



# Emergency Shelter Regional Response Meeting Minutes

January 10, 2020  
Noon to 1:30 pm  
GPCOG, 970 Baxter Boulevard, Portland

## In Attendance:

Name	Affiliation
Matt Sturgis	Cape Elizabeth
Jerre Bryant	Westbrook
Jeremy Gabrielson	Cape Elizabeth
Scott Morelli	South Portland
Claude Morgan	South Portland
Sue Henderson	South Portland
Joe Chappell	Cumberland County Emergency Management Agency
Emily Kaster	Cumberland County Emergency Management Agency
Kristine Jenkins	Maine Center for Disease Control
<b>For GPCOG:</b>	Kristina Egan Chris Hall

## 1. Welcome and introductions.

Chris Hall called the meeting to order at 12:05 pm and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

## 2. Review meeting purposes.

Kristina Egan and Chris Hall provided background and context for the meeting. The Metro Regional Coalition’s (MRC) December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019 meeting included a detailed discussion of the region’s capacity to respond to situations where emergency shelter capacity in Portland is exceeded. The MRC looked at last summer’s Expo crisis and discussed how the region might plan for a similar problem in the future.

The Cumberland County Emergency Management Agency (CCEMA) was identified as a key partner in any discussion of regional emergency shelter planning. Additionally, CCEMA is already working on expanding local emergency shelter capacity.

Hall said that today’s meeting is intended to bring together municipal and county partners to discuss how we can best design and implement supplementary emergency shelter capacity at the local level and use that expanded local capacity as the basis for a mutual aid agreement throughout the region.

### **3. Presentation on expanding local emergency shelter capacity.**

CEEMA's Director Joe Chappell and Deputy Director Emily Kaster discussed the need for additional local emergency shelter capacity, as well as the planning process for expanding local shelter capacity.

Chappell introduced CEEMA, outlining its central role in coordinating emergency response within the County. He noted that his agency had been involved in the Expo Crisis over the summer and emphasized CEEMA's continuing commitment to help manage emergencies including the need for temporary emergency housing in the months after a need arises.

Members shared their views and perspectives on the Expo Crisis and their hope for a more pre-planned, less ad hoc response to any future emergency housing crisis, no matter how it comes about.

Chappell explained CEEMA's common structure for different circumstances, allowing the agency to engage different parts of the County and different types of networks in response to the unique aspects of any given emergency. He noted that CEEMA is constantly growing its network of partners, for example in the faith community, to expand the County's capacity to respond to emergencies.

Chappell discussed the tradition role of the American Red Cross in providing emergency shelter, and how the Red Cross's capacity is reduced due to various factors. As a result, Chappell said it was more important than ever that local municipalities develop shelter capacity of their own and the ability to share it in mutual aid when necessary.

### **4. Local shelter inventory.**

With input from members Chappell outlined all the aspects of providing temporary emergency shelter and discussed each one:

- Location – where are people going to stay? Do we have the appropriate building(s)? There are many structural and logistical requirements for a building to qualify as a shelter site.
- Staffing – who will staff the shelter? Volunteers need to be vetted (background checked), trained and scheduled. Municipal staff often have conflicting duties.
- Costs – who will pay for the costs of the shelter? Are expenditures being tracked for possible reimbursement? Who is managing procurement?
- Resources – where are consumables coming from (food, diapers, etc.)? And where will durable equipment (cots, etc.) come from?
- Security – who is maintaining security and how is that being managed?
- Transportation – who is providing transportation to people in the shelter and how is that being managed?

- Donations – how are donations being solicited, managed and used?
- Support Services – how are support services (legal, medical, etc.) being provided and managed? Are special support services (like translators for non-English speakers) being managed?
- Sanitation – are sanitation matters being identified and addressed to prevent disease?
- Infection control – are infection control measures in place and effective?
- Communications – who is responsible for communications, including message development and effective transmission of messages to the public?

Chappell emphasized that the answers to all these questions, and others, should be included in the elements of a plan developed by individual to ensure that individual communities can respond to the need for emergency shelter in an efficient, effective way.

CEEMA is ready and able to help individual municipalities create and improve their emergency shelter plans. The agency is also happy to help Metro Regional Coalition communities draft a mutual aid agreement for regional emergency shelter support based on individual municipal plans.

In response to questions Chappell noted that a few municipalities in the County are ready today to manage an emergency shelter on their own. He also noted that national best practices don't really exist for local shelter needs in ways that align with Maine communities.

## **5. Next steps – inventory and planning.**

Members agreed that MRC communities should build municipal and regional capacity to manage any emergency shelter scenario, and particularly those where FEMA reimbursement is not available.

In order to reach that goal Joe Chappell agreed to help MRC communities inventory their assets. As a next step Chappell will share inventory materials with GPCOG staff – those materials will be sent to all MRC members, and if they wish municipal managers will be able to work with their local emergency management directors and CEEMA to complete the inventory process for their community.

After the inventories are done Chappell and the staff at CEEMA will help MRC municipalities draft individual emergency shelter plans as well as mutual aid agreements for temporary emergency shelter situations.

The group agreed to meet again in two months to assess progress, identify any difficulties and refocus on remaining goals.

## **6. Adjourn.**

Chris Hall thanked everyone for their time and adjourned the meeting at 1:28 pm.