

Warren County EPR/LEPC Committee
Meeting Minutes 10/27/2021

In Attendance

Tammie Delorenzo – Warren Co. Administrator’s Office
Laura Stebbins – Glens Falls Hospital
Ann Marie Mason – Warren County OES
Ashley Rivers – Warren County OES
Dr. Richard Leach – Warren County Public Health
Sandy LeBarron – Finch Paper
Dr. Ellis – NYS Ag & Markets
Robert Higgins - DEC
Chris Hanchett - Warren Co. DSS
Mike Tripodi – American Red Cross
Dan Durkee – Warren Co. Public Health
Don Stack-Warren County Public Health
Mike Herman-Ames Goldsmith
Thomas Iwinski-National Grid
Michael walker-Capital Region BOCES
Jay Armstrong
Ericka Albrecht
Corey DiLorenzo-NYDOH-Warren

The meeting was called order at 9:05 am. Dan Durkee gave a brief overview of the agenda items and provided the quarterly meeting dates for 2022 and let meeting participant know they could be found in the chat section or on the meeting agenda. Dan also informed participants that he and Ann Marie Mason had updated the email distribution list, but if any participating organization had any updates they wanted added to the email list to please send them to Dan Durkee via email.

Dan then turned the meeting over to Laura Stebbins – Glens Falls Hospital.

Laura Stebbins- GF Hospital Update

Hazard Vulnerability Assessment Review

Review of the Glens Falls Hospital 2022 Hazard Vulnerability Assessment (HVA) - for details about the HVA for Glens Falls Hospital contact Laura Stebbins.

Exercise

- NYSDOH plans to stage a Medical Response & Surge exercise (MRSE) among the hospitals and emergency response agencies per region. Our regional exercise is April 28th. I will send more information when available.
- Expect to restart monthly tabletops in May. Please let me know if there are any specific topics of interest.

Regional Healthcare Coalition Update

- Laura Stebbins continues as chair of the Capital District Pediatric Emergency Preparedness Work Group. Pediatric Emergency Preparedness Seminar in development for September.

Mass Fatality Plan

- The GFH morgue capacity has increased from 4 to 14.
- The Mass Fatality plan will need to be reviewed this year.

Ann Marie Mason WC OES –

LEPC Update

- Tier 2 reports coming
- Spoke about ICS 300 Course (see flyer sent with email)

Real Events

Ice Jams – No issues at this time, but will continue to monitor them as we move from winter to spring.

Spoke about University Games being held in 2023 which Gore Mountain will be used. Planning for large scale emergencies that could be associated with the event has begun with partner agencies.

Dan- Warren County Public Health updates

-spoke about COVID changes since January 1, 2022. Detail how State took over Contract Tracing, and issues dealing with that change. Spoke about how phone calls to our department have decreased with this change.

-spoke about the mask mandate changes, court ruled against Governor, and an injunction was issued to keep mandate in place. Will update when we get more information.

-Dr. Leach ask about Vaccine numbers, Dan stated to check NY State Website.

Laura Stebbins mentioned that Regional Emergency Preparedness Exercise will be April 28th. Subject Is Communicable Disease Outbreak, Hospital will pick the start time. Information to be sent soon to agencies that normally participate in the regional exercises.

-Dan asked for suggestions for meeting topics or speakers. Send emails with ideas

Member Updates

Christian Hanchett, Warren County Social Services – Staffing shortages were a little bit of an issue due to small clusters of COVID among staff, but things seem to be quieting down a bit. He asked about when to get Booster after getting COVID. Dan stated to talk to your Doctor, but there is no longer a delay period as long as symptoms have resolved or if asymptomatic you have been released from quarantine. Staff can call the Public Health office if they have other questions. Chris provided information about HEAP and emergency funding for the public. He said there has been extra money made available for people that need HEAP assistance.

Dr. Richard Leach – Doctor Leach talked about the COVID 19 Omicron Variant fading, however a new variant BA 2 is being closely monitored and has been found in the US. This variant seems more transmissible, but can't say if it is more dangerous. It's in 40 countries, 100 cases in USA. Have to see where it goes. Discussed getting booster shot after getting COVID, and he recommended someone wait a month or two if they were very sick to wait to allow the immune system time to settle down. If you had no symptoms or very mild symptoms it is probably okay. Check with your doctor if you have concerns. Current vaccines (3 does) is doing well against Omicron variant according to data at limiting the number and severity of infections. Spoke about disinformation and the need for public health to do a better job of combatting it. Might do another Letter to Editor. Public Health needs to do a better job

getting information out and possibly use story telling which might be helpful to the public instead of just science.

Mike Tripodi American Red Cross – spoke about spike in Home fires response. He stated that many of the fires have been linked to an increase in the use of space heaters and other heating sources during the cold weather in January. In person volunteers have increased and as of Jan. 1, all need to be fully vaccinated to do in person volunteering. Unvaccinated volunteers are restricted to virtual volunteer roles only. Offered Red Cross help for World University Games planning and onsite if needed.

Robert Higgins, NYS DEC – Spoke about Ice on Lake George and starting this weekend will be on the Lake to check Ice for various issues. The Winter Carnival starts next month and expects huge crowds for that and Ice Castles. DEC is also monitoring for Avian Influenza in wild water fowl because it has been identified in eastern Canada and the waterfowl migrate through the State of New York.

Mike Walker- Capital Region BOCES- stated he was new to the position and was working on staffing plan for the region. Dealing with the changes of the Mask Mandates.

Thomas Iwinski-National Grid-stated he was the new Community Customer Manager for National Grid. Talked about Weather and how the company is taking a proactive approach. Spoke about this weekend Northeastern and how they are moving employees and equipment around to be ready. Spoke about the new rate increase and the monthly bills will be more. Reach out for help if you need it. If you know of anyone who has trouble affording their utility bills they have community specialists to assist in accessing HEAP and other assistance.

Erica Albrecht Northern GI – Introduced herself as the new representative for Northern GI and stated she would now be attending the meetings.

Corey DiLorenzo-NYDOH-Warren -Spoke about food inspections being completed. There has been an increase the number of inspections occurring. The office staff has been visiting places inspecting fire alarms and food safety.

Dr. Ellis – NYS Ag & Markets – Dr. Ellis spoke about COVID and its impact on animals including mink, ferrets and also domestic animals including dogs and cats. He said some types are animals are culled to stop the spread of COVID. It seems like dogs and cats may carry COVID in their nasal passages, but it does not seem to spread to humans. He then discussed the Asian swine flu and its continued impacts overseas and the need to stay vigilant in the States. He said the concern would be if it got into the wild pig populations and how quickly it could get into large farms that raise pigs for food. The way to try and contain Asian Swine flu is to cull large populations of pigs. Currently it does not seem to pose a direct threat to human health, but it is important to monitor in case it mutates and becomes easily transmissible to humans. This has not happened yet. Dr. Ellis responded to a question from Dr. Leach about COVID-19 possible infecting the bat population in New York. He said he was not aware of any issues with the brown bat population being infected with COVID at this time, but that he was not aware of any active surveillance. He asked Robert Higgins from NYSDEC if he had seen or heard anything regarding COVID in bats in New York. Robert stated he had not.

John Charlton DHS? - (unsure company or organization)

-Thank you- Survey Monkey help

-CERT agency – meeting 2021

-EPA established in 2018 Tier 2 program changes. More information to follow.

Dan closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their time and reminding them that next meeting has been scheduled for April 27, 2022.

The meeting adjourned at 10:35am.

Future Meeting dates:

April 27th, 9:00am July 27th, 9:00am October 26th, 9:00am

Minutes Submitted by

Dan Durkee, Co-Chair
Warren County EPR/LEPC Committee
11/9/2021