

**Sonoma County Operational Area  
Emergency Council**



**Thursday, December 8, 2022**

10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

Via Zoom

**MEETING MINUTES – Approved 7.13.23**

**Attendance – Council Members**

Supervisor David Rabbit	County CAO Sheryl Bratton	Christopher Godley, Department of Emergency Management (DEM)
Steve Akre, Sonoma Valley Fire	Neil Bregman, City of Santa Rosa	Missy Brunetta, Sonoma State University
Johannes Hovevrtsz, Director, Public Infrastructure	Chief Charles Funkhouser, United States Coast Guard	Grant Davis, Sonoma County Water Agency
Todd Derum, Member-at-large	Sarah Finnigan, Calif. Office of Emergency Services	Tina Rivera, Director of Health Services
Dr. Sundari Mase, Public Health Officer	David Hotchkiss, PGE	Janell Crane, Deputy Human Resources Director
Jonathan Kajeckas, Information Services Project Manager	Tennis Wick, Director Permit Sonoma	Erin Tarkhanian, Sonoma County Office of Education
Ben Nicholls, Cal Fire	Paula Glodowski-Valla, Sonoma County HSD	Leland Montell, ARC

**Non-Council Members in Attendance**

Jeff DuVall, Deputy Director, DEM	Dagny Thomas, DEM	Sam Wallis, DEM
Nancy Brown, DEM	Andrew Smith, Agricultural Commissioner	Dr. Kismet Baldwin- Santana, Deputy Public Health Officer
Tiffany Coe, DEM	Chris Angle, DEM	Jorge Rodriguez, DEM
Steven Hancock – Water Agency	Tanya Narath, RCPA	Barbara Lee, Climate Action and Resilience Group

Carly Cabrera, So. Co. PIO	Brittany Miller, City of Santa Rosa	Kendall Newman, Sonoma State University
James Cooper, DEM	Jamie Bloom, Sonoma County HR	Jeanette Pantoja (COAD)
Sonja Moug, DEM	Sheri Lang, DEM	Susanne Smith, Regional Climate Protection Agency
Phone in – 707 765 7765	Phone in – 707 800 5578	Phone in – 707 780 7153

**I. Call to Order**

- a. Meeting called to order by Chris Godley @ 10:02 A.M.
- b. Supervisor Rabbit welcomed everyone to the meeting, spoke briefly about the background of the Council and asked Chris Godley to perform roll call.

**II. Roll Call/Establish Quorum / Approve Agenda**

- a. Christopher Godley conducted verbal and visual roll call. Quorum achieved with 23 members of the Council in attendance.
- b. Agenda approved by all present with no changes.

Ayes: 23      Nays: 0

**III. Approve Minutes**

The last Council meeting was May 2022. Meeting minutes were provided in the meeting package that was presented to all Council members. Tennis Wick moved to accept the minutes as written, Sheryl Bratton seconded. Motion passed with the following votes:

Ayes: 23      Nays: 0

**IV. Old Business**

- a. **Drought:** Jeff DuVall from the Department of Emergency Management gave an update to the drought status:
  - i. As of December 1, 2022, Lake Sonoma is at 39.7% capacity, Lake Mendocino is at 62% of capacity.
  - ii. 26.16% of the County is at the Extreme Drought Level
  - iii. The National Weather Service predicts a 76% chance that we will continue with La Nina weather conditions through the winter (Dec – Feb 2023), with a possibility of returning to neutral between Feb and April of 2023.

- iv. The Sonoma County Interagency Task Force will be ramping up after the first of the year and has six working groups:
  - 1. Water Coordination, 2. Community Governmental Affairs & Grants, 3. Impact Assessment, 4. Contingency Planning, 5. Public engagement and Education, 6. SB552 – Small System Providers.

**b. County Agriculture Access Verification Card Program:** Ag Commissioner Andrew Smith spoke to the newly implemented program:

- i. Applicants eligible to apply for a card are Commercial Agriculture Producers and their full-time employees. The employees must be employed for at least 6 months prior to applying for the card. Employers must provide a signed verification of employment. Applicants must first complete a fire safety course that has been accredited through the Sheriffs' Department. The application for an Access Verification Card is available through the Department of Agriculture/Weights & Measures Website. The issued card expires 42 months after the accredited safety course is completed.
- ii. During a declared emergency, cardholder must keep the card in their possession at all times and must present the card to law enforcement at all check points and any time law enforcement requests to see the card.
- iii. Application is available in English and Spanish and allows a digital signature.
- iv. There is an Ag Department staff member assigned to the website who monitors the applications and also receives notifications whenever a new application is received.
- v. The Ag Department is working closely with the UC Cooperative Extension to verify any livestock producers who may not be known to the Ag Dept.
- vi. To date (12.02.22) 37 applications have been received, 19 issued, with the remainder being processed.

**V. New Business**

- a. Public Health Updates:** Dr Sundari Mase gave a presentation on the current state of Covid-19. Covid numbers were doing well until 4-6 weeks ago, which is also a state-wide trend. We currently have 14.3 cases per 100,000. Most likely can be attributed to holidays, travel, etc. We have had 24 Covid deaths in the county since June.
- i. The Health Department is performing wastewater surveillance in the cities of Santa Rosa and Petaluma. This surveillance helps to show trends and can detect variants of viruses.
  - ii. Variants BA.4 and BA.5 are currently the most common, with BF and BQ also being present. These are all variants of Omicron.
  - iii. Earlier increases in influenza and RSV can be severe to the very old and the very young. RSV is decreasing while influenza is increasing.
  - iv. As of 12.07.22 there are 48 people hospitalized due to influenza, 37 for Covid, and 2 people with both diseases.

- v. Previous years' mitigation efforts (masks, distancing, isolating) had worked to keep numbers down, but the reduction of those efforts have translated to increased numbers.
- vi. One factor used by the State to determine health in the County is Ambulance Off-load times. Ideally a patient taken by ambulance to a hospital would receive care within 20 minutes 90% of the time. Sonoma County currently stands at 27 minutes. This is due in part to the increase in respiratory illness.
- vii. The Bivalent Booster is available and currently 25.9 % of the eligible population in Sonoma County has received it. This is better than the state percentage of 18.3. Unfortunately, there is a disparity across ethnicities in our county, which the Public Health Department is focusing on and is trying to increase the participation for all groups.

Chris Godley asked about masking and what the outlook is for masking mandates:

Dr. Mase replied that there is currently no appetite for masking mandates, however, Sonoma County has now moved into the Medium Community Level for transmissions, so masking is recommended in indoor public settings especially if the person is vulnerable for any reason, or lives with a health-vulnerable person.

Supervisor Rabbit asked about influenza numbers:

Dr. Mase replied that current numbers are about the same as 2017 which is considerably higher than 2018 or 2019.9, Influenza, and RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus)

**b. City of Santa Rosa Emergency Management Program:**

Neil Bregman of the City of Santa Rosa, presented on the many changes and implementations that the city has made in recent years to improve emergency communications and services for the residents of the City of Santa Rosa. Those efforts include, but are not limited to:

- i. 2 additional Staff Members; Deputy Emergency Manager and Community Outreach personnel
- ii. Distribution of thousands of NOAA radios to residents via grants,
- iii. Evacuation zone maps that include travel routes for individual neighborhoods
- iv. Alert & Warning Improvements
- v. Shelter Capacity training and supplies
- vi. Evacuation exercises with residents
- vii. Implementation of Hi-Lo sirens on emergency personnel vehicles
- viii. Revision and updates of the EOP, playbooks, and SOP's

**c. Catastrophic Drought/Flood Project**

Christopher Godley spoke briefly to the Board approval for funding that allows the creation of a partnership between Sonoma County Department of Emergency Management and the Water Agency to address the long-term effects of climate change in direct relation to Drought and Flooding. They will form a working group which hopes to address many topics including mitigation, emergency planning, response, and community preparedness. The working group is seeking participants from other agencies and welcomes input and contact information for people who are interested in being part of this working group. The group will commence their efforts after the first of the year.

**d. Coordination of Risk Reduction Efforts:**

- i. Christopher Godley summarized the efforts of various County Departments and public partners that are working to mitigate efforts pertaining to Wildfire, Flood, Earthquake, and Climate Change. The various jurisdictions are expending tens of millions of dollars in their respective specialties to make improvements. There are focuses on Infrastructure, Home Hardening, Resiliency, Social Networks, Water System Resiliency; just to name a few.
- ii. **Susanne Smith of the Regional Climate Protection Agency** spoke briefly about their organization that includes members from Boards of cities and counties. Their desire is to explore a revenue measure on climate change. They are working on a climate mobilization strategy that will include Transportation, Buildings, and Land & Water. They are in the early stages of planning, but will focus on mitigation, adaptation, and resilience. She will inform Director Godley of their next meeting and will include information that to allow attendance by anyone interested.
- iii. **Steve Akre, Fire Chiefs Association**, discussed efforts of the Fire Districts and multiple cities and agencies that are working on defensible space, vegetation management, and prescribed burns as part of the combined efforts throughout the county. They are hoping to provide a high level of protection and wildfire defense. There has been coordination of efforts with several agencies, cities and private groups participating.
- iv. **Barbara Lee, Climate Action and Resilience Group**, spoke to her groups' actions to improve fire resilience. Amongst other things, they are working to develop a pilot program with insurance agencies to align incentives from fire protection/mitigation grants with factors of risk reductions that insurance companies may accept as basis to either reconsider an insurance policy rejection, or reduction in cost of an insurance policy. They are hoping to eventually expand the program to whole neighborhoods to help extend protections and subsequently provide services.
- v. **Tennis Wick, Permit Sonoma**, relayed information to the Council that they had recently had the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Community grant approved by the President. They are now moving forward and hiring staff to administer that

grant. They also have the Community Wildfire Protection plan out for public review and have been receiving very good feedback. That plan will be finalized in 2023 this will be the guiding policy for the entire county and will be a multi-year implementation process. They have also been conducting vegetation management inspections with Fire partners and are seeing progress in many of the most fire prone areas of the county.

- vi. **Steven Hancock, Sonoma Water**, discussed the Water Agency's assessment and vulnerability studies, and their many projects focusing on various topics such as Resilience and Mitigation. The Water Agency will be adding a multitude of projects in the near future
- vii. **Ben Nicholls, CalFire**, discussed efforts to perform prescribed burns to create defensible space and that they are transitioning to pile burning and strategic fuel breaks.
- viii. **Christopher Godley, DEM**, summarized this section and noted that there is a perceived interest from many folks to continue this discussion. He suggested that folks could discuss informally or create a working group, possibly within the Emergency Council, with DEM providing administrative support. Further action to be determined.

#### **e. Emergency Council Membership Revisions**

**Christopher Godley, DEM** discussed potential revisions to the Emergency Council bylaws as the county has merged General Services into Transportation and Public Works, creating the new Department of Public Infrastructure. Since there must be a revision to acknowledge this change, he would also propose making the following revisions:

- i. Remove General Services and TPW, migrate to PI
- ii. Revise terms of service for the representative of: Utilities, Schools, Member at large from 1 year to 4 years.
- iii. Remove two State agencies (California National Guard and California Highway Patrol), leaving CalOES and CalFire

These changes will reduce the core members to 15 which should make it easier to establish a quorum.

No questions or suggestions from the members of the Council, so Director Godley will proceed with the process of making the revisions.

## **VI. Continuing Business**

### **a. Community Preparedness**

Dr. Nancy Brown provided a brief summation of the years' successes:

- i. Partnered with 180 varied community groups
- ii. 70 Public Engagement opportunities/events
- iii. Connected with 4284 Community Members

- iv. Reached 500,000 residents via social media. More engagement on social media from the Spanish community than English
- v. New grant received for the upcoming year which will provide for television broadcasts and radio shows in both Spanish and English. This will help reach people who are not digitally engaged or do not have internet access

**b. Operational Area Exercises and Training:**

**Jeff DuVall, DEM,** provided an update on the status of existing annexes.

- i. There have been updates to the Earthquake, Tsunami, Terrorism/Active Shooter, Extreme Heat (converting to Extreme Temperature), and Drought. These annexes have been updated as to policies and procedures, staff roles, and all other pertinent updates.
- ii. The update to the Tsunami Annex includes updates to the Tsunami Hazard mapping, which shows that Sonoma County has increased areas of vulnerability. The new maps are more accurate and easier to read.
- i. The Terrorism and Extreme Heat Annexes will be out for comments after the first of the year.
- i. DEM will be working with an outside vendor to develop the Drought Annex. Work will start after the first of the year.

**c. Exercises and Training**

**Jeff DuVall, DEM,** spoke to upcoming training opportunities. Currently scheduled are:

- i. 12.14.22 – Community Based Water Resiliency Workshop
- ii. 02.2023 – EOC Specific Training will start
- iii. 02.2023 – Operational Area Tabletop Earthquake Exercise
- iv. 02.29.23 – 03.30.23 – Operational Area Full Scale Alert & Warning Exercise
- v. 05.2023 – Operational Area Wildfire/Power Shutoff and Heat Event Workshop
- vi. TBD – Advanced PIO and CSTI Evacuation and Re-Entry Planning

Regular trainings allow staff to work on situations in a low stress environment and allows them to work through scenarios that will benefit the community during times of disaster. DEM will continue to provide a wide variety of training opportunities throughout the year.

**d. Grants: Sheri Lang, DEM,** Provided an overview of the most recent grant procurements:

- a. Training: \$75,000 utilized to provide conference participation to various Emergency personnel.
- b. Generators: \$275,000.00 utilized to purchase generators to benefit the Operational Area.

- c. Radios: \$353,000.00 used to purchase radios for several Law Enforcement departments
- d. Mass Care & Shelter Supplies: \$79,000.00 used to purchase supplies
- e. There are 7 current grants that total close to \$5 Million dollars. Those dollars are supporting multiple programs in the Operational Area.
- f. There are 5 pending grants that total over \$9 Million dollars that will be used to benefit the Operational Area.

**e. Public comment:** There were no comments or emails.

**f. Member Announcements:**

- a. Sarah Finnigan of CalOES announced that the State has started the process to review all Counties Emergency Operations Plan. The focus of the review is new legislation that is required to be part of the EOP. Sonoma County was one of the first ten to be reviewed. The review for Sonoma County has been completed and the feedback is in the process of being consolidated, but initial reports show that our county did a great job and has passed the review.
- b. Christopher Godley noted that today is CAO Sheryl Bratton's last Emergency Council meeting as she has resigned her position with the County of Sonoma. Chris described the challenges and triumphs that Ms. Bratton experienced during her tenure as CAO and thanked her for her service.
- c. Supervisor Rabbit echoed the thanks and appreciation of CAO Bratton. Expressed that he feels the County is much better off now than five years ago and looks forward to what is next.

**g.** Meeting adjourned at 11:42 with no formal move to adjourn.

**h.** Next meeting date to be determined.

Adjourned at 11:42 A.M.



## Attachment 1: Sonoma County Emergency Council Background

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Authority Established by Sonoma County Municipal Code (Chapter 10, Section 10-7).  
Authorized under California Government Code (Title 2, Division 1, Chapter 7, Article 10).

### Missions

1. Study, revise and recommend to the Board of Supervisors for adoption, the County/Operational Area Emergency Plan
2. Review and recommend action upon all proposed mutual aid agreements
3. Review and recommend adoption of ordinances, resolutions, and rules/regulations as may be necessary to implement the plan or mutual aid agreements.
4. Annually review goals and objectives for the county/operational area.
5. May recommend calling and conducting test exercises.
6. Approve any of county/operational area funding distribution proposals (grants) as required by CalOES.
7. Serve as Operational Area Citizen Corps Council (grant requirement)

### Membership

Primarily local government agency representatives with some community organization participation (up to 33 potential members total).

### Officers

The Chair of Board Supervisors serves as ex officio Chair. In their absence, the County Administrator (in their role as the County Director of Emergency Services) to serve. A member of the Department of Emergency Management serves as ex officio Secretary.

### By-laws

None. County Code states: majority vote; quorum to conduct business is calculated at the time of the meeting based on the number of representatives appointed; may appoint committees.

### Meeting Schedule

At least semiannually.

## Attachment 2: Sonoma County Emergency Council Membership

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1. The chair of the board of supervisors of the county
2. The director or designee (County Administrator)
3. The County director of the department of emergency services or designee
4. The County sheriff or designee
5. The County director of general services or designee
6. The County director of information systems or designee
7. The County director of the department of health services or designee
8. The County director of human resources or designee
9. The County director of human services or designee
10. The County director of permit and resource management department or designee
11. The County director of the department of transportation and public works or designee
12. The general manager of the Sonoma County water agency or designee
13. The Regional Manager of Coast Valleys EMS agency or designee
14. One (1) representative from each of the incorporated cities within the County, appointed from time to time by the respective city councils
23. One (1) member representing the public utilities within the County engaged in the transmission of power, gas, telephonic or telegraphic communications or other similar utility, appointed annually by the chair of the emergency council
24. One (1) member representing the public schools in the County appointed annually by the Sonoma County superintendent of schools
25. One (1) member representing the general public appointed annually by the chair of the emergency council
26. One (1) member representing the local chapter of the American Red Cross
27. One (1) representative from the California National Guard
28. One (1) representative from the U.S. Coast Guard Two Rock Training Center
29. One (1) representative from each specific state agency utilized in County's emergency response including, but not limited to, California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection (Cal- Fire), California Highway Patrol (CHP), and California Office of Emergency Services (OES)
32. One (1) representative from any signatory party of the Operational Area Agreement in force, not previously identified herewithin