



# NORTHEAST HOMELAND SECURITY REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

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## Regional Cache Committee Meeting

### Minutes

*September 9, 2021*

*10:00am*

[Zoom Link](#)

*Meeting ID: 960 9578 3347*

*Passcode: 084331*

*Call In: 646 876 9923*

### **Call to Order**

- Chair J. Sanchez called the September 9, 2021 meeting to order at 10:03am.

### **Approval of Minutes from the June 3, 2021 Meeting**

MOTION put forth by P. Cohen.

- Approve the June 3, 2021 meeting minutes.
  - Seconded by Chief J. Gilliland
  - In Favor: J. Brickett, P. Cohen, M. Foster, Chief J. Gilliland, H. Tecce, J. Rousseau, M. Valenti.
  - Opposed: None.
  - Abstain: None
- The motion passed

**Chair J. Sanchez welcomed Rosemary Volinski, a new Program Manager for NERAC.**

### **FEMA & EOPSS Review of Cache Fee Structure**

- Questions from the committee were provided to EOPSS ahead of this discussion:
  - 2 CFR 200.307 "encourages" non-federal entities to earn income to defray program costs. Why would anyone want to discourage this very successful program?
  - Why can't the cache sites invest income generated through the fees to cover operational program costs?
  - What would we need to do to resume charging and using cache fees?
  - Can we generate fees from older equipment that FEMA no longer has an interest in, once it is beyond the appropriate timeframe?
- EOPSS staff informed the Committee that as of last week, FEMA has not decided on what will happen with the funds that are currently in the cache accounts.
  - As background, upon FEMA review of 2 large purchases that were requested utilizing cache fees, FEMA staff determined the current balances of the cache site accounts were too high. The freeze of the accounts then ensued with FEMA explaining that fees were originally intended to be used for maintenance costs



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only and not labor and that cache account balances were supposed to be minimal. Questions arose about the qualifications and certifications of these employees on the payroll.

- The cache sites have been reporting their fee income and related cache site expenses quarterly to MAPC who in turn passed the reports on to EOPSS. There have been policies approved regarding the spending of cache fees to ensure accountability and spend down of these funds. These policies were created with the intent to utilize the funds for maintenance costs related to keep the cache sites operational. These costs included both labor and non-labor expenses, as there was no guidance received that indicated labor costs were not allowable.
- FEMA tasked EOPSS with developing a policy for program income for the Commonwealth. EOPSS determined that they do not have the capacity to govern a program income policy across the Commonwealth that will apply to all of the Federal funding streams they receive and it is because of this that program income will not be allowed. Only 2 states in the country allow program income. The development of this policy will take time as it will be statewide and need legal review.
- Going forward, the cache fee system that NERAC had in place will not be allowed.
- The following concerns/points were presented regarding the elimination of the cache fee system:
  - The fees provide an important incentive for borrowers to return equipment in a timely manner, so that it is available at the cache sites for use in emergencies.
  - Perhaps there is a possibility to charge fees only for items FEMA no longer has an interest in because they were purchased via a grant that close 7+ years ago.
  - Large community events such as the Topsfield Fair and Salem Haunted Happenings rely on numerous pieces of cache equipment. Without cache fees, NERAC would need to fund equipment maintenance related to the borrowing of these items.
  - Communities only pay .1% of the value of the equipment. If they are not getting equipment from a cache site, then they must go to other rental companies charging much higher rates.
  - NERAC may not be able to buy new equipment since the Council will be using grant funding to maintain old equipment.
- EOPSS staff offered committee members the opportunity to provide feedback during the program income policy development process. Staff would also like to visit each of the 3 sites to better understand how they run and discuss any challenges they are having with their program. EOPSS will work to ensure the program is adhering to all grant requirements and will be supportive as we move forward together to sustain this successful program.

## **Budget Update**

- The Committee discussed that FFY19 Line Item L. 12 Cache Site Maintenance is over-allocated by \$2,086.46.

MOTION put forth by Chief J. Gilliland



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- Reduce the allocation for FFY19 Line Item L.10 Trailer for 30 KW Generator by \$2,086.46 (bringing it to \$2,467.01), since this project's funding is split between FFY19 and FFY21 and increase the funding for FFY19 Line Item L. 12 Cache Site Maintenance by \$2,086.46.
- Seconded by H. Tecce
  - In Favor: J. Brickett, M. Foster, Chief J. Gilliland, H. Tecce, M. Valenti.
  - Opposed: None.
  - Abstain: None.
- The motion passed

## **Project Updates**

### *FFY19 Beverly Medical Gator Trailer*

- The trailer has been delivered and the project is closed.

### *FFY19 Portable AM Radio Station Cover*

- The cover has been delivered and the project is closed.

### *FFY20 Portable Message Boards*

- The PJ was submitted and EOPSS approval was received, but an amendment has been submitted to update which cache sites will be receiving the total of 3 message boards (1 to Beverly, 2 to Framingham, 0 to Lexington).
- MAPC is confirming specifications with M. Foster and will issue an IFB combined with the procurement of the 500KW Generator.

### *FFY20 500KW Generator*

- The PJ was submitted and EOPSS approval has been received.
- MAPC is confirming specifications with M. Foster and will issue an IFB combined with the procurement of the Portable Message Boards.

### *FFY20 Portable Vehicle Barricades*

- Since this project was deemed a lower priority than the Portable Message Boards and 500KW Generator, we are holding off on the procurement until we see what the pricing comes in at for the prioritized items in case they are over budget and additional funding needs to be allocated.

## **New/Old Business**

### *Disposal of Surveillance Cameras to Beverly*

- The Full NERAC Council voted in favor of disposing the cameras to the City of Beverly, at the City's request.
- MAPC is working to find a company to provide a formal appraisal of the cameras so a disposition request letter can be sent to EOPSS.

### *Cache Fee System*

- Based on the conversation had with EOPSS at today's meeting, Chair J. Sanchez would like to create a working group. This working group will team up with EOPSS to help shape their new policy that would impact fee programs and will consist of himself, M. Foster, and H. Tecce. MAPC will coordinate meetings of this group with EOPSS.
- Questions arose regarding why older equipment that needs a great deal of maintenance is kept and not disposed of.



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- As long as the equipment is properly maintained, the equipment is useful.

**MOTION** to adjourn meeting put forth by H. Tecce.

- Seconded by Chief J. Gilliland.
  - In favor: J. Brickett, M. Foster, Chief J. Gilliland, H. Tecce, M. Valenti.
  - Opposed: None
  - Abstained: P. Cohen, J. Rousseau.
- The motion passed.

**The date of the next meeting will be October 7, 2021 at 1:00pm, which will take place after EOPSS visits the Beverly cache site on September 27, 2021 at 10am.**

## ATTENDEES – COMMITTEE MEMBER

John Sanchez, Chair: Director, Burlington Public Works\*

Chief Jason Gilliland: Marblehead Fire Department\*

Mark Foster: Director, Beverly Emergency Management\*

Paul Cohen: Town Manager, Chelmsford\*

John Brickett: Northeast EMS\*

Heather Tecce, MEMA Region 1

Marc Valenti: Manager of Operations, Lexington Public Works

Jeffrey Rousseau: Framingham Department of Public Works

## ABSENT – COMMITTEE MEMBER

Mike Collins: City of Beverly, Commissioner of Public Services and Engineering

## ATTENDEES – OTHER

Lauren Sacks: MAPC

Rosemary Volinski: MAPC

Amy Reilly: MAPC

Ben Podsiadlo: EOPSS

Vicky Mboka-Boyer: EOPSS

Gina Papagiorgakis: EOPSS

Lynn Wright: EOPSS

The following documents were used/referenced during the meeting:

- June 3, 2021 meeting minutes
- September 2021 Budget Update