

MINUTES
HARVEY COUNTY LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE (LEPC)
EOC Meeting Room (Basement of LEC)
120 E. 7th Street
Newton, Kansas 67114
February 14th 2024 @ 9:00 am

Present: Larry Alexander, Mike Anderson, Gloria Arellano, Skip Cowan, Jamie Dehler, Craig Dunlavy, Kyle Feidler, Brody Flavin, Daniel Keane, Lona Kelly, Colton Kester, Jim Leftwich, Kyle McCaskey, Brian Palmer, Molly Redinger, Becky Reimer, Steve Roberson, Karen Rothe, Anthony Swartzendruber, Jason Thompson, Chris Utter

Brody Flavin called the meeting to order at 9:00am.

Mr. Flavin asked the committee if anyone had any questions about the agenda, no questions or concerns were brought forth, Mr. Flavin then accepted the agenda without a motion. **Agenda Approved.**

Mr. Flavin then asked for a motion to accept the minutes from the December 2023 meeting, Skip Cowen made a motion to accept the agenda as presented, Steve Roberson seconded the motion, **Minutes Accepted.**

1. Presentation -

- Mike Anderson then introduced our presenter for this meeting, KWCH Storm Spotter Scott Roberts. Mr. Roberts then spoke to the group about his presentation titled, “The Case for Mobile Storm Spotters.” During his talk, Scott asked if any of us had specific dealings with “storm chasers” vs. storm spotters? He went on to explain that there is a difference in the language and how those two separate groups are not similar in their desire to educate, vs the desire to chase the big funnel. Scott then gave four examples of a time that he experienced storms and what a “Storm Spotter” who is educated on the weather and what to look for, was able to handle them. The storms he mentioned were in:

Moore, Oklahoma

Dodge City, Kansas

Greensburg, Kansas

Andover, Kansas

Mr. Roberts ended his presentation by detailing some of the things you should do if you find yourself out doors when a storm is approaching, he also shared one of his passions

for pets and their rescue and recovery after an incident. He also shared with the group that there is a specific kit just for this purpose at ready.gov

Scott then opened up the floor to questions.

Gloria Arellano asked Scott, “How do they handle storms at night when they can’t see the road in front of them.” Mr. Roberts advised they choose not to chase at night and that has been something he has learned the hard way over the years in too many close calls with tornados. He has made the decision to stay safe at home but even some day storms can turn bad quickly and you need to make a fast decision. Steve Roberson then asked, “With the construction of newer vehicles is it now safer to actually buckle yourself in tighter and ride out the storm in your car?” Scott advised that he can’t speak for most vehicles but it is definitely a better alternative than getting out and laying down in a ditch, or under a bridge. Jim Leftwich then questioned Scott on whether he works with local storm spotters, agency ones, or just on his own. Scott clarified that he does in fact work mainly on his own but not as much as he used to, however he is always open to working in a group.

2. Old Business:

- **None to address at this time.**

3. New Business:

- Mike Anderson then took the floor to ask what the group thought about using our LEPC meetings to venture out to partner business sites? The idea is to alternate months so that we get a chance to go out and see what other organizations can offer to Harvey County as far as a resource. An example would be the upcoming meeting in April would be at the Newton Airport and that we would keep it light and a quick meeting so that we could tour the facility but on months that we are back in the EOC those would be more structured. With Gloria Arellano voicing the first agreement, Molly Redinger added she felt it would be a good change of pace. No one disagreed so Mike advised that from now on in his emails with the LEPC members he would state the location and if anyone would like to offer their spot to please let him know in advance and we can set that tour up as well.
- Skip Cowan then took the floor to talk about the upcoming “Storm Fury on the Plains” presentation that the Emergency Management Department would be hosting with the National Weather Service. They advised the time, date and location if anyone would like to join. It was added that the State Wide

Tornado Drill will be held on March 6th at 11am so please be prepared for that as well.

- 4. Adjournment:** Brody Flavin then asked if any of the committee members had any further questions, as none were brought forth Mr. Flavin adjourned the meeting at 9:57am with no motion or second made.

**Next Meeting April 10th 2024 – Newton City-County Airport
810 N. Oliver Rd.
Newton, Kansas 67114**