



# RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

## RUTLAND REGIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (REMC)

### MEETING MINUTES FOR WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2025, 5:30 PM

Rutland Regional Planning Commission – Microsoft Teams

#### I. **Voting Member Roll Call**

Vice Chair Jan Sotirakis convened the meeting at 5:33 PM. Maggie O’Brien conducted the voting member roll call. A quorum of voting members was present.

#### II. **Approve Meeting Agenda**

O’Brien requested a correction to a typo in Item VII(a)(ii): the date for the “Upcoming: Southeast Facilitated Discussion” should read February 4, not February 3. Peter Mantello made the motion to accept the agenda as amended. Motion seconded by Bill Lovett. No further discussion. Motion approved.

#### III. **Approve September 17, 2025 Meeting Minutes**

Mantello made the motion to accept the September 17, 2025 meeting minutes as presented. Seconded by Lovett. No further discussion. Motion approved.

#### IV. **Open to the Public**

There was no one from the public in attendance.

#### V. **REMC Representative Reports**

##### a. Statewide Local Emergency Planning Commission (**LEPC**) Rep, Bob Morlino

Morlino reported that the Statewide LEPC had its last meeting of the year on October 14, with 65 attendees. The Commission reviewed the EPA and Vermont DEC regulations regarding notification procedures for releases of hazardous materials, as well as exercises that had occurred since their last meeting in July. These included a bioterrorism exercise at the Vermont Department of Health in Colchester and a simulated leak of anhydrous ammonia (a refrigerant) in two locations: the Arctic Ice Facility in Rutland City and Cabot Creamery in Cabot. Recent incidents of note include a 200-gallon sulfuric acid spill in Middlebury and a carbon dioxide release in Brighton. Morlino also stated that, excluding the flood years of 2023 and 2024, the HAZMAT team has had a very busy year, receiving over 200 calls. The next LEPC meeting is scheduled for [January 13, 2026](#).

##### b. Threat Hazard Identification & Assessment/Stakeholders Preparedness Report (**THIRA/SPR**) Rep, Peter Mantello

Mantello stated he had nothing new to report, as he was uncertain who to contact about involvement in the THIRA/SPR. Bill Jones clarified that the Department of Homeland Security sends the THIRA/SPR survey to the VEM Regional Coordinators annually. This year’s survey focused on a hypothetical dam breach and had questions about the Region’s funding, training, exercise, and planning capabilities. Bill commented that he was limited in what information he could provide since there is currently no funding to support assistance from the RPCs. Vice Chair Sotirakis and O’Brien spoke briefly about the challenges of sheltering large numbers of people, a topic previously explored by the Chittenden Reservoir Emergency Action Plan (CREAP) team.

REMC meeting recordings can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCngReaqDYcXwlit75D6ayTw/videos>



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- c. Integrated Planning and Preparedness Workshop (**IPPW**) Rep, Tom Johnston  
Johnston was absent. O'Brien stated there was nothing new to report.

## VI. **REMC Organizational Tasks**

### a. Appointments

- i. Chair and Vice Chair: Chair Jones was not present but had previously indicated he would be stepping down for the 2026 Federal Fiscal Year. Vice Chair Sotirakis entertained a nomination for Chair. Mantello volunteered to accept the nomination. Mike Wetmore made the motion to elect Mantello as Chair. Motion seconded by Jack Perry. No further discussion. Motion approved. Mantello then made the motion to re-elect Sotirakis as Vice Chair. Motion seconded by Lovett. No further discussion. Motion approved.
- ii. LEPC Rep: Wetmore made the motion to re-elect Morlino as the Statewide LEPC rep. Motion seconded by Lovett. No further discussion. Motion approved.
- iii. THIRA/SPR Rep: Wetmore made the motion to re-elect Mantello as the THIRA/SPR rep. Motion seconded by Lovett. No further discussion. Motion approved.
- iv. IPPW Rep: O'Brien had not heard from Johnston whether he was interested in continuing in this role. Given his absence from the IPPW in recent years, O'Brien encouraged the Committee to consider a new representative. Wetmore made the motion to elect Judy Frazier as the IPPW rep. Motion seconded by Lovett. No further discussion. Motion approved.

## VII. **Announcements**

### a. REMC/COAD Update & Northwest Facilitated Discussion Debrief

O'Brien recapped the "Northwest sub-region" facilitated discussion held on October 15 with the Towns of Benson, Castleton, Fair Haven, Hubbardton, Sudbury, and West Haven. Key trends remained consistent with the June 2025 Northeast Subregion exercise, with particular emphasis on challenges related to EOC staffing and training, operational communications, and resource staging and distribution. A detailed description of these and other findings is located in the After Action Report sent out on November 24. The Towns of Clarendon, Mount Holly, Shrewsbury, Tinmouth, and Wallingford are on deck for the upcoming Southeast Facilitated Discussion on February 4, 2026 at the Wallingford Rotary Club (96 North Main Street) from 10 AM - 1 PM. O'Brien asked Committee members from these municipalities to [submit an RSVP form](#) as soon as possible to confirm their participation and assist with catering logistics. Eric Pulver accepted Craig Knapp's request to attend the December 22 Clarendon Selectboard meeting to garner buy-in.

### b. Revisit: Forming an Advisory Group

Pulver reiterated the importance of forming an advisory group to review and apply the takeaways from the sub-region facilitated discussions. The REMC could theoretically serve as a mechanism for these meetings, but there is not necessarily a need to pull in non-voting members (yet). Pulver also acknowledged that the timing was poor for getting this off the ground, given delayed FEMA grants and uncertain dynamics at the federal and state levels. Mantello offered that all facilitated discussions should be complete before the REMC tries to assemble an advisory group. Pulver and O'Brien agreed on this course of action, so the topic has been tabled until at least October 2026 (the date of the last discussion with the Central sub-region).

### c. EMPG Program and Funding Update:

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O'Brien explained that the Emergency Management Planning Grant, which funds much of VEM and the RPC emergency management programs, has still not been awarded to the State. This typically happens in the August-September timeframe, but the changeover in administration and new requirements for sub-applicants have resulted in legal review that is still pending as of December 17, 2025. As a result, many activities in the emergency management program are being put on hold. O'Brien will use state funding, where possible, to support critical operations, specifically the REMC/COAD work and the CREAP team. RRPC can also continue to serve as Local Liaisons if a disaster were to happen. Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (**LHMP**) updates remain unaffected, as those are supported by separate funding pots. Fortunately, all Towns that submitted for LHMP updates through the Municipal Planning Grant received the award, so RRPC will continue to assist municipalities on that front. There was some discussion about the importance of having current LHMPs and the typical cost of preparing plan updates.

### VIII. **Next Meeting – March 18, 2026 @ 5:30 PM**

Mantello made the motion to adjourn. Motion seconded by Jim Bagnall. No further discussion. The meeting adjourned at 6:29 PM.

*Respectfully submitted by Maggie O'Brien, Emergency Management Planner at the RRPC*