

Notes from August CERT meeting

Called to order at 7:30 PM on August 22, 2022

Attendance: Melissa Barringer
Rachel Bush
Karen Scheuerer

Old Business:

By-law changes/updates. No one in attendance had any concerns with the changes or the wording. Even though a quorum was present we did not vote on accepting the by-laws because Mark Grisar had sent an email voicing his concerns and others had not weighed in. We hope to vote on the proposed by-laws at the September meeting.

Sandra Joseph has resigned from CERT after serving for more than five years. This leaves the position of training officer vacant. Rachel Bush offered to fill this position and was appointed by the President to fill the role until the election in May 2023.

There was a discussion of whether or not we had a quorum. Which led to the question of how many trained members we have. Sandra did not have any records from the current membership. This led to looking at the July attendance and a discussion of who had completed training that we know about. From this we concluded that we did have a quorum present.

FEMA training is online. One must register/create a login. IS stands for Independent Study. Karen has completed one of these modules. She said the test at the end of the module is tricky and she took it three times to pass. It does not give you feedback on which questions you answer incorrectly and when you retake the test the order of the questions changes/some are reworded.

Rachel plans to have a spreadsheet for people to record their training at the next meeting.

NEW Business

Recap of National Night Out. Reviewed the goal of engaging people about emergency preparedness and heat exhaustion. What went well was leaving the table and speaking to people who were milling around vs. sitting at the table. Our table location was in the full sun and it was a hot evening. Also the backpack "game" went well. This was a backpack with emergency supplies. There were two items missing from the list we provided. We used this as a way to get kids interested in emergency preparedness by letting them go through the backpack and challenging them about why certain items were in there as well as identifying which two items were missing.

Improvements/ What we should do differently for Public Safety Night: Being decisive about what literature to put on the table. There was extra stuff on the table at National Night Out because

when Melissa went to OEM to pick up the Heat Exhaustion flyer, Nayeli gave us a box with all kinds of materials.

Rachel and Melissa went through the CERT closet on August 12 and reorganized it. This included reorganizing the literature. We have three full tubs of literature and the tubs are labeled. When you open the tubs you will see dividers which are also labeled. There is a tub with Spanish materials.

Public Safety Night is from 5-9 on September 23. Discussed getting volunteers and realized that this is after our next scheduled meeting. Mark agreed to help set-up.

Creating a calendar for going forward with monthly meeting dates and community events. Decided to move the next meeting to the third Monday, September 19th. We also looked at the dates for November and December and decided that the fourth Monday of the month was not the best option being that they fall on a holiday weekend. We decided to move the monthly meeting to the third Monday of the month through the rest of the year. In January the third Monday is a holiday so we would move to the fourth Monday of the month beginning in January 2023. There was a proposal to move the meeting to Tuesday nights. Rachel would prefer Tuesdays. There are so few of us Melissa was reluctant to make that decision not wanting to change the meeting day and result in one of us being unable to attend. She will get feedback via email of the members. Changing the date and time will be discussed at the September meeting. There was also discussion about not meeting in December due to the holidays. We also discussed moving the start time to 7 PM.

There was discussion about bringing in a trainer and the logistics, would we have a longer meeting on nights with training?

Melissa emailed the Recreation committee this past Saturday asking about citywide events that CERT may be able to participate in. She had not received a response at the time of this meeting. Rachel thought that Robin used to be involved with the Recreation committee or maybe still was and might have the information we need. We discussed Public Safety Night in September, Halloween in October, possibly helping with food distribution with the city in November and telling people for example to change the batteries in their smoke detector or making sure they have a smoke detector. Christmas parade/Santa on Firetruck in December, City gives away toy for tots with a meal/Santa but that might not be something we want to participate in as CERT. Discussed FEMA's calendar of safety topics.

Insurance update. YES. We are covered by the city's insurance on p. 36 which states "All Volunteers, but only while acting within the scope of their authority and while providing the public service or performing the public duty for which they volunteered." Melissa reiterated that if a large tree falls blocking the street, you cannot put on your CERT vest and hardhat and remove that tree as a CERT volunteer unless CERT is activated by the police chief or the Mayor. If you go out as CERT without the authority of the police chief or mayor you will not be

covered under the city's insurance policy. You can, however, as a neighbor go help remove that tree in the capacity of being a good neighbor.

Melissa talked about two different levels of activation 1) helping the police with something 2) disaster scenario. Rachel asked if we have a phone tree. Melissa asked about text blasts. Rachel suggested creating a google doc with each member's information that could be available in the google group. Karen asked if we had a list from Mount Rainier Day. She said they collected names of people who were interested in knowing more/joining CERT. The three of us at this meeting do not know what happened to that list.

Karen would like to provide more information about what CERT is. Melissa said that we had an article in the August message and said she had not seen it. Did it come out? Has anyone seen it? Karen found CERT through the city website and suggested updating that. Rachel suggested that one month instead of a regular meeting, have an open house and each member is tasked with bringing two people to the meeting to learn more about CERT/increase membership.

Financial Update. Our budget is \$2500. Melissa spent \$31 on National Night Out. She purchased a whiteboard, dry erase markers and a case of 40 water bottles. She suggested buying a 2 CPR mannequins; one adult and one infant. The cost of the adult is \$112 and the cost of the infant is \$156. Melissa brought a homemade CPR "dummy." using a stuffed shirt and a 2 liter bottle. Karen Schurerer made a motion to purchase one adult CPR mannequin and one infant CPR mannequin. Robin Bush seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Rachel asked does Hyattsville have CERT? And suggested participating in Zombie Run. Discussed which CERTs are active near us. Melissa reported that it is us and Upper Marlboro. Karen said she has seen a big SUV with a CERT decal on the side over in Colmar Manor. Melissa read an email from Rasheed which praised different CERT teams for participating in National Night Out. He went to Clinton and Nayelie attended Upper Marlboro. Melissa said there used to be more CERTs active in our county but when the pandemic hit with the stay at home order some of these groups did not revitalize. We discussed having an outreach coordinator. Karen said she would like to head this up. Melissa appointed Karen to be the head of the Community Relations & Outreach Committee. Rachel suggested that we do our roles together/sharing ideas and certainly we will all be working together as a team to accomplish the goals we set out. Rachel would like to bring in a trainer at the October meeting and this led to a question about whether or not the meeting time would be extended when we do have an outside trainer. Discussed paying the trainer a gratuity and Melissa suggested reaching out to Lt. Simms for a list of possible trainers. We did not identify a training topic

First Aid kit is lacking. Items need to be labeled. Rachel threw out expired meds. Melissa said she would request a first aid kit through the city, the same one that the police carry around in their police car. Rachel expressed concern about giving out over the counter medication. If we did this then we are implying as CERT that we have some kind of medical understanding of their

situation. She said as a neighbor she might feel okay giving someone an aspirin for a headache, but is it appropriate as CERT? We are not medical professionals and she wouldn't want someone to walk away thinking that they got the okay for their condition when maybe they aren't okay.

Karen suggested drafting an Agenda for the next meeting

Public Safety Night

Update from Training Officer

Community Outreach Brainstorming

Review calendar/events

Google doc lives in group with all of our contact info and training

Pull out literature for Public Safety Night/Get things together for

Next meeting is September 19th at 7:30

Meeting adjourned 8:25 PM