

**CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS FEMA TRAINING
DECEMBER 08, 2010 @ 6:00 PM
FIRE DEPARTMENT TRAINING ROOM
MINUTES**

A. CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Mayor Reggiani called the Council Work Session to order after dinner at 6:33 pm on December 08, 2010 in the Fire Department Training Room.

B. ROLL CALL

Present for roll call were *Vice-Mayor Reggiani*, Council members *Jim Kacsh*, *Bret Bradford* and *Robert Beedle*. Absent from the training were *Mayor James Kallander*, Council members *Keith van den Broek*, *David Allison*, and *EJ Cheshier*. Also present were Deputy City Clerk *Robyn Kincaid* and Disaster Response Coordinator *Dick Groff*.

C. WORK SESSION TOPIC

1. FEMA Training Session

Dick Groff opened the meeting by introducing the three Home Land Security presenters; *Michael O'Hare*, Deputy Director; *Kerry Seifert*, Preparedness Emergency Management Specialist II; and *Mark Passmore*, Emergency Management Specialist II. He thanked them for coming to train the elected leaders on what to do when a disaster happens. *Seifert* started off explaining why they selected this particular course (FEMA 351, "Who's in Charge" Course) for this training and gave an overview. *Seifert* explained that they are from the State not the Federal departments. However, if people from FEMA come to town they probably are Alaskans, they like to hire locally, so they will be more acquainted with the demographics of the state. He said the State of Alaska Emergency Plan was written in 2004 and is currently being re-written. But the fact that the responsibility for planning and preparing for a disaster is in the hands of the individuals and heads of households will not change. The FEMA website has emergency response courses and prepared plans available. He emphasized that Cordova has a really good Emergency Response plan. It is important that City officials and leaders be well informed of their roles and steps to be taken in an emergency. The community will be taking care of the critical things for the first 72-hours and will rely on those leaders to know what to do. How well the community is prepared for a disaster will directly affect how well they will be able to respond and recover from a disaster. Typically at the local level the rescue, treatment, law enforcement, personal protection, restoration of critical infrastructure and sheltering are taken care of at the local level before receiving any outside assistance. Also the community will control the hazards, manage resources, developing incident action plans and determine needs and short-falls. He added that in the Alaska Shield drill he was impressed that Cordova has about forty Mutual Aide Agreements (MAA) or Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) that go through an annual review. Responsibilities should be mapped out in job descriptions of staff and by state statute. He explained that "authority" and "responsibility" have touchy lines drawn that should be known. This should be defined in your Emergency Response Plan. *Kacsh* stated that in the past the Mayor has been the one to declare a disaster which allowed for quick relief. *Seifert* responded that the Mayor has the authority to call it a disaster but it's the Emergency Managers responsibility to train and prepare the community and its leaders. *Joanie Behrends* and *Richard Groff* are both trained trainers and can offer many EOC (Emergency Operations Center) training classes in Cordova without bringing in someone else. Typically the EOC is not staffed by first responders, others need to step up and be trained, because the responders will be out in the field. He added that tribal entities must work with the City on disaster planning. The state will communicate with the City unless

the City has signed the responsibility over to the tribe. He presented the Council with an incident response flow chart and a flow chart of the hierarchy in an incident. **Beedle** asked if the charts have to be strictly followed. **Seifert** responded that there could be some local judgments made based on the incident but the chart should be followed as close as possible. **O'Hare** introduced the section of the training "What the State can do for you" the state's role in the emergency recovery process for you. **Beedle** asked if they will help with grants after the incident. **O'Hare** responded that they will be there from start to finish. They are not there to take over but to act as guides and assistants. He said it is their job to set up communications where there are none. Disaster Policy Cabinet is all of the commissioners and department heads decide if the event is large enough to escalate the disaster declaration and aide. The Governor can amend or suspend the status of the incident, certain orders, regulations or permits as required for response to the disaster and providing recovery from the disaster at any point in time. There are MAA's with other communities and States for assistance if needed. Beyond the Governor and the MAA's is the Federal Government aide. **Beedle** asked how many incidents they can support at a time. **Seifert** responded that it depends on the incidents, as each incident may not need a lot of help. He added that they are there to help as needed. **O'Hare** stated that Alaska is great at taking care of itself. The last 22 federally declared disasters in Alaska only resulted in the loss of 4 lives. **Groff** mentioned that HAM radio is available and always running. **O'Hare** agreed that HAMM radio is always a last resort and is always an option. They discussed the communications concerns in Cordova and the issues that should and are being considered.

The training had a 5-minute recess from 8:00 pm to 8:05 pm

Seifert stated that a verbal or written Declaration of a Disaster is available. A sample of the written version is available in the incident management plan book. **Groff** pointed out that Cordova's Emergency Response plan has a template for easy locating. **O'Hare** added that they can and will help with the wording in order to help increase the funding and aide availability. **Beedle** asked to have the 7-days limit clarified. **Seifert** and **O'Hare** offered that any disaster declaration is good for 7-days, if it needs to be continued the governing body must meet and decide to extend the disaster declaration. **Seifert** reiterated that their job is to help get the wording on the declaration to maximize the funding or communications or organization. **O'Hare** added that all process can be trumped at a no-brainer incident for immediate response. Meaning it doesn't have to go slowly up the chain of command. The Governor can declare it as a disaster at any point in time in order to get help on the ground faster. **Seifert** stated that in an incident don't wait for money. Take pictures, keep receipts, and start fixing up your town. Use the reserves at hand to get the process started. **Passmore** presented "Responding to the Incident". He stated that they deal with City, Tribal, non-profit and State agencies strictly. Meetings will be held to determine which projects should be tackled and when. For insurances it is required that the City pay first before State or Federal funding can be applied. Cost estimates must be submitted before funding can be given for the projects. They discussed the difference between a small project and a large project in regards to funding. **Passmore** explained that any funding given to the City will be expected to be used to make things like they were before. If the road washes out and you want to put it in a different place you'll have to do it without the extra funding. They will only fund for the road to go right back where it was before the incident. They are authorized to give 75% of the project's funding right up front. The other 25% is held back until the project is completed and inspected. Each project has a "project worksheet" which acts as a contract for the project and will keep the funding reimbursement process moving smoothly. Project worksheets can be appealed and amended through a process. They can also do a temporary fix on a project just to get things operating and then later do a permanent fix to the project. There is a 60-day window where damages need to be reported for reimbursement. If there is insurance

on the building they get hit up first then the emergency funding will pick up the rest. *Beedle* asked if a building was grandfathered in would the funding cover bringing it up to code. *Passmore* responded that it would with some special exceptions and added that cost estimates must be feasible. *Kacsh* stated that the Council member's actions will help the community members get reimbursed too. *Seifert* stated that they are there to assist through the process. If you need assistance from the State, you ask for assistance from the State, you will get assistance from the State. *Passmore* added that they can help prepare before the incident too. *Reggiani* thanked the team for coming. *Groff* stated that the team would be available the following morning if anyone would like to meet with them. *Beedle* asked where they could go for more information. *Seifert* responded that their State website and the FEMA websites have lots of information and resources available for free.


D. COUNCIL COMMENTS – none

E. ADJOURNMENT

M/Bradford S/Kacsh to adjourn the regular meeting at 9:20 pm
Hearing no objection, the meeting was adjourned.

Approved: August 3, 2011

Attest:



Robyn Kincaid, Deputy City Clerk