



**Board of Directors Meeting
Via Teleconference
September 28, 2017**

MINUTES

Present: Jan Tyson (Presbytery of Western New York), Carol Wood (IHS/211FL), Rich Hajeris (Red Cross in NYS), Wilhelmina Murray (Catholic Charities), Peter Gudaitis (NYDIS/NDIN), Rev. Joe Auslander (UMC, Upper NY Conf.), Gail Farnham (PDA), Amanda Vallone (Buffalo Red Cross), Nicholas Croce (NYVOAD), Jamie Marcella (DHSES), Nora Porter (DHSES), Tammy Leone (DHSES), Bill Dugan (DHSES), Nathan Boor (FoodLink), Kelly Dodd (Olmsted/211WNY), Zack Hodgson (Salvation Army/NYC VOAD)

Absent: Deb Palumbos (RRVOAD)

The meeting was called to order at 1:04 pm. Peter welcomed everyone & thanked them for attending. Thank you to Nathan & Deb for keeping NY VOAD operational & helping to get back up to speed.

The board now includes representatives from across the state, and DHSES & FEMA VAL's also supportive.

Minutes from August Meeting

There were no changes to the minutes. Minutes were approved.

Finance & Governance

The balance available is \$345.11. It was being held in Rochester bank account, but account was closed because of the fees being charged. Funds were transferred to NYDIS in dedicated account until NYS VOAD is "restored." There is also a question of the tax ID; NYS VOAD does not have nonprofit status so needs to work with a fiscal agent. NYVOAD was using NVOAD EIN number which is no longer approved by NVOAD. Until more \$, not high priority. Nick will produce a budget for anticipated costs for operating. NYDIS is paying Nick's salary and the website provided by NVOAD for free. Twitter & FB free. Not a nonprofit so no need for directors' & officers' insurance at this time.

The Bylaws also need revision because they have not been reviewed since 2014-15. Current administrative realities & capabilities are not reflected. When the Board met in Rochester in August, ReachOut America's (commodities distribution nonprofit also joining national VOAD), and St Lawrence COAD applications were approved.

Mental Health Association of New York City has applied (materials sent with agenda); they operate the Disaster Distress Hotline. Unanimous approval. Their dues payment needs to be invoiced.

Dues have not been collected for a number of years because there was little to offer in exchange. The dues structure will be discussed. Representation at statewide events. Once activity level resumes under new board, membership fees will be resurrected, likely in 2018.

Communication

Nick has worked on the VOAD Voices newsletter to distribute and is updating the directory. Some former members (two or three) have not been heard from so will be set to inactive. A draft will be sent out in next few weeks to review.

SIT REPS

June & July were very busy; August less so. September's hurricanes impact has been catastrophic for US Virgin Islands & Puerto Rico (with NY in FEMA Region 2). Nick has tried to get updates on website and news feed on FB & Twitter. Members urged to "like" NY's and other VOAD pages and tag NY VOAD on posts so Nick can add to the news feed.

Activation matrix considers who can provide staff capacity in state EOC as needed, anticipated to include Rev. Joe Auslander, Mina Murray-Davis, & those close to Albany. Accurate information on web based trainings & NYS DHSES trainings. FEMA as well.

Conference

DHSES has been planning an event for April 2018, but deployments & activations are getting in the way of planning. It is hoped that at least this board & chairs of COADs & VOADs could meet face to face this year and will be looking for funding to make that happen to include possible travel expense reimbursement, hotel cost subsidies. Location could be Albany or Rochester.

DHSES

New York State's response to Maria & Irma – Governor's office has taken a proactive position to damages in PR & VI, including sending staff to the islands. Press release on September 24 announced that the Empire State Relief will collect items that may be transported to PR government. More details are in the press release. There may be a role for NY VOAD to take. Bill or Jamie will get in touch with Peter for next steps. Donations still strongly discouraged in favor of cash. Where it's requested by receiving agency, reputable distribution process is acceptable. Unsolicited donations discouraged. Will work on PR piece/flyer for board approval to cross-endorse.

Further, there is discussion about setting up evacuation service center functions for those coming from San Juan to NYC (voluntary evacuees), and in coming weeks via commercial flights, small scale so far. Carnival Cruise sending a ship to Saint Croix, Saint Thomas, San Juan for those who need urgent care. Also private planes are evacuating people where possible. Islands projected to be without power for months and housing needs are huge, to continue for an estimated 18-24 months. Evacuees may be placed with family in Greater NY area, may need to stand up across the state to help connect families and friends to be housed. Not an official request yet but planning in process, fundraising too. Churches have been inquiring if places needed for families to stay. Expecting soon to convene a call.

Zack – Mayor de Blasio has done similar drive. Gov't drives seem to be more coordinated, Churches & CBOs arranging drives & taking to drop-off points. All this is expected to lead to "typical" donations management issues.

Bill – Temp housing needs mostly expected in NYC & Greater NY. Other NYS cities – if you hear of needs anywhere in the state, by people arriving here, share with Nick & Bill & Jamie. Creeping growth of need around the state. St John, St Thomas, St Croix also similar, smaller population.

Carol - offered to survey 2-1-1's across the state for reports of calls received and to distribute a statement to 2-1-1's regarding material goods collections.

Amanda Vallone: WNY Latino leaders are doing relief fund and collecting goods. They are not sending to Armory, other locations, and the deadline is tomorrow. Will be shipping to a collection center in PR. VOAD members can say something to organizers – that 70% of donated goods end up in a landfill and create other concerns. Dissuade them to not do goods. No gas, no trucks, no roads, no power, no refrigeration. WNY Red Cross has deployed several people.

Nathan Boor: It was noted that food banks cannot collect baby food, according to Feeding America guidelines.

DHSES already provided messaging to Governor & Mayor De Blasio. Community calls 211, have a consistent message across the state. Bill will send statement for comments.

Other: NYS Wilhelmina, Albany, is currently working with flooding incident for Herkimer, Rensselaer County, 20 clients, believe there are more who need help. No funding because issues arose before other storms. Conducting outreach with local organizations, uphill battle.

Bill Dugan: Request for declaration, Lake Ontario (submitted 7/6) & July rainstorms – declarations requests have been submitted. IA declaration pending for four counties, SBA assessments in process. Two separate declaration requests are pending with FEMA.

The Board Roster will be sent out with contact information.

Rev. Auslander – UMCOR has provided \$45,000 working on case work & distributing funds for durable household goods like washers and dryers.

DHSES conference, where they've identified a venue but hasn't received final approval for funding – discussed above.

Next meeting scheduled for 11/1, 1-2pm. Probably will schedule another response meeting beforehand.

Follow up:

Will work on donations management message & send out

Bill & Peter – will coordinate with governor

Jamie – will provide update on conference or in-person board meeting

Long-term recovery potential applications – continue to get updates from DHSES, share needs for monthly SIT REP.

Directory draft to everyone, check with absent agencies

Meeting adjourned 1:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Wood

Institute for Human Services