



National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

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Minutes for DEVOAD Quarterly Meeting 16 October 2023

Chairperson Toby French opened the meeting at 1:05pm, held both in-person at the New Castle County EOC and virtually via Zoom. Beyond our NCC hosts, only five attended in person, while roughly 25 dialed in. Toby reviewed the Agenda, there were no changes or additions suggested.

Toby reminded everyone that DEVOAD is part of the broader National VOAD movement, and that is based on the “4Cs”:

- Communication
- Collaboration
- Cooperation
- Coordination

We have 19 member organizations who work to assist survivors following a disaster on what is often “their worst day”.

GUEST SPEAKER

The meeting was started with a Guest speaker, Alexia (“Lexi”) Nobles from American Logistics Aid Network (ALAN). ALAN is a NVOAD National member, and helped DEVOAD in transporting 10 pallets of plywood from Florida to Dover in 2022. The plywood was donated by FEMA. DEVOAD members were invited to dial in for the upcoming ALAN Blue skies Seminar to hear about services provided by ALAN for non-profits in disaster relief. Lexi’s briefing was very informative!

RESPONSE EFFORTS

Wrap-up of Greenwood Tornado Effort

Toby provided a wrapup for DEVOAD efforts on the Greenwood Tornado response, assisted by Marty Brett, Vice Chair and Field Lead for that effort. Pictures were



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Main topic – 7 August Wind Event in New Castle County (Newark and Hockessin)

The next topic covered was the DEVOAD Response for the NCC Severe Wind Event that occurred on 7 August, causing damage to property and homes in the Newark area (Brookside and Cherokee Woods) and Hockessin. The response was in three phases:

- Volunteer Work Day - 16 Aug. DEVOAD and NCC teamed up with several volunteer groups (UWDE, NCC Police Cadets, DE State Police, along with elected officials and community leads) to perform a 1-day cleanup of affected neighborhoods. The County (Public Works) brought out a chipper and trailer to help dispose of the innumerable branches, leaves, sticks, etc that were in front yards. DEVOAD also provided chainsaws and operators to cut up the larger trunks on the ground. It was a great day with a lot of work done!
- Team Rubicon response 16 – 30 Aug; Toby called on Steve Scott, Incident Commander (IC) for the Team Rubicon response. The TR “Op” (Operation) began as a 1-week, 20-greyshirt effort, using the NCC Police Academy as a base of operations. After that initial week, the Op was expanded to another week and grew to 25 greyshirts. Steve talked about the exceptionally large trees that had to be cut up, and the great partnership with both DEVOAD and NCC on this response. NCC Executive Assistant Sue Moore helped coordinate donated meals for the hungry greyshirts and the NCC PD provided 24-hour security at the Academy. Steve reported 34 properties



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were cleaned/assisted, and several tons of vegetative debris was cleared.

Truly a marvelous effort, many thanks to Team Rubicon!

- Follow-up work; As with so many of these Response efforts, after the Heavy Hitters pack up, a few “didn’t get to” properties became known. Marty has been coordinating weekend workdays during September and October, supported largely by BCMD and area Baptist churches. Marty gave us a description of the work and called on Ellen Udovich of BCMD to talk about the efforts by the Baptist volunteers. Many properties along Cherokee Road have been cleared, giving a huge lift and encouragement to those homeowners. Several homes along Cherokee Road were hardest hit by the storm, and several were destroyed. Most insurance policies do not cover downed trees, so this work is a big help to those folks.

DEVOAD ADMIN

Toby then covered four Administrative items:

- Projects: DEVOAD Guidebook. The Guidebook is a project that was started four years ago, by a DEMA Lead Planner. It has progressed by fits and starts but has never been completed. The primary purpose of the DEVOAD Guidebook is to record the capabilities of our members, to assist Delaware emergency managers in matching Unmet Needs with volunteer organizations. DEMA has now assigned the project to Stephanie Swisher, a part time DEMA employee residing in California. Stephanie dialed into the meeting and gave an overview of the project and described her plan to complete the information/capabilities for all 19 members. She has inputs from some that will need to be verified and/or updated:
 - o Adventists Community Services (ACS)
 - o ARRL
 - o Red Cross



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- Charity Crossing
- Commodore Center
- UMCOR
- Salvation Army
- Team Rubicon
- BCMD
- Food Bank of DE
- Lions Club

Stephanie will proceed to contact all members to get either initial info or updates and would like to have responses by 31 October.

- Joint Regional VOAD Conf (Region 3 states): The 2-state (MD & DE) Joint VOAD Conference was such a success last year, it has been proposed that it be expanded out to any State in FEMA Region 3 that would like to participate. A Working Group is looking for a venue that is centrally located and working on drafting an agenda for the four sessions. A date in March has been proposed, and the theme will be focused on Micro-burst events that have been striking the mid-Atlantic states recently. States expressing an interest to date include Maryland, Delaware, DC, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania. Cliff Oliver has agreed to help secure sponsorships again.
- Response resources acquired equipment (saws, sleds, etc.). Toby explained that there have been situations in the past year where volunteers could respond, but either had no or not enough equipment. Due to recent grants to the DEVOAD for resources, we have been able to acquire some needed equipment:
 - 2 Stihl Model 261 chainsaws
 - 2 plastic sleds for moving debris



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DEVOAD will be looking into additional items, like rakes, shovels, etc. in the future.

- Elections in January – THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT! The next Quarterly Meeting is the Annual Meeting in January, and that is when we elect officers to the Board. Toby showed a list of the Board positions:
 - o Chair
 - o Vice Chair
 - o Secretary
 - o Treasurer
 - o At-Large

A Nominating Committee will be recruited to solicit candidates who might be interested in standing for election to one of these positions. PLEASE be thinking of whether “now may be your time” for leadership in the DEVOAD. We have made a LOT of progress in the last four years, let’s not lose the momentum.

NOTE: As per the Bylaws, after two terms (4 years) I will be stepping down as Chair in January.

PARTNER UPDATES

- FEMA: Julia Pedrosa of FEMA provided an update on matters at Region 3. Busy with Preliminary Damage Assessments (PDAs) in PA and WV. Bucks County (PA) was denied an IA The VAL team has been busy with training, Amy Eden recently taught Donations and Volunteer Management, and they are working on an IA (Individual Assistance) 101 class for PEMA (PA). Julia strongly encouraged VOAD members/leadership to sign up for this training. Region 3 has a new IA Branch Chief, Natalia, coming to Region 3 from HQ. Region 3 has also developed a Cold and Flu Tool Kit, lots of good info. See



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the Chat for a link. The Biden Administration is releasing \$1.8B for Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) and the Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) programs. Region 3 can provide information. PAVOAD recently had elections, Julia Menzo is the new Chair. Marty asked when the grants would be available, Julia said check the link.

- DEMA: Jennifer Walls, Recovery Principal Planner; New staff: Tara Wilburn; new PA Planner, Travis ?, Mgt Analyst, so now fully staffed. When the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for Mitigation grants is released, Phil Cain will lead that for DEMA, project proposals accepted; Nikki Testa has moved into DEMA Outreach, Daniel Young will be Program Manager, working on new CERT classes, quarterly Newsletter, recommend suggested classes; Expanding the Resilience Fund to cover Non-IA disasters, to support non-profits. Julia mentioned the children's game for preparedness, featuring Pedro the Penguin. Tara mentioned a class EMI in K04090 Voluntary Agencies in Disaster given by EMI virtually (5 days).
- NCC OEM, update by Chris Hodgden, acting EM, doing staffing; Just Chris, Mike Edwards, and Sue Moore. Dave Carpenter (EM) is out indefinitely. Gave a shout out in appreciation to DEVOAD for all the work on the Wind Event Response.
- activity: Bethany Janke – glad to support, both Blue Skies and Gray Skies activity; listed several recent disasters, to include salt water incursion in LA. Unmet Needs brought by VOADs to NVOAD, try to find National Partners that can meet it.



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WRAP-UP

In way of a wrap-up, Toby put up the 4Cs again, and said he hoped the DEVOAD is demonstrating those cultural principles in the work this year. The Annual Meeting will be in January 2024, date TBD. He thanked everyone for attending and dialing in and thanked our host, NCC OEM, and all of our speakers for contributing.

Chat File

Alexia Nobles - American Logistics Aid Network: I have to jump for a meeting, but thank you again for the opportunity to share about ALAN; Looking forward to attending future calls! 😊 To learn more about us, visit our website at <https://www.alanaid.org/>, and if you're a non-profit in need of logistical assistance, submit a request here: <https://www.alanaid.org/request-support/>. I can also be reached via email at Alexia@ALANaid.org.

Stephanie Swisher (DEMA): stephanie.swisher@delaware.gov

Danielle Swallow: I have to run to another meeting. Just wanted to mention that as part of my community engagement work for Delaware Sea Grant, I am going to be organizing a flood insurance forum next spring, and will be partnering with DEMA on Know Your Zone evacuation planning workshops for municipal and county officials in Kent and NCC (we did Sussex last spring). More details to be announced later this year.

Julia Pedrosa - FEMA VAL R3: <https://www.fema.gov/press-release/20231012/biden-harris-administration-announces-nearly-2-billion-available-funding>



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Nikki Testa - DEMA Outreach: Daniel.Young@delaware.gov

Julia Pedrosa - FEMA VAL R3: <https://www.fema.gov/press-release/20231012/fema-american-red-cross-release-new-emergency-preparedness-game-children>

Patricia Heineman: A very excellent and informative meeting, Toby! Thank you and VOAD partners for everything you are doing!

Stephanie Swisher (DEMA): Way to go Marty, and thank you, Toby!

Lorri Wall: Great meeting!

Susan Moore: Thank you!

Nikki Testa - DEMA Outreach: Thank you. Nice to be back :)