

Talbot County

Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) Minutes

April 24, 2025, 10 AM, Talbot Operations Center

Attendees: Geneva Schaffle (DES), Madison Loker (DES), Katie Stafford (DES), Rich Taylor (TCHD) Kurt Fuchs (Easton Utilities), Ben Pittsley (Social Services), Dave Johnson (Bayleigh Chase), Tina Kintop (DES), Joe Gamble (TCSO), Erin Lewis (Chesapeake Center), Geoff Searle (Red Cross), Christy Ralph (RACES), Bob Luff (RACES)

Welcome and Introductions:

Schaffle introduces the beginning of LEPC and its importance. She announces that the Agricultural Center was unable to attend today to give their planned presentation and that she will be covering the presentation section. She will present on DES's current COOP planning process using Tetra Tech's pre-made presentation (current COOP vendor).

Talbot Presentation

Talbot County's COOP plan is being revamped to follow requirements and to accurately depict ever-changing technology and practices within emergency response. Schaffle stresses the importance of COOP for Talbot County and provides examples of when and where our COOP plan would be used, not just for DES, but for all county departments and stakeholders. Schaffle reviews COOP lingo such as mission essential functions, life cycle of the COOP process, and delegation of authority if an emergency were to occur. Schaffle emphasized the difference in essential functions between each department and the ongoing writing process. Schaffle asks participating departments to speak on their experience during this updating writing process. Chief Kintop with DES & Sheriff Gamble spoke on their experience and shared that the new reliance on technology can lead to failures, but that they have plans if any technology failures were to occur. Dave Johnson with Bayleigh Chase asks if the COOP frameworks and plan can be trained on & how that occurs. Rich Taylor with the Talbot County Health Department responded that he can share his newly written plan and how easy it is to create and scale exercises. Bob Luff expresses his concern about high-level flooding and whether they will be added to the new CAD system for first responders to view.

Emergency Services Report Out

911: Talbot Dispatch is now on 24/72 shifts but still located at Port St., but will be moving to Mary Ct around fall or winter. Dispatch will be getting a new CAD system, which will improve the capabilities and abilities of dispatching. Dispatch is fully staffed and not expecting any upcoming hirings. DES Admin is now located at Mary's Ct, and technology is being put in, and the parking lot extension is underway.

EMS: Talbot County EMS has just received a new ambulance that was put in around COVID (2020), and has just put in for two more units to be added to the fleet. EMS is looking to replace cardiac monitors to a new upgraded technology (PAC 35), EMS peer support program is growing and is taking great stride within our first responder community, EMS Week is upcoming, EMS crews will be checking AED units throughout the county as there are around 300 units, EMTs have been accepted into the LEOPS program, and EMS will be hiring in the upcoming months. A new EMS station is being built within the Cordova Chapel District to ensure quicker response time on that side of Talbot County.

EM: Loker discussed upcoming trainings, upcoming CERT classes, the idea of a blood drive this summer, announced our new Pet Preparedness segment that will be happening in June, and asked if anyone would like to volunteer for the St. Michael's running festival to assist with road closures.

GIS: Stafford further explains the CAD system and the new additions to the CAD system that will better assist dispatchers and citizens, such as the common name of places.

Round Table

Dept of Social Services: Upcoming shelter exercise on June 18th, and still discussing the magnitude of the drill.

Easton Utilities: Easton Utilities have been requested by mutual aid due to increasing negative weather in surrounding regions. They reported that they can use MOUs during a time of emergency here in Talbot, and there were lessons learned from their recent response to other jurisdictions

Sheriff's Office: Sheriff's office reports that they also have MOUs in case of emergency, they have moved to Mary's Ct. and are currently building a Sally Port where there will be a spare EMS unit & the ability to bring prisoners there securely. Reports on Deputy Masterman's passing and invites anyone to his funeral today at 2 pm. They are looking to hire one school resource officer and one deputy for their department. Reports that crime in Talbot is about the same amount as last year and further emphasizing the importance of the new CAD system for the law enforcement response and data collection.

Health Department: Followed up on the importance of an internal & external COOP plan and their recent assistance with the Active Shooter Drill at Easton UMMS

Bayleigh Chase: Currently planning evacuation drills as well as their quarterly fire drill, took DES critiques from last drill, and updated their emergency plans

RACES: Recently, they had an event where they took out their RACES trailer and contacted various countries, outer space, and other far-distance responses. Their event was a big success and drew a lot of positive public response. Bob Luff reminded DES of the need for future antennas at Mary's Ct for RACES continuation.

American Red Cross: Discussed the resources available to us as well as their response to fires and other events

Chesapeake Center: Working on creating new plans and requesting DES assistance to observe and wanted to note the changing needs of the residents with their care