



Town of Los Altos Hills

Emergency Preparedness and Response Committee

Special Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 6th, 2023 6:00 pm. PDT

1. Call to order, start recording [6:00pm]

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kearney.

2. Roll call of members [6:00pm]

Member	Status	Comment
Chair Terry Kearney (TK)	present	
Vice-chair Ben Gikis (BG)	present	
Secretary Dave Stewart (DS)	present	
Jim Basiji (JB)	present	
Phil Harter (PH)	present	
Amita Sachdeva (AS)	present	
Sam Wood (SW)	present	
Associate Victoria Bebee (VB)	absent	Excused, meeting conflict
Associate Neil Katin (NK)	late	6:45 arrival
Associate Bill Lattin (BL)	absent	Excused
Associate Andy Kirk (AK)	absent	
Associate David Gilmour (DG)	present	

With 7 of 7 voting members attending, a quorum is present.

2.1 Other attendees

Name	Comment
Lisa Schmidt (LS)	LAH Town Council Member
Cody Einfalt (CE)	LAH Interim Assistant to the City Manager
Bill Ralston	Environmental Initiative Committee member
Melissa Elian	LAH Engineer

3. Public comment on subjects not on the agenda [6:02pm]

Bill Ralston: environmental initiatives: here to understand where emergency preparedness is concerned with results of climate change: bigger storms, resulting power and communication outages.

4. Remarks from the Chair [6:05pm]

Welcome Bill. Kearney provided Hazard Mitigation and Emergency Operations plan, and agrees that weather is getting more intense, but the plans don't really consider this. We would welcome your participation in this committee. Sachdeva is involved with outreach, Gilmour and others are considering the communications strategies.

We are supposed to elect officers, and review our standing sub-committees.

5. Review, correct and approve minutes of the prior meeting [6:08pm]

MOTION to approve the minutes of the June 6th, 2023 meeting.

Member	Moved	Second	Aye	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Chair Terry Kearney	x		x				
Vice-chair Ben Gikis		x	x				
Secretary Dave Stewart			x				
Jim Basiji			x				
Phil Harter			x				
Amita Sachdeva			x				
Sam Wood			x				

6. Election of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Secretary [6:09 pm]

MOTION: Nominate Stewart, for Secretary

Stewart campaign speech: happy to relinquish this job if anyone else wants it.

Member	Moved	Second	Aye	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Chair Terry Kearney	x		x				
Vice-chair Ben Gikis		x	x				
Secretary Dave Stewart					x		
Jim Basiji			x				
Phil Harter			x				
Amita Sachdeva			x				
Sam Wood			x				

Stewart elected Secretary with 6 of 7 ayes, one abstention.

MOTION: Nominate Sachdeva, Vice-Chair

Member	Moved	Second	Aye	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Chair Terry Kearney	x		x				
Vice-chair Ben Gikis		x	x				
Secretary Dave Stewart			x				
Jim Basiji			x				
Phil Harter			x				
Amita Sachdeva			x				
Sam Wood			x				

Sachdeva elected Vice-Chair with 7 of 7 votes.

MOTION: Nominate Kearney, Chair

Kearney campaign speech: I'm okay with anyone else doing this job.

Member	Moved	Second	Aye	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Chair Terry Kearney				x			
Vice-chair Ben Gikis			x				
Secretary Dave Stewart		x	x				
Jim Basiji	x		x				
Phil Harter			x				
Amita Sachdeva			x				
Sam Wood			x				

Kearney elected Chair with 6 of 7 votes.

7. Receive questions/requests on Heritage House remodel (Elian) [6:14pm]

Elian: Can we appoint someone to the Heritage House Updates Ad Hoc Committee? Weekly Wednesday 3pm. Nominated Katin in absentia, Wood as back-up. Would also like to box and store paper files. Katin appointed, and discussion that Duncan MacMillan and Dru Anderson (ECC members) could also be helpful. Is there a schedule to test out the equipment? Stewart: When might demolition start? Elian: funding hitch, but July/August?

(Elian) [6:52] technical issues with zoom audio. Confirmed Katin could join the ad hoc meetings on an as-needed basis. Katin: thinks documents are History, not ECC. Needs to know where to store equipment. Will we need a radio room during remodeling? Elian: will need to research.

8. Receive, discuss and potential vote upon Recommendation from the Strategic Communications working group (Gilmour) [6:25pm]

Gilmour: review of methodology: look at use cases, figure out who needs to talk to who, and determine common infrastructure needs. Summary: what does the EOC need, what radio should be used for, how to communicate with the public.

EOC needs hardened internet access. Needs up-to-date contact information for public infrastructure operators. Might need direct communication with first responders.

Continue to enable and support Amateur Radio communications for CERT field surveys and back up government communications.

Public inbound and outbound communications. Recommend a hardened website promoted to the public.

Schmidt: We would present the idea that this is what we're trying to get to, and council would direct staff to work on it, come up with a timeline and develop a plan. Schmidt will develop a presentation for council with help from EPRC.

MOTION: To direct LAH Staff, with support from EPRC and related LAH committees as needed, to develop an overall road-map and prioritized project proposals with timelines to implement or upgrade the town's emergency communications infrastructure to meet the requirements herein, or, as appropriate, to propose changes to those requirements (for example, based on budget or feasibility) for review by EPRC and Council.

Member	Moved	Second	Aye	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Chair Terry Kearney	x		x				
Vice-chair Ben Gikis			x				
Secretary Dave Stewart		x	x				
Jim Basiji			x				
Phil Harter			x				
Amita Sachdeva			x				
Sam Wood			x				

The motion passes unanimously with 7 votes.

9. Receive, discuss and potential vote upon proposal for Amateur Radio Club (Katin) [6:58 pm]

This is a place to recruit, train and socialize amateur radio people separate from CERT, and to keep the emergency radio equipment up and running. This is a proposal that we do a non-Brown Act club. Discussion around organization structure: is the club independent or managed by the EPRC?

Gilmour: LAHEG is independent, and if the club is fully independent, it might be possible to merge the goals and responsibilities of the club with LAHEG responsibilities. Katin: An issue with an open club with a repeater is that it can be taken over by new members to acquire the repeater. Therefore it makes sense to keep the membership organization separate from the repeater organization. The club can be a person-power resource to the emergency group without having control. Kearney: does the town fund the LAHEG? Gilmour: not directly, but under the MOU there are allowances for expense reimbursement. Katin: summarizes what is the relationship between the club and the LAHEG, and the club and the EPRC and/or Town? Carr, Katin, Lattin to meet with Gilmour or another LAHEG empowered representative to structure relationships and come back with another proposal.

10. Standing Reports

10.1 Town Council Liaison Report (Council Member: Schmidt) [7:15 pm]

No council meeting in July, August will be a long one. Focused on housing element.

10.2 City Manager's Report (Einfalt) [7:16 pm]

Stewart: Cody said that LAH is meeting with Los Altos to discuss the shared emergency manager position, possibly on the 18th.

Kearney: Expressed concern that we're sharing an emergency manager with a larger entity. Stewart: LA is 80% of the total population. Also, LAH contracts law enforcement to the county, and LA has a local police force, another opportunity for disconnected response.

10.3 County Fire District Liaison's Report (Associate Member: Bebee) [7:17 pm]

Bebee at another meeting, no report.

10.4 EPRC Standing Subcommittee Reports [7:18 pm]

10.4.1

Community Outreach (Member: Sachdeva/Council Member: Schmidt)

Sachdeva: Unsure what's needed for an EPRC table at the September 30th safety event. Need to talk with Einfelt/Bebee. Safety Dinner went well, recognizing CERT, Neighbor Watch, and Firewise.

10.4.2

Medical & Environmental Health (Members: Harter/Kearney)

Harter: Meeting scheduled this month.

10.4.3

SW Groups/Programs (Secretary Stewart)

10.4.4

Own Emergency Plans (Secretary Stewart)

Stewart: Can only read Ann's documentation. Spoken to Einfelt about new shared emergency manager responsibilities.

10.4.5

Mass Notification (Associate Member Katin, Council Member Schmidt)

Katin: zero progress. Schmidt interested in running a formal test of Nixle, emergency notification. Wood: Nixle plays the message immediately. If your voicemail has an announcement, Nixle doesn't "wait for the beep", but starts talking before recording begins, losing the beginning of the message. Further discussion of the weaknesses of Nixle: requires cell service is up, poor adoption across town (3000 endpoints, 8000 population), is the message understandable. Katin: can I get a focused set of questions? Schmidt volunteers. Stewart: Santa Cruz is working on creating notification by Zonehaven zone, using voter rolls, as a possible information source.

10.4.6

Emergency Communications (Member Wood/Associate Members Katin)

No discussion.

11. Discussion concerning appointment of standing subcommittees [7:32pm]

Sunset DSW groups

MOTION: EPRC adopt (continue) Community Outreach (Sachdeva), Medical & Environmental Health (Harter, Kearney), Town Emergency Plans (Stewart), Mass Notification (Katin, Schmidt), Emergency Communications (Wood/Katin) standing subcommittees. Sunset the DSW groups subcommittee as successfully completed work. Maintaining the current membership of the subcommittees except move Schmidt from Community Outreach subcommittee to Mass Notification.

Member	Moved	Second	Aye	No	Abstain	Recuse	Absent
Chair Terry Kearney	x		x				
Former Vice-chair Ben Gikis			x				
Secretary Dave Stewart		x	x				
Jim Basiji			x				
Phil Harter			x				
Amita Sachdeva			x				
Sam Wood			x				

Basiji: address home break-ins? Schmidt: not really in our charter.

Motion carries unanimously.

12. Review action items from the meeting [7:39 pm]

Stewart to post Ham Club proposal to the Town website.

Schmidt to come up with a list of emergency notification questions to assist Katin in discussion with Hepenstal, and to ask Pirnejad to request Sheriff’s Office to prepare a presentation on evacuation procedures in LAH.

Ham club proponents (Carr/Katin/Lattin) to meet with LAHEG representative to work out organizational structure.

13. Discuss future agendas [7:38 pm]

SCC SO presentation evacuation procedures (e.g., who makes the decisions, how they handle traffic in the affected areas, how they coordinate with DSWs on re-entry)

Testing the Town's emergency mass notification system(s)

Revisit Town Ham Club discussion

14. Adjournment [7:46 pm]

Chair adjourned the meeting without objection.

Common abbreviations and jargon used above:

DHV	Disaster Healthcare Volunteers
DSW/DSV	Disaster Service Worker/Volunteer
EMC	Emergency Management Consultant (Hepenstal)
EmComm	Emergency Communications
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
EOP	Emergency Operations Plan
EPRC	Emergency Preparedness and Response Committee
FSC	Fire Safe Council
GTG	Government Technology Group
Ham	Amateur radio
HMP	Hazard Mitigation Plan
IRU	Indefeasible Right of Use
LAH	Los Altos Hills
LAHCFD	Los Altos Hills County Fire District
LAHEG	Los Altos Hills Emergency Group, trustees of the W6LAH repeater
MRC	Medical Reserve/Response Corps
SPECS	South Peninsula Emergency Communications System