



**REGULAR MEETING OF
EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

Tuesday, April 30, 2024, 11:00 a.m.

Remote Meeting via Teams

For information on how to participate: <https://www.whistler.ca/municipal-gov/committees/emergency-planning-committee>

- PRESENT:**
- BC Ambulance Service Representative, L. Darlington
 - BC Ambulance Service Representative, L. Wu
 - Whistler Transit Ltd. Representative, C. Gomez
 - RMOW Chief Administrative Officer, V. Cullen
 - RMOW Councilor, J. Ford
 - RMOW General Manager Corporate Services and Public Safety, T. Battiston
 - Mayor, J. Crompton
 - RMOW Emergency Program Coordinator, B. Manson
 - RMOW Fire Chief, T. Doherty
 - RMOW General Manager Community Engagement and Cultural Services, K. Elliott
 - RMOW General Manager Infrastructure Services, J. Hallisey
 - RMOW Manager Protective Services, L. DeBou
 - School District #48 Representative, I. Currie
 - Vancouver Coastal Health Representative, Dr. M Khaketla
 - Whistler Blackcomb Representative, J. Lawther
- ABSENT:**
- Blackcomb Helicopters Representative, D. Marcoux
 - RCMP Sergeant SO, N. Miller
 - RCMP Staff Sergeant, S. Banks
 - RMOW Emergency Social Services Coordinator, K. Hannah
 - Whistler Search and Rescue Society Representative, T. DelBosco
- STAFF PRESENT:**
- Recording Secretary, C. Burford
- OTHERS:**
- Amy McDowell *representative from Blackcomb Helicopters*
 - Dave McPhee *representative from Whistler Blackcomb*
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1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor J. Crompton recognized the Resort Municipality of Whistler is grateful to be on the shared, unceded territory of the Lílwat People, known in their language as Liíwat7úl, and the Squamish People, known in their language as Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh. We respect and commit to a deep consideration of their history, culture, stewardship and voice.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Moved By RMOw Councilor, J. Ford
Seconded By RMOw General Manager
Corporate Services and Public
Safety, T. Battiston

That Emergency Planning Committee adopt the Regular Committee Meeting agenda of April 30th 2024

CARRIED

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Moved By RMOw Councilor, J. Ford
Seconded By RMOw General Manager
Corporate Services and Public
Safety, T. Battiston

That Emergency Planning Committee adopt the Regular Committee Meeting minutes of February 13th 2024.

CARRIED

4. PRESENTATIONS AND DELEGATIONS

4.1 Review of Current Regional Situation

B. Manson provided a presentation on the review of the current regional situation.

- There are currently a few fires that are burning from the year before.
- Noted that Alberta is a different eco-region and as such, fires are typical this time of year.
- There have been no flood warnings or advisories, as there has been low amounts of rainfall.
- Water levels in the snowpack this year are currently at 50%, the typical amount is 100%.

T. Battiston asked when the last time the snowpack levels were at 50%?

J. Crompton said it has been the lowest since records started.

4.2 Review of Evacuation Exercise

The evacuation exercise that was completed on Thursday 25th March 2024 was successfully completed with good results.

A survey was sent out to all participants and results will be shared with the committee.

The evacuation exercise was based off a vehicle fire on the Cheakamus Forest Service Road, and a tactical evacuation by the Fire Chief. Evacuation of exposed areas and EOC was activated. A test alert was sent out to affected areas, as well as a test of the Whistler alert. A reception center was set up in the fire hall in Spring Creek (noted that a center wouldn't normally be in a fire hall in a real situation). Once the fire was contained the order and alert was rescinded.

Members from Bylaw, RCMP and Whistler Search and Rescue were assigned to door knock within the affected areas. This took approximately 2 hours, as there were not that many people home during the exercise. Noted that 2 individuals would not be evacuated when door knocked. There was some miscommunications regarding bus transport that will need to be resolved for future exercises.

Areas that worked well

- Preparations and previous tabletop exercises set up for good results.
- Clearly defined roles with everyone on initial conference call.
- Briefing of situational awareness.
- Whistler Alerts.

Areas for improvement

- External GIS maps to show map of fire. This suggestion was passed onto the RMOW IT department to implement.
- Electronic Signatures.
- Radio Inoperability.
- Layout of EOC space.
- Collecting and documenting event information, also ensuring it is easily displayed and accessed.
- Notification attachment did not go out initially, this was tested and resolved.
- Ability to share the GIS maps.
- Whether evacuees can return to retrieve their pets.
- Internet capacity, recommendation of an IT specialist to be a part of the EOC staff.

V. Cullen noted that those who were prepared built confidence and those who were not are now more knowledgeable. Having key partners in the room was effective. Suggested that delegating tasks based off work speeds for the future. If the EOC is working with paper, then a printer is required.

T. Doherty these would be his recommendations from the exercise:

- A test of the initiator is necessary when activating the call, as it is not very user friendly.

- A board chart on the wall of the EOC should be displayed showing everyone's positions
- One email that everyone has access to, so nothing is missed on personal emails.
- Predetermined operational periods for the reception such as 8am-6pm.
- Set times for sectional meetings for better flow of information.
- More training on what to do with documentations, such as position logs.
- Defense plans with GIS mapping.
- The radios should be taken out of the EOC and use cell phones instead, so as to limit the noise in the room.

J. Hallisey asked if we have a list of the staff members who have emergency management training?

B. Manson confirmed we have this list and he will be able to share.

J. Ford asked if there is a way for people to update their contact information for the connect rocket Whistler alerts?

B. Manson said that he has the ability to edit the list.

L. DeBou said there is due to be an update on the emergency information brochure and the information on how to edit your account will be added to this.

J. Ford asked is the SLRD, DOS or VOP was included in this exercise.

L. DeBou said that they were invited to observe, but we are confident if it was a real emergency that communication is there.

B. Manson said that the door knocking gains high compliance but is a high use of resources.

T. Battiston suggested that a table top exercise and functional exercise should be completed yearly and full exercise to be completed every other year.

T. Doherty asked if there is a requirement for these to happen?

B. Manson said there is no documentation nor it is in any of the acts.

J. Crompton said it is critical to do these, especially in high volume areas.

J. Ford said if we wait to do it again in 5 years then there may be too new people with the turn over in the community, as new developments are bringing higher population.

B. Manson confirmed that we will aim for table top exercise and functional exercise to be completed yearly and full exercise to be completed every other year.

J. Ford suggested to involve the to the Sea to Sky communities in future exercises.

4.3 Busing Evacuees Discussion

In the 2019 Multimodal plan is what noted that the number of people who did not have vehicles was 8,442 in the Summer and 17,030 in the winter.

- The muster points are currently at the number 10 bus stops.
- An extra stops at the Recreation Center .
- Hotels will be responsible for transportation their own guests.

V. Cullen said that the hotels are suggesting that guests not bring vehicles.

J. Crompton said that there are not enough buses or coaches in Whistler. Hotels should have a list of people and how many seats they have in vehicles. Should involved them in the next table top exercise.

T. Battiston said the biggest solution would be the phase of population, suggesting in a major event to potentially deny entry as a solution.

Remaining Challenges

- Highway congestion.
- Availability of BC Transit buses and Charter buses.
- Whether pets are allowed on buses.
- Connecting evacuees with seats in cars.

T. Doherty asked is there is a Transit emergency plan?

B. Manson said there has been nothing set in place. Should note that if there is a large scale evacuation then there may not be any bus drivers left in Whistler to assist. Ideally the regular bus route continues to run to get people to the muster points.

T. Battiston said that emergencies are not often immediate and those who are transient or visiting will probably evacuate early, as they don't have any ties to Whistler i.e. own homes. This will resolve a portion of those who will need evacuating.

L. Wu asked if the hotels are able to inform guests not come, or if they are able to stop people booking?

T. Battiston said that would be a communication piece with hotels.

D. Phee asked is there an education plan for businesses with staff in an evacuation, and are we able to work with the chamber for this?

T. Battiston said we are currently in communications with only individuals, but perhaps a brochure to provide businesses would be beneficial.

B. Manson said that he is also recommending that any events that are coming to town need to submit an evacuation plan as part of their application.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

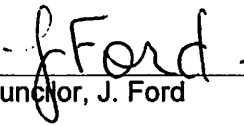
6. TERMINATION

Moved By RMOW Councilor, J. Ford

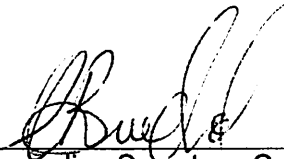
Seconded By RMOW General Manager
Corporate Services and Public
Safety, T. Battiston

That Emergency Planning Committee terminate the Regular Committee Meeting of April 30th 2024.

CARRIED



Councilor, J. Ford



Recording Secretary, C. Burford