

Emergency Management Director (EMD) Position

Since Valerie suggested removing the Emergency Management Director (EMD) position from the Town Administrator's responsibilities, I have been working on creating a new Emergency Management Director (EMD) position for the Town of Bristol.

Timeline

- Reached out to Kathleen Ramsay (VLCT), who referred me to Andrew L'Roe (Emergency Management and Land Use Planner with the ACRPC.)
- Andrew provided the following details:
 - *Valerie has been wonderful and will be missed; she was one of the more active and engaged Emergency Management Directors (EMDs).*
 - *Bristol has great individuals, but many are already volunteering for the Fire Department, working for Vermont Emergency Management, or holding other roles during emergencies.*
 - *Town Administrators and Managers tend to be the most engaged EMDs, as they understand the financial implications of the role (e.g., ERAF post-disaster funding and FEMA grant requirements).*
 - *Ideally, Town Administrators and Managers would receive compensation for serving as EMDs, rather than it being an additional responsibility.*
 - *The EMD role in Addison County generally falls into distinct groups:*
 - ***Town Managers/Administrators:*** *E.g., Bristol, Vergennes.*
 - ***Police Chiefs:*** *E.g., Middlebury.*
 - ***Volunteers:*** *Often involved in or recently retired from Fire Departments or Emergency Medical Services; this is common in about half of the towns with moderate populations.*
 - ***Select Board Chairs:*** *In about a third of the most rural towns, EMDs serve by default to sign paperwork but are not otherwise engaged.*
 - *Few, if any, EMDs are likely receiving monetary stipends.*
 - *Vermont Emergency Management (VEM) has an EMD website with additional information.*
 - *VEM is taking over communication and updates for Local Emergency Management Plans next year.*

- Met with Bristol resident Michael Leyden (EMS Training Center Manager, University of Vermont Health Network.) Mike had expressed interest in the EMD position and had previously worked with the Town on updating the Hazard Mitigation Plan. He confirmed his interest and would fill the role if offered.
- Spoke with Harry Schoppmann (Regional Coordinator–Northwest Vermont Emergency Management (VEM)):
 - *EMD required by State Statute: If the Emergency Management Director (EMD) role is not filled, it defaults to the Chair of the Town’s Selectboard.*
 - *Job Description and Guidelines: Harry will provide a job description and guidelines document for the EMD role.*
 - *EMD Responsibilities:*
 - *Update the Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP) annually.*
 - *Engage key public safety players in the town (e.g., police, fire, ambulance, etc.).*
 - *Attend quarterly regional meetings.*
 - *Focus primarily on the “response” phase of emergencies.*
 - *Collaborate with Town officials during the “recovery” phase of emergencies.*
 - *Role Considerations:*
 - *The EMD should not be the Fire Chief but can be a local volunteer.*
 - *A Deputy EMD role is essential, but a Coordinator role is optional.*
 - *Support from Vermont Emergency Management (VEM):*
 - *Harry from VEM will coordinate with towns starting in December.*
 - *VEM operates 24/7, 365 days a year, to assist towns with any emergency-related issues.*
- Spoke with Peter Coffey, Bristol’s current Emergency Management Deputy:
 - ***Not interested in the Director role:*** *Prefers not to take on the responsibilities of the EMD Director.*
 - ***Willing to stay on as Deputy:*** *Open to continuing to support the town in a Deputy EMD capacity.*
 - ***Fine with Michael Leyden in the Director role:*** *Supports Michael Leyden as the choice for EMD Director.*

- ***Suggested stipend range:** Proposed a stipend for the EMD Director between \$500 and \$1,000.*
- ***Deputy stipend:** Did not feel a stipend for the Deputy EMD role was necessary.*
- Researched stipends offer by the Town of Bristol for the Health Officer and Bristol Fire Department:
 - *Health Officer Stipend \$500*
 - *BFD ranges from \$550 to \$2,750*
- Adapted the EMD job description provided by Harry Schoppmann.

Recommendations

- Approve a job description for a Town of Bristol Emergency Management Director (EMD).
- Approve a yearly stipend of \$750 for the position.
- Invite Bristol resident Michael Leyden to interview for the newly created position.

Prepared by Ian Albinson, Selectboard Member
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