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Date: August 8, 2023
To: Board of County Commissioners
From: Daniel Nibouar, Interim Director, Department of Disaster Management
Subject: Emergency Preparedness Council Update

REQUEST: Seeking Board input on the progress and future direction of the Emergency Preparedness Council (EPC) and proposed revisions to the EPC Bylaws.

BACKGROUND: The Emergency Preparedness Council (EPC) was formed in following the 2020 Wildfires and 2021 Winter Storms to increase community engagement in preparedness and response efforts by advising Clackamas County Disaster Management. As described in the approved bylaws, the goal of the EPC are as follows:

- a. Advise the Disaster Management Department and Clackamas County Board of County Commissioners in the development of activities, strategies and priorities to achieve disaster preparedness within the boundaries of Clackamas County.
- b. Promote disaster management initiatives and activities. Participate in community education and engagement.
- c. Advocate for policy and system changes that improve the disaster preparedness in Clackamas County. Optional activities could include providing oral or written testimony on behalf of the Emergency Preparedness Council to the appropriate government level, helping to identify partners of support for preparedness, and participating in legislative activities.
- d. Strengthen intergovernmental collaboration and enhance collaboration between governments and partners on an ongoing basis.
- e. Develop strategies to enhance collaboration among governmental bodies and the general public.

PROGRESS TO DATE: These goals have required a significant time commitment from Council members. The Council's required quarterly meetings, monthly subcommittee meetings, meeting preparation, and research into topics of interest, have made it difficult to engage all members.

The Council was able to review preliminary results of the COVID-19 after-action process, in alignment with the first goal. However, in further meetings the Council was unable to achieve a quorum to pass forward any recommendation to Disaster Management and the BCC.

Community events, outreach opportunities, and training opportunities have been shared on an on-going basis, but participation has been extremely limited.

Subcommittees – In accordance with the bylaws five subcommittees were created. They are: Community Preparedness, Communication, Logistics, Resources, and Recovery. The Council has two



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active subcommittees Community Preparedness and Communication that have been meeting jointly for several months. The bulk of the work has been focused on the second EPC goal “to promote disaster activities in their respective communities”. The other three subcommittees have been unable to maintain members or take on any tasks.

BYLAWS CONSIDERATION: The EPC has had several challenges in recent months, most notably the dwindling number of voting members and lack of participation in the five subcommittees. A discussion about these and other challenges at the quarterly EPC meeting on June 26th, has led to a desire by the EPC voting members to amend the by-laws.

The EPC by-laws outline a total of 15 voting members, though currently there are only 8 voting members. Recruitment for voting members has been ongoing since September 2022. EPC has not met quorum since September 2022. The drafted changes to the by-laws propose a total of 7 voting members, with no more than 9. This change will help reach the quorum requirements needed to conduct official business and relieve time and capacity constraints for the ongoing recruitment to fill the roster.

The by-laws also state that the EPC have a required 5 subcommittees, to allow for each Board of County Commissioners to sit on each subcommittee. An amendment to the by-laws to remove the requirement of 5 subcommittees and instead create subcommittees on an ad hoc basis, will decrease EPC member workload while still providing subject matter expertise by community partners and incorporate feedback and guidance from EPC voting members.

Additional by-laws changes include removing ex-officio members from the formal roster, while still seeking their input as needed; removing the Secretary Officer position, as this role continues to be supported by Disaster Management staff; and the addition of language about EPC business being subject to public records requests.

The Emergency Preparedness Council seeks to refine the by-laws and focus their efforts, to support the expectations of the BCC and the community they represent.

BOARD DISCUSSION:

- Is the EPC meeting the board’s expectations?
- Is the council serving its intended purpose?
- Does the Board support the proposed changes to the EPC bylaws?

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Revise EPC bylaws to match member capacity.