



Orleans-Essex REMC Meeting Minutes

DATE: November 17, 2025

TIME: 1pm

LOCATION: Newport Fire Station, also available via ZOOM.

The meeting was called to order at 1pm by Chair Phil Brooks

Introductions were made. Those attending in person were Zachary Borst- VEM; Molly Dockter- NVDA; Russel Curtis- Westmore; Maurice Doyon- Westfield EMD; Jeff Young- Newport Fire Department; and Matthias Bannach- Civil Air Patrol/NEK Amateur Radio. Those attending via ZOOM were Glenn Herrin- VEM/Danville EMD, Phil Brooks- Glover EMD/REMC Chair; Michael Sanville- North Country Hospital; and Rebecca Petelle- VT Department of Health.

The minutes from June 4, 2025, were reviewed but were unable to be approved due to the lack of a quorum.

Presentation by Glenn Herrin- as a representative from VEM, he began with the VT Alert overview. All VT towns can adopt VT Alert- town manager or mayor initiates adoption but it typically happens after selectboard discussion. Towns can register for free at vtalert.gov to send out emergency only messages. If a town is not registered they can still send out messages by contacting the state watch officer.

Presentation by Glen Herrin- as the EMD of Danville- regarding Incident Support Plan followed and covered the three basic components of a plan- warning, messaging, and support. Zach reiterates that an Incident Support Plan helps build mid-level coordination and information sharing. Discussion ensued regarding how this looks for the Caledonia-Essex REMC and how it might look for the Orleans-Essex REMC- it was decided to pursue a plan at the next meeting.

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CALEDONIA, ESSEX AND ORLEANS COUNTIES
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Discussion- by-laws update- Phil stated that it has been difficult to gain a quorum and asked if it would be possible to reduce the number of members needed for a quorum. Zack stated he would look into the possibility but thought it would be unlikely to get around state statute. Discussion followed on how to improve attendance at meetings in order to provide a quorum. It was decided that we should focus on bringing more members to meetings, not just for voting but also to increase engagement. Phil also asked if, given the current hold on EMPG funds, NVDA would still be present at meetings as stated in the bylaws. Molly explained that at this point in time NVDA is able to provide temporary funding and will be involved until further notice. Emergency management and coordination play an important role in informing regional planning, local understanding, and safety.

Vermont Emergency Management Update Zack gave an overview of our upcoming renewal of the Integrated Preparedness Plan (IPP). A main goal would be to have the regional IPPs align with the state IPP- in this way the state can distribute more information to small communities and reduce workload. Zack will provide an update at the next meeting with a proposal of how the state to regional coordination will look.

Zack also recommends checking under the About Us/Contacts section of the VEM website (<https://vem.vermont.gov/contact-us>) and be sure that you're enrolled in all email lists (they are located on the left hand side of the page in the menu navigation section under the About Us/Contact). He also cautioned that while the drought is slowly subsiding, the NEK did not receive as much rain as the rest of the state and is still technically in drought status.

Phil stated that he would like to create a tabletop exercise based around the theoretical breach or damage of the Shadow Lake dam that would include communication with downstream communities. He will host at the Glover Fire Station sometime in the winter and will continue to report back with updates and information.

Matthias presented information about what he does with NEK amateur radio and would like to understand if there is a meaningful role they can fill during emergencies or leading up to emergencies. He would like to start more in depth training of up to 40 young and engaged citizens and thinks it would be good to have useful involvement with the local community. Zack noted that it is helpful to have volunteers receive standardized training, such as the information provided through AuxComm. It was decided to stay in touch regarding opportunities and collaboration.

The next meeting was stated as January 19, 2026 but due to MLK Day was rescheduled to 1pm on January 20, 2026 at the Newport Fire Station and also available via ZOOM.

The meeting adjourned at 2:55pm