaFleur (LSP), Amanda Butler (Env. Coordi.), Jared Maze (OHSEP)

Guests present: Megan Powell (OHSEP), Anthony Olivier (DEQ), Jennifer McHaffie (Micah 68 Mission), AJ Powell (SPD), Jason Lionberger (OHSEP), Cynthia Robertson (M68M), Scott Kyle (LCMH), Kalon Washington (LCPD), Brent Smith (Sasol), Amy Michiels (GOHSEP), Jake Alford (Woodside), Jerry Pierrotite (HASC), Liz Harmon (Hospital) Jamie Gaines (SWLA RPC) Nancy Tower (Volunteer), Marc Ferguson (OHSEP) Liz Harmon (Hospital)

Mason called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M.

Mason asked for Ron Tower to lead in the Pledge

Mason asked for any public comments:

Cynthia Robertson's Comments:

- Requested correction of her name.
- Emphasized the importance of LEPC's role in community safety.
- Shared personal experiences of community concerns during industrial incidents, as she observed at the scene.

Jennifer McAfee's Comments:

- Stressed the need for reliable information during emergencies.
- Discussed the challenges of misinformation and accurate communication.

PE & I Update: Ron Tower

- In August, we began developing the written program to meet LEPC responsibilities under EPCRA 301 and the additional responsibilities required by the State of Louisiana.
- The program and the Bylaws were discussed to the LEPC in August..
- It was discussed to divide the two committees, redefining the standing committees was done.
- Ryan Novak chairs of Alerting and Notifications and Ron Tower chair of Public Education and Information committee (PE & I).
- Two primary goals, to design and deliver mechanisms to provide accurate and timely information.
- Second, to implement an effective public education campaign to support the alerting and notification system.
- These goals are to produce good communication
- While the committees are working on messaging with community feedback are being used to design future programs.
- Goals include accurate information dissemination and public education.

- Emphasized the importance of good communication and collaboration with community and industry professionals.

Notifications Committee: Ryan Novak

- Agreed to be the chair of the Alerting and Notification committee.
- I met with Jason and Jared around November, just to make sure we were aligned and understood what OHSEP's role was and how they saw things, and make sure we were kind of consistent with our approach in there.
- So, we will take a cross-functional approach to that. I have some goals.
- The first committee meeting will be held March 6, 2025
- Will come next month with some updates.

Membership Discussion/Tier II: Mason Lindsay

- All members to please attend especially when we have voting issues so we can vote on those issues.
- We do have attendance requirements and members are required to have at least make four meetings per year so we're asking members to come to the meetings.
- Some members are agency members and some are individual members. An agency members are appointed by the their agency and the bylaws do not allow you proxy vote, so if you're the designated member of the agency you're the only one who can vote for that particular agency. You may send someone to take your place to gather information.
- We have an increasing problem with members not attending at the maximum of at least four meetings a year.
- Challenges in reaching a quorum for voting due to attendance issues.
- Discussion on tier two fees and plans to document this process in the future.
- Currently Parish provides administrative support functions for the CPLEPC.
- Because of an increased request for information, we need to make our requests of CPLEPC through Jared Maze who is officially the Secretary/Treasurer of the CPLEPC and Parish Director.

Website Overview:

Rob Daughdril has provided volunteer support for the CPLEPC website since 2017 and was appointed by CPLEPC board as web director. He provided an overview of the current website.

- Designs but has volunteered to put the site together and help keep it up to date. It includes only the information he has been provided.
- As Web Director he has designed and maintained our website for extremely low cost.
- The website is used to post our minutes and post our agenda. The website also has the CPLEPC bylaws, frequently ask questions and answers, and additional reference material.
- This web page costs us about \$150 - \$200 dollars annually.
- We a software upgrade at no cost the CPLEPC.
- It cost Mutual Aid around \$6,000 because it was more complicated. If we significantly upgrade the CPLEPC page.
- We get approximately 900 hits on the webpage each month.

- Ron thanked Rob for his website management role and invited him to be part of the PE&I Committee.

LEPC Notification: Sean LaFleur

- Public information, our agency is very important for our department.
- And when we are working on a chemical event or an explosive event, just like the incident in New Orleans on New Year's Day, trying to get information out as quickly as possible is important.
- Accurate information is of utmost importance, and you can go back into this area to the Biolab.
- For any you that don't know, the Chemical Safety Board, roughly a month ago, released a video from Hurricane Laura. I think it would be important for you to watch that video. It pulls the minutes up and sees what was said to us during that meeting, and why we had so much heartburn, and why we worked with KPLC to make a public records request so they could see my text report on the information that we were told versus what we dealt with. Things like that industry needs to a better job in putting information out.
- LERC puts out good information on what the CPLEPCs responsibilities are. Our LERC is going through changes right now, because there are still some governor's appointments that I think need to be made. The chairman is likely to change, because we have an upper-level reorganization in our department. John Porter is now the special operations lieutenant colonel. He is over our section, SWAT, aviation. Currently it's Colonel Hasselbeck, who's a lieutenant patrol colonel. So, you may see some changes there, but I mean, I'd have no issues.
- We've gone through a process over the last year of change in public records requests on our incidents.
- So, I have no issue, and I would post a link to that for anybody who would want access to ours.
- Now, those are only reports of incidents that we respond to. If we don't know about it, we can't respond.
- Any of that information is helpful, I think, from a public safety standpoint. That's why I do what I do, and anything we can do to facilitate that, and so I'm going to be working on Ryan's committee on the notification side. We give presentations.
- Most people don't realize this, but our right to know laws took place before Sara title III took effect.
- Also, the CPLEPC is one of the best and most active LEPCs in the State.

New Projects:

- Handout was provided, if you need one just let Megan Powell know.

Conclusions:

- The meeting highlighted ongoing concerns about effective communication and public safety during industrial incidents.
- There is strong emphasis on improving information dissemination and community engagement through various channels, including digital platforms.