

CERT Meeting Notes, 8-28-23

The meeting was called to order at 7:31

Attendees: Melissa, Karen, Tim, Danielle, Mark, Officer Cruz, Explorer Cruz Reyes, and Explorer Albert

A special appearance was made by Police Chief Alston, who reinforced the Department's appreciation of CERT's community contributions.

Among other things, the Chief led a discussion of how to eliminate speeding and running stop signs. A Stop Sign Camera program is coming to Mt. Rainier to stop the transgressors.

The Chief has instructed Parking Enforcement to allow unmetered parking on a section of Rhode Island Ave. during monthly CERT meetings.

Danielle is working with City Manager Kamali and City Council to make parking passes available to CERT members during CERT meetings.

The Deployment Committee reported that it is making progress in setting up walkie-talkie communications for use during emergencies. Melissa and Mark have tested the devices, along with Repeater (amplifier), and determined that in order to have coverage across the City an antenna is required. Melissa is ordering that piece of equipment soon. Mark spoke to Melvin Mason, a ham radio operator, of Upper Marlboro CERT about the repeater issues. Melvin tells us that the repeater has to have an antenna. It is not optional.

Tim is developing an easily readable map of Mt. Rainier that will clearly show rally points, throughout the town, for us to assemble in an emergency.

The Evacuation Committee met recently and a report on their progress will be forthcoming.

Discussion moved to a review of our Annual Goals, which we named last January.

1. We have established collaboration with other area CERT teams (Upper Marlboro, Cheverly, University Park), with the City administration and Police Department. We have yet to establish anything with the fire department and we are re-doubling efforts to do so.
2. We are on track to be a presence at at least one public event per quarter. So far: Easter Egg Hunt, Mt. Rainier Day, 5k Run, Mt. Rainier Elementary School carnival, and National Night Out. We are planning to be present at Public Safety Night on September 22, and to participate in the Police Department's Halloween Trunk or Treat Event.
3. We have hosted two public training events so far: Active Shooter and Narcan. We plan to do a CPR/ First Aid training and a training on how to evacuate your home in the event of an emergency to meet our goal of one per qtr.
4. Our efforts to double CERT's membership and double our number of lead responders from 5 to ten have fallen short. We will be re-visiting our strategies to accomplish these two goals.
5. CERT member training for crowd and traffic control is in the planning stages and we hope to complete this by the end of the year.
6. We have been providing regular (monthly) communications to the community regarding our activities and opportunities for engagement. Our web site is up to date but how many people know about it? We may develop a one page bilingual flyer for distribution at places like Glut, City Hall and other locations. Looking for other ideas.

During open discussion CERT member Tim Jenkins shared some of his ideas. He tried to pair the newer radio walkie-talkie with the

old radio and after researching decided that it wasn't worth the effort or expense. It was suggested that we donate the old radios to a boy scout troop.

Tim also shared his experience at National Night Out. He said many people have expressed interest in being trained to use Narcan and suggested that we host another public training event.

Tim offered to post links to our CERT website on the city's Facebook page as a way to reach out and let the community know about us.

Open discussion also included what the ask is for the fire department, how we can support them and how they can support us. Mark will reach out to Firefighter Hines about setting up a meeting between the Fire Dept and the CERT officers.

Upcoming training and events:

- September 9 Field Day (11311 Dille Dr. Upper Marlboro) Pre-registration required; lunch provided
- September 22 Public Safety Night 5-8
- September 25 next CERT meeting
- October 20 – 22 CERTCON
- October 23 CERT meeting

The meeting adjourned at about 8:35.