



RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

RUTLAND REGIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (REMC)

MEETING MINUTES FOR WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2026, 5:30 PM

Rutland Regional Planning Commission – Microsoft Teams

I. **Voting Member Roll Call**

Chair Peter Mantello convened the meeting at 5:32 PM and conducted the voting member roll call. A quorum of voting members was present.

II. **Approve October 14, 2026 Meeting Agenda**

Bob Kilpeck moved to accept the agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Vice Chair Jan Sotirakis. Maggie O'Brien presented the following amendments for consideration:

- Item VII: move sub-items c and d under sub-item B, "EMPG Program and Funding Update"
- Item VII: new sub-item c.: "New REMC Representative Resources"

Chair Mantello amended the motion to accept the agenda with these amendments. No further discussion. Motion approved.

III. **Approve June 17, 2026 Meeting Minutes**

Bill Lovett made the motion to accept the June 17, 2026 draft meeting minutes as presented. Seconded by Vice Chair Sotirakis. No further discussion. Motion approved.

IV. **Open to the Public**

Heather Beard, the newly hired Communications and Outreach Manager from Vermont 211, introduced herself. She is primarily attending to learn more about what the REMC is doing in Rutland, but also expressed her responsibility to ensure that people know more about what Vermont 211 does and also how the organization can support communities in times of disaster or emergency.

V. **REMC Representative Reports**

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

Bob Morlino was absent, so O'Brien provided his report from the October 13 Statewide LEPC meeting. She highlighted several recent hazardous materials incidents in September, including a propane railcar derailment in Rutland City, an anhydrous ammonia release at the Dairy Farmers of America facility in St. Albans, and a tanker crash in Woodford involving methyl methacrylate. The Rutland City incident occurred during a weekend with major events underway and prompted discussion about the potential challenges associated with a large-scale evacuation. The railcar did not leak, and the State HAZMAT team, in the middle of training at the nearby Pittsford Fire Academy, responded quickly.

REMC meeting recordings can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCngReaqDYcXwIit75D6ayTw/videos>



RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Recent LEPC and HAZMAT Team activities included training and exercises related to bombing prevention, hazardous materials awareness and operations, decontamination, and air monitoring. The LEPC also received a presentation from the Vermont Intelligence Center on cybersecurity and infrastructure assessments, available to municipalities and companies at no cost. O'Brien also reported on Morlino's participation in the Vermont Emergency Preparedness Conference and encouraged REMC members to attend future conferences. The next Statewide LEPC meeting is scheduled for January 12.

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

Bill Jones reported that information for the current THIRA/SPR cycle had recently been received and that he would forward it to Chair Mantello and work with him to complete the report. O'Brien reminded the Committee that the THIRA/SPR is used to identify threats, hazards, preparedness capabilities, and gaps relative to FEMA core capabilities. She also noted that new reference materials were being developed to clarify the responsibilities of the REMC's designated representatives.

c. *Integrated Planning and Preparedness Workshop (IPPW) Rep, Judy Frazier*

Judy Frazier was absent, and O'Brien stated she had nothing to report on her behalf. She explained that the annual IPPW, held each spring, builds on gaps identified through the THIRA/SPR and identifies planning, equipment, training, exercise, and organizational priorities to address them over the following three years.

VI. **REMC Organizational Tasks**

a. *Review and Vote on Amendment to Bylaws: Shifting the fiscal year/voting membership reappointment procedures*

O'Brien presented proposed amendments to the REMC Bylaws, including shifting the Committee's fiscal year from the federal fiscal year (October 1–September 30) to the state fiscal year (July 1–June 30). Additional proposed changes would formalize the annual voting membership renewal process by using the names listed on municipal Local Emergency Management Plans (LEMPs) as proof of appointment, assume proxy designation unless otherwise stated, move language regarding mid-year membership turnover from Article 7 to Article 6, and change the deadline for the REMC regional plan from June 1 to May 31. The proposed revisions are intended to reduce administrative burdens, align voting membership renewal with the annual LEMP update process, and better accommodate changes to the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) period of performance.

Although the agenda anticipated a vote, O'Brien determined that the specific amendment language first needed to be presented to the Committee in accordance with the Bylaws. Members discussed the proposed changes and expressed support for the general approach. A formal vote will instead occur at the December meeting.

b. *Reminder: 2026–2027 Voting Membership Renewal Procedures*

If the proposed transition to a state-fiscal-year schedule is approved, municipalities will complete the existing fall voting membership reappointment process one final time. Renewal materials will be distributed at the end of October and should be completed during November so that the Committee has a full voting



RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

membership in place before the December 9 meeting. If the Bylaw amendments are approved, the upcoming membership term will serve as a shortened transition period (October 1 to June 30) before future terms align with the state fiscal year beginning July 1. Voting membership renewal forms will remain available for mid-year vacancies or turnover, while the annual LEMP process would become the primary mechanism for future annual appointments.

DRAFT



RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

VII. **Announcements/Roundtable**

a. *REMC/COAD Update*

i. *Southern Facilitated Discussion Debrief*

The fifth subregional Facilitated Discussion was held July 30 in Pawlet with representatives from Pawlet, Danby, and Mount Tabor. Tom Johnston described the exercise as a valuable opportunity for neighboring communities to strengthen relationships and improve their understanding of local resources and hazards. Eric Pulver noted that the exercise identified recurring regional challenges related to documentation, resources, volunteers, and communications, while also highlighting opportunities for greater collaboration and resource sharing among neighboring municipalities. The smaller group format allowed participants to exchange contact information and discuss opportunities for closer coordination. The Committee discussed emergency communications as a particular concern, especially in areas with limited cellular coverage or where telecommunications systems may become unavailable during prolonged power outages. Jan Sotirakis emphasized the importance of establishing regular communication among neighboring EMDs and EMCs so communities can share situational awareness and resources during emergencies. Kerry Ellis described West Haven's work with a local ATV organization to incorporate its members and equipment into the Local Emergency Management Plan as emergency resources. Members also discussed other locally developed capabilities identified through the Facilitated Discussions, including alternative communications initiatives like the successful deployment of the "MESHtastik" network in Middletown Springs. O'Brien and Pulver emphasized that the long-term goal is to sustain the subregional relationships developed through these exercises and transition from information gathering toward ongoing network building and collaborative preparedness work.

ii. *Upcoming: Central Facilitated Discussion – November 5, 2026*

The sixth and final Facilitated Discussion is scheduled for November 5 in Rutland City and will involve Rutland City, Rutland Town, Proctor, West Rutland, and Mendon, along with the Rutland Regional Medical Center. O'Brien reported strong anticipated participation. Local media are expected to provide limited coverage intended to communicate the purpose and value of the initiative to the public. Non-voting members discussed concerns that media presence could affect participants' willingness to engage candidly during an exercise. Organizers acknowledged these concerns and emphasized that the exercise is intended to provide a no-fault learning environment. Media participation will be limited rather than covering the entire exercise, and organizers will reinforce the exercise's no-fault nature with both participants and media representatives.

b. *EMPG Program and Funding Update*

O'Brien announced that RPCs received an Advance Notice to Proceed for EMPG 25, allowing work and billing under the program to begin September 1 even though agreements with the State have not yet been fully executed. The period of performance runs through May 31. Because the shortened grant period provides limited time to complete the full scope of work originally envisioned, the RRPC will concentrate on required activities and planning for the next EMPG round.



RUTLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

i. *Public Works Mutual Aid Agreement: Biennial Review*

The Public Works Mutual Aid Agreement Biennial Review, which had been delayed while EMPG funding was unavailable, is now expected to move forward in January. The review is overdue, but scheduling it early in the year will allow municipal officials to participate before Town Meeting Day.

ii. *Vulnerable Populations Communication Protocol: Annual Review*

The Vulnerable Populations Communication Protocol review is expected to follow in February and will involve regional social service agencies. Additional tentative EMPG activities discussed included beginning subregional advisory council work in the spring, supporting local hot-weather annex development with a workshop, and planning for the next grant cycle.

c. *New REMC Representative Resources*

O'Brien previewed new one-page reference guides being developed for REMC representative positions. Each resource will explain the purpose of the associated program or process and outline the responsibilities of the representative. Bill Jones will review the materials for accuracy before they are distributed to Committee members and posted as permanent resources on the RRPC Emergency Management webpage.

VIII. **Next Meeting – December 9, 2026 @ 5:30 PM**

O'Brien noted that the next meeting will be on the second Wednesday of December, in accordance with the posted Meeting Resolution dated September 18, 2024.

Bill Lovett moved to adjourn. Motion seconded by Jack Perry. No further discussion. The meeting adjourned at 6:51 PM.

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

*Disclaimer: Artificial intelligence assisted with compiling these meeting minutes.
RRPC staff reviewed and verified the final content and remain responsible for it.*

Rutland Regional Emergency Management Committee (REMC)
Voting Members 2025-2026 as of 10/14/2026

Rutland REMC Voting Members					
Town	First Name	Last Name	Title	Present	Proxy Given
Benson	Brad	Barrett	EMD-designee		Y
Benson	Jim	Pritchard	Highway Rep		Y
Brandon	Bob	Kilpeck	EMD	1	Y
Brandon	Tom	Kilpeck	Fire Chief		Y
Castleton	Michael	Jones	EMD	1	Y
Castleton (Chair)	Peter	Mantello	Police Chief	1	Y
Chittenden	Bob	Case	EMD - designee	1*	Y
Chittenden (Vice Chair)	Jan	Sotirakis	Fire Rep	1*	Y
Clarendon	Craig	Knapp	EMD - designee		Y
Clarendon	Matt	Jakubowski	Fire Chief		Y
Danby	Shelley	Taylor	EMD - designee		Y
Danby	Tom	Johnston	Fire Rep	1	Y
Fair Haven	Jim	Heller	EMD - designee		Y
Fair Haven	Bill	Humphries	Police Chief		Y
Hubbardton	Rick	Grabowski	EMD		Y
Hubbardton	Michael	Wetmore	Fire Rep		Y
Ira	Bob	Toppin	EMD		Y
Ira	Dan	Perry	Fire Chief		Y
Killington	Whit	Montgomery	EMD		Y
Killington	Mark	Foote	Fire Rep		Y
Mendon	Mark	Fiore	EMD		Y
Mendon	Abigail	Lancore	Constable		Y
Middletown Springs	Robin	Chestnut-Tangerman	EMD-designee		-
Middletown Springs	Joe	Castle	Fire Chief		-
Mount Holly	Jeff	Chase	EMD		Y
Mount Holly	Billy	Austin	Fire Rep		Y
Mount Tabor ¹	Matthew	Gasperetti	EMD		-
Mount Tabor ¹	Tom	Johnston	Fire Rep		-
Pawlet	Bob	Morlino	EMD		Y
Pawlet	Jonathan	Weiss	Fire Rep		Y
Pittsford	Matthew	Trombley	EMD		Y
Pittsford	Jason	Shortsleeves	Fire Rep		Y
Poultney	Paul	Donaldson	EMD		Y
Poultney	Aaron	Kerber	Fire Chief		Y
Proctor	Judy	Frazier	EMD		Y
Proctor	Kevin	Blongy	Fire Rep		Y

**Rutland Regional Emergency Management Committee (REMC)
Voting Members 2025-2026 as of 10/14/2026**

Town	First Name	Last Name	Title	Present	Proxy Given
Rutland City	Bill	Lovett	EMD	1	Y
Rutland City	Dan	Gedney	Fire Rep		Y
Rutland Town	Martin	Wasserman	EMD	1*	Y
Rutland Town	Bill	Sweet	Fire Rep		Y
Shrewsbury	Aaron	Korzun	EMD		Y
Shrewsbury	Jack	Perry	Fire Rep	1	Y
Sudbury ¹	Steve	Sgorbati	EMD		-
Sudbury ¹	Shaun	Ketcham	Constable		-
Tinmouth	Matthew	Patry	EMD-designee		Y
Tinmouth	Ray	Pratt	Fire Rep	1*	Y
Wallingford	Jim	Bagnall	EMD		Y
Wallingford	Bill	Weiss	Rescue Rep		Y
Wells	Todd	Fenton	Fire Chief		Y
Wells	Don	Preuss	EMD-designee		Y
West Haven	Kerry	Ellis	EMD	1*	Y
West Haven	Joshua	Wood	Fire Rep		Y
West Rutland	Mary Ann	Goulette	EMD		Y
West Rutland	Michael	Skaza	Fire Chief		Y

¹ Missing Voting Membership Renewal Form; position considered formally vacant

* Virtual Attendance

TOTAL PRESENT 11

TOTAL CONFIRMED MEMBERS 50

Non-Voting Members

Organization	First Name	Last Name	Present
Castleton Rec Director	Micah	Barshay	1
Poultney Highway Dept.	Joel	Roberts	1
Rutland Mental Health	Loree	Zeiff	1
RRPC	Maggie	O'Brien	1
VDH	Eric	Pulver	1
VEM	Bill	Jones	1
Vermont 211	Heather	Beard	1

7

*Confirmed Voting Members Only

TOTAL (w/ proxies) **18**

TOTAL (w/o proxies) **11**

Quorum (≥10) Met? **YES**

**Quorum is 11 per the REMC Bylaws; however, the entire voting membership has not been formally instated as of 06/17/2026. Quorum has been adjusted for this meeting only to account for these vacancies.