



**Gratiot County Emergency Management Division  
Emergency Operations Center  
1375 County Farm Drive  
Ithaca, MI 48847**



**GRATIOT COUNTY LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE (LEPC)**

Meeting Minutes from:

January 13, 2026 – 1000 Hrs.

Meeting held at the GI-RESD (Ithaca, MI)

Zoom option was made available for those who could not attend in person.

**Chair:** Fred Harris – Gratiot EM

**Vice-Chair:** Paul Hungerford – Gratiot Isabella RESD

**Information Coordinator:** Chief Richard Ramereiz – St. Louis Police Department

**Emergency Services Coordinator:** Fred Harris – Gratiot EM

- I. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance
  - A. Fred Harris called the meeting to order at 1000 Hrs.
  - B. Fred Harris led the Pledge of Allegiance
- II. Roll Call / Attendance - (ten members of the LEPC are required to be in attendance in person to have a quorum)
  - A. Fred Harris – Gratiot EM/HSD
  - B. Richard Ramereiz – St. Louis PD (SLPD)
  - C. Dave Rapacz – Gratiot County Central Dispatch (GCCD)
  - D. Mark Williams – Alma Public Safety
  - E. Sheila Moore – MidMichigan District Health Department (MMDHD)
  - F. Tom Clark – Gratiot County Sheriff's Office
  - G. Paul Hungerford – Gratiot Isabella RESD (GI-RESD)
  - H. Maureen Skayhan Dutra – American Red Cross Mid-Michigan Chapter (ARC)
  - I. Cory Zimmerman - MSP Lakeview Post
  - J. Robert Wolf – MSP Emergency Management Homeland Security Division (EMHSD)
  - K. Casey Zangaro – MSU Extension Office
  - L. Josh Boutwell - Gratiot Isabella RESD (GI-RESD)
  - M. Tim Dolehanty – Gratiot County Administrator
  - N. Mario Lucchesi - American Red Cross Mid-Michigan Chapter (ARC)
  - O. Zoom - Sheila Englehardt – 211 NE Michigan
  - P. Zoom - Maureen Gibbons – Region 1 Healthcare Coalition
  - Q. Zoom – Paul Spata American Red Cross Mid-Michigan Chapter (ARC)
- III. Approval of January 13, 2026, Meeting Minutes and March 10, 2026, Meeting Agenda
  - A. Motion to approve minutes and agenda – Dave Rapacz / Support – Shiela Moore
    - i. All in Favor / None Opposed
    - ii. No additional discussion
    - iii. Motion passed



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- IV. Call to the public.
  - A. No public present
- V. Special presentation
  - A. No presentation scheduled.
- VI. Old business
  - A. Homeland Security Grant Status
    - i. We currently have three (3) pending grants. All three (3) grants are pending due to the federal freeze on all federal grants.
      - 1. 2024 HSG grant earmarked for airport security cameras.
      - 2. 2023 HSG grant earmarked for the purchase of a drone by Alma PD. This project is also delayed by an unforeseen delay with equipment. This grant is set to expire in May 2026
        - a. Our Fiduciary suggested that the 2023 and 2024 grants be switched to prevent loss of funds due to the delay of equipment.
      - 3. 2025 HSG funds have not been announced.
  - B. Hazard Mitigation Plan Grant award/status
    - i. The current plan has expired (May 2025). The expired plan needs to be updated.
    - ii. Grant will allow us to hire a consultant to assist with this.
  - C. Emergency Management Performance Grant award/status
    - i. Provides limited funding for the Emergency Manager's wages and benefits.
    - ii. The amount awarded is \$4300.00. We have been notified that this grant will no longer be available at some point in the future, but no end date has been provided.
  - D. Hazard Materials Grant award/status
    - i. Requires the EM to review the emergency action plans for all businesses that are required to report Tier II Chemical Inventories.
    - ii. We will receive \$30-\$35 per plan for reviewing the Tier II Chemical Inventories
    - iii. Funds received can be used to purchase equipment.
- VII. New business
  - A. Welcome, Tim Dolehanty – Gratiot County Administrator
  - B. 2025/2026 Tier II Chemical Inventory reviews completed using the online Tier II Management reporting system.
- VIII. Round table discussion
  - A. Sheila Moore - MMDHD
    - i. Flu and respiratory issues are on the rise. Flu vaccinations are available by appointment. Protective masks are available. COVID-19 test kits are no longer available.



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- ii. MMDHD will be conducting a radiological exercise with Region 6 partners. MMDHD will be conducting a foodborne illness tabletop exercise within the agency.
- B. Cory Zimmerman – MSP Lakeview Post
  - i. Staffing is increasing for the MSP Lakeview Post. Several new troopers are in field training, and several are in the current troop school.
- C. Maureen Shayan Dutra – ARC MidMichigan Chapter
  - i. Prepping for disaster preparedness, focusing on animal emergencies
  - ii. ARC will be hosting a mass casualty workshop in Lansing, MI, on April 25<sup>th</sup>.
  - iii. Introduced Mario Luchessi.
- D. David Rapacz – Gratiot County Central Dispatch
  - i. AI call answering service is now in service. This will answer the initial call to dispatch (non-emergency line) and filter the robocalls/spam calls that have been inundating the dispatch center.
  - ii. 911 phone system upgrade has been completed
  - iii. The new radio tower has been erected. Power should be completed this week. Expecting to go live in February/March.
  - iv. CAD project is progressing. Hoping to have a vendor selected by October 2026
- E. Paul Hungerford – GI RESD
  - i. Michigan school districts filed lawsuits in late 2025 challenging Section 31aa(9) of the State School Aid Act, which conditions school safety and mental-health funding on a requirement that districts “waive any privilege” during a state investigation following a mass-casualty event. This waiver could include attorney–client privilege, work-product protections, and even certain constitutional rights.
  - ii. A coalition of school districts argued that the waiver is unconstitutionally vague, overly broad, and coerces schools into surrendering fundamental rights in order to receive funding—effectively, forcing districts to choose between critical safety resources and legal protections
  - iii. On December 17, 2025, the Michigan Court of Claims ruled in favor of the state, upholding the privilege-waiver requirement. This is being appealed. GI-RESD did not sign the waiver or accept funds pending the appeal hearing.
- F. Tom Clark – Gratiot County Sheriff’s Office
  - i. Currently fully staffed at this time. The Sheriff’s Office now has a School Resource Officer (SRO). The SRO will be working with Ithaca, Breckenridge, Ashley, and Fulton Schools. Two (2) deputies are currently attending the corrections academy.
- G. Mark Williams – Alma Public Safety
  - i. Alma District Fire Department has taken possession of a new fire engine.



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- H. Josh Boutwell – Gratiot Isabella RESD
  - i. Will be attending a digital threat assessment “train the trainer” at the end of the month. Will be training local educators and school safety partners at the conclusion of this training.
- I. Richard Ramereiz – St. Louis Police Department
  - i. Two (2) police recruits are currently attending the Delta College Police Academy.
  - ii. The city has sent out RFPs to have bulletproof/ballistic glass/panels installed at the city hall business counter and the police department counter.
  - iii. A free Narcan dispenser is located in the vestibule of the main entrance of the St. Louis City Hall.
  - iv. The free community pantry has been a great success so far.
- IX. Last call to the public
  - A. No public present
- X. The next meeting scheduled is May 12, 2026, 1000 HRS., at the GI-RESD in room 300 unless otherwise noted.
- XI. Adjournment
  - A. Motion to adjourn – David Rapacz / Support – Tom Clark
    - i. All in favor/none opposed
    - ii. No additional discussion
    - iii. Motion passed
    - iv. Adjourned at 1052 hrs.

Meeting minutes submitted by:

Chief Richard Ramereiz  
St. Louis Police Department  
LEPC Information Coordinator