

2023 Jefferson County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

Hazard Mitigation Committee Kick-Off Meeting

May 24, 2023, 2:30 PM – 4:00 PM

Hospice of the Panhandle
330 Hospice Lane
Kearneysville, WV

Link to Recording:

https://mbakerintl-my.sharepoint.com/:v:/p/sheila_hicks/EeyhElsPIWtJgDGcSURNGJQBfiqEHUfbAVHt4fRyjB3o_A

Attendees

Jefferson County Mitigation Committee Members

Steve Allen
Thomas Butcher
Mason Carter
Sallie Edwards
Jon Freund
Jessica Gormont
Andrew Jenkins
Dick Myers
Kelly Parsons
Jeff Pippel
Terrence Reidy
Matt Vosika
Mason Weikle
Frank Welch
Monica Whyte
Joyce White (Virtual)
Stephanie Grove (Virtual)
Andy Beall (Virtual)
Andy Beall (Virtual)

Michael Baker

Mark James
Wes Stafford (Virtual)
Sheila Hick (Virtual)
Jeffrey Cragle (Virtual)

Smith Planning

Michelle King
Virginia Smith

Meeting Notes

1. Welcome and Introductions

Steve Allen. Mr. Allen explained that in order for the community to maintain eligibility for disaster assistance, updates to the hazard mitigation plan are necessary every five years. Mark James provided a brief background/introduction of himself and called for introductions of attendees. Mark went over the meeting agenda and explained that today we have upcoming exercises mainly to address the first three items in the plan. We want to gather feedback from attendees on the changes in hazard and risks since the last plan update in 2018. We will also look at Jefferson Counties capability to pass the assessment and the five-year plan review process.

2. Project Overview

- a. What is a Hazard Mitigation Plan and why do it? Plan is a community-driven, living document that communities use to reduce their vulnerability to hazards. Counties must have a plan to maintain access to mitigation grants. These grants can augment local mitigation activities already being accomplished and can leverage other funding sources.
- b. Plan Components – will maintain elements/format of 2018 Plan:
 - i. Introduction
 - ii. Risk Assessment
 - iii. Mitigation Strategy
 - iv. 5-Year Cycle

Question: Steve Allen - Would the mitigation strategy meeting be in July.

Answer: Mark James – Yes

Steve Allen explained Community Rating System (CRS) and the significance. Must submit reports annually to ISO Insurance Services Office saying this is what we found in that five year cycle each year. This helps get the citizens of Jefferson County a certain amount off flood insurance premiums.

3. 2023 Planning Process

- a. Plan Development and Participation
- b. Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee – State Agency Officials, Municipal & County Officials, Non Government Stakeholders – no recommended stakeholders when asked.
- c. Sub-Committee Opportunities
- d. Meetings (Every 4th Tuesday)
 - i. Kick-Off: May 24th - 1.5 hours
 - ii. Hazard Analysis / Risk Assessment : June 27th - 2 hours
 - iii. Mitigation Strategy: July 25th – 4 hours
 - iv. Draft Plan Review: August 22nd – 2 hours
- e. Public and Stakeholder Participation
- f. Obtain Mitigation Plan State and Federal Approval and Adoption

Steve Allen commented that July meeting will tentatively be held at the Ransom Civic Center, depending on availability.

Mark James noted that the Plan requires about a month of review by the State and then the federal government takes 45 days for their review. We will want to have it done by August, at the very latest September.

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Mark James stressed the importance of plan committee members to attend meetings, each month, provide local information, input on the plan, review the plan and develop mitigation actions.

Mark James noted new guidance that became effective in 2023. The major changes is the inclusion of equity climate change in this plan. It was partially addressed in the 2018 plan, but more analysis will be required. Also, we will be expanding on the capability assessment and plan integration portions of the plan.

Virginia Smith added that over the last year FEMA Region 3 has required this guidance to be used prior to it being effective. Municipalities cannot just sign off and adopt the plan at the end you have to participate, and we have to document your participation throughout the planning process. Municipalities will also have to identify mitigation action items (2) for each hazard. The County and municipalities must show that they have thought through this process. Another new change in the guidance: If you identify a hazard within the mitigation plan, you have to have at least one mitigation action item.

Question: Steve Allen - What does HAZUS stand for the for those in here, those of us who may not know what that acronym means.

Answer: Michelle King – Hazard in the US. FEMA developed software to calculate vulnerability using community specific data.

Steve Allen commented that August is Jefferson's County Fair in which a booth is staffed by the Local Emergency Planning Committee. This would be an excellent opportunity to get that word out to the public or even to hand out questionnaires. Also, suggested inclusion of plan updates in the monthly newsletter.

Virginia Smith noted that links to public survey can be sent through social media.

Question: Monica Whyte - Certain municipalities within Jefferson County are required/mandated by the state to have Source water protection plans that engage communities through emergency services or planning departments. Is there any way integrate Source Water Protection Plans and hazard mitigation plan? The County is due to update the Source Water Protection Plan by 2024. Anything that would help them and including those in their surveys or whatever?

Answer: Virginia Smith - we could address how the two plans could be integrated. We'll show you some ways and some language that you may want me to use too.

Steve Allen noted that one of the areas that we have to address climate change as well and this is how we could bring the two plans together.

4. Risk Assessment Overview and Hazard Review by Virginia Smith

- a. Identify Hazards – Previous & New
- b. Profile Hazards
- c. Rank Hazards
- d. Assess Vulnerability
- e. Hazard Profile Includes:
 - i. Location and Extent
 - ii. Range of Magnitude
 - iii. Past Occurrence
 - iv. Future Occurrence
 - v. Vulnerability Assessment

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Virginia Smith explained Exercise #1: Risk Evaluation and Identification and Mark James handed it out for completion. The purpose of the exercise is to evaluate previously profiled hazards and to identify any new hazards that may exist.

- Part 1: Note any changes in frequency, magnitude or geographic extent.
- Part 2: Evaluate list of hazards NOT profiled in existing HMP.

5. Capability Assessment

- a. Planning and Regulatory
- b. Administrative and Technical
- c. Financial
- d. Education and Outreach
- e. Participation in the NFIP
- f. Plan Integration

Virginia Smith explained Exercise #2: Capability Assessment Survey. The purpose of the exercise is to gather information used to evaluate jurisdictional capabilities and plan development.

Virginia Smith addressed Equity and Social Vulnerability and distributed an Equitable Services Survey requesting the following feedback from participants:

- Shifts in the Needs
- Included Social Equity and/or Vulnerability into Planning or Services
- Known Areas of Social Vulnerability

Also, this will be a good tool to determine if possible opportunities exist for partnerships across organizations, departments and agencies. Determine ways to best inform individuals in know areas of social vulnerability and decide which areas money should be spent.

Steve Allen added, heat in the summer and cold in the winter would be good example of hazards that could be weighted by equity – Getting information out and making resources available would be a priority.

Jefferson County Community Ministries is a good resource for this - providing shelter, along with shelter availability at the Civic Center, schools and United Way. Constructing a building for homeless people and families. Consider for inclusion under social equity. Invite a representative to be part of the planning process.

Monica Whyte commented that United Way, releasing a report on limited income constrained residents in the Eastern Panhandle with nationwide support (ALICE).

Virginia Smith requested that the County NFIP coordinator (Mason Carter) complete Exercise 4: NFIP Community Questionnaire. Mason Carter was in attendance and reviewed the NFIP form for completeness and will provide comments.

- Jefferson County, FEMA FIRM, effective date - December 18, 2009.
- Floodplain Management Ordinance language – Compliant with the current FIRM and FIS and available online at the County's website www.mapwv.gov/flood/map

6. Five-Year Plan Review

Questions for review:

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- How has the nature of hazard risk changed in the last five years? Is there new development?
- Are the current resources to implement mitigation actions sufficient?
- Are the fiscal, administrative, political, public support, capability, sufficient?
- Overall, what are the biggest obstacles to completing mitigation actions?

7. Next Steps and Action Items, by Mark James

Information and updates will be posted on County website.

| Task | Dates |
|---|----------------------------|
| Full Project Timeline | May 2023 – September 2023 |
| Kick Off Meeting | May 24, 2023 (TODAY) |
| Hazard Analysis / Risk Assessment | June 27 (Scheduled) – 2hrs |
| Mitigation Strategy | July 25 – 4hr Workshop |
| Plan Writing | June – August |
| Draft Plan Review Public Meeting | August 22 – 2hrs |
| Deliver to WVEMD/FEMA for Review | August 1 and September 1 |
| Distribute to Municipalities for Adoption | December |

Action Items

- Hazard Mitigation Committee
 - Completed Hazard Risk Evaluation
 - Complete Capability Assessment
 - Monitor Project Updates on County Website
- Project Planning Team
 - Update Project on County Website
 - Distribute Data Requests
- Ensure adjacent jurisdiction participation on planning committee.
- Invite Conservation District to Committee meetings.
- EM Director participated in a radio spot on May 24th which include Hazard Mitigation as a main topic.
- Newsletter sent at the 1st of each month by Emergency Management

Steve Allen gave final words. Will be in contact for next meeting in June. The press release about this meeting was published in *The Journal* newspaper. Additional opportunities for release of information to media outlets include: *Shepherdstown Chronicle* and *Spirit of Jefferson*.

Resources & Contact Information

Jefferson County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Project Website:

<https://www.jeffersoncountywv.org/county-government/departments/homeland-security-and-emergency-management>

Stephen S. Allen, Director sallen@jeffersoncountywv.org

Dick Myers, Deputy Director dmyers@jeffersoncountywv.org

Mark James - mark.james@mbakerintl.com

Virginia Smith - vsmith@smithp-d.com