

NDPC Unofficial Meeting

May 20, 2024

Attendees: Kane, John, Matt, Tom Leitz

These are not official minutes as we did not have a quorum.

We agreed that, aside from the addition of “and Volunteer” to our committee’s title, the mission statement created by Forrest was good.

We agreed that our role is to support CReW. They are long-term recovery; we are short-term cleanup.

Kane stated that our new focus on supplies and training is appropriate and helps us concentrate as a committee.

John and Tom agreed that Team Rubicon was not able to currently handle Waterbury’s emergency needs. Looking to grow their presence in Vermont.

Tom said that, based on conversations with state and town officials, the WAB flood response was “better than anyone else’s.”

Kane added that this was due to Liz, Alyssa, and Dani Kehlmann.

Tom: So, replicating this should be our goal.

Tom: Replicating the 211 system isn’t going to work. We should assume we’re on our own.

John: The recruitment and training of the immediate volunteers is going to be a challenge.

Tom: We need a list of things we need to procure, including phone numbers, as part of our manual. He’s looking for guidance from the committee regarding what we should buy or rent. “Make it super easy for everyone.”

Matt: How about a two-pronged approach? While Matt works on the manual, the rest of the committee focuses on building the campaign. If this involves t-shirt design through the schools and the parent recruitment campaign around it, the planning needs to begin ASAP. We’ll be happy if we conclude this campaign by the end of the year.

John: Who has control over the equipment that’s already here in Waterbury?

Kane and Tom: The supplies are in the basement of the municipal building.

John: Ask Team Rubicon to train our volunteers. They can provide help in small ways but it’s up to us to solve the problem.

Kane: We need a list of important things we need to do, including:

- Getting more committee members

- Finding core volunteers

Matt: Getting core volunteers is about the campaign effort, which is about the contest.

Kane and Matt had a conversation about how to recruit the core volunteers. Matt talks in terms of a campaign. Kane is interested in a direct ask. John offered that before we do any of that, we need a clear list of asks. This ties in with Matt's offer to write the manual.

Kane: The only people we need to train is the core group.

NOTE: Matt had a later meeting with Liz Schlegel who believes we can recruit volunteers at a summer event—in other words, no campaign needed.

There was discussion of the river gauge, what it does, where it is, how often it updates. Tom offered that we need better forecasting and more accurate assessments of the river height. A significant amount of time was devoted to discussing dam management.

Kane offered that the NOAA provides color-coded maps of areas that predict local flooding in particular areas.

Matt suggested that we divide the committee in two: he will work on the manual and the other committee members can work on the volunteer recruitment effort. John emphasized that we need a well-defined ask, which is the piece Matt is working on.

Kane has a dream for the volunteer corps: When someone else has a flood, the response is to call Waterbury. Matt wants to create a document that other communities can use. John emphasized that once it's done, there will be continued updating.

We want the volunteer corps to be something people aspire to be part of. This depends on how we build it. An analogy, according to Kane, would be the volunteer fire department.

Tom: Committees struggle without staff. The town has a staff member with emergency management experience who might be assigned to our committee. Tom asked us to get back to him with our thoughts on that so that he/we can write a job description. Our job is to think about tasks for this person.