



Professional Emergency Manager Advisory Board Meeting

MSP Headquarters
7150 Harris Drive, Dimondale, Michigan 48821
PEM-of-the-Year Room

Minutes – June 2, 2021

The regular meeting of the Professional Emergency Manager (PEM) Advisory Board (AB) was held on Wednesday, June 2, 2021, via *Microsoft Teams* (virtual).

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by the chair, Capt. Kevin Sweeney, commander of the Michigan State Police, Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division (MSP/EMHSD).

Roll call was taken, and the following members were present: Lt. Dave Oslund (Region 1), Mr. Chris Hobbs (Region 2), Ms. Jenifer Boyer (Region 3), Mr. Durk Dunham (Region 5), Ms. Liz Reimink (Region 6), Mr. Mike Kasper (Region 8), and Mr. Greg Williams (MEMA).

MSP/EMHSD staff members present were Ms. Danica Frederick, Mr. Jack Calhoun, and Ms. Diane Laban.

Opening Comments

Captain Sweeney welcomed Ms. Liz Reimink as the new Board member representing Region 6. Ms. Reimink received her PEM designation in 2008. She enjoys instructing and hopes to contribute to improving the PEM Program for future emergency managers.

Approval of Agenda

Lt. Oslund moved to approve the June 2, 2021, agenda. Motion was supported by Mr. Hobbs. Agenda was approved as presented.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Hobbs moved to approve the April 15, 2021, minutes. Motion was supported by Ms. Reimink. Minutes were approved as presented.

Upcoming Courses

Ms. Frederick reported the upcoming virtual HSEEP course is full. Another HSEEP course is scheduled for July 19 and 20. Two G-191 virtual courses are scheduled for June 18 and July 27. An ICS 300 course will be held July 13-15. Currently, all courses are conducted remotely, but approval is being sought to begin offering in-person classes in summer and early fall. Captain Sweeney noted that EMHSD staff are scheduled to return to the worksite in mid-July, and plans are being drafted for what that will entail.

PEM Courses – Committee Report

Captain Sweeney reported the PEM Program Committee has met on two occasions, and he will join the third meeting at 1:30 p.m. today to discuss issues regarding PEM certification. Captain Sweeney stated in reviewing the PEM Manual, it reads, "The Michigan Professional Emergency Manager (PEM) Program provides the knowledge and skills for emergency managers in the state of Michigan to effectively prevent, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of disasters in their communities." This certification does not include advanced training but provides the tools and knowledge for emergency managers (EMs) to have a base-level foundation to be effective in those five areas. In previous committee meetings, this led to valid discussions regarding how to assist those individuals who receive their PEM designation and then wish to seek advanced training in a particular area.

Captain Sweeney stated he hopes PEM Board members will agree with the criteria for the foundational-level program. After that, courses already in place can be reviewed to determine which topics they cover. If the PEM Program becomes shorter or longer in the process, that is okay provided goals and objectives meet the five areas needed in Michigan. He asked PEM Program Committee members to provide their thoughts.

Ms. Boyer posed the question that if the course subject matter can be accomplished in an hour or two of instruction, why hold a two-day course on the topic. She suggested goals and objectives for the courses be identified and include syllabuses and outlines.

Ms. Reimink believes the PEM Program provides a good foundation but recognizes it would be impossible to achieve the knowledge that is acquired after years of working as an EM. In her view, the PEM designation indicates a person is competent enough to perform as an EM, and the number of in-person classes offered was sufficient to learn who the EM experts were at the state level and in other jurisdictions.

Mr. Kasper stated the core knowledge written years ago was based on a shortened, basic PEM academy. He is concerned about reducing courses to the point that key elements are missing but believes this is an opportunity to make the PEM Program good.

Mr. Hobbs indicated there are items that could be discussed later, as his perspective of the core settings might be of a different nature than some members of the PEM Board and PEM Committee.

Ms. Frederick indicated that during the initial meeting, members made the decision to review PEM courses one by one. They requested a breakdown of each course, which can be done. Ms. Frederick has added Mr. Matt Schnepf and Mr. Tom Weber from EMHSD to offer expertise in their fields.

Captain Sweeney summarized that Public Act 390 mandates the Michigan State Police is required to set forth standards and requirements for training and professional development of emergency management coordinators in Michigan. After foundational-level courses are addressed, specialized areas could be developed for those who would like advanced expertise.

Roundtable

Lt. Oslund reported Michigan State University mass vaccination sites will be closing next week. He stated Region 1 has one member who is working on PEM certification. Discussions have taken place about combined training at a regional level, as they move back to working in person.

Mr. Hobbs reported vaccine sites in Region 2, specifically Macomb County, are winding down and moving toward specific locations. He stated multiple individuals in his office are seeking to complete their PEM certification and look forward to completing the last of their courses when they become available.

Ms. Boyer reported Region 3 is moving toward the recovery process in terms of COVID.

Ms. Reimink reported Region 6 is preparing for visitors to the lakeshore during summer months. During a recent Quarterly EM meeting, she addressed some of the questions discussed by the PEM Committee but received few comments. Ms. Reimink requested a current list of PEMs in Region 6, as she would like to seek feedback from them on what might be lacking in current PEM courses. Ms. Frederick indicated she could provide such a list from the database.

Mr. Kasper reported Region 8 finished their last mass vaccine clinic yesterday. He stated there are a few individuals interested in obtaining their PEM, but believes they are waiting for improvements to the PEM Program.

Mr. Williams had nothing to report.

Captain Sweeney addressed future PEM Board meeting locations and requested feedback from members regarding virtual versus in-person meetings. He offered that in-person meetings do not have to occur at MSP Headquarters and can be held at a central location.

There was brief discussion among Board members regarding the pros and cons for both in-person and virtual meetings. It was suggested in-person meetings coincide with PEM Program Committee meetings, as it would be beneficial to resume discussions directly after. It was also suggested to alternate scheduling of Board meetings between virtual and in-person. Captain Sweeney agreed with the suggestions and said it will depend on what Open Meetings Act provisions will ultimately allow.

Captain Sweeney stated further discussions regarding PEM Program courses will take place at today's 1:30 p.m. committee meeting, and all are welcome to join. He will ask Ms. Frederick to forward the appointment to anyone interested.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Adjournment

Ms. Boyer moved to adjourn the meeting. Motion was seconded by Mr. Williams. Meeting was adjourned at 10:42 a.m.