

Minutes from Joint Upper and Lower Rattlesnake General Meeting April 3, 2024.

Attendees:

Upper Rattlesnake Leadership Team members Terri Roach (Co-Chair), Andrea Stierle (Co-Chair), Jeani Alonso Adam's (Treasurer and Transportation Committee Representative), Kathy Gaskill (Secretary), J. Kevin Hunt (Community Forum Representative), Judy Molland (Alternate Community Forum Representative), Doug Grimm (Sign Maker)

Lower Rattlesnake Leadership Team members Peter Lesica (Co-Chair), Robert Schultz (Co-Chair and Community Forum Representative), Gracie Sanford (Alternate Community Forum Representative), Kathy Tonnessen (Secretary), Marta Meengs and Joan Steelquist (Members at Large)

Kalina Pritchard (Neighborhood Specialist), Melissa Glueckert (Neighborhood Specialist).

An estimated 175 people were in attendance.

Minutes were approved from last year's Upper Rattlesnake General Meeting held on January 31, 2023.

Non agenda items were presented including upcoming eradication of Norway Pines by Missoula Parks and Trails, letting people know students from Loyola Sacred Heart School will be distributing evacuation packets in the Rattlesnake and concerns relating to evacuation.

1. Tables were hosted by the Watershed Education Network, Missoula Aging Services, Wildfire Preparedness, CERT (Citizens Emergency Response Team) and Bear Smart giving information on their programs and services. Missoula County Public Schools and the Missoula Fire Department had tables with information regarding the upcoming mill levies on the May ballot.
2. Nick Holloway and Ken Parks from the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) gave a presentation addressing evacuation plans for the upper and lower Rattlesnake for different scenarios including wildfire and a train derailment resulting in a toxic spill. They gave information on some of the technology being used by OEM and also stressed the importance of residents doing their part to stay informed and suggested signing up for Smart 911 to receive information regarding emergencies. They explained OEM partners with a number of other agencies including Police and the Fire Department to name a few.
3. Nick and Ken mentioned steps people should take now to be prepared including arrangements for pets, packing items they will need to take in case of evacuation including prescriptions, documents, computers, pictures, cash and clothing. They recommended having a place to store said items so they are ready to quickly retrieve. Also communicate with family members to arrange a meeting place once evacuated.

4. Adriane Beck from OEM spoke about the planning that is being done for evacuation and stresses the importance of people being signed up to receive alerts and then to follow directions. She said there are three levels of alert with the third level being focused and specific to an immediate emergency in a specific area. In this type of incident holding areas and emergency shelters will be set up. A "Warning" informs the public of a dangerous situation and to watch for updates. An "Order" is an official directive for residents to take specific action such as evacuation.
5. Brooks Bailey works on technology modeling using the Ladrus model and showed how different situations can affect an evacuation and what alternatives can be found using technology. He said there are 2556 residents in the Rattlesnake. If each home averages two cars used in an evacuation it could potentially take 6 hours and 11 minutes to have everyone exit at the bottom of the Rattlesnake. A toxic chemical spill at the bottom of the Rattlesnake would entail a much different evacuation strategy.
6. The meeting concluded with residents asking questions regarding perceived problems with parts of the plan and a desire to have more specific information. The presenters addressed the concerns and ways they potentially could be handled. One resident emphasized the importance of helping each other and helping the process run as smoothly as possible.
7. Kevin Hunt urged involvement with the CERT program and said he was communicating with OEM about organizing Neighborhood Emergency Response Teams.
8. The meeting was adjourned at 8 p.m.