

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – NOTES –  
EMERGENCY TABLETOP EXERCISE NOVEMBER 14, 2018

Notes of the Tabletop Exercise held on Wednesday, November 14, 2018 in the O'Connor Community Centre.

Present: Mayor Jim Vezina  
Councillors Wendy Handy, Jerry Loan, Bishop Racicot  
Clerk-Treasurer Lorna Buob  
Deputy Clerk-Treasurer & CEMC Linda Racicot  
Administrative Assistant Erin Laforest  
Fire Chief and Alternate CEMC Henry Mattas  
Deputy Fire Chief and Alternate CEMC Monica Budiselic  
Alternate CEMC Morris Douglas  
Fire Department and First Response members – Leanne Coderre,  
Willy Coderre, Greg Biloski, Mike Carli, Jenna Coderre,  
Road Department – Kelly Johnson, Brent Dennhardt, Richard Pitton  
Ontario Provincial Police – Sergeant Ted Becker  
Superior North EMS – Ernie Kadikoff  
Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management Field Officer –  
Amethyst Sector – Sharon Bak  
Lakehead Amateur Radio Club – Randy Gottfred, Brad Harris

Mayor Vezina called the exercise to order at 7:10 p.m. Attendees were welcomed and thanked for attending the Township of O'Connor's Emergency Tabletop Exercise. Introductions were made around the tables. Mayor Vezina then turned the exercise over to Ms. Racicot, the Township of O'Connor's Community Emergency Management Coordinator (CEMC).

Ms. Racicot explained the requirements of the Township under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act. Section 12(1) which states that every municipal shall have a Municipal Emergency Control Group (MECG). Ms. Racicot noted that the four (4) hour training is no longer required, however the MECG is required by law to be trained and be able to demonstrate knowledge of the components of the Township's Emergency Plan. The MECG is also a part of the Community Control Group (CCG), which includes members from outside agencies depending on the need for the particular emergency. The MECG is also required to conduct an annual practice exercise for a simulated emergency incident in order to evaluate the municipality's emergency response plan and its own procedures, this being the reason for this exercise.

Ms. Racicot proceeded with the slide presentation explaining the objective of the exercise and the scenario. The exercise is to improve the readiness and to build local capacity for dealing with emergencies and disasters that could occur in the Township of O'Connor. Every Municipality shall also have an Emergency Management Program Committee (EMPC). This group is responsible to make recommendations that will improve the functionality of the Emergency Plan.

The scenario for this exercise was an Ice Storm. The slide presentation was read aloud with the group and the scenario played out in different stages. A map was also provided to clarify where the different incidents were located in the Township. Those in attendance then moved into groups, based on their department and what they would be doing in this particular emergency. Each group then reported to the group what they would be doing at each particular stage of the emergency. Questions were asked based on the information provided by the participants.

The Lakehead Amateur Radio Club members provided information on how they could assist in an emergency. They are a volunteer service and are available to whoever needs them. If there are not enough people in the area they can deploy more. The volunteers use their own equipment. If the telephone system or radios are not working they can be the liaisons between departments or agencies. As they are volunteers they cannot guarantee how many people would be available at any particular time. They are self-sufficient and do not need power to operate. Battery backups are good for 4 – 7 days. Their main repeater is on Mount Baldy and there are other towers in the area.

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There are 250 local radio operators with 30 of them members of the Amateur Radio Emergency Services Club. Mr. Harris and Mr. Gottfred left the meeting following their presentation.

Ms. Bak, OFMEM, provided information with regard to cell towers and power outages. She also noted that if we require assistance from their office we have to call them. They do not call us.

The Scenario continued and the groups again reported what they would be doing in the current situations.

A question was asked with regard to the use of volunteer's equipment in an emergency and whether or not it would be covered by the Township's insurance in case of an incident, or how the expenses of using this equipment would be compensated. It was recommended that this be looked into further and included in a policy.

It was noted that the Township does request emergency situation information from all new residents, and requests updated from our current residents. The information requested includes contact information, whether or not they may need medical assistance in an emergency, if they would be able to assist or take in neighbours in an emergency or if they would have equipment available to help out in different situations. This list is located in the municipal office. It was suggested that perhaps it should also be kept at the homes of the Administrative staff in case they cannot attend the office depending on the situation. This will be discussed further with the MCEG.

It was suggested that it be noted how, if in an emergency, the groups cannot attend in person, how they can virtually be together. It was also noted that the Emergency Plan should include how the Acting Mayor is appointed in the Mayor's absence.

Ms. Racicot asked the group if they knew what a Hotwash was and continued to explain that it is the immediate "after-action" discussions and evaluations of the agencies performance following an exercise, training session, or major event. In summary the exercise tonight went over very well. It was noted that there could be gaps in communication in such an emergency. It was also noted that there will be follow up questions to the insurance company with regard to volunteers equipment being used in an emergency. It was also suggested that perhaps the request for emergency information could be made fillable on the Township's website to make it easier for residents to submit it.

Mayor Vezina thanked everyone for attending and participating in the exercise and thanked Ms. Racicot for preparing and presenting and the meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

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Mayor

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Clerk-Treasurer