

Severn River Association Minutes

Board of Directors Meeting Tuesday, October 18, 2011

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by Vice President Bob Whitcomb.

Presentation by Karen Sank, Community Outreach and Volunteer Coordinator – Office of Emergency Management, AACo.

Definition: an EMERGENCY is defined as an event which threatens to, or actually does, inflict damage to property or people. Emergency Management is not emergency response; it is the coordination of plans and operations of the components of the emergency response system (fire, police, EMS, Health, public works, central services, private sector, etc.). Police handle most events without management – the Office of Emergency Management only gets involved if a multi-agency response is needed.

The AACo Emergency Operations Center (EOC) has connections to the Sheriffs, Police, and Fire Departments. Each agency must have 3 people there with decision-making authority. All must sign in & out to be tracked. The EOC also does exercises to test emergency response systems. Evaluators rate the response, and an After-Action Meeting is held to discuss what could improve. One recent exercise responded to a terrorist release of Sarin gas on a subway car, requiring HazMat suits, portable oxygen tanks, and emergency medical treatment. Another, Operation Rescue on the Rails, involved a SWAT team, bomb squad, and passenger injuries.

AACo's GIS system has been instrumental in Emergency Management – it allows instant weather and wind prediction, line-of sight locations for on-scene personnel and communication antennas, gas plume dispersal prediction, etc. It allows an emergency scene to be viewed from 4 different angles at 2 different heights. EOC software provides rapid location of where an Emergency Notification call originated – anyone can report an emergency. The system can call all nearby homes to warn of flooding or other potential threats, asking residents to stay indoors during the emergency situation.

Comprehensive Emergency Management is carried out in 4 Phases – Mitigation, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery.

- v Mitigation - activities which actually eliminate or reduce the chance of occurrence or effect. Example: raising houses in flood zones.
- v Preparedness -planning how to respond in case the emergency or disaster occurs.
- v Response - activities occur during and immediately following a disaster to provide emergency assistance and reduce the chance of secondary damage.
- v Recovery - final phase and continues until all systems return to normal or near normal. Short term & Long – some are still recovering from Isabel in 2003.

Types of emergencies planned for by the OEM include essentially anything except a volcano. Several examples were shown of past emergencies including the Severna park Tornado 9/28/06. The OEM is also responsible for preparing for emergencies at critical Marine facilities including Annapolis harbour and the Bay Bridge. Flooding is one of the most common hazards. Don't drive in standing water – if you can't see road, turn around. During the May 2008 Inland and Coastal flooding, many people drove around barricades & got stuck. A truck with relatively high road clearance is just as vulnerable as a car. The AACo inundation map shows flood prone areas.

Lisa Bender asked if Storm Drain flooding should be reported to OEM – Ms Sank responded that this can usually just be reported to DPW, but OEM may arrange emergency transport for medical patients.

John Wright asked if the Earthquake 7/16/2010 wasn't actually in 2011? There was an earlier earthquake in 2010.

Ham Radio Operators help out. The Mobile Command & Communications Unit has voice, data & video, 17 different radio systems, satellite uplink. It can be set up in 1 hour, and has stayed on scene for as long as 3 weeks.

Evacuation vs Shelter in Place - Evacuation is preferred if possible. You should have an evacuation kit with a battery powered or hand-crank radio, fresh batteries, flashlights, clothes, overnight kit, etc. – there are several websites with specific recommendations. They have tested the availability and suitability of emergency shelters. A map is available showing critical access and evacuation routes.

Shelters are place of last resort and tend to be crowded and basic – you will need your own bedding and cots are reserved for injured sick or elderly persons. Hotels and shelters are more likely to accept your pet if you have a crate. AACo will shelter pets, but cannot do more than provide basic medical services. Shelters are Usually in high schools, but may also be in fire stations and community centers.

A Citizen Corps Council was formed after 9/11 to recommend ways in which citizens can help. It meets monthly and all are welcome.

- v CERT Training – Community Emergency Response Teams – all volunteers. 20hrs training normal. – fighting small fires, S&R, first aid.
- v Community Outreach –Neighbor Network Program
- v Annual Community Disaster Preparedness Fair
- v National Preparedness Month in Schools & Senior Centers

You should be prepared at home, at school, at work and on the road. Most offices have no emergency plan. Tornado evacuation should NOT be by car – you could be trapped. Snow can also cover and hide cars. You should have a family communications plan including how to get emergency information and how to find each other if you become separated. Sources of information include

- ▶ Emergency Alert System
- ▶ NOAA All Hazards ALERT radio
- ▶ Very local radio stations: WNAV 1430 AM WYRE 810 AM WYPR 88.1 FM
WBAL 1090 AM El Zol 99.1 FM WFSI 107.9 FM
- ▶ Anne Arundel County Office of Emergency Management: 410-222-0600
- ▶ Anne Arundel County website: www.aacounty.org
- ▶ Anne Arundel Community Television: Channel 99

The most BASIC emergency kit contains: Water, Battery operated or hand-crank radio, Flashlights, Nutrition bars, Medication, and Spare batteries. Emergency alert radios are available for about \$30 at Radio Shack. Kits should include 1 gallon of water per person per day + pets. Store the kit in clean dry place and make sure it is easy to move. Rotate the supplies as they expire (every 6 months for water). Remember personal hygiene and copies of important papers. Detailed kit lists are available in a free booklet available from FEMA – visit www.FEMA.Gov/AreYouReady or call 1-800-480-2520. Also visit www.ready.gov and www.aacounty.org/oem

Volunteers – you can help by becoming part of a CERT, a Call Taker, EOC Support Staff, Shelter Staff, an Outreach Presenter, or the Volunteer Language Bank.

Business Meeting:

Minutes of Last Meeting were Approved subject to some Land Use edits by Dinny White. Final version will be posted on the website after Dinny's edits are added.

Treasurer's Report – Treasurer Lynne Rockenbauch reported Checking Acct Balance as of Oct 1 is \$ 31,523.28, Investment account balance \$35,084.81, total \$66,608.09. \$1,000 has been disbursed as a Stormwater Grant, and \$3180 has been disbursed to Winchester from that dedicated fund.

Old Business:

- Land Use – Zoning Update – Dinny White was absent but provided the following report via Bob Whitcomb: Dist 2, 3 & 5 no news – missed meeting.
 - Lisa Bender noted that **Bill ??** asked for R2 chg to R15 after 2 other changes (Jumpers Hole Rd) to permit a retirement community; this proposal will be presented to Carrollton Manor 10/22.
 - Ken Hatch reported that Richard Falk of the General's Highway Council has contacted a pro bono attorney, but they need some funds for filing fees, etc. The Wedding Chapel change is part of the suit, but the whole process is being challenged. They have collected about \$8,000 so far, and will refund any unused funds. They have parties with standing to sue.
 - Priest Pt – hope to file agreement tomorrow. SRLT is now actively working with developer Scott Peterson.
- Oyster Committee – Bob Whitcomb – Distribution of new spat was completed last week. The Oyster Recovery Project has met the order requested, but now we must document who has cages and get their contact information to keep them in touch with Maryland Grows Oysters. Coordination was a challenge – keeping spat alive was a great effort. We need to check MGO numbers against volunteer reports. Ray Dumentat asked for 80 bags for Herald Harbor but got only 65 – we still need to confirm that final number. 350 volunteers were involved. The Severn River has the most volunteers of any river in the program. Others have more cages via schools or other large organizations, but we have the most individual volunteers. Many more communities still need contact & motivation. Enthusiasm is high but we need to spread out.
- Phragmites Removal project in Plum Creek – Mike Robinson – Good turnout – Flood that washed out Old Herald Harbor Road also took out some of the stream bed. This was good timing in that it allowed us to prevent Phragmites from taking over after the native vegetation was damaged by the flood. AACounty has some funding for Phragmites removal. We did not spend the whole budget but did spend some money on herbicides. They did not use RoundUp – several other formulations are better for locations near water. They saw a bald eagle and much other wildlife. They plan to repeat the project next year – you need to repeat the same spot at least 2 more years to assure the Phragmites do not regenerate. The site needs to be monitored for regrowth. AACo encourages controlled burns for small areas, but this technique was not used.
- Jonas Green Park project – Bob Whitcomb – Tree planting was waiting on sewage upgrades which are now complete, so they are starting landscaping. Crepe Myrtles are planned soon.
- Oyster Sanctuary – We need divers to check our oyster reef for damage from Hurricane Irene. The Magothy River had no damage and experts felt it was not a concern, but we would like to check. Kern Hatch is a diver and volunteered to help with the evaluations.
- Operation Clearwater – no report. Dr. Hornor was not present.
- Severn School Run is set for 11/6 – please register at SevernSchool.org.
- Audit Committee – John Wright distributed the plan developed by the committee for an Operating Reserve fund. Kurt R moved to adopt the plan, Ken H seconded, motion passed.
- Membership Committee – John Wright – The Committee has some concern that getting email addresses via opt-in is too intrusive – direct mail is more responsible. Lisa Bender asked if direct

mail could include an opt-out provision. Opt-in is more acceptable from the meeting sign-in sheets, but outside sources are less responsible. Responders should only see the email author's address, not other recipient addresses. Bob Whitcomb suggested that the Log should have an option to get on list. Mike Robinson proposed that a letter once a year is reasonable, as has been done in the past – President Duane Wilding plans to send one very soon, hopefully with a questionnaire. Email blasts requesting renewals have not been as effective as a letter. Bob Whitcomb asked if he should send The Log to his Oyster volunteer; Kurt Riegel suggested sending them a link, not the Log. Kurt will work with Bob to do that.

- Stormwater Action Fund – no report. The Winchester Rain Garden project got good press and thanked SRA publicly in the Capital. Eloise Ullman wrote the article. Bob Whitcomb reminded all present that we are still looking for applicants.
- Bob Whitcomb - Horne Point Natural Shoreline project got 2 grants to SRA from CBT for 2 properties, \$7500 for prop of ?? and \$7100 for Keith ?? Projects are now on hold because two adjacent property owners want to participate also. A Common grant for both properties had been rejected last February.
- Evergreen Road Storm Water Remediation Project – Mike Robinson – This project is proceeding too slowly but there has been no public criticism. President Duane Wilding should spearhead this criticism. Duane pointed out that DPW Director Ron Bowen will be our speaker next month, and we should not embarrass him now by public criticism. Ann Pearson who wrote the original SRA grant request wants to move now. The Project was delayed by the need to devote DPW resources to developing the Watershed Implementation Plan to satisfy the EPA. Bob Whitcomb – Ron Bowen and Ginger Ellis have been prioritizing problem areas – we should ask for their list at our next meeting and see what Severn Projects are on it – Evergreen should of course be included.

New Business:

- Community News – (opportunity for Community Reps to share happenings in their community) –
 - John Wright – after recent storm damage, his community had a big meeting to review problems & solutions – there was much interest in rain barrels rain gardens.
 - Mike Robinson – Dr. Pierre Henkart is coordinating Oxygen studies of various RiverKeepers to further our understanding of how sediment affects oxygen levels. A small washout in his community took \$500 of gravel & dirt to correct. While the response by DPW was good, clearly there are good financial incentives to prevent more such damage.
 - Lisa Bender – Carrollton Manor had basement water damage from proximity to the community drainage pit (storm water pond).
 - Mike Robinson - Arden – Vet cem met with State Sen - >\$100K flood damage from cemetery runoff due to extensive regarding. Seemed open to suggestions for improvement. Sat maps show major tree removal – grass & marble not so good. Bob W – Oyster gardener who could'nt do it instead donated \$250 to SRA.
- Mike Robinson - Some Universities will give a free presentation on how to raise money to improve storm water management and treatment.
- Bob Whitcomb – Richard Klein of Community & Environmental Defense Services has offered to do a Watershed Audit of the Severn River. This is a survey of storm water management systems to document how well they are working and recommend action to improve their operation. There is no charge for the preliminary audit, and the results of this audit will be presented to the January meeting of the SRA. Ken Hatch was familiar with a similar audit done by them in Towson which he felt was a good program. The report concentrated on violations.
- Other Business –There was no other new business.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:07 pm.

Next Meeting: November 18 – Speaker: on Bowen, Anne Arundel County DPW. Topic – Watershed Implementation Plan for Anne Arundel County.