

Meeting Minutes – Resilient Neighbors Network 11:00 am ET Friday, October 20, 2017

Resilient Neighbors Network (RNN) is a network of professionals representing communities actively working toward adaptation and resilience from natural hazards.

RNN Mission

To increase resilience in existing and developing communities at the grass roots level by documenting and actively sharing best practices, through education, peer to peer collaboration and mentoring.

RNN Vision

RNN will be a source for a compilation of community driven hazard resilience best practices that can serve as a resource to people & communities before, during and after a disaster. RNN will also actively bring ground truth and grassroots enlightenment to policy makers, researchers, regulators, and journalists.

AGENDA:

1. Roll call
2. Approval of Minutes
3. Review of Action Items
4. RNN Community Membership – Rebecca Joyce Memorandum
5. Discussion of Communications and Outreach Strategy-Special Guest Janice Roper-Graham
6. RNN Communities Involvement with NHMA Nominating Committee and Election
7. Pilot of the RNN/Disaster Risk Reduction Curriculum in Harrisburg, PA
 - Next Steps
8. NHMA DRR Curriculum & Workshop Status:
 - Where are we with respect to the RNN and DRR Curriculum's further rollout?
 - Does the RNN Curriculum fit the need of External Stakeholders coupled with existing FEMA courses, EPA, & NOAH courses?
 - Do we need to adjust our Curriculum to better suit the need?
9. NHMA AND RNN COMMUNITY MEETING: Natural Hazards Workshop - July 9-12, 2017
10. Status of Practical Community Resilience Project in South Carolina
11. Report from Vincent Brown of FEMA on the many things happening in FEMA Headquarters
12. Status of Island Press Interest, ABA
13. Comments/Issues/Good News
14. Adjourn

11:00 am ET - CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL:

1. ROLL CALL:

Present: **Jim Murphy** (NHMA Board Member); **Bill Robison** (City of Tulsa); **Barb Miller** (Jefferson County); **Gene Henry** (Hillsborough County); **Vincent Brown** (FEMA); **Tim Trautman** (Mecklenburg County, NC); **Roger Faris** (Seattle, WA); **Rebecca Joyce** (Shenandoah Valley Region, VA); **Tom Hughes** (NHMA Board Member); **Ed Thomas** (NHMA Board Member); **Daya Dayananda** (formerly of Pasadena, TX); **Janice Roper-Graham** (Outreach Process Partners, MD); **Barb Miller** (Jefferson County)

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Ed Thomas opened the floor for discussion on the Minutes. Rebecca Joyce and Tom Hughes each stated the Minutes looked good to them. There being no further comments,

A Motion to approve the minutes was made by Rebecca Joyce;
The Motion was seconded by Tim Trautman;
There being no discussion, it was
VOTED: the Minutes were approved.

3. REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS:

September Action Items were discussed. October Action Items list to be circulated by the Monday following the meeting.

SEPTEMBER ACTION ITEMS LIST:

1. Rebecca Joyce to send an email out to everybody who wasn't on the call today and ask them for their thoughts so we can compile a list. Email to mention the need for best practice stories and include Roger Farris's contact info. **(in process)**
2. RNN community to decide what they want to say about themselves and share this within NHMA and RNN and make sure it goes out to Matt Campbell at FEMA and other folks. **(in process)**
3. Rebecca Joyce to set up a schedule of bi-weekly calls for anybody from any community to call in and talk to the RNN. **(in process)**
4. NHMA Admin to support Rebecca Joyce in setting up these calls. **(in process)**
5. Roger Faris to connect with Barb Miller and discuss a work-around for compiling the Harper's Ferry best practices story. **(in process)**
6. Ed Thomas and Rebecca Joyce to talk after the meeting about contractor support for the RNN and working with NHMA webmaster to update the website. **(in process)**
7. Rebecca Joyce to send NHMA webmaster an email sometime this weekend and copy Ed Thomas and NHMA Admin. **(in process)**

OCTOBER ACTION ITEMS LIST:

1. Rebecca Joyce to send NHMA webmaster a note explaining that website updates are all postponed to next month for good and sufficient reason.
2. Janice Roper-Graham to come up with a couple of logo options for the RNN to consider and present at the next meeting. [Ed noted that we do not seek to establish RNN as a separate group apart from NHMA-but integrate NHMA into the work of all resilient communities and vice versa]
3. NHMA Admin to get the Action Item List out by Monday after the call. **- DONE.**
4. NHMA Admin to distribute a copy of Ed Thomas' email note to Rebecca Joyce in regard to describing the RNN and recruiting new member communities.

5. RNN Communities to review and offer input on this memorandum so we can better describe RNN to potential new communities, as well as circulate it to interested persons such as Matt Campbell and Vincent Brown of FEMA.
6. Janice Roper-Graham to work with NHMA Admin to help smooth out and speed up the newsletter formatting to try make it more cost effective.
7. Janice Roper-Graham to work with her associate, Jordan Asulin, to do social media as we can come up with little articles and the like.
8. Discussion of the Nominating Committee to be added to the top of the Agenda for next month's meeting.
9. All RNN Community Members to think about volunteering for the Nominating Committee. Also, RNN Community members to think about who else they would like to invite to become an RNN community member, and who else they think could possibly be a committee chair or could be on the NHMA Board.
10. RNN presentations of the DRR Curriculum to incorporate audience participation going forward, as this has proven very successful and generates tremendous interest and enthusiasm.
11. Rebecca Joyce to forward contact information to Ed Thomas for the Association of Play Therapy, a national association, as a good connection for possible help in producing copies of the Children's Guide.
12. RNN Community to think about where it might be able to hold its annual meeting this year that would be really useful to everyone involved.
13. NHMA Admin to distribute Tom Hughes' Stakeholder Work Group attachments to the RNN Community. – **DONE**.
14. Barb Miller to connect with Tom Hughes to get him in touch with some of the folks who were involved in West Virginia.
15. Tom Hughes to get a of list of different trainings that the External Stakeholder Group has made over to Barb Miller, so she can add some things on to it.
16. Tom Hughes to fill in the chinks and the gaps in the list of training programs with the DRR Curriculum materials and get this to Ed Thomas by the time they have their meeting in Utah.
17. Vincent Brown to continue working on the things that he and Ed Thomas have been working on and set in motion, and to get information from FEMA over to Ed Thomas on these today. This list to include items which involve higher education initiatives, possibly getting on agendas, and continuing work on trying to get the best practices into the NHMA.
18. Ed Thomas to pass this information from Vincent Brown on to the RNN Communities and the NHMA Board.
19. Roger Faris to work with Jim Mullen and Barb Miller to research alternate best practice stories that involved the RNN.
20. Barb Miller to give Roger Faris some other good examples of how communities have recovered when not eligible for FEMA declaration; Roger Faris to follow up with research on these.
21. Barb Miller to reach out to the one person still in Harpers Ferry who might remember what happened and see if they are willing or able to talk about it with Roger Faris.

22. Roger Ferris to stay in touch with Vince Brown and Janice Roper-Graham about how to put together a best practices database that is searchable.

23. NHMA Admin to get Janice Roper-Graham's email address to Roger Faris. – **DONE.**

24. Ed Thomas to get information about P-1000 to NHMA Admin for distribution to the group. [done]

4. RNN COMMUNITY MEMBERSHIP – REBECCA JOYCE MEMORANDUM

Progress on the RNN Community Membership Memorandum was discussed. This to continue as an Action Item and an item on the Agenda.

5. DISCUSSION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH STRATEGY-SPECIAL GUEST JANICE ROPER-GRAHAM

Janice Roper-Graham introduced herself and shared some of her hazard mitigation experience and background. She discussed her efforts on a project related to the mitigation best practices portfolio on the FEMA website, over 900 stories of people who have mitigated, some of which were followed up on, but had lost its presence as a robust searchable database on FEMA.gov. Janice seeks to take these stories and put them into a searchable database hosted by the NHMA or the RNN website, to get this information back in circulation and get the message of hazard mitigation out.

Janice also described her interest in developing a method of measuring community resilience as a *score* by the RNN. She proposed creating something whereby the Resilient Neighbors Network could create an aggregate community score – like the CRS - that attempts to leverage existing mitigation practices and come up with a Resilience Grade for how a community is doing. This could help communities see how to improve and be used to advocate for increased mitigation.

Ed Thomas reported that Janice will be helping us smooth out the newsletter and assisting us with social media outreach. Janice also offered to help with logo design for the RNN. Ed noted that we do not seek to establish RNN as a separate group apart from NHMA-but integrate NHMA into the work of all resilient communities and vice versa.

TOM HUGHES – EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS WORKGROUP

Tom Hughes reported on the External Stakeholders Workgroup. This was set up about six months ago and was previously dormant in 2010. It has three tribal members, three that are locals, three State Hazard Mitigation Officers, three Regional, and three from Headquarters. All met in DC and discussed the buy-in issues at every level.

The first thing they looked for was a workplan for Communications. We are seeing some changes now in the FEMA website, particularly in the Hazard Mitigation area, which is a result of that Workgroup's efforts.

A second area they looked at was Technical Assistance. Under the Technical Assistance Program, the Workgroups are trying to get money out faster to help develop applications and strategy out in the field and use that money early on. The Headquarters team is working on this.

A third area of focus was Best Practices. A place to house this material is needed and a Workgroup is focused on that.

Tom Hughes is also working on a related topic for hazard mitigation core competencies. This is for matching skills and certifications to needs when they are moving folks within a Floodplain Management Association from unaffected areas to affected areas, intra- or interstate, and need to match skills and certifications to needs.

Tom has also identified all the courses that EMI has had in the mitigation world and looked at the enabling and terminal objectives. He will be looking at job descriptions, etc. from a couple of states and then will be

sitting down with EMI and the rest of his team, to see if there any gaps and identify how to best place the teams. He will need the support of the RNN Communities to accomplish this meaningfully.

Barb Miller offered to put Tom in touch with some folks who were involved with this in West Virginia. Tom will get a copy of his trainings list to her and include the materials that we are developing within NHMA.

6. RNN COMMUNITIES INVOLVEMENT WITH NHMA NOMINATING COMMITTEE AND ELECTION

Ed Thomas explained the NHMA Nominating Committee and called for volunteers from the RNN to participate. He encouraged the RNN to also look at various NHMA Committees and become involved or chair some. It was agreed to make this an Action Item and add it to the November Agenda.

7. PILOT OF THE RNN/DISASTER RISK REDUCTION CURRICULUM IN HARRISBURG, PA & SALT LAKE CITY, UT - NEXT STEPS

Ed Thomas shared that we want to follow the example of what was done in Harrisburg, PA and in Salt Lake City as to how the Curriculum presentations are done going forward. These are very much the models for us to follow, in that they include focused discussions based on topic and open the floor to audience participation, weaving in examples and explanations to help people better grasp the material.

Rebecca Joyce shared that she and Tim Trautman will be doing a presentation in NC next week and will build in time for that very thing. Tom Hughes agreed that this is a good idea and shared the benefits of using relatable scenarios in each of the module presentations.

8. NHMA DRR CURRICULUM & WORKSHOP STATUS

RFP - Ed Thomas shared that NHMA had issued an RFP on turning the Curriculum into a college level certified course, and the contract had been awarded to Pierce College in Washington State. The goal is to have the DRR Curriculum eventually become a credential similar to the ASFPM, Certified Floodplain Managers, etc. It is hoped the RNN Community members will be the first ones getting credentialed as Disaster Risk Reduction Ambassadors or Auditors, so they can have DDR initials after their name.

ROADMAP 508 COMPLIANCE/SPANISH TRANSLATION & CHILDREN'S GUIDE

Ed Thomas shared that the *Roadmap* has been updated to include some additional materials on post Maria, to help focus on the special circumstances in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. A Spanish-language version is being produced. Alessandra Jerolleman has been contracted to do this thanks to the very generous contribution of NHMA Board Member Dr. John Weiner. The *Roadmap* has also been made 508 compliant.

Thanks to the wonderful efforts of Rebecca Joyce, Alessandra Jerolleman, Mia Harrison, and Gina Wightman, of Wightman Associations, an excellent disaster activity book for children has been produced. This has also been made 508 compliant, has a Spanish-language version, and has already been distributed in the Virgin Islands along with packages of crayons and other things to support children.

Ed Thomas is also actively working with a foundation group to try and come up with funds or have somebody produce copies of this material for use in Puerto Rico. Rebecca Joyce will forward her contact info from the Association of Play Therapy to Ed to help with this.

9. NHMA AND RNN COMMUNITY MEETING: NATURAL HAZARDS WORKSHOP - July 9-12, 2017?

Ed Thomas opened discussion of the NHMA/RNN Annual Meeting. The usual annual meeting was not held this year. This is an Action Item for the RNN to think about where it could meet that would be useful to it and to everybody involved.

Tom Hughes suggested the NHMA & RNN consider holding its Annual Meeting next year to coincide with the Hazard Mitigation Stakeholders Workgroup (of locals and tribes) - in March of 2018.

10. STATUS OF PRACTICAL COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PROJECT IN SOUTH CAROLINA

No specific discussion.

11. COMMENTS FROM VINCENT BROWN OF FEMA ON THE MANY THINGS HAPPENING AT FEMA

Vincent Brown reported on his progress working on some of the items Ed Thomas requested of him. These include looking at and getting involved with higher education initiatives, possibly getting on agendas and trying to get the best practices in some kind of position with NHMA. Ed will receive information from FEMA on some of these today. Ed to pass this material on to the RNN and the NHMA Board.

12. STATUS OF ISLAND PRESS INTEREST, ABA-HOUSTON SUCCESS STORY

Ed Thomas reported that we have gotten some articles into the NACCO Newsletter about the DRR Curriculum and the *Roadmap* and will continue with these efforts. Also working with Jennifer Roper-Graham and the work she is doing on migrating best practices into a more searchable format, along with peer-to-peer communications and having someone like Mr. Greenberg, the architect, writing for the architectural magazine and the engineering magazines, on his triumph and as a convert to the need for generous freeboard.

13. COMMENTS/ISSUES/GOOD NEWS

Ed Thomas reported a success story related to pilot testing of material that eventually became Module 20 of the DRR Curriculum. In presenting to a group of architects and developers at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, one of the major architects in the United States, Mr. Allan Greenberg, was there, who came specifically to find out what kind of freeboard he wanted to use for a huge new development he was doing in Houston. After the presentation, Ed approached him to ask if he had been convinced that four feet of freeboard was the standard he should use for a development. Mr. Greenberg replied, 'Absolutely not. I am not using 4 feet of freeboard. After what you said about liability, standard of care, and the limitations of flood mapping being an insurance product, not an engineering product, I am using five feet of freeboard on my development.' That being several years ago, Mr. Greenberg used five feet of freeboard for his Houston development and had absolutely zero damage from Hurricane Harvey.

Jim Murphy asked Vince Brown about how to get FEMA and various organizations, agencies and offices to disseminate clear information that is not confusing to people and communities who are working on projects that involve floodplain management. Vince Brown explained that it would depend upon the Region and how that particular Region operated, but one would need to start by addressing folks there. He also suggested disseminating info through best practices, articles in publications, newsletter, etc.

14. ADJOURN

A Motion to adjourn was made by Rebecca Joyce;
The Motion was seconded by Ed Thomas;
There being no discussion, it was
VOTED, the Meeting adjourned.

ADDENDUM TO RNN MEETING OF 10-20-17:

PRESENT: Ed Thomas, Rebecca Joyce, Barb Miller, Roger Faris.

DISCUSSION ON INVOLVEMENT IN THE RNN:

Barb Miller announced she will be retiring from Jefferson County on December 31, 2017. She expected to be pretty much unavailable for the next three to six months. She would like to continue her involvement with the RNN. Ed Thomas assured her it is possible and that she would be very welcome, sharing the precedent already set by Daya Dayananda. Barb said she hoped her successor at Jefferson County would continue to be involved in the RNN.

RNN BEST PRACTICES DISCUSSION:

Ed Thomas opened the discussion about how to tell the story of communities that don't get disaster declaration by FDA and the Stafford act, and what they can do as a best practice.

Roger Ferris shared that he would like to stay in touch with Vincent Brown and Janice Roper-Graham about building a searchable best practices database. NHMA Admin to get Janice's email address to Roger Faris.

DISCUSSION OF HARPERS FERRY:

Status of the best practice story for Harpers Ferry was discussed. There being some sensitivity in Harpers Ferry with respect to telling its story, it was decided to ask Roger Faris to do a work-around and try to tell the story without naming names.

Barb Miller concurred that a work-around with Roger Faris was doable and agreed to give him some basic information to start.

Ed Thomas shared his understanding that Jim Mullen had provided a great deal of information which at the time was understood to be useful to the folks in Harpers Ferry, along with information offered by himself, Rebecca Joyce, and others. There seemed to be a chance for us to tell the story of the RNN community a bit through it. The dialogue in technical assistance we had provided to the folks in the community through Barb Miller seemed to be very helpful and well received.

Barb Miller explained that though the information was passed on to the folks at Harpers' Ferry, they slightly accepted it but didn't pursue it, opting instead to go with the information they could get from various agencies. She said she would talk to the one person who was still down there and see if they were allowed to discuss it but advised that we just stay away from using it as an example.

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

The importance of expanding the RNN and its connection to communities was shared.

FEMA publication P-1000 on natural hazards protection with respect to schools, earthquakes, floods was discussed. NHMA Admin to get a copy of this out to everyone.

Ed Thomas shared his thought on doing something for the American Bar Association's resiliency series on the new FEMA publication.

Call ended 12:40 pm.