LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE

Town Hall Chambers

Weymouth, MA

October 2, 2018, 10:00 a.m.

Minutes

**PRESENT:**  John Mulveyhill, Chairman

Daniel McCormack, Health Department

Charlotte Jenkins, Emergency Management

James Mannion, MEMA

Chris Carey, Weymouth Police Department

Joan Cooper-Zack, SSHS

Jonathan Tose, Citizen Representative

John Higgins, Fire Department

Matthew Brennan, Health Department

Mary Heinrichs, WETC

**ALSO PRESENT:** Bob Hedlund, Mayor

Patrick McMurray, Undersecretary Homeland Security

Peter Ostroskey, State Fire Marshal

Keith Stark, Weymouth Fire Department

Justin Myers, Weymouth Fire Department

Jen Pompeo, Weymouth Police Department

Kenan Connell, Weymouth DPW

Mary Roy, Rep. Murphy’s Office

James O’Brien, Braintree Fire Department

Karen MacAleese, Braintree Police Department

Robert James, Braintree Emergency Management

Robert Millotte, Braintree Emergency Management

Dennis Girardi, Braintree Emergency Management

Brian Pomodoro, SSHS EMS

Steve Murphy, Hingham Fire Department/EMD

Bob Gillan, Quincy Police Department

Patricia McDonnell, Recording Secretary

Chairman Mulveyhill called the meeting of the Local Emergency Planning Committee to order at 10:05 a.m.

**INTRODUCTIONS:**

Attendees introduced themselves and their role with the committee.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

The minutes of June 19, 2018 were reviewed.

Motion made by Joan Cooper-Zack to approve the minutes of June 19, 2018. Motion seconded by Charlotte Jenkins and unanimously voted.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Discuss Public Safety Concerns/Compressor Station:

Matt Brennan thanked everyone for attending the meeting. He stated this is step one to voice concerns about the proposed compressor station as a community. In July 2017 Governor Baker sent a letter to Mayor Hedlund stating the public should have greater input into the possibility of the compressor station coming to Weymouth. In the future there may be another meeting which will include the public so they can voice their concerns.

Mr. Brennan provided an overview of the project and the identified concerns. The proposed location is on Bridge Street in Weymouth on Route 3A. The gas company provided an impact map which shows that if there was a large scale event the impact zone would extend 786 feet outward. Large scale events do happen, and have happened in other locations. Inside this impact zone is Route 3A. The Fore River Bridge, a $244 million dollar project could be impacted. Components of the bridge could be affected in the event of an explosion impacting residents ability to flee the area.

The Fore River Energy Center is within this zone and they have a lot of hazardous materials on site, including 2.25 million gallons of diesel fuel, compressed hydrogen gas, aqueous ammonia, sulfuric acid, and sodium hydroxide.

The MWRA pump station, which handles sewage for surrounding communities, is within this zone. If anything happened at the compressor station Braintree, Holbrook and parts of Weymouth would lose the ability to pump sewage. They need to consider how they would get to the people at the MWRA plant if there was an event. They would have no ability to get out and may have to shelter in place.

There are homes in this area. There are 7500 people per square mile in Weymouth. There is recreation property next to the site with a deed restriction so there will always be a security concern for the facility because of the proximity to this public access. There is also only one way in and one way out so this has to be looked at. Consideration has to be given to if there were a hurricane, what kind of storm surge would be expected, as the area would likely be inundated with water.

Mr. Brennan asked how Enbridge will address all these items and whether any of their plans are going to rectify the concerns outlined. He asked how they are going to protect the safety of the citizens and the general public. He cited the recent incident Columbia Gas experienced in the Andover/Lawrence area. He stated they should learn from that experience and determine what they would do here. He stated it would be good to determine what lacked in emergency response protocols in that incident and ensure that with this project they will be successful in protecting people.

Patrick McMurray, Undersecretary for Homeland Security, stated the Governor’s office does not take this lightly and they sent him to listen to these concerns and bring back information. He stated this meeting was planned prior to the Andover/Lawrence incident. This incident was a serious matter and makes you wonder how over pressurization or human error could happen. He stated the relationship between fire, police, ems, and emergency managers is important and plans have to be in place if this project moves forward. He is going to submit information provided to the Secretary of Public Safety.

James Mannion of MEMA stated they attend a lot of tabletop scenarios and what happened in Andover/Lawrence shows it is a very long-term recovery process. If this had happened in December and it was colder the problem would be compounded. He stated Weymouth regularly conducts exercises.

Peter Ostroskey, Mass Fire Marshal, echoed the sentiments of the Undersecretary and Mr. Mannion. He applauded the committee for having this meeting. He stated the problem in Andover/Lawrence was due to a combination of aging infrastructure and construction work being done. He stated it is important to have early planning. The compressor station adds a level of concern that they do not have currently and is important to have strong relationships across the continuum. He thanked everyone for the opportunity be at this meeting.

Keith Stark, Weymouth Fire Chief, stated Weymouth does the best they can with the resources they have. It is a densely populated area. They need to look at how they are going to afford the training and resources. He stated they should look at putting the compressor station in a location where it has less impact.

Jonathan Tose asked how Homeland Security would feel about a project like this in the proposed location, as the area has high risk facilities already. He asked what the other facilities plans are, as to his knowledge they have had no input from these facilities . He stated a major incident could do havoc on the South Shore area.

Mr. McMurray stated each state has a Homeland Security Advisor. He stated he is a liaison with DHS and he can ask them to contact the different entities to put together a report from the federal side. He referenced the West Roxbury compressor station project. He stated when he first started this job the federal judge had already signed off on the project so when he contacted the federal government he could not get them to come. With this project it is early and they can do due diligence. Certain decisions have already been made but the judge has not signed off yet.

Jonathan Tose asked why Weymouth. He stated it seems this one basin is a mecca for disaster. Mr. McMurray stated this is the most convenient location for the gas company.

Jen Pompeo, Weymouth Police Department, expressed concern about how they would get support if something happened to the bridge infrastructure.

Joan Cooper-Zack stated she works at South Shore Hospital, but also is part of a healthcare coalition and the stakeholders are hospitals, EMS, ambulatory care, and long-term care, and Milton, South Shore and Carney would be the hospitals to receive patients in the event of an emergency. She stated there are an abundance of hazards that would impact the communities and they have a lot to learn and she looks forward to hearing more.

An attendee stated an incident would affect shipping lanes and commuter boats. He stated if anything happens to this compressor this would be a big problem shipping-wise as this is a large shipping area. He stated he would check with the Coast Guard to see if they have any concerns.

Kenan Connell, Weymouth DPW, stated there have been gas leaks in town and the Mayor has been aggressive with repairing them. At one time they had 600 leaks and have whittled them down. He stated National Grid has been on strike and this has impacted repairing leaks.

Dan McCormack, Weymouth Health Department, stated since day one they have all agreed this is not the location for a facility of this capacity. He stated there are additional health concerns being addressed under a heath impact assessment. A lot of time has been spent telling state and federal officials that this is not the right location for this compressor station and he hopes all this information will be brought back to the Governor and Secretary and let them know this is not the right location as there are too many hazardous materials and human recptors.

Steve Murphy, Hingham Fire Department, stated he agrees with Chief Stark’s concerns. The area is isolated and if the bridge is impacted Quincy and Braintree police and fire will have to find other routes to access the site and this will delay responses for mutual aid. They also may be dealing with issues on their side of the bridge. He stated there would be a difficulty responding without more staffing, funding, and training.

Bob Gillan, Quincy Police Department, stated they need to see serious response plans. The bridge is a huge concern for maritime and the ability to get response to Quincy.

James O’Brien, Braintree Fire Department, stated he echoes the comments and concerns of Chief Stark. Karen MacAleese, Braintree Police Department, stated they would need proper equipment.

Mr. McMurray stated first responders will be needed if there is an incident and an emergency plan will have to be in place. He stated he watched the Governor declare a state of emergency for the Andover/Lawrence incident and it was a big deal. He stated any information he can compile would be helpful as the Governor and administration does listen.

Motion made by Jonathan Tose to invite representatives from Enbridge to present to the LEPC to get firsthand information. Motion seconded by Charlotte Jenkins and unanimously voted.

Mr. Tose stated it might also be worthwhile to invite representatives from the other facilities in the area.

Mary Roy from Representative Murphy’s office stated they are listening to the concerns and will be following up with the administration at a later date as well.

Chairman Mulveyhill opened the meeting up for public comment.

Alice Arena stated the energy facility board posted letters regarding this project and posted seven potential locations. Franklin and Rehoboth were included and they were discounted because they do not want to put in extra pipe. She wanted Mr. McMurray to know that the company itself has indicated there are other locations they could consider.

Michael Lang, East Braintree Civic Association, stated the material Mr. Brennan provided is from Spectra and is inaccurate. The impact zone is actually the incineration zone and the actual impact distance is 1000 feet. He stated there is another compressor coming in after this compressor. All this gas is going to Canada to be exported as LNG. He indicated he is willing to sit down with people. He stated this is going to be a huge fire risk. The Civic Association has top officials working with them and have come up with totally different data and he is willing to share it at any time.

Frank Singleton, Weymouth Conservation Commission, stated there is a safety committee that was supposed to be set up. There are concerns with public access and security. There is a bicycle lock on the gate, which is a joke. He stated there are a lot of issues vetted by the citizens group that need to be vetted by government officials. There are a number of issues regarding public safety which need to be raised and they need to document these concerns.

Mr. McMurray stated once a site like this is in place and authorized by the feds the local municipalities have to deal with it and they have to make sure what they are putting on paper are facts, not speculation.

Jennifer Mathien of Hingham Residents Against the Compressor Station thanked everyone for attending and working on a plan. She asked if it is worth the risk to local emergency responders on a project that does not benefit them. She stated the facility will be remotely monitored in Texas.

**HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INCIDENTS:**

Matt Brennan stated they have not responded to anything since the last meeting. Chairman Mulveyhill stated there was an incident at the high school but it quickly decelerated and there was no hazmat involved.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion made by Charlotte Jenkins to adjourn at 11:05 a.m. Motion second by Joan Cooper-Zack and UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Patricia McDonnell

Recording Secretary

Approved by:

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John Mulveyhill, Chairman

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_