



CERT ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS
CONFERENCE CALL – MAY 6, 2019 / 1:00PM
MEETING MINUTES

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Dan Martin called the meeting to order at 1:03pm and welcomed those on the call. Roll call was taken and the following were on the call:

- Balla, Tonya – Mundelein Fire Department
- Billings, Trish – Milton Township
- Clifford, Kurt – Hanover Township Emergency Services
- Crawford, David – Northbrook Fire Department
- Drendel, Beth – North Aurora Police Department
- Drotot, Sheri – Cumberland County
- Geraci, Chuck – Village of Alsip
- Hanneken, Michelle – Serve Illinois Commission
- James, Randy – South Lake County Regional CERT
- Luecht, Steve – Northbrook Fire Department
- Martin, Dan – Village of New Lenox
- McKellar, Andy – Madison County Emergency Management
- Racilla, Megan – Huntley Police Department
- Rodriguez, Edgar – McDonough County ESDA
- Small, Marc – Long Grove Fire Protection District
- Sobanski, Malwina – Addison Police Department
- Stejskal, Pat – Fremont Township
- Stevens, Jack – Naperville Fire Department
- Tubbs, Latesha – City of Chicago Office of Emergency Management and Communications
- Wenzel, Mickey – South Lake County Regional CERT
- Wilson, Rich – Buffalo Grove Fire Department

APPROVAL OF APRIL 8, 2019 CONFERENCE CALL MINUTES

Dan advised that the Minutes from the April 8, 2019 Conference Call were previously distributed to members via email. Dan asked for a motion to approve the Minutes. Trish Billings made a motion to approve the Minutes, followed by a second from Jack Stevens. There was no discussion following the motions and the Minutes were approved by a voice vote with no objections.

NETWORKING

Dan Martin advised that he has created a **group email** for the CERT Association of Illinois. Dan noted that secondary personnel from each of the teams are being added and we've also had a number of additional teams / representatives added as well.

Dan also noted that an **Excel document** has been created for membership. As the document is revised, it will be shared with Association members.

Michelle Hanneken talked about "**Basecamp.**" Michelle advised that it's essentially a message board that our membership can use to post questions and documents (meeting agendas, meeting minutes...) relevant to our Association. Michelle noted that once an "invite" is sent out to everyone, individuals can go in and edit their preferences in the settings tab. Michelle cautioned not to reply to emails that are sent out UNLESS you want the whole group to see your reply. There will likely be a learning curve for the group, but it definitely could prove to be a useful tool. Michelle advised that she will send out the "invitations" to join in the near future. The "invitations" will be user / email specific and obtained through the Excel document that Dan is keeping up-to-date. In addition, Michelle advised she will also post a user's guide at the site.

A **Facebook page (or group)** for the Association was briefly discussed. This would be another useful tool that our Association could utilize to communicate with members and others interested in CERT. Trish Billings from Milton Township advised that she is an admin for the Milton Township Facebook Group and would be willing to help. In addition, Tonya Balla from Mundelein CERT also said that she would be willing to assist. Dan advised that he would reach out to Trish and Tonya regarding getting something started. Michelle also offered to allow the use of the Illinois Citizen Corps Council Facebook Page if it wished, as it's currently not really being used for anything.

A short discussion was also held regarding a future **web site** for the CERT Association of Illinois. Dan mentioned that although much of the communication would be done via social media, a web site will also be a useful and needed tool. The web site would be a location where documents would be stored, information about conferences, links to other CERT-related pages, etc... Dan asked if anyone had any experience with standing up a web site (securing a domain, building the page, etc...). There was no one with experience in this area. As such, this is an item that will require additional research and thought.

A short discussion was held regarding a **newsletter** for the CERT Association of Illinois. The initial thought would be that the newsletter could be quarterly and would highlight the Association's events and activities. Kurt Clifford from Hanover Township Emergency Services advised that he would be willing to assist with a newsletter as our Association moves forward. In addition, Sherri Drotot from Cumberland County advised that she would be willing to help as well.

The **sharing of best practices and ideas** (training, funding, marketing, recruitment, tracking of volunteer hours, community events, volunteer recognition, SOP, etc...) was briefly discussed. It was noted that "Basecamp" will be a very useful tool for our Association for the sharing of this information. It was noted that the sharing of information, by-way-of communication ("Basecamp," web site, Facebook, newsletter, etc...) will help all of our teams and will help raise the bar in Illinois with regard to CERT. Dan encouraged everyone on the conference call to share information and questions as it's a way for everyone involved to learn.

TRAINING

The date and location for the **2019 Prairie State CERT Challenge** was announced. It will be Saturday, September 21, 2019 and will be held at the Cook County Public Health Facility in Oak Forest, IL (formerly known as "Oak Forest Hospital." The facility is located at 159th St. & Cicero Ave., and is accessible from I-57, I-294, and I-80. Dan advised that as planning for the event moves forward, additional details will be provided. In addition, it was highly recommended that Teams / Members participate in this event.

Teams were encouraged to extend invitations to other teams to attend their local training events.

This information can be communicated via "Basecamp" or email at this time. From a learning and networking standpoint, it will be great to see teams / members training together.

It was discussed that as we move forward, **the CERT Association of Illinois could also host training events.** Dan noted that training would not have to be as formal as the Prairie State CERT Challenge. It could be as simple as choosing a topic, instructor(s), and a location for a Saturday morning session. The discussion also included having a small group of Association members (perhaps some on the conference call) generate some ideas for a training. Again, this would be something relatively informal, hosted by our Association, that would have training and networking value.

ANNUAL (TRAINING) CONFERENCE

A short discussion was held regarding **our Association hosting an Annual Training Conference.** Dan advised everyone on the call to be on the lookout for speakers / presenters as they attend their own respective conferences. Presentations about CERT and various emergency management disciplines would be ideal. Dan used the CERT National Conferences as examples of how our conference could be organized, including a large-scale drill involving conference attendees. Marc Small from Long Grove Fire Protection District, Trish Billings from Milton Township, and Edgar Rodriguez from McDonough County all advised they would be willing to help with an Annual Conference. On a related note, Dan also encouraged everyone on the call to attend the National CERT Conference in 2020, which will be held in Missouri. Undoubtedly, many ideas will be generated from attending that particular conference.

MUTUAL AID

The group briefly discussed **Mutual Aid.** One of the things that has previously been noted is the fact that there is no "formalized" structure for CERTs in Illinois. Many teams are activated through their local jurisdictions, but often times not beyond their jurisdictional boundaries. This can be frustrating for trained CERT volunteers that are willing to travel to help with tornado, flooding, and other disasters because CERTs are not formally requested to assist. Moving forward, relationships may be developed with:

- Serve Illinois
- Illinois Emergency Management Agency
- Illinois Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (IL VOAD)
- Northeast Illinois Community Organizations Active in Disaster (NEAL COAD)
- Others (Fire, Police, EMA, Public Works, etc... Associations)

Michelle, as well as Edgar Rodriguez, noted that the Illinois Public Works Mutual Aid Network (IPWMAN) is a good example of how Mutual Aid *could* work. Everyone was encouraged to take a look at IPWMAN's website <https://www.ipwman.org/> to see how they are organized.

It was noted that there may be some legal challenges that need to be looked at as a formalized Mutual Aid structure is developed.

MEMBERSHIP

Association Membership was discussed, in part, to provide some direction for our By-Laws. The following types of membership were included in the discussion:

- **Team Membership**
 - To be a member, the candidate must be a member of a recognized team (in good standing with Illinois Citizen Corps Council and FEMA)?

When asked, it seemed that all teams represented on the call were all in good standing.

- **Individual Membership**
 - Must be affiliated with a recognized team?
 - Anyone that has completed the Basic CERT Course? FEMA online course?
 - Someone who has completed the CERT Train-the-Trainer Course?
 - Anyone with the advancement of CERT in Illinois?

It was agreed upon that for Individual Membership, someone who has completed the FEMA online course *could* be eligible for membership, but they should be encouraged to take the in-person Basic CERT Course at their earliest convenience. This minimum requirement will be important for members when they attend training and other CERT Association of Illinois events so they will understand the basics.

- **Corporate Membership**
 - A business (example – ProPac) that supports the mission of CERT and / or the CERT Association of Illinois?

These suggestions all will be taken into consideration when the By-Laws are drafted. In addition, everyone will have an opportunity to review the draft By-Laws, including the section that will pertain to Membership.

ORGANIZATION OF ASSOCIATION

In addition to the discussion about Association Membership, a discussion was held regarding **how the** Association would be organized. This discussion was held, in part, to provide some direction for our By-Laws.

- **Board of Directors**
 - Number of Directors and from what region? An example might include 2-3 Directors from the Northern Region, 2-3 from the Central Region and 2-3 from the Southern Region. It might also be prudent to have Directors “At-Large” to take advantage of other skill sets. It was agreed upon that a 9 to 11 Board of Director range would be ideal.
- **Structure**
 - By Region? An example might include the North, Central and South.

- **Executive Board**
 - Will the Board of Directors have an Executive Board? Examples might include a President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. Other examples might include Past President, President, 1st Vice-President, 2nd Vice-President, 3rd Vice President, etc...
 - What might term limits look like? Examples might include one year in each position or no term limits.
- **Committees**
 - Will there be Committees? Examples might include Membership, By-Laws, Nomination, Training, Communication. Everyone was encouraged to start thinking about the types of Committees that would be useful and to start thinking if they would be interested in a Chair position. The idea is to get folks involved in areas where they have an interest.

BY-LAWS

On the first call, Latesha Tubbs from the City of Chicago Office of Emergency Management and Communications graciously agreed to take the lead in drafting the By-Laws. Marc Small and Randy James also agreed to assist Latesha with this effort. Dan will reach out to Latesha for the purpose of organizing a meeting with this ad hoc group.

NOT-FOR-PROFIT / 501 (C) (3) STATUS

Gayle Lundeen graciously agreed to take the lead in this area, but was not able to participate in this call. Beth Drendel from North Aurora advised that her husband is an attorney who has experience in this area. Beth advised that she would speak to her husband about this effort. Dan thanked Beth for her offer and will follow-up with Beth's husband on Gayle's behalf to get things going.

ESTABLISHMENT OF DATABASE FOR TEAM RESOURCES

Dan asked Edgar Rodriguez to explain what he had in mind with regard to creating a geographic database of Association Members. It could include other areas such as resources and much more. Dan will ask members for the proper name of their organization, under which their CERT is structured. In addition, Dan will ask that everyone send an updated address. After this information is collected, Dan will send the Excel document to Edgar so he could start mapping where everyone is located. This information will be very useful in determining training locations, conference locations, where recruitment efforts are needed and so on.

MISCELLANEOUS

Karen Flanagan / Elgin CERT: Teen CERT (as well as Basic CERT) training content needs updating. Cited the example of including Stop the Bleed in the curriculum. No one on the call knew *exactly* when the new curriculum would be released. At the National Conference in Naples, FL FEMA advised that they would distribute all printed materials before releasing the new materials.

Karen Flanagan / Elgin CERT: Recently attended the Illinois Safe School Conference. There is a series of emergency preparedness training courses for K-12 as well as higher education institutions now available. The courses were developed by Ron Ellis who served as the Director for the School and Campus Security Training Program that was co-sponsored by the Illinois State Board of Education, ITTF and ILEAS.

NEXT CONFERENCE CALL OF IN-PERSON MEETING

A discussion ensued about whether to have the next "meeting" as a conference call or as an in-person meeting. Edgar Rodriguez will be mapping where everyone is located and perhaps that will help

determine where the in-person meeting. Either way, Dan will send out a Doodle Poll with a number of date and time options.

ADJOURNMENT

The conference call ended at 2:07pm.