

CAER Meeting Minutes

5-21-2025

Location: Room 40 (lower level) at the Steele County Administration Building (630 Florence Ave) and Teams.

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 3:32pm by Tom Karnauskas.

Attendees: Tom Karnauskas, Jerry Ibberson, Dennis Hollatz, Ethan Rindfleisch, Annette Duncan, Amber Aaseth, Megan Ringhofer, Thad Rosenberg, Zach Roberts, and Joe Eichten

Introductions: Attendees introduced themselves.

Routine Approvals:

- 1) **Secretary's Report** – No changes. Jerry made a motion, Amber seconded. Motion passed.
- 2) **Financial Report** – Approx. \$1800 in the account, no funds have been spent. Annette made a motion, Jerry seconded. Motion passed.

Old Business:

- 1) **Long Term Recovery Group (LTRG)** – Kristen gave an overview of the purpose of a Long Term Recovery Group and what steps we will work on today.

- a. **Define LTRG Mission** – We bring together community resources to address the ongoing unmet needs of those impacted by disasters, fostering resiliency in our communities.

Kristin made a motion to approve the mission. Jerry seconded the motion. Motion carried.

- **Establish LTRG Goals** – Develop a plan for the top 4 disasters/hazards that could affect Steele County: Flooding, Tornado, High-Winds, Blizzard, are the disasters that we believe will be the focus. We will review the data in more detail to determine. In the future we will identify goals in the following areas as we have a more defined process.
 - **Strategic goals** – (Overarching goals)

- Development and activation of an LTRG (within CAER) in Steele County
 - Identify potential unmet needs based on previous data (mitigation plan).
 - Identify all possible resources that we can utilize in times of disaster.
 - Identify the partners that will serve in the LTRG.
- Identify what positions should be created to support LTRG (funded and unfunded). For example, disaster case management and distribution of funds, and construction coordinator, etc.
- **Operational goals - TBD**
- **Tactical goals - TBD**
- **Long-Term goals - TBD**

New Business:

1) Multi Hazard Mitigation Plan (MHMP) – Updated every 5 years, the purpose of the report is to reflect on disasters and how we will manage them based on previous data. Tom reported that we are a year behind as the last plan is already 5 years old. Megan reviewed the plan which has now been approved. Tom noted that this will be published on the Steele County website. Every possible disaster was reviewed, evaluated, and a plan was created to get the community back to pre-disaster conditions. Megan reported that most residents experiencing a disaster should be able to recover relatively quickly, this in part is due to the resources that we have available in Steele County.

A few highlights from the report:

- Between 1957 and 2022 we had 14 Major Disasters and 5 Emergency Declarations.
- Tornado - 19 in the past 76 years. 19.7% risk of tornado in an average year.
- Lightning – unpredictable, on-going, especially in the summer.
- Hail – unpredictable – 100% probability will be affected.
- Flash Floods – 2007, 2010, 2014, 2016, 2024, additional mitigation is introduced after each flood. Ellendale and Blooming Prairie are not FEMA mapped because they do not pose a risk of flooding like Owatonna and Medford. Areas located near rivers are more closely monitored.
- Winter Storms and Blizzards – 1-2 each year; more snow, higher risk of flood in the spring.
- Extreme Cold – Severe cold days are minimal.
- Extreme Heat – Severe hot days and humidity poses a risk to individuals living outside.
- Drought – minor droughts the past few years. We have not had significant issues with crop growth or risk of wildfires.

- Soil Erosion – significant erosion along the rivers and lakes. Mitigation in place to address.
- Earthquakes – we are on an ancient fault line; however, have had little to no activity near Blooming Prairie.

Dennis reported that there are additional resources for communities looking to address flooding. He will send the information to Megan and copy Kristen.

Tom shared the Flood Gauge that is in place for Straight River (Bridge Street) and Maple Creek (Dane Road) and how it is utilized to monitor flooding.

- 2) **2010 Flood** –Tom has files for 2004, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016 which he will make sure that Kristen has access to. Tom reported on the data from the 2010 Flood.

- **County Residence – 224**
- **Owatonna Residence - 469**
- **Business – 64**

The residence reports were everything from sewage backup to seepage. The streets that sustained the greatest level of damage were Hoffman Dr., Holly Street, Johnson Place, Kast Ave, Kim Lane, and Knollwood Place (Major 22, Minor 80, and Affected 157). Most of the damage reported was along the Straight River and Maple Creek. EOC was stationed on the first floor of the Firehall. The largest needs reported were for clean-up materials. Salvation Army, Red Cross, and local stores provided supplied. There was not a large demand for sheltering. One of the greatest needs after cleaning up was the number of mixed waste/debris that needed to be cleared out, including furniture and building materials.

Community Response Needs:

- Building Inspectors
- Technical Assistance for Insurance
- Structural Assistance, MN Investment Fund
- Community Disaster Loan Program

Owatonna had 83 visitors to the Recovery Center (DRC) looking for support:

- Housing resources
- Behavioral Health
- Trailer homes – how to handle demolition and removal
- No Long-Term recovery representation
- No resources to address immediate needs, i.e. food, clothing, shelter

United Way of Steele County's Role for this disaster was Disaster Fundraising and distribution of funds for residents and businesses in Steele County.

Tom shared a tool from FEMA, the Community Lifelines, that could be utilized in our conversations around Long-Term Recovery. Tom opened the room up for questions. Jerry reported that they have about 30 Red Cross Kits that can be distributed. Dennis was curious about how mitigation has changed the plan regarding landslides and soil erosion. Megan requested a copy of the Community Lifeline slide Tom shared.

3) **Types of Resources to Prioritize** - Tom recapped our disasters, both Natural and Human.

- a. **Sheltering** - both short term and long-term
- b. **Basic Needs**— food, clothing, etc.
- c. **Transportation and Road Infrastructure**
- d. **Health Care Needs (Medical, Medications, PPE)**
- e. **Financial Supports**
- f. **Information and Communication**

Action Items:

- Next agenda: Which Disasters will be Prioritize (Natural/Human).
- Core team needs to communicate with each other between meetings to ensure that we are in the best position to move this work forward.
- Schedule Disaster Training for Volunteers United. Annette and Kristen will set up a meeting to discuss the parameters.

Steele County Emergency Manager Report: No report.

Member Reports:

CERT – conducted a class with 3 new people certifying and 2 re-certifying. This was combined with Rice County.

SKYWARN – Annual training completed. Approx. 30 people in attendance.

RACES – Attempted a class; however, did not have anyone register.

FEMA – No update.

UNITED WAY OF STEELE COUNTY – Annette reported that we continue to build up our Volunteers United and would like to get them some official disaster training.

No updates from the team.

Adjournment: Tom committed to continuing with this team, after his retirement. Megan made a motion to adjourn, Amber seconded. Motion carried. Tom adjourned the meeting at 4:46pm

Next Meeting: July 16, 2025, at 3:30pm at the Administration Building and Teams, we will be celebrating Tom's retirement.