

Kossuth County Emergency Management Commission
219 S. Phillip Street
Algona, IA 50511

The Kossuth County Emergency Management Commission meeting was held Tuesday October 24, 2023, at the Kossuth County Emergency Response & Training Complex 219 S. Phillips St in Algona.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Rick Murphy, at 6:00 p.m.

A quorum was established.

A motion to approve minutes from August 29, 2023, meeting was made by Deb Steven with a second from Marilyn Schutz. Motion carried.

A motion to approve Agenda for Kossuth County Emergency Management Commission for October 24, 2023, was made by David LaGue. Motion carried.

Old Business

29c Update- Charissa reported this bill is still active- has to go back to subcommittee to approve the strike outs- then full committee – then to the floor. As of right now, nothing else has changed, continue with Sheriff as voting member and adding all the BOS. In order to hold 30% of the budget, we need to have a strategic plan and capital improvement.

Weather Radar update-Charissa reported on September 28th the D2 weather committee met. Over the past few months, the committee had the pleasure of working with Kolby DeWitt, Justin Jensen, Matthew Rector, Jacob Bossman, and Jim Oberhelman, in an effort to bring this issue to their attention. They are all very knowledgeable of *the gap* and realize there is a great opportunity to improve the adequacy of the weather radar coverage in this area. The committee is working on an ASK letter to Senator Grassley, Senator Ernst, and US Representative Feenstra. **It is our vision to better serve our citizens through an improved weather radar system for North Central Iowa and South-Central Minnesota. Together, we need to look for solutions that would accomplish this so that we can provide a level of safety to those impacted by adverse weather events in this area.**

Our vision allows for three options.

Each option brings its own benefits that could enhance the level of weather radar coverage in *the gap*. Regardless of which option is selected it is imperative that we work together as a team to serve those individuals that trust us to help protect them. To explain the distinctive features of the S-band, C-Band, and X-Band radar systems see attachment 6.

1. Place a NEXRAD S-band weather radar system in the northern portion of *the gap*. As we all know, a NEXRAD S-band radar is the gold standard for gathering weather data. It would reach far into both Iowa and Minnesota giving those living and visiting our recreational areas located in *the gap* a level of weather radar coverage they have not had in the past. By creating a project where one of these systems is placed in *the gap* there would be an immediate positive impact on lives and property. The data collected from the system would be instantly uplinked to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the National Weather Service (NWS) so that early and accurate weather statements could be issued. These government

owned weather radar systems come at a tremendous expense to install, operate, and maintain, but their value cannot be questioned.

2. Place up to three C-band weather radars in the region to cover *the gap*. The C-band weather radars are often found at larger market television and radio stations like Des Moines. These radars are not nearly as powerful as the NEXRAD S-band weather radar but when a grouping of these radars are installed, they would adequately cover *the gap*. This option would have less capital outlay of tax dollars than option 1 and would require a joint venture, perhaps with a private organization to keep them operating and maintained. The installation costs for a single C-Band weather radar is approximately 1.5 million dollars. There would be ongoing operational expenses associated with the radar that would need to be addressed.
3. The third option brings into play a private organization that installs, operates, and maintains small X-band weather radars. These smaller 60-mile radius radars “see” at lower levels in the atmosphere, so they are able to detect those low-level weather aberrancies that the larger weather radars have difficulty “seeing”. The organization, Climavision, has been placing these X-band radars across the southern United States in an effort to fill the gaps left behind by the NEXRAD S-band radar network. They have had tremendous success in filling those gaps and are now entering phase 2 of their strategic plan which include Iowa and our northern gap.

There is no cost associated with the radar installation, operation, and maintenance. Climavision bares all of these costs and makes their money through subscriptions to the data provided by these X-band radars. Public works, school boards, city and county leadership, local airports, state parks and camping areas, insurance companies, agriculture, first responders, Emergency Management and more can subscribe to receive the data on an annual basis. They can use this data to help them document weather patterns as well as prepare for and respond to adverse weather conditions.

Manure pit update- Sunday EPA and M & M Pumping met at the manure pit to begin emptying. EPA on site for air testing. A few feet remains as it is thick- EPA instructed to add water to completely get pit emptied. M & M pumping were going to add water to pit Tuesday and get on schedule to complete the pumping process.

Pipelines update- Charissa reported that Navigator has pulled the pipeline project and the last she heard Summit was postponing their pipeline for 2 years.

New Business

Drone update-Charissa reported that she had used the drone back in September, currently have partnered with Merrill Drones as supervisor of the drone program. Drew Storm and I have been meeting with Ryan to work through our policies and procedures. Ryan will be training the part 107 which is required to be a pilot. We did identify an issue with one of the drones so Autel will be looking it over and possibly issuing a replacement.

Crisis Canine update-Maverick was part of Officer Cram’s debriefing at the hospital and assisted a lady in a crisis at the Iowa Homeland Security Conference. She met with Judge Gale and is aware he is available if needed in the court room. Friday, we met with the Attorney General’s

office as they endorsed Crisis Canine. November we will be doing the Critical Incident debriefing training that is part of this program so we will have our own team in Kossuth County.

Strategic Plan/Committee-Charissa discussed this back in the July meeting, and it was tabled at that time. Knowing the 29c is still active for legislation and ISAC will most likely support the bill, I would like to start working on the strategic plan as this will help carry over funds if we have identified a big project that will take a few years. Charissa would like at least 3-4 people to work on this project and bring back to the full Commission in April. A motion to develop a strategic plan and committee was made by Christy Skilling with a second from Marilyn Schutz. Motion carried. Those on the Committee are Christy Skilling, David LaGue, Rick Murphy, and Roger Fisher.

Winter Preparedness Mailer- Charissa presented a Winter Weather Preparedness mailer that she would like to do a mailer out to the county residents. Discussion was had and suggestion of making a QR Code on the mailer for those that are Spanish speaking. Josh Waechter has offered to help with the QR code and link to be placed on the pamphlet. Total mailers would be 7,060 @ 0.19/ piece= \$1397.88. Print Shoppe can do \$5000 folded for \$698. A motion was made by Christy Skilling with a second from David LaGue to proceed with the mailer. Motion carried.

HMGP Update- Charissa reported there are 5 worksheets that still need to be turned in that were due in September. Charissa has reached out to those that have not completed their worksheets offering assistance.

Budget- Charissa would like to set a date for the 24/25 budget planning for December in order to have a public hearing at the January meeting. This will allow for the weather if the meeting gets cancelled so there is time to have it submitted by February 28, 2024. Discussion had and the Commission agreed to have a meeting on December 19, 2023 at 6:00pm.

A motion to Adjourn was made by Josh Waechter with a second from Tom Johnson. Motion carried.

Next meeting: **Tuesday, December 19, 2023 at 6:00 pm**

Respectfully submitted,

Charissa Mueller, Coordinator

****Voting and Quorum.** Every member of the Commission shall be entitled to (1) one vote. A quorum shall be determined to be eight (8) attending voting members. ******