

Sonoma Disaster Council Regular Meeting

Emergency Operations Center
177 First Street West

**Thursday, August 16, 2012
Minutes**

Public Works Director Bates called the meeting to order at 3:37 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

1. Introductions were made. Present: Public Works Director Milenka Bates, Public Works Administrative Clerk Colleen Pratt, Water Operations Supervisor Steve MacCarthy, Sergeant Crum (Sonoma Police Department), Brad Blazer (Sonoma County Fire & Emergency Services), Sandra Costello (Vintage House Senior Center), Jennifer Hainstock (Supervisor Brown's Office), Bill Hammett (KSVY) Skip Jirrels (Sebastopol CERT Program), Julie Pendray (Editor, Sonoma Patch), Wendy Peterson (Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau), Charlene Rundstrom (Creekside HOA), John Saguto (American Red Cross), Kelsey Scanlon (Informal Intern for Disaster Council), Hans Steuck (Chantarelle HOA), Bob Taylor (KSVY)

2. Comments on items not appearing on the agenda.

No comments from the public.

3. The minutes of the May 17, 2012 meeting were approved.

4. Radio Communications Overview (KSVY).

Bob Taylor and Bill Hammett discussed KSVY's communications system. There was discussion regarding alternate energy source for a repeater during an emergency. Steve MacCarthy said the City has two generators at the Corporation Yard that could be used for communications between the EOC and the radio station during an emergency.

Hammett said the Federal government requires stations to have a signal to override KSVY for the emergency alert system from the President or Governor's direct line (broadcasted to one master station, then chains out to local stations). Public information would be broadcast when not in override directive. Additional Federal communication systems include: FEMA's new internet system called Capdec.

Hammett outlined three stations that have the right of way to send out messages during a disaster: AM, FM and NOAA. In a non-catastrophic event, anyone can come to the station to make announcements to the public.

Steve MacCarthy asked how power outages impact on KSVY. Hammett said they would not be able to broadcast without a backup generator. If electricity is down and internet is down, everything needs to be done through the transmitter at their second receiver (AT&T T-1) on Denmark Street. At their station on Napa Street, signal goes to Denmark Street (AT&T T-1). During an emergency with power out, people would need to listen to updates on car radios. John Saguto emphasized the importance for the public to have information easily accessible through radio (gave an example of the fires in Humboldt radio communication created stability).

Cost estimates for a generator range from \$5,000-10,000 for a small generator and fuel storage (fuel size depends on how much “run time” in radio messaging during a disaster the City would want). Power requirements would be less at higher elevation; and storage cells could be recharged with solar (adding a couple of days of power during a disaster).

Jennifer Hainstock spoke of grant funds for an external generator through Fire & Emergency Services. Brad Blazer and Jennifer Hainstock both offered to assist Bob Hammett in submitting a grant for the equipment. Hainstock added that S.C.O.P.E. training includes what to have in an emergency kit, with radio and batteries suggested.

John Saguto said that a standard form of communication in writing is important as a means to delivering messages from whoever is chairing the EOC (to reduce misinformation; SOP – standard operating procedure). Word of mouth fails, paper gets the message through.

After further discussion on how the emergency radio communication would take place, Bob Taylor said they would write up a procedure so others could enter the second communication location to make announcements (during a more serious disaster and use the microphone powered by generator), otherwise people would walk into the KSVY station at 164 W. Napa Street with a written note from the EOC – whoever is in charge (e.g. City Manager, Fire Chief, Police Chief). There is no ham radio receiver at the second location.

5. Disaster Council Structure: Research & Recommendations for Communications in Preparedness and Recovery. Kelsey Scanlon (Informal Intern) presented her findings. Scanlon focused on four phases of a disaster: 1) mitigation; 2) preparedness; 3) response and 4) recovery. Reliable information is vital to public, media and government channels.

The 2004 tsunami demonstrated the impact of communication with social media (instant reports from public on disasters and a place for people to tell their story).

Communication strategy suggested: 1) Develop a fan base for social media prior to a disaster; 2) Use a Joint Information Communication System (JIC) that is currently being finalized through County; 3) Develop outreach programs, such as a bigger push for S.C.O.P.E., disaster preparedness day, booths, fairs, special events, and farmer markets.

Commissioners thought that outreach would be a good idea for a Senior Project. Wendy Peterson stated that she has the information for the Sonoma Valley High School Senior Projects ‘Fair’ event on August 27 and provide the sign-up information to staff.

Bill Hammett said radio or TV Public Service Announcements (PSA’s) would be opportunities for Senior Projects receiving air play every 15 minutes.

Hans Steuck suggested having a screen on the Amphitheater at the Farmers’ Market with a disaster preparedness message running; people could come and go to view the message (vs. listening to a presentation via microphone (similar to a PSA).

Julie Pendray (Editor, Sonoma Patch) talked about social media’s importance (e.g. City Council’s, Sheriff’s departments, and wineries have Twitter accounts). She explained during the power outage while on working assignment in San Diego – her staff was tested to keep the website updated and offering timely information (people are on Facebook and Twitter during a disaster). When batteries were low, they used generators already in use at a Farmers’ Market to keep communications going (with a lesson to have a back-up battery for cell phones). She

agreed with Kelsey Scanlon that people need the information “now.” She volunteered to be a volunteer on the DC for social media, or give a talk to the Disaster Council.

John Saguto said there is a gap between use of Twitter by retirees and bi-lingual communities; Twitter currently is in English and said Twitter was only a supplement for communication.

Brad Blazer JIC’s (Joint Information Centers) function is to pull in information, vetting it for disseminating accurate information; that will be discussed at the table top discussion during the October drill.

Sergeant Crum reported that the County Sheriff’s Department is now using NIXEL, and that people can register the cell phones for alerts at nixel.com. NIXEL puts out real time alerts with zip code localities (pinged to cell phones once you have subscribed).

6. Sign-Up for Annual Disaster Preparedness Exercise on October 18 @ 10:18 a.m.

The sign-up sheet was provided for the California Shakeout Drill on October 18. Public Works Director Bates said the City would be going through an exercise in the EOC; some departments will work with the Sonoma County Water Agency.

Brad Blazer said the Sonoma County Fire & Emergency Services the County would be doing the first Table Top exercise on September 26 with the actual exercise the same day as the California ShakeOut. Sonoma is not listed as a player on the County level. Bates said staffing was the issue. However, Steve MacCarthy may participate in the County exercise and asked that information be sent to him.

7. Updates. Water Operations Supervisor MacCarthy reported on leaks and reviewed Boil Water Notification.

Sandra Costello reported the Vintage House was hosting another free S.C.O.P.E. training on the October 19, 2012, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Public Works Director Bates adjourned the meeting at 5:00 p.m. to the next regular meeting scheduled for Thursday, November 15, 2012, at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Rogers
Management Analyst