

**Resilient Neighbors Network**  
**Minutes of Meeting of Friday, *April 26, 2019, 2:00 pm ET***

**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 FOR UPCOMING MEETING OF *May 17, 2019:***

1. Roll call
  2. Approval of Minutes (March 2019 and April 2019)
  3. **Comments/Issues/RNN Community Sharing/Good News**
  4. Review of Action Items
  5. RNN Future Activities
  6. Discussion of Best Practices Documentation-New Best Practice on mitigation-based recovery with no Presidential Declaration: Joe Rossi and Coastal Coalition [Material sent separately] and Traci Sears from Montana
  7. Next Steps for RNN-DRR Curriculum Future Meeting? Discussion of CTP Grant
    - a. New Grant requires NHMA and RNN to participate with and recommend other possible interested agencies for an advisory committee meeting in Washington D.C. – [Detail by John Wiener circulated with Minutes.] Possible other locations/dates
    - b. NHMA DRR Curriculum & Workshop Status:
      - i. Examining how to further improve fit of the RNN Curriculum to the needs of External Stakeholders; coupling better with existing courses: including FEMA, EPA, NOAA, NACo, NGO & private market courses?
      - ii. RNN Volunteers for the development of the Disaster Risk Reduction Curriculum;
      - iii. How to take advantage of the latest update from the Multi-Hazard Mitigation Council on the cost/benefit of Hazard Mitigation.
    - c. Natural Hazard Conference
  8. *CTP Collaboration Monthly Call for Topics*
  9. **Status of Practical Community Resilience Project in South Carolina & Silver Jackets link** (Ed Hecker)  
New NHMA Board Member Ed Hecker to talk about RNN Linkage to Silver Jackets
  10. Comments from Vincent Brown of FEMA on the many things happening at FEMA
  11. Status of Island Press Interest, Articles for NHMA Newsletter and/or ABA
  12. Adjourn
-

## Minutes for Meeting of Friday, *April 26, 2019*:

### 11:00 am ET - CALL TO ORDER, INTRODUCTIONS AND ROLL CALL:

#### 1) ROLL CALL:

Present:

**Tim Trautman** (Mecklenburg County);  
**Ned Swanberg** (State of Vermont);  
**Chuck Wallace** (Grays Harbor, Washington);  
**Barb Miller** (Jefferson County, WV);  
**Joe Rossi** (Marshfield Coastal Coalition);  
**Erin Capps** (NHMA Board);  
**Tim Lovell** (Tulsa Partners, OK);  
**Rebecca Joyce** (Shenandoah Valley Region, VA);  
**Gene Henry** (Hillsborough County, FL);  
**Ed Thomas** (NHMA Board Member);  
**Vincent Brown** (FEMA)

---

#### 2) APPROVAL OF MINUTES: (March 2019)

#### 3) Comments/Issues/RNN Community Sharing/Good News

Tim Trautman

- Through a year-long grant program from the Department of Homeland Security, Charlotte-Mecklenburg County has been implementing a pilot program to test low-cost flood sensors that can be used to fill in gaps in urban areas in-between the more expensive USGS sensors/gauges. The program has been up and running since January. The next step is to deploy 100 sensors from a single vendor in the field and tie them into the existing network of sensors and gauges to see how effective they are.

Ned Swanberg

- Due to recent flooding in Vermont, they are in the process of doing damage assessments.
- They have also been involved in computing the Open Space calculations needed as part of the NFIP-CRS program.
- The Resilient Vermont Conference is being held June 7-8.

Chuck Wallace

- A tribal nation and two other communities are continuing to build on the vertical evacuation work that Chuck was successfully involved with in Grays Harbor, Washington.
- In Chuck's new role as earthquake coordinator, the current goal has been working with businesses and schools to sign up for notifications so they can implement safety procedures earlier because of these warnings.
- In the near future, Chuck may be assisting with tsunami inundation areas inland. Recently it was discovered that there is a much larger number of buildings that could be damaged than previously thought.

Barb Miller

- One current area that Barb is involved in with her position at JH Consulting has been assisting local communities in getting into the NFIP CRS program.

### **Joe Rossi**

- Joe as CRS Committee Chair has been assisting many of their communities as they work through the 5-year review process.
  - Began his involvement in January 2018 where the community was at 5% discount and should be at 15% as of August.
- The Coastal Coalition will be holding a CRS symposium to attract and encourage new communities to get involved in the CRS program.
  - Boston area is broken into the South Shore and North Shore; the South Shore has 19 CRS communities, the North shore has only one.
  - Partnered with FEMA, ISO and the state to put the Symposium on June 13, 2019.
- The Coalition has been working on a different way to implement HMA grants for individuals and communities.
  - Partnering with a for-profit and a non-profit to create a program where they administer FMA applications and implement the grant for them and the community as well. Hope to have this off the ground in 2020.

### **Erin Capps**

- Erin recently met Marissa Also, the Chief Resilience Officer for Houston, Texas. She will be contacting Marissa to invite her to participate in an RNN call, speak to the group, and potentially become involved with RNN.

### **Tim Lovell**

- Tim mentioned in connection to Erin's comment that Devon Douglass who had been Tulsa's Chief Resiliency Officer has moved to Harris County, Texas and is now working for a judge.
  - They have selected someone from New York City to fill the role – more information to come on this.
- There were some concerns that the 100 Resilient Cities at the international level was being sunsetted and merged into a new initiative. Tulsa with the 100 Resilient Cities, has focused on resiliency as it relates to equity and took their Office of Civil Rights and made it the Office of Resiliency and Equity.
- Tulsa offered a series of trainings on emergency preparedness and business continuity in areas of low to moderate income, in both English and Spanish. This referenced work that Tim's organization does and they met to discuss ways to have collaboration at the local level.
- Annie Vest, NHMA's new Board member who is also on the Board of the Disaster Resilience Network, led the final meeting for the update of Tulsa's Hazard Mitigation Plan.
  - Attendees at the meeting requested this tool that was developed by Meshek & Associates as a part of the City of Tulsa Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan: "KNOW YOUR RISK OF FLOODING!  Check out the City of Tulsa's amazing new tool to map the risks around your home. Follow the links below to find out how you can better protect your home and family against flooding and other disasters.

How to locate Map My House tool on City of Tulsa website:

1. Visit <https://www.cityoftulsa.org>
2. Click the following tabs: residents > public-safety > hazard-mitigation
3. Scroll to bottom of hazard mitigation page and click link to Map My House

Or visit <https://meshek.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html...> and follow the instructions listed on the left side of the page for how to use this site.

- The NSIT/CRS program had a series of neighborhood meetings.
- DRN is supporting a fortification program and have applied for an HMGP grant.

### **Gene Henry**

- In working on their Hazard Mitigation Plan, community meetings in conjunction with FEMA are being held.
- Letters have been sent out to owners of the 63,000 structures that are affected by potential flooding to let them know of their vulnerability.

- They are in the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of sea level rise studies that are looking at their vulnerabilities. Have looked at fourteen characteristics of population and the vulnerabilities of the populations; this coupled with the Carol Flood Act in Florida which requires all the jurisdictions that can be affected by sea level rise to address their infrastructure potential problems/issues from it over the next 30-40 years.
- His community is in the process of updating their local mitigation strategies, updating their codes and flood damage control regulations. Hoping to make it all digital in the next round.
- They are looking at some area-wide buyouts of flood-prone properties and updating their codes.
- They are currently updating their post disaster-redevelopment plan. Their contractors will be using the RNN website as one of their primary resources in making it a 'living plan'.

### **Ed Thomas**

- Ed mentioned that he is excited about all the wonderful things going on at the local level and is happy to help wherever he can, particularly with the legal needs of communities in disaster risk reduction.

### **Rebecca Joyce**

- She is assisting the 21 localities in their region in updating their regional Hazard Mitigation Plan. To engage the public in the process, they are tying into 2 anniversaries this year – Smokey Bear's 75<sup>th</sup> birthday and the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Hurricane Camille. She mentioned to the group a handy resource for lower cost Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl education and awareness materials through the National Symbols Cache. <https://www.symbols.gov/> You can order items tax free and it is a great resource for getting materials out to the public.
- NHMA Admin to put this in the next Newsletter and get it up on both websites.

**DISCUSSION:** Gene Henry asked Rebecca Joyce to explain her process for communicating with localities – do they use GoToMeetings, or Skype meetings, or did they participate with walk-in customers in regard to outreach?

**Rebecca Joyce** clarified that the 21 localities in her Region consist of 5 counties, 5 cities, and 11 towns.

- They first of all put the Plan up on their website.
  - Because they were a Project Impact Community and still have their Disaster Education Program, they will usually get people to come to events by doing presentations about the history of flooding, or will go to existing community events and have a table with giveaways and then ask people to fill out the survey, etc. It's a pretty standard approach across all the counties and cities to get feedback.
- As for the Steering Committee, they have a new requirement from their FEMA Regional Office to not only have the localities adopt the Plan but also have engagement. So instead of having monthly or bi-monthly meetings, they're holding three meetings and told the communities up front that they have to come to the meetings and represent their localities as part of this engagement so that their Plan will allow them to apply for the grant money.
  - They had their first meeting last month and had 61 people attend which was very exciting.
- Rebecca shared that her Region is also trying to streamline and have the same kind of materials available at all events. They try to plug in to whatever community events already exist and do whatever they can to involve folks, whether giving them a Smokey Bear bookmark, or having refreshments, etc. and then just making sure to keep a running list to include in the plan to show engagement.

Gene Henry shared that his Region is also doing similar things but is trying now to go a little bit beyond and is very excited to hear about Tim Lovells' application.

- Hillsborough County is also trying to create an interactive all-hazards document on the web so folks can go in and easily search a single subject area. Periodically their Communications Department can send something out through social media. They want folks to be able to access the information easily and quickly because they have found people just don't like reading static documents anymore.
- Rebecca shared that her Region is experimenting with interactive apps on their website so folks can mouse-over maps, for example, and get popups with hazard mitigation information and

interesting facts. This is something they're creating through the mitigation plan which will then stay up on the website and continue to get folks engaged.

- Gene suggested we can share this information each month in our community updates.
- Gene mentioned that he still uses and speaks to a lot of the work that Ed Thomas has done as far as the consequences for identifying vulnerabilities for those risks with development, development review, planning and building critical facilities, etc.;
  - Does Ed have a nice summary someplace that the RNN can cherry-pick of the work he's done showing case studies, etc. on liability? Also, can he share the work that he's done with the Bar when it's complete?
- Ed Thomas shared that he has worked on a number of summaries but probably the RNN needs something pithier. We do have some chunks of material in the DRR Curriculum.
  - We also have some one-pagers on disaster mitigation online and can work up some more snappy short, pithy one-pagers and update those that we have.
  - Ed suggested the RNN figure out what it's wants are with respect to these and work something up specifically for them.
- Gene Henry will go back into the DRR Curriculum and check for links; Ed Thomas suggested Chapter 20, Limitations on Flood Maps, and the Taking Issue Module.
  - The legal and policy opportunities with Disaster Risk Reduction is Module 15, and Understanding the Impediments is Module 20.
- With regard to Takings, Ed spoke about his experience with the American Law Institute conference this past winter, a very conservative law organization.
  - One of the speakers was from the Pacific Legal Foundation which is the group that sponsors major takings litigation cases against government. They were very involved in the Koontz case in Florida.
    - One of the things they said they want from government is a "nexus statement." They want to know what harm the government is preventing by restricting development.
    - They have stated that it is not a taking when the government acts to restrict development to prevent harm.
    - The folks in Southwest Florida Water Management District never really stated what harm they were preventing in the Koontz case. This is a consistent theme that runs, especially when dealing with folks from the wetland agencies who just simply, as far as Ed can tell, do not like talking to flood plain managers.
  - Telling the wetland folks that their winning card is harm prevention.
    - The specific legal foundation is as bedrock conservative as you get, the people who actually sue government on takings say that when you're *acting to prevent harm there is no taking*.
  - If we could get some quotes from folks from the conservative legal foundation and other conservative legal foundations, saying it just isn't a taking when we're acting to prevent harm, it would be good.
    - Ed Thomas shared that he had a bunch of engineers and architects in a course at the Harvard Graduate School of Design and asked about base flood elevation. They said they comply with the code. Ed eventually extracted from them that the confidence envelope around the base flood elevation, based on the time when it was done, and not looking into the future, *was designed to be 50/50 the day it was made*. That is on its face, in his opinion as an attorney, professional malpractice.
    - To use something with a 50/50 confidence interval when you should have used something with a 95/5 confidence interval, is malpractice.
      - If we can convey this concept – that this is why we need to have the freeboard that we describe in the Curriculum. If you don't do that, everybody who touched that project is just as guilty of malpractice because you didn't understand the number that was used for the fundamental design.
      - Maybe we can bring in somebody from the Pacific Legal Foundation. They have a very conservative property rights view based upon the maxim of Roman law.

- Maybe we need to pull this material into a very snappy one-pager, saying here's a Law Review article that talks about flood elevation, here's Module 20 of our Curriculum that talks about flood elevation, etc.
- Gene Henry shared that his Planning Director who is an attorney, is looking exactly for that kind of material. When goes to give them recommendations, they just push them aside because they don't see that full connection.
  - This is the reason that we have these regulations. When it comes down to it, the planner or flood plain administration, hazard mitigation persons are just not getting it to the point where the planning director can actually hold it up at a public hearing or in court.

**Rebecca Joyce interrupted to bring the discussion to a close.**

- After the call she will type up notes and send them around to everyone who spoke for review. These will be send to help NHMA Admin capture the discussion at the beginning of the call.

Rebecca Joyce suggested moving the community discussions to the beginning of the meetings going forward. We can pick up the rest of the agenda from this meeting next month.

- Is there anything we haven't covered this month that needs to be talked about before we adjourn the meeting?
  - Ed Thomas offered that Ed Hecker, the new NHMA Board Member now retired after 42 year with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, had wanted to be on the call today and talk about RNN linkage to Silver Jackets.
- We will keep the Silver Jackets item on the agenda for the next meeting.
- Rebecca Joyce suggested everyone try to capture some ideas and thoughts for the next meeting into a brief report that can be sent around rather like the one supplied by Terri Turner so if there are links to things, or resources that anyone wants to share, it will give us a let up to start the discussion.
- Rebecca Joyce reminded everyone that even when an RNN community member leaves their community to change positions, etc., their expertise doesn't leave the group. Rebeca is very glad that all are staying on the calls, and hopes that Daya Dayana will call in again sometime since he's changed communities as well.

Ed Thomas shared with regard to matters he and Gene Henry were talking about, if anyone has something of a legal or quasi legal nature they would like input on, he would be happy to work with them.

- Gene Henry to get together with Ed Thomas to set something up to discuss a one-pager, with a short, snappy statement.

Gene Henry asked if FEMA's team that helps with post disaster redevelopment is preaching the DRR Ambassador curriculum when they go into these communities that are looking at long term reconstruction; Ed: responded that no, they are not.

- We're trying to get the Curriculum in front of FEMA – Vince Brown and Ed Thomas have been working on this since last Fall,
- We tried to present the Curriculum in FL but the state of Florida didn't want it, for whatever reason.
- We'd like to snap up the one-pagers and review other materials for pithiness.

Gene Henry asked is there some way we can begin working with these communities that have this long-term reconstruction issue?

- Going back 25 years, and we are still watching these communities not taking responsibility for making their community sustainable.
  - There's such a need for this to be better integrated when FEMA's going to these communities and assisting with millions of dollars in reconstruction.
- Ed Thomas and Vince Brown have pushed very hard with Matt Campbell and his group in long term recovery.
  - Vince Brown will work with Ed Thomas to socialize the Curriculum within FEMA. Vince shared that, at the suggestion of a FEMA staff member who saw the Curriculum and wanted it in Florida where he was deployed for Hurricane Michael but had to leave before we could make it happen and there was nobody else there to push it, so it fell flat, but we need to keep going.

#### 4) Review of Action Items

Tabled.

#### 5) RNN Future Activities

6) Discussion of Best Practices Documentation-New Best Practice on mitigation-based recovery with no Presidential Declaration: Joe Rossi and Coastal Coalition [Material sent separately] and Traci Sears from Montana

#### 7) Next Steps for RNN-DRR Curriculum Future Meeting? Discussion of CTP Grant

a) New Grant requires NHMA and RNN to participate with and recommend other possible interested agencies for an advisory committee meeting in Washington D.C. – [Detail by John Wiener circulated with Minutes.] Possible other locations/dates

#### b) NHMA DRR Curriculum & Workshop Status:

- i) Examining how to further improve fit of the RNN Curriculum to the needs of External Stakeholders; coupling better with existing courses: including FEMA, EPA, NOAA, NACo, NGO & private market courses?
- ii) RNN Volunteers for the development of the Disaster Risk Reduction Curriculum;
- iii) How to take advantage of the latest update from the Multi-Hazard Mitigation Council on the cost/benefit of Hazard Mitigation.

#### c) Natural Hazard Conference

#### 8) CTP Collaboration Monthly Call for Topics

#### 9) Status of Practical Community Resilience Project in South Carolina & Silver Jackets link

#### 10) Comments from Vincent Brown of FEMA on the many things happening at FEMA

#### 11) Status of Island Press Interest, Articles for NHMA Newsletter and/or ABA

#### 12) Adjourn

A **Motion** was made by Gene Henry to adjourn.

The motion was **seconded** by Vince Brown.

There being no discussion, it was

**VOTED:** Meeting is adjourned.

Meeting ended at 3:12 p.m.

Next meeting is May 17, 2019 at 11:00 a.m. Eastern Time.

## ACTION ITEMS:

---

### April 2019 RNN Action Items List

- NHMA Admin to put the National Symbols Cache. <https://www.symbols.gov/> in the next Newsletter and get it up on both websites.
  - Gene Henry and Ed Thomas to get together to make the one-pagers pithier and snappier and see if special one-pagers can be developed for specific issues/matters around Module 15 and Module 20, or any other Modules.
- 

### March 2019 RNN Action Items List

#### REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS

(March-A1) Barb Miller will invite Jenny Gannoway to talk at one of our meetings.

#### PRESENTATION ON MITIGATION PLANNING BY LAURA DUFF, PLANNER AT FEMA

(March-A2) Veronica Criscitiello to distribute a copy of the Planning Module to Laura Duff for her review and feedback.

(March-A3) Laura Duff to look at the Planning Module and give some feedback.

(March-A4) Tom Hughes to talk to Shannon Burke about going to the next APA Conference to try to interest university professors there in the DRR Curriculum.

(March-A5) Tom Hughes to get with the APA about improving the Planning Module and putting parts of the Curriculum out as webinars.

(March-A6) Vince Brown to schedule Laura Duff to come back in a few months to talk to the RNN about the Tribal Mitigation Planning Handbook.

(March-A7) Erin Capps to discuss with Laura Duff about doing a webinar for us on that as well.

(March-A8) Erin Capps expressed our hope to continue to loop Laura Duff in on our activities and keep her in mind for future calls and webinars

#### NEXT STEPS FOR RNN-DRR CURRICULUM FUTURE MEETING? DISCUSSION OF CTP GRANT

(March-A9) Veronica Criscitiello to get the updated Curriculum Overview sent out to everybody.

(March-A10) Ed Thomas and Erin Capps to arrange with David Mallory to make a frequent report (not less than once per month) to Vince Brown on the stuff we're doing with FEMA's investment to make sure that Vince is aware of how we are using these, and the leverage with the RNN Communities and the Best Practices we are developing, etc.

- (March-A11) Rebecca Joyce to put Module 24 – From Policy to Engineering: Earthquake Risks in the survey she is sending out to the RNN asking if anyone could help with looking it over for final review.
- (March-A12) Barb Miller to review Module 6 – Risk Assessment
- (March-A13) Veronica Criscitiello to send Module 6 – Risk Assessment to Barb Miller for review.
- (March-A14) Ed Thomas, Tom Hughes and Chuck Wallace to look at the Michael Gumpert Recovery Management Curriculum.
- (March-A15) Erin Capps to send the Michael Gumpert Recovery Management Curriculum to Ed Thomas, Tom Hughes and Chuck Wallace and then get back to Michael Gumpert and let him know.