



## Professional Emergency Manager Advisory Board Meeting

Amway Grand Plaza Hotel  
187 Monroe, NW, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503  
Pearl Room

### Minutes – May 10, 2022

The regular meeting of the Professional Emergency Manager (PEM) Advisory Board (AB) was held on Tuesday, May 10, 2022, at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel.

The meeting was called to order at 10 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 Board members were present: Capt. Dave Oslund (Region 1), Ms. Donna Northern (Region 2), Ms. Jenifier Boyer (Region 3), Mr. Jeff Parsons (Region 5), Ms. Liz Reimink (Region 6), Mr. Gregg Bird (Region 7), Mr. Mike Kasper (Region 8), Mr. Ryan Wilkinson (MI-SME), and Mr. Greg Williams (MEMA).

MSP/EMHSD members present were Mr. Jack Calhoun, Ms. Jackie Hampton, and Ms. Diane Laban.

#### **Opening Comments**

Captain Sweeney welcomed two new members to the Board. Mr. Jeff Parsons will represent Region 5, and Mr. Gregg Bird will represent Region 7. Mr. Parsons stated he has been with Kalamazoo County Office of Emergency Management for three years and was in public health/emergency preparedness prior to that. Mr. Bird stated he has been with Grand Traverse County Emergency Management for about nine years and in the public safety field for 32 years.

#### **Approval of Agenda**

Mr. Williams made a motion to approve the May 10, 2022, meeting agenda. Motion was supported by Ms. Boyer. Agenda was approved as presented.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Captain Oslund made a motion to approve the March 23, 2022, minutes. Motion was supported by Ms. Boyer. Minutes were approved as presented.

#### **New PEM Committee Report**

Mr. Calhoun reported that he, Ms. Danica Frederick, Ms. Northern, and Ms. Reimink met to discuss potential changes to the PEM application process. It was recommended that individuals obtain a letter of recommendation from their supervisor when they apply to the PEM Program. The logic is that local emergency managers (EMs) may not know everyone within their jurisdiction or have contact with the organization the person is representing. They are looking at October 1, 2022, as a possible start date for this new process. Ms. Northern added that the letter of recommendation would come to the state with their application, and when the state sends the email of approval, that letter can be attached.

Mr. Calhoun clarified that local EMs are automatically accepted to the program if they apply. Captain Sweeney emphasized that individuals are allowed to take PEM classes without applying to the program.

Captain Sweeney stated that absent any objections from Board members, they will move forward with this new process. He requested Ms. Frederick update the PEM Program Manual to reflect the new procedure.

## **PEM Annual Refresher Conference**

Mr. Calhoun reported that he and Ms. Frederick met with Ms. Leslie Meyers and Mr. Williams regarding the possibility of hosting a PEM refresher during the annual Michigan Emergency Management Association (MEMA) Conference. They are leaning toward a four-hour time block as opposed to a full day. They identified and discussed potential topics to fill the time and make it worthwhile for attendees.

There was Board member discussion regarding travel, time constraints, reserving a conference room, and suggestions to record the PEM refresher. Captain Sweeney asked Mr. Calhoun to work with MEMA partners and continue to explore the possibility.

## **Upcoming Courses**

Mr. Calhoun announced they are hosting two G-191 courses. The first is on June 3 in Ludington, and there are currently 13 openings. The second is on July 8 in Bellaire with 18 openings currently. A Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) course will be held June 22-23 in Bellaire (currently eight openings) and July 27-28 in Marquette (currently 18 openings). A Public Information Officer (PIO) course is scheduled for June 7 and 8 in Ann Arbor. That class is full, with a wait list of four. A second PIO course will be held July 25 and 26 in Marquette (currently 14 openings). They will be hosting a Michigan Core Emergency Management Knowledge Requirements (MI-CEMKR) course on July 14 and 15. It includes a virtual option, which is also currently full.

Mr. Calhoun reported they conducted a PEM exam on April 14 that included two sessions. There were 36 individuals who took the exam, and 34 passed. The next exam will be August 12, and 23 individuals are currently enrolled.

Mr. Calhoun reported there are currently 362 active PEMs. According to MI-TRAIN, there are 1,129 individuals listed as "in progress" in the PEM Program.

Mr. Kasper suggested the possibility of holding a PEM exam in the Upper Peninsula (UP). Captain Sweeney indicated such a request could be accommodated and asked him to work directly with Mr. Calhoun.

## **PEM Program – PowerPoint Presentation**

Mr. Calhoun stated that he will email a copy of the PEM PowerPoint presentation to Board members. He explained that its contents were taken directly from the PEM Program Manual and include slide-by-slide instructions on how individuals apply to the program. Once they are accepted, pass the exam, and receive their designation, it outlines the renewal requirements as well. Mr. Calhoun stated the PowerPoint was designed for those who are unsure about the PEM Program. In addition, they have been discussing with exercise staff the possibility of taking the presentation into the regions in order to promote the program.

Board members discussed ways to promote the PEM Program and reach out to individuals who may not be attending county or regional meetings. Captain Sweeney agreed with suggestions to promote the program via meet-and-greets, conferences, etc., and particularly reaching those "boots on the ground" individuals.

Captain Sweeney recapped the following action items: 1) Mr. Calhoun will email the PEM PowerPoint to Board members and post it on MI-TRAIN. Board members will be given a week to respond with comments or suggestions prior to posting. 2) Mr. Calhoun will schedule a 30-minute training to include district coordinators, local EMs, and anyone interested in endorsing the PEM Program. 3) Board members will be provided with the final document of the PEM Strategic Plan, which includes updated goals and objectives. 4) Mr. Calhoun and Mr. Williams will work on logistics for a PEM refresher.

## **Roundtable**

Mr. Parsons reported the city of Kalamazoo reinstated their emergency management program and hired a new person. More information will be provided when received. Mr. Bob Kirk will retire on May 19. Mr. Parson looks forward to being of value to the PEM Board.

Ms. Reimink announced that Mr. Troy Maloney is the new Oceana County EM. They have requested that all counties in their region assist with an exercise in Mason County. She discussed the refresher component of the PEM Program Manual and asked if a specific definition for what constitutes a PEM credit could be reviewed. Captain Sweeney requested the topic be added to the next Board meeting agenda.

Ms. Northern reported they are still working with FEMA on the flood event from last June. They are planning for upcoming events to include the Grand Prix, fireworks, and North American Auto Show.

Mr. Bird commented on promoting the PEM Program and asked if there is a way to identify or receive a list of individuals who are interested in becoming a PEM. This would allow local EMs to reach out to them. He is especially interested in ways Michigan can become a leader in the emergency management discipline. Captain Sweeney remarked that he agrees and has emphasized with his staff and Board members the importance of promoting the professionalization of emergency management.

Ms. Boyer reported that in Midland the final report for the dam failure was released. There are still ongoing litigation and lawsuits. Long-term recovery is ongoing. The last four approvals have been over \$150,000. They are grateful for over \$5 million in donations received to support recovery. Ms. Boyer announced they are getting active shooter exercises going again, and local airports are conducting their three-year exercises this month.

Captain Oslund commented that the focus for PEM courses is typically the southern half of Michigan so he commends the Board for including partners in the UP and rural areas, as he believes it will strengthen the program and MEMA memberships throughout the state.

Mr. Kasper announced that Ms. Teresa Schwalbach, the Marquette County EM, retired earlier this year, and that Ms. Missy Robbins from Chippewa County is retiring June 3. Mr. Greg Postma is the new Chippewa County EM. He reported they had a Northern Exposure/Burning Acres exercise in the UP. All counties engaged in some capacity, and it was well received. The U.S. Coast Guard recently led Operation Straight Shield, an exercise involving an active shooter on a ferry boat. It involved seven successful boardings and transferring 40 patients off the boat. They did a mass casualty exercise with it as well. The exercises went well with many lessons learned.

Captain Sweeney remarked that EMHSD would like to schedule additional State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) tours for new emergency managers. It has been done twice and both were well received.

#### **Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

#### **Adjournment**

Mr. Kasper moved to adjourn the meeting. Motion was supported by Ms. Reimink. Meeting adjourned at 10:59 a.m.