

COPIN General Membership Meeting
July 13, 2016, 1:30-3:30pm
Franklin County EM&HS

Attendance: 27 Members Present

Olivia Biggs – Licking Co Health Dept
Anne Brown – City of Worthington
Bernice Cage – MORPC
Michelle Day – Franklin Co. Public Health
Darcy Dooley – City of Grove City
Victoria Gnezda – Worthington Schools
Megan Hoffman – City of Upper Arlington
Kelly McGuire – Franklin County EM&HS
John Palmer – Ohio Hospital Association
Emma Speight – City of Upper Arlington
Donna Stalter – Fairfield Medical Center
Jennifer Thrush – Union Co Health Dept
Kate Waldrop – Licking Co Health Dept
Inge Witt – Village of Plain City

Kelsey Blackburn – Central OH Trauma System
Lynn Bruno – Jackson Twp
Megan Canavan – City of Powell
Christa Dickey – City of Westerville
Karen Fahy – City of Grove City
JT Hiller – Delaware General Health Dist
Dan Kochensparger – Upper Arlington Fire (Retired)
Pam Palm – Knox County Health Dept
Kim Snell – Columbus Regional Airport Authority
Mallory Sribanditmongko – Gahanna Schools
Angie Tabor – Columbus Regional Airport Authority
Connie Tracy – Columbus Regional Airport Authority
Traci Whittaker – Delaware General Health
Laura Young Mohr – Columbus Public Utilities

Meeting Called to Order: COPIN Chair Dan Kochensparger called the meeting to order at 1:31pm

Minutes: April meeting minutes not available. Will need to approve at October meeting.

New Members & Guests Introduced: 4 Guests Present

New members – Olivia Biggs, Licking County Health Dept
Guests – Blythe Buurma, Crawford County Health Dept; Rebecca Diehm, Columbus Fire Dept; Cathy Collins, Columbus Dept of Public Safety; Don Taylor, Worthington Schools; Christy DeWees, Worthington Schools; Tracy Whited, Delaware County Sheriff's Office

Board Resignation: The Board accepted with regret the resignation of Donna Stalter. Donna is taking on new responsibilities within her organization and can no longer commit to being on the Board.

Rickenbacker FSE: Dan Kochensparger provided a recap of the full-scale exercise on June 14. Several COPIN members assisted at the exercise as evaluators, controllers and media portrayal. Angie Tabor from the Columbus Regional Airport Authority thanked those who assisted. Dan, Angie and Kim Snell (Columbus Regional Airport Authority) shared some lessons learned. Lessons learned included making sure roads that are listed in response plans have the same names as what appears on Google maps; prescript messages for condolences and next steps; difficulty in confirm a number of injured/dead.

The Franklin County Coroner's Office offers tours of their facility and process. This is a great resource for any agency that may need to work with the Franklin County Coroner during a disaster scenario.

COHAN Drill: A drill of COHAN, the alerting system we use for COPIN call-out requests, occurred on July 6, 2016. The test alert was sent to all COPIN members (65). COPIN had an 80% confirmation rate. Our goal is a 75% confirmation rate. Since we exceeded our goal, no improvement plan is needed.

Member Activities Roundtable: Dan shared some “In the news” topics that featured COPIN member agencies.

-A California water conservation PSA done by former COPIN member Mike McNutt’s agency won an award.

-Mallory Sribanditmongko with Gahanna school district was quoted in the Columbus Dispatch for her sentiments to a change in _____.

-The Port Columbus airport has been renamed. It is now the John Glenn Columbus International Airport.

-Franklin County Public Health in the news regarding a case of someone with a brain eating amoeba. Received local, state and national coverage, including an interview with People Magazine.

-Elevated nitrate levels in some Columbus area water. Laura Young Mohr commented they were very proactive in their communication efforts this time and received very few phone calls as a result.

-Columbus Dispatch article on increase in drug overdoses. Underscores that there is no system in place to coordinate information from multiple first responder agencies and hospitals to help identify when regional or statewide spikes are occurring.

-Save the Date: Annual Ohio PIO Symposium is Sept. 16.

Professional Development:

“Media and Communications Strategies Employed During the Pike County Multiple Homicide”

Lisa Person Hackley, Communications Director, Ohio Attorney General’s Office

Lisa talked about the process of how a state agency coordinated with local agencies that had very limited staffing. Many of the challenges she discussed from a state perspective were very similar to the challenges we face as local agencies.

The Ohio AG’s Office does not become involved at the local level until requested to do so by the County Prosecutor or local Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI). The call for state assistance was received very early. Mutual aid to the Sheriff was provided within one hour of the request.

The Ohio AG’s office was asked to handle all media calls right away. It was clear early on that very information about the investigation could be released...only information on the process of the investigation (number of agents on scene, amount of material collected, etc.). Media calls were routed to the Communication Director at the Ohio AG’s Office. The AG’s office didn’t have enough staff to send on scene over the weekend. The one available person had to stay at the office to handle the large volume of media calls.

The Ohio AG’s office sent a PIO to Pike County and he started taking the lead on collecting information, creating messages, and setting up a press conference (setup lights, podium, brief the AG, and coordinate the briefing logistics). The PIO worked with the lead Special Agent & Major to get the first press release out within 3-4 hours of the initial call. Ohio AG’s PIO took with him a mult-box and portable podium. A lead law enforcement agent on scene corralled media to the best of his ability. He also directed media to the Ohio AG’s office if they had questions. 3 press conferences were held before the end of the first day.

The AG and the Sheriff did take all the media's questions, but could provide very little information because of the investigation.

GovDelivery is the tool the AG's Office uses to push press releases and information out to lots of outlets simultaneously with one touch.

The release of the graphic 911 call and trying to cross check accuracy on names of the deceased was very challenging. Many family members had very similar names, so it was essential the correct names were released. 15 minutes after the number of victims was released, another victim was found. Had to quickly update the information. Another challenge occurred when a businessman independently issued a reward for anyone with information that led to the killer. He posted this on social media, and it took a lot of time to verify the legitimacy of this statement.

A JIC was established, and messages were cleared through the Lead Agent on scene, the Sheriff or the Major on scene.

Most interesting calls were from British tabloids which would just fabricate stories or would try to confirm crazy rumors.

Next Meeting: Oct. 12, 1:30-3:30pm at Franklin County EM&HS, 5300 Strawberry Farms Blvd, Columbus

Meeting Adjourned: Anne Brown moved, Bernice Cage seconded. Adjourned at 3:10pm