

Oregon VOAD Meeting Minutes



February 21, 2017

Attendance:

Laura Pasco, *Adventist Community Services*; Robert Worlock, *Church of Scientology*; Mike Johnson, *Church of Jesus Christ of Latter day Saints*; Dick Raub, *Episcopal Dioceses of Oregon*, **Vice President-Urban**; Steve Serkin, *Jewish Federation of Greater Portland*; Charlene Larsen, *Lutheran Disaster Response*, **Vice President-Rural**; Susan Romanski, *Mercy Corps*; Dean Alby, *Oregon Food Bank*, **President**; Wendy Colvin, *Mennonite Disaster Services*, **Treasurer**; Christian Burgess, *Disaster Distress Helpline*; Dan Moseler, *OR-ID Conference of United Methodist Church*; Sherry Young, *Oregon Lions District 36-0*; Mike Riedy, *FEMA VAL, Region X*; Joseph Murray, *Oregon Office of Emergency Management*.

14 individuals representing 14 organizations/government agencies

1:00 p.m. – **Roll call and Introduction:** Dean welcomed everyone to this conference call general meeting of Oregon VOAD.

1:15 p.m. – **Partner Spotlight:** Susan Romanski of Mercy Corps provided our Partner Spotlight this month. Susan describes Mercy Corps as an International Relief Organization with a small foot print in the United States. Her role at Mercy Corp is to identify areas of commonality between Mercy Corps international work and domestic needs here in the states when/if disaster strikes on a regional level. Their strength is large scale response with a focus on the restoration of food, water, sanitation and housing. In the Northwest, Oregon and Washington are preparing for a Cascadia Subduction Zone type earthquake, the aftermath of such a devastating event could see the knowledge and resources of Mercy Corps as being a large asset to disaster response and long-term recovery.

1:30 p.m. – **Review of Meeting Minutes from January 17, 2017:** Dean provided the attendees with meeting minutes from our last Special meeting that focused on snow/ice response. There was a moment to review the minutes and a request for feedback or changes. Having no feedback or requests for changes and request was made for a motion to accept the meeting minutes of January 17, 2017 without changes; Robert Worlock made a motion to accept the meeting minutes without change, Laura Pasco seconded the motion and a vote followed. A voice vote drew a unanimous yes vote and the motion passed.

1:40 p.m. – **Should Oregon VOAD Pursue a 501(c) 3 Status?** Dean started this discussion about a 501(c) 3 status by pointing out that Oregon VOAD currently is not recognized in the state as a club, a non-profit or any type of organization in the state. We have by-laws and work as a Membership organization but have no real standing in the state. We hold no insurance, cannot receive donations for our own disaster response projects, nor can we provide tax deductible receipts. He asked the participating membership if they felt having a 501(c) 3 status would be helpful.

- **Discussion** – Charlene reminded us that we have used Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) as our fiscal agent in the past. That organization has a tax exempt

status and supports our disaster response and long-term recovery efforts. We could go back to EMO and formalize our relationship with a MOU or other agreement. Laura Pasco added that if our current relationship with EMO is working for us, then why fix it. Wendy stated that a 501(c) 3 status formalizes our organization and makes sure we are working at the highest levels, it creates a much more transparent and logical money management system for us and allows people to make tax exempt donations to us without the need of a fiscal agent. Michael Riedy noted that many VOADs have a tax exempt status for the very reasons stated by Wendy. Mike Johnson said he had done some research and ORVOAD is not registered as a club or any type of organization in the State which seems peculiar that we have not even done this level of work. Sherry Young added that we currently have trouble filling our leadership spots in the organization and the work to achieve a tax exempt status would be maybe more work and organizational skill than we have band-width for. Dean completed this discussion by stating that this topic will be formally discussed at our March ORVOAD Meeting with hopes of a vote to either move forward with formal 501(C) 3 status or to work out a MOU with EMO.

- **Required Action** – Place 501(c) 3 discussion on March Oregon VOAD Meeting Agenda.

2:10 p.m. – **Committee Reports**

- Bylaws, Policies and Procedures, Dean - nothing to report.
- Long Term Recovery Groups, COAD/VOAD Development, Charlene – There are a number of COADs working in the state. Clatsop County is working to develop a COAD and this work will continue through the spring. Linn/Benton continues to work to develop their COAD.
- Membership Committee, Brent – not present.
- Communications Committee, Robert Worlock – we are researching an option for a website provider. Scott recently set up a template in WordPress for Oregon VOAD to experiment with. Dean added that he had indeed looked at the website template and it looked so much nicer and user friendly. We will continue to look at this option through the spring.

2:20 p.m. – **Current ORVOAD Response:** Dean reports that Oregon VOAD worked closely with Multnomah County Emergency Management and OEM during this last winter weather cycle with no outstanding requests for help. Joseph added that he knows of no requests from the counties for help but that this sometimes takes 30-60 days for people to work through their local resources before requests are made to the state organizations.

2:30 p.m. – Oregon VOAD Nominations Committee: Dean reported that Tom Hogan (Nominations Committee, Chair) went in for heart surgery this last weekend. He appears to be doing well after by-pass surgery but will need a couple of months to recovery. Currently we need a co-chair for the committee that can fill in until such time as Tom can continue his leadership role. Steve Serkin agreed to support Tom through this upcoming election cycle ending in May. This election cycle will accept nominations for Vice President-Urban, Treasurer, Member at Large and Secretary. Dean adds that both Dick Raub and Wend Colvin have been nominated to continue their respective leadership roles, but other nominations for these positions will be accepted until April's cut-off date.

- Required Action – Send all nominations for leadership to Steve Serkin. He will take over leadership of the Nominations Committee, working closely with Tom through this election cycle.

2:40 p.m. - **Organizational Highlights:**

- FEMA, Michael Riedy – 15 counties in Idaho have received PA declarations due to flooding events. Some areas of Alaska experiencing flooding events as well.
- OEM, Joseph Murray – No report
- Lutheran Disaster Response, Charlene Larsen – LDR is leaning forward into potential flooding in the Oroville area of Northern California to provide services if needed.
- OR/ID Conference of United Methodist Church – Dan states that UMCOR is doing outreach in the Idaho area to identify flooding impacts to wells and septic systems. Also leaning forward into the Oroville area to respond if needed.
- Oregon Food Bank – Dean reports that OFB continues to reach into communities impacted by flooding and snow to assure there is food available. There are also efforts on the coast to strengthen food reserves if needed for seasonal flooding or a Cascadia type event.

2:55 p.m. – Announcements:

- **Trainings and Workshops:**
 - There are a number of conferences and trainings coming up this spring. Keep an eye on the weekly updates to see these trainings and remember to sign up for these.
 - Oregon VOAD will host the Mountain West Annual Conference in 2018. There is no location picked out yet but we will need to begin planning soon.
 - There are three conferences coming up in the next couple months, if you need help to attend one of these, please speak with one of our leadership to arrange for a scholarship or grant.
 - OEM Workshop, April 11-13th in Sun River, OR
 - Annual Mountain West Conference, April 23-25 in Longmont, Colorado
 - Annual National VOAD Conference, May 15-18 in Houston, TX
- **Next Oregon VAOD Meeting:** Mercy Corps will host our next Oregon VOAD meeting on Tuesday, March 21st from 1:00 – 3:30 p.m. Thank you Susan!

3:00 p.m. – Adjourn.