



# Southeast Region Homeland Security Advisory Council (SRAC)



## SRAC Full Council Meeting Minutes

Meeting held virtually through Zoom.

**August 10, 2023 – 11:00 A.M.**

### Members Present

Chief Brian Clark, Norton PD  
Chief Thomas Lynch, Franklin PD  
Chief Michael Kelleher, Foxborough FD  
Joan Cooper-Zack, South Shore Hospital  
Robert Verdone, SE MA Regional 911 Dist.  
Brian Evangelista, Region V EMS  
Stacy Lane, Norwood Health Dept  
Chief David Guillemette, Harwich PD  
Chief Scott Fournier, Berkley FD  
Lt. Bob Stephanian, PCSO  
Mike Guitierrez, MMA

### Guests Present

Taylor Sulik, SEMRECC  
Joe Gibbs  
Greg Arpin, MVLEC  
Mike Walker, Barnstable Cty  
Chip Reilly, Barnstable Cty  
Anthony Gould, Dukes Cty  
Tim Gover, MetroLEC  
Joe Hattabaugh, MEMA

### Support Staff Present

Todd Castro, SRPEDD  
Kevin Ham, SRPEDD  
Grant King, SRPEDD  
Ben Podsiadlo, EOPSS  
Amy Reilly, MAPC

**Members Absent:** Michael Courville, Dartmouth; Mike Lambert, BAT; Kevin Sweet, Wrentham TA; Chief John Kelley, Wareham FD; Chief Mark, Thompson, Scituate PD

1. **Roll Call:** Mr. Ham read the roll and attendance was taken.
2. **Public Comment:** No public comments were provided.
3. **Approval of Minutes from April 6, 2023, & April 13, 2023, meeting minutes:** A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to approve April 6, 2023, and April 13, 2023. UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED. A roll call was completed.
4. **Project Update/Fiduciary Report: FFY 20, 21 & 22:** Mr. Castro mentioned that LENCO has notified him that the FireCat is ready for pickup which is great news since it has taken over a year. He mentioned the majority of the command post vehicle equipment has started to arrive. Mr. Castro stated that he has received the EHP approval for IRAT training for Scituate, Norton, Oak Bluffs, and the Gannon Training Center. He stated he just received EHP approval yesterday for Lakeville Police Department for the upcoming Thermographer Training class. The Weymouth Shelter Plan is completed. He also indicated that a vendor has been identified for the Fire Services Project regarding the exhaust fan. He stated that the bid advertisement is set to expire on August 22<sup>nd</sup> for the HRT training that is scheduled for this coming fall. Mr. Castro reminded all Council members that FY20 funds must be exhausted by December 31, 2023, and FY 21 must be used by June 30, 2024. Mr. Castro referred the Council to the At-a-Glance budget and entertained questions from the Council.



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- **June Meeting Catch-up:** Chief Clark mentioned that at the June meeting the motions below were discussed and the members that attended did support them. He stated that he was looking for approval of the four motions below. Mr. Ham explained each motion in detail to the Council members.
  - Motion: To support the purchase of 20 2d Dummies for regional teams for Search and Rescue training and exercises not to exceed \$8,000 as part of the existing FFY 21 Drone Project.
  - Motion: To approve an additional \$13,990 for the Barnstable County Cache Diesel Generator out of FFY21, Fire Services, Not Allocated line item.
  - Motion: To approve an additional \$15,000 for the METROLEC TAC Fire Project for additional Ballistic Protection equipment out of FFY21, Fire Services, Not Allocated line item.
  - Motion: To support equipment, installation, and optimization of microwave equipment between Marion and Fall River in support of the BAPERN SW District, not to exceed \$160,000 from FFY21 and \$100,000 from FFY 22, as part of the existing FFY 21, and 22 Interoperability projects.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the four motions above as read. UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED. A roll call was completed.

- **FFY 21 Drone Project:** Mr. Ham mentioned there have been a few more requests that have come in with regards to the drone project. He explained the requests below.

- **NIST Lanes, Tethers:** Mr. Ham mentioned some of the teams are looking for NIST Lanes which are lying practice training setups, night polls and various items for the teams to fly around to practice their airmanship skills. He also mentioned the teams are looking for tethers and further explained that a tether is an unmanned aerial vehicle tethered to the ground. It consists of a base station on the ground and the drone, which is connected to the station through the tether (cable). Mr. Ham mentioned that he would spend the funding down for the drone project. He asked the Council if they want to spend the funds on these items or provide regionalization. Chief Clark mentioned that he would like to see what the cost is, and he mentioned as far as regionalization that might be a little difficult to accomplish in a short term. Chief Clark asked this agenda item to be placed on the next meeting agenda for further discussion and if Mr. Ham could have a cost for these items that would be great.
- **Regionalization:** This was discussed briefly above.

5. **MAPC Report:** Ms. Reilly stated MAPC has been busy with a lot of procurement on behalf of the region and inventory. She mentioned at the end of September, MAPC gives their annual inventory update to EOPSS. She mentioned that the team has been working on inventory documents. Ms. Reilly entertained questions from the Council. Chief Clark asked how the firecat payment will work out. Ms. Reilly stated that



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it should not be a problem because MAPC has worked with LENCO in the past.

6. **EOPSS Report:** Mr. Podsiadlo mentioned that he and Ms. Reilly have discussed the firecat and we are excited about the firecat program. Undersecretary Jean Benna Casa-Thorpe has moved on from EOPSS, she was offered a position in the private sector. He mentioned that Deputy Secretary Kerry Susan Terry has assumed EOPSS leadership and has assumed the HSA and Homeland area, which is great. Mr. Podsiadlo mentioned he is looking forward to bringing her to an upcoming Council meeting to introduce herself. He mentioned she comes with a strong public safety prosecutorial background and is Secretary Terry Reid's number two. He also mentioned that the State Fire Marshal Peter Ostrowski retired and has been replaced by the Northampton Fire Chief John Devon. Mr. Devon started his position this week and he has a strong background in Homeland Security. He mentioned he attended an ASHER exercise that was not funded by the Council. It was a privately funded exercise at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts in Hingham that was a large scale, and Hingham, public safety, and METROLEC were involved. He did thank the Council and Chief Saffoyer. He reported that the second round of the new SLC GP cyber grant, and the NOFO dropped this week. He mentioned EOPSS is beginning to work on those grants and also track the finalization of the first year's requirements that have a state cyber plan that lays out how funding will come out to locals into rural areas that will be passed through model. Mr. Podsiadlo entertained questions from the Council.
  - **Update regarding resumes received for Fire Service & EMD representative vacancies:** Chief Clark mentioned that resumes have been received and forwarded to EOPSS for the vacancies. Chief Clark mentioned that Chip Reilly of Barnstable County, Brian Nobrega of New Bedford and there are three fire chiefs from West Bridgewater, Lakeville, in Falmouth, that the Council will need fire services to give suggestions on. He asked all to be prepared to vote on those vacancies for the next meeting.
7. **Training & Exercise/Planning:**
  - **Training & Exercise / Planning Chair Vacancy:** Chief Clark mentioned that since Mr. Kenn has resigned as Planning Chair, Lt. Bob Stephanian will be chairing the Training & Exercise/Planning committee now.
  - **DPW vacancy:** Mr. Ham mentioned that he spoke to a New Bedford DPW individual a few days ago and he inquired about what the Council does, and the commitments. He stated that he seemed interested and was going to be sending his resume in soon. Mr. Ham mentioned his name is Jamie Ponte and he serves on a committee that SRPEDD has. Mr. Ham mentioned that he seems interested and is a good fit.
8. **Fire Services:** Chief Kelleher asked if he could talk offline about payment for the Crowd Science Class. Mr. Castro mentioned that he would call Chief Kelleher later today to discuss the Crowd Science Class.
9. **Interoperability:** See below.



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- **BAPERN SW District Update (Marion to Copicut Hill Link):** Mr. Verdone mentioned that he is waiting on Ross and Baruzzini to complete their feasibility and Path Study. He mentioned once it is complete, they will come up with a plan for procurement for equipment and services.
  - **TAK (Tactical Awareness Kit):** Mr. Verdone shared his screen and discussed the Tactical Awareness Kit. He explained that it is a software awareness kit. He stated the software platform that was developed by the Department of Defense, specifically the special operations forces command and in the past decade. Mr. Verdone mentioned that Homeland Security Science and Technology Division, which has since been rolled into CISA to some degree, made it publicly available to first local governments, state, local and territorial governments. This software is a community control platform situational awareness platform. Mr. Verdone referred the members to the presentation and mentioned he would send it to the Council after the meeting. Chief Clark asked if Mr. Verdone sent a funding request for this project. Mr. Verdone mentioned that he did not.
  - **Intel & Info Sharing:** Mr. Sulik mentioned over the past two months, he has got together a regional intelligence trends meeting that happened in June and July. He stated between those two meetings he has had over 20 different agencies and representatives show up to that meeting across state local federal partners. Also, the Massachusetts State Fusion Center as well as the Rhode Island State Fusion Center have been members at these meetings. He mentioned the goal at the meeting is that they go around the table and discuss intelligence trends happening within their specific AOR. They also see if anyone else has similar events or issues happening within their AOR. He stated starting at the end of August, he will be holding monthly meeting, and information will be sent out throughout the region for everyone to look at and let us know what is going on across the region. Mr. Sulik mentioned he had an interesting meeting with the Secretary of State's office about election security. He mentioned he is working on election security with the upcoming election in 2024 and there will be information to come. Mr. Podsiadlo asked Mr. Sulik to involve OGR in these meetings that pertain to the grant. Mr. Sulik stated that he would include them. He mentioned that in the past the Council has discussed having a Cyber Security Subcommittee and he mentioned he has individuals that would like to be involved in all levels of government. Mr. Sulik gave the Council a detail report and entertained questions the Council.
10. **LEC:** Chief David Guillemette mentioned there have been a few successful callouts recently. He mentioned one being a suicidal female in Harwich. He mentioned training continues especially with the marine response team. He mentioned Metro is going to be sending a mutual aid boat for the carnival, in Ptown which will be a joint operation.

Chief Lynch mentioned there were a lot of events on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. He mentioned they had a few requests for not only the tactical bicycle unit, but SWAT for Randolph, Plymouth and Needham had a few callouts. He mentioned there have been a few search and rescue related events that were successful as well.



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- **METROLEC Command Post Replacement Discussion:** Mr. Castro mentioned attached in today's meetings materials there is a quote for a METROLEC Command Post Replacement. He mentioned that he knows the Council has been investing a lot of funds over the past few years in the current Command Post. Mr. Castro mentioned it is a 2004 vehicle with hundreds of hours of run time.

Mr. Gover mentioned that the vehicle is getting old and is starting to come to the end of its life. He mentioned that they are trying to keep it updated and it has cost over \$250,000 just in the last few years. We are dealing with the age of the chasey and the age of the rest of the equipment. He mentioned this is one of the busiest trucks in the area and he would like to see if we could look into a new command post. Mr. Gover mentioned that leasing is an option. Chief Clark mentioned this will need to be discussed further but this will have to go to the Planning Subcommittee. Chief Lynch stated that he understands that we would have to discuss different funding avenues and maybe leasing. He mentioned that he will speak to the LEC treasurer. Chief Lynch mentioned that the members also need to remember within a year or two LEC's are going to be looking into vests for all levels and the tactical SWAT operators as well. He mentioned this is another expensive endeavor. Chief Clark mentioned that he has been in contact with Mr. Podsiadlo who has been speaking to Kevin Stanton regarding a bullet proof vest grant. He explained it in further detail. Mr. Podsiadlo mentioned that law enforcement funding that comes to the DOJ has grants that are the most current through AGF that is active right now. He mentioned it does allow for that vest, although it wouldn't allow LEC's to apply, but members can apply through their local jurisdictions. He mentioned for example Norton's officers that are on the SWAT team could apply to their community and that should help offset some of this, you know, large the needs and large expense that's kind of mounting with this issue. Chief Clark mentioned as a council we will have to give guidance and direction to the law enforcement councils to get it out to their members in the coming months or year.

11. **Cybersecurity:** All items were discussed under Interop under Intel and Sharing.

- Formation of Cybersecurity Committee
- Cybersecurity Interns

12. **EMS:** No report.

13. **Education:** Mr. Guterrez mentioned that school is going to be starting up again soon. He mentioned he has been working with campus safety issues and figuring out projects that may need addressing. Mr. Guterrez mentioned that he has been in contact with Bob and Tim over the pan mass and they were identifying projects that would benefit the Cape and islands for public safety for local communities to be able to utilize the space at his building , whether it be for a naturally occurring disaster or manmade incidents such as an active shooter or terrorism, etc.



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14. **Emergency Management:** No report
15. **Regional Transportation:** No report.
16. **Public Health:** Ms. Lane mentioned that COVID is pretty quiet, but they are waiting to see what happens in the Fall. She mentioned the vaccine has been commercialized and being distributed free, similar to what we do to distribute the flu vaccine. She stated they will target groups, such as first responders, Senior Center, schools, and they will be paying for flu and the COVID vaccines in the Fall. She mentioned that a hot topic here in public health is the newly arriving migrant families seeking asylum in Massachusetts. She mentioned there hasn't been a lot of information and there was supposed to be a meeting on Friday with MEMA, but it was canceled. She stated there have been a couple of DPH calls. Ms. Lane mentioned she is curious what Public Health's role is. Ms. Lane mentioned that they are in all our communities, and she heard there have been some shelters and churches to help. She stated that obviously, the big concern is communicable diseases, tuberculosis that they would like to identify quickly and get them into treatment.
17. **Hospitals:** Ms. Cooper-Zack reiterated Ms. Lanes comments on the migrant families. She mentioned this has affected hospitals and other ambulatory care sites. Ms. Cooper-Zack stated that hospitals are working in both regions which this Homeland Security Council covers, region four and five for hospitals. She mentioned they have been working on planning and gap analysis that was part of the Asper planning that they needed to do. She mentioned the key points were to develop hazmat training, and collaboration between fire and Department of Fire Services, as they have come back from COVID. She mentioned they are looking to have staff trained again in decontamination and planning for any type of radiation event, as asked for by Asper. Ms. Cooper-Zack indicated that all regions have been affected by the Brockton Hospital closure. She mentioned she had a meeting and they discussed reopening the hospital next week. She mentioned Brockton Hospital would be opening just the Wound and Infusion Center. She indicated they do have their urgent care sites open, receiving about 140 patients per day between both. She mentioned that hospitals are impacted as they are all about at 93% occupancy levels. Ms. Cooper-Zack mentioned an exercise that was held yesterday for BlueCross/BlueShield in Hingham. Hingham, Cohasset, Norwell, Weymouth, many other folks such as South Shore or Medflight, and law enforcement and fire, were definitely involved in that exercise. She said it was a great exercise.
  - **Weymouth Regional Shelter Project Report Out:** Ms. Cooper-Zack mentioned that the vendor did an excellent job working with Weymouth and updating our shelter plans. She mentioned this project was completed two months ago. She stated the town has come up with a list of planning and next steps, that would be very beneficial as sheltering from the perspective of weather. Mr. Ham mentioned that he believes he sent in the Weymouth Regional Shelter Project report when it was completed, but if it was not, he will send it after this meeting.
  - **Formulation of Health/Hospital Committee:** Chief Clark mentioned that a Health/Hospital Committee was discussed a few months back. He indicated that there may be a need for this type of committee with



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all the hospital closures lately and now with migrant families. He mentioned Norton has migrant families and there are over 430 hotel rooms being used for these families. He stated that he feels it would be beneficial to have a committee. He said it would not have to meet monthly. He stated that a group should get together along with MEMA as well. Ms. Cooper-Zack mentioned that we all definitely need information for migrant families. Chief Clark asked if Ms. Lane and Ms. Cooper-Zack could work on getting a committee together. Ms. Cooper-Zack stated that she would work on it.

18. **Public Works:** None
19. **Government Administration:** None
20. **MEMA:** Mr. Hattabaugh mentioned MEMA has had a busy summer with weather related events, and MEMA is continuing to do steady state monitoring. He mentioned on the training side, Jeff and he are continuing to bring in the state and federal programs. He stated they have schedules posted for statewide programs. He mentioned that MEMA posted their training schedules six months at a time. Mr. Hattabaugh indicated that if anyone has questions to reach out to him.
21. **Items not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours in advance of the meeting:** None
22. **Next Meeting/Adjournment:** The next meeting will be on September 7, 2023, at 11 AM. This meeting will be held via Zoom.