

Community Facilities Meeting

January 14, 2020

Agenda:

5:30-5:45 – Opening Activity

5:45-6:00 – Rick Whitson, Director of Emergency Management Montgomery County

6:00-6:15 – Q & A

6:15-6:30 – City of Cherryvale (Jonathan Booe, City Manager; Jimmy Holt, Chief of Police, Interim Fire Chief)

6:30-6:45 – Q & A

6:45-7:00 – Activity – Develop questions to refer to architects and construction experts (to be answered during Mar 5 Meetings)

Notes of Meeting Highlights:

Rick Whitson presented on storm shelters and school intruder safety. His comments included the following information

- Emergency Management is the gatekeeper for all federal funds for shelter projects
- Explained the cycle and importance of the county's Emergency Operation Plan, which is specific and addresses storm shelters
- Hazard Mitigation Plan – this is a possible source of funding for some shelter projects
- Cherryvale has four designated tornado shelters in the plan: Library, School, United Methodist Church, First Baptist Church
- It is possible to get funding for storm shelters in schools (not guaranteed). It is a 2 to 4 year process for the application to go through.
 - Grant is applied for by Emergency Management
 - We can apply for funding. Feds send an assessment team to look at the need.
 - Storm shelter grants (if approved) require a 25% match from the community.
 - It is a slow process, with lots of red tape. Have to be diligent to have a chance.
 - Thayer school is in Neosho County, so a separate application would have to be discussed with Emergency Management of that county for Thayer School.
- Active Shooter – this item has gained probability on the annual hazard vulnerability assessment. It is starting to surpass natural disasters as a top hazard.
- We hear about the big active shooter cases in the news. We don't hear about the ones that "come close." There were 400 in the US last year.
- Don't panic, but communities should be aware and taking steps to prevent
- All experts say entities must be taking steps to train and prevent. If there is an incident, the lawyers come out and lack of training and preventative measures are what they are looking for.

- It is possible to get a free assessment of the city and schools by an expert from Homeland Security. It takes 6 to 9 months to get him scheduled to come. Dr. Kiblinger and Jonathan Booe agreed that they would work with Rick Whitson to get that process started.
- Question and Answer followed

Staff members from the City of Cherryvale presented their thoughts on safety specific to Cherryvale Schools

- Entrances where patrons can buzz in and then have direct access to the rest of the school concerns them. An entrance that forces visitors to pass through the office increases security.
- There are limited egress options at LC currently.
- Should consider putting oldest students on 2nd floor if possible
- They would like to see better security design (from a tactical standpoint) in the east and west stairwells as the current design needs modification in the event of an active shooter situation
- Fire and egress are concerning to them. Roof collapse of the auditorium is a concern in the event of a fire. The department is not equipped to safely put out a fire in that area the way the current roof is constructed; fire fighters would be at-risk.
- Question and Answer Followed

Participants used remaining time to submit questions for the architects and construction experts to answer when they present at the March 5 facilities meeting.