



**REGULAR MEETING OF
EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

Tuesday, October 31, 2023, 11:00 a.m.
Flute Room at Municipal Hall
4325 Blackcomb Way, Whistler, BC V8E 0X5

PRESENT: School District #48 Representative, I. Currie
BC Ambulance Service Representative, L. Darlington
Whistler Search and Rescue Society Representative, T. DelBosco
Mayor, J. Crompton
Whistler Blackcomb Representative, J. Lawther
Whistler Transit Ltd. Representative, C. Selfridge
RCMP Staff Sergeant, S. Banks
RMOW Emergency Social Services Coordinator, K. Hannah
RMOW Emergency Program Coordinator, B. Manson
RMOW General Manager Infrastructure Services, J. Hallisey
RMOW General Manager Community Engagement and Cultural
Services, K. Elliott
RMOW General Manager Corporate Services and Public Safety, T.
Battiston
RMOW Chief Administrative Officer, V. Cullen
RMOW Manager Protective Services, L. DeBou
RMOW Councilor, J. Ford
RMOW Fire Chief, T. Doherty

ABSENT: BC Ambulance Service Representative, R. Larkin
Vancouver Coastal Health Representative, Dr. M Khaketla
Blackcomb Helicopters Representative, D. Marcoux

STAFF PRESENT: RMOW Bylaw and Licencing Coordinator, C. Burford

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor J. Crompton recognized the Resort Municipality of Whistler is grateful to be on the shared, unceded territory of the Lil'wat People, known in their language as Lil'wat7úl, and the Squamish People, known in their language as Skwxwú7mesh. We respect and commit to a deep consideration of their history, culture, stewardship and voice.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Moved By RMOW Manager Protective
Services, L. DeBou

Seconded By RMOW General Manager
Infrastructure Services, J. Hallisey

That Emergency Planning Committee adopt the Regular Committee Meeting agenda of October 31 2023.

CARRIED

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Moved By RMOW General Manager
Corporate Services and Public
Safety, T. Battiston

Seconded By RMOW Councilor, J. Ford

That Emergency Planning Committee adopt the Regular Committee Meeting minutes of July 25 2023.

CARRIED

4. PRESENTATIONS AND DELEGATIONS

4.1 A Review of Regional Emergencies

B. Manson gave a review about the recent regional emergencies.

Notable nearby fires included Gun Lake, Seton Portage. Local fires include Harmony Bowl and Green River

- July 26 - Gun Lake issued alerts and Seaton were issued Evacuation orders
- July 31 - Upgraded to fire of note.
- Aug 1 - Evacuation alerts issued for both Gun Lake and Seaton. RMOW were contacted to host evacuees in local hotels, which were managed by ESS and Red Cross. Gun Lake Fire Chief received data on the number of evacuees that needed hotel rooms, however the data was inaccurate, and no evacuees showed up.
- Aug 2 - Evacuations was escalated.
- Aug 9 - De-escalated to alert only.
- Aug 15 - Escalated again.
- Aug 18 - Reduced to orders only.
- Sept 8 - Some of the orders were rescinded.

From the maps shown, things can change very quickly and there were notable things to learn from these evacuations, including evacuation routes.

There are generally lower compliance rates when there are 2nd and 3rd evacuation orders. Dynamic situations are often very hard to predict.

There were 3 fires within the RMOW boundaries, in particular the fires along the highway, that could potentially affect evacuation routes.

T. Doherty provided feedback of difficulties communicating with BC Wildfires on the Gun Lake fire, where they were a few Whistler fire crews posted.

S. Banks commented that the fire crossed over the main road of Gun Lake, access was limited and the RCMP were the last on call at this location. With limited cell service, it was a struggle contacting relevant people.

V. Cullen asked if there was information of how these fires were started

B. Manson confirmed 202 fires were naturally caused (often from lightning) and 27 were human caused. He also said, during the summer the amount of people signing up for the Whistler Alerts increased.

J. Ford asked how the RMOW handled situations with other Municipalities

B. Manson responded saying RMOW were in contact with the SLRD and responded when they needed assistance.

J. Ford provided feedback saying there was criticism from the public regarding the BC Wildfire updates and a request for outward communication needed improving.

T. Battiston said given that hotel rooms (funded by the provincial government) were not used, there needs to be better communications on evacuees needing shelter.

B. Manson confirmed he will be meeting with other Municipalities in the Sea to Sky Corridor to address these issues.

K. Hannah inputted the ESS also worked with the SLRD to streamline communication but was difficult when residents refused to leave. More communication on support provided on these specific areas. If the wrong information is given, such as number of hotel rooms needed, then there is risk the volunteers will have nothing to do and thus leave.

J. Ford said this should be shared, as misinformation was given to the community members of Gun Lake who were unaware of the support and resources were provided.

4.2 Draft Operational Evacuation Plan

The Draft Operational Evacuation Plan was emailed to all committee members, this is a draft plan that requires feedback from members of the Emergency Planning Committee.

The plan consists of the following:

- Operation Response Plan
 - Course of action

- Guidance
- Scenarios
- Legislation
- Population Reduction
- Tactical Evacuations
 - Authority would be on RCMP and Fire and EOC would be there to support.
- Strategic Evacuations
 - EPC would decide when to evacuate, including sending out Whistler Alerts, giving the orders and facilitating the evacuation
- Rescinding Evacuation Orders
 - This would include help from EOC, as well as a recovery plan and the processing.
- Receiving Evacuees
 - This might also mean refusing to support other Municipality, if there is a risk that there is a Whistler evacuation.
- Appendices
 - Exceptional circumstance evacuees
 - Evacuation Planning Data
 - Evacuation Maps
 - Door Knocking
 - Permit/Forms
 - Checklists
 - Further Key Points
 - ESS have their own plans, The draft OEP will reference them.
 - Muster points have been set as mostly bus stops within Whistler, as most people are familiar with where these are.
 - This plan is not officially adopted but should be reviewed operationally

The EPC should review this plan and comment on changes needed. Following this, the plan will be revised, approved, adopted, exercised and updated.

K. Elliott asked if there are healthcare requirements for people evacuating.

B. Manson noted that this is part of vulnerable population. Some evacuees can be prepared for their medical needs and also the ESS would help with all the health care issues. Those under hospital care are the responsibility of healthcare.

T. Battiston also stated that this plan doesn't include every eventuality, but there are more refined plans. It is very important the EPC view this plan and provide incite.

L. DeBou included that the Multi Modal Plan is researche based and includes data for all evacuation stratagies. The Operational Evacuation Plan is for when there needs to be immediate action.

V. Cullen asked what specific key assumptions would need feedback on.

L. DeBou said it would be for strategic evacuations where we would be conducting the evacuation.

T. Battiston said we need to work on the population reduction tension with events and high influx of tourists and when to communicate to the public not to come to Whistler. If a shut down were to be issued, getting to a place where marketing and other businesses can come to an agreement and consensus.

L. DeBou confirmed there are meetings coming in the near future with the GMs for Whistler businesses, including hotels, for communication and their level of preparedness and what their needs are. Also, to have visitors and newly hired staff to sign up for the Whistler Alerts.

J. Crompton said as 60% of visitors are coming to Whistler on buses coaches, what is the plan when evacuating those without vehicles.

L. DeBou said there are plans for busier Muster Points such as in the village, but ultimately getting all seats filled in vehicles will need to be managed. Communication from the hotels would be beneficially and be talked about in the upcoming meeting.

4.3 Emergency Program Coordinator Update

Exercises with RMOW Senior Management was provided and feedback was implemented in the plan. Staff confirmed it made them more confident after the exercise.

Bylaw Officers have been provided training to sign up evacuees. This will support the ESS and also other communities, when required.

K. Elliott asked if people register digitally why we would need to provide training.

L. DeBou confirmed that it takes 20 minutes for the referral system to be submitted and once this is done food and/or hotel vouchers can be produced. Additionally, if orders are extended, we have to manually extend the evacuee request.

K. Hannah explained that we are unable to train external volunteers and if they are interested, they should register though the Red Cross. Volunteer retention is difficult as the system is complex and refresher courses are not always provided.

The Emergency Management Act is in its first reading, but legislation for this is not yet approved. The key points in the act are:

- Municipalities plans may be audited .

- Enforced evacuations by the RCMP, Municipalities may also be enforced upon if not in compliance.
- Orders mean other municipalities may be ordered to manage other communities' evacuations.

An exercise will be conducted in the Spring for a test evacuation, in a small scale.

J. Crompton suggested to have the test evacuation to include resident and tourist accommodations, as last exercise did not include this.

K. Elliott asked what relationship with the First Nations communities is being considered, including the evacuation exercises. Feedback was they would like to have a relationship in place before an emergency happens.

B. Mansion confirmed engagement with the First Nation communities, and they will be included in the plans.

New Signage was shown to the committee which included evacuation routes, call outs for job rolls and muster point signage (including the closed ones)

J. Ford suggested to add a QR code to additional information and provide the signs in other languages.

B. Manson will follow up to have that included.

V. Cullen asked if there was a debrief scheduled with SLRD and if a meeting with Osoyoos was considered.

L. DeBou confirmed that a meeting was scheduled with SLRD.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

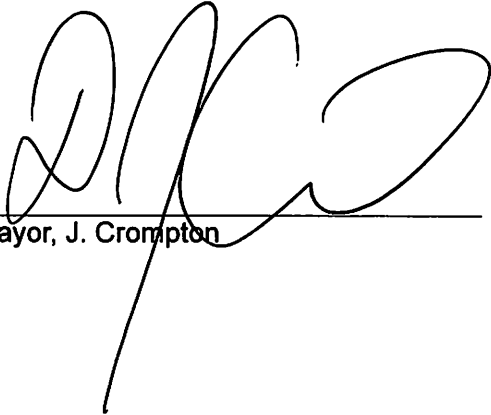
6. TERMINATION

Moved By RMOW Councilor, J. Ford

Seconded By RMOW General Manager
Community Engagement and
Cultural Services, K. Elliott

That Emergency Planning Committee terminate the Regular Committee Meeting of October 31 2023.

CARRIED



Mayor, J. Crompton



Recording Secretary, C. Burford