

**Washington County All-Hazard Mitigation Plan Orientation Meeting Minutes**  
April 13, 2006

**Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Kyle Vandewater at 7:05 p.m. in Training Rooms 1 & 2 at the Washington County Municipal Building B, Fort Edward, New York.

**Attendance (23):**

Kyle Vandewater	Washington County DPW, Mitigation
Robert W. Humiston	Town of Argyle, Highway Supt. VP Board of Educ.
Hugh Dewey	Town of Greenwich, Highway Supt.
Floyd Pratt	Town of Hebron, Highway Supt., Fire Chief
Paul Zinn	Washington County, Deputy EMS Coordinator
Guy Capuano	Village of Salem
Ken Talkington	Hebron
Doug Brownell	Easton Vol. Fire. Co.
Dr. Tom Phelan	Strategic Teaching Associates, Inc., President
William H. Cook	Washington County Public Safety
Leon R. Clark, Jr.	Town of Hampton
Chris Rieben	Town of White Creek, Highway Supt.
Sean Carney	Town of Jackson, Highway Supt.
Gordon Aubry, Sr.	Town of Argyle
Jim Woodcock	Town of Hartford
Ray Rathbun	Telescope Casual Furniture
Joseph Childs	Village of Salem, Trustee
Al Dunlop	Pilot Knob Fire Department
Maureen Van Buren	Ft. Ann Central School, Superintendent
Willy Grimmke	Washington County DPW, Superintendent
Walter Graham	Town of Kingsbury, Supt. of Highways
John Boyce	Fort Hudson Nursing Center, Dir. of Plant Oper.
Edward Lips	State Emergency Management Office, Planning

**Introductions:**

Kyle Vandewater introduced Dr. Tom Phelan and Ed Lips. Dr. Phelan is a consultant retained by Washington County to facilitate the preparation of an All-Hazard Mitigation Plan that will be multi-jurisdictional, involving all towns and villages in Washington County. Ed Lips is experienced in assisting local governments in preparing All-Hazard Mitigation Plans and will serve as the point of contact with the State Emergency Management Office (SEMO). Attendees introduced themselves giving name, position, and jurisdiction.

**Presentations and Discussion:**

Dr. Phelan explained that a goal of this meeting would be to form Mitigation Planning Task Force that will be officially designated as such by the County. He asked those present to consider becoming a member of the Task Force after listening to the presentation, getting questions answered, and sharing their ideas about the need for mitigation planning in their jurisdictions. Dr. Phelan reflected upon a question Kyle Vandewater had been asked when communicating the purpose of the meeting to an invitee. "Why do we need another disaster plan?" Dr. Phelan explained the differences between the existing Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) and a mitigation plan. The CEMP addresses emergency/disaster response, whereas a mitigation plan addresses prevention and efforts to reduce the impact of all-hazards before they happen.

Discussion centered around the notion that local residents and officials are best prepared to provide input into an All-Hazard Mitigation Plan because they are most familiar with the history of local disasters such as flooding, ice storms, wind storms, mud slides, and earthquakes. They are also acutely aware of potential man-made, biological, and technical hazards. The history of past disasters is critical to mitigation planning. Attendees spoke of past experience with flooding, wind, and ice storms.

Mention was made of a study currently underway in the Village of Salem that is addressing concerns over flooding. Dr. Phelan indicated that the work done in that study could be incorporated into the All-Hazard Mitigation Plan. Such a study would provide required evidence in support of possible mitigation projects in the future.

Discussion included possible mitigation plans for schools, the nursing center, businesses, and highways with histories of flooding causing damage to infrastructure.

Ed Lips distributed copies of the grant approval letter dated December 16, 2005, from FEMA. He reviewed the contents of the approval letter and the attachments including the Conditions of Approval, FEMA-1564-DR-NY, HMPG Project # 1564-001 Washington County and 44 CFR Sec. 201.6 Local Mitigation Plans. Mr. Lips also made available several reference materials from FEMA and SEMO to assist attendees with understanding the mitigation plan process. In addition, he provided copies of "Integrating Historic Property and Cultural Resource Considerations Into Hazard Mitigation Planning: State and Local Mitigation Planning How-To Guide," FEMA 386-6/May 2005. These materials will assist the Task Force going forward.

Mr. Lips also discussed three programs: FMA Flood Mitigation Assistance, HMGP Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (the Washington County grant), and PDM Pre-Disaster Mitigation (competitive).

Several questions regarding the role of highway superintendents in the mitigation planning process were discussed. Dr. Phelan suggested that the leadership of highway superintendents in this planning process would be welcome since so much damage from disasters is centered on highways, bridges, and drainage systems.

It was made clear that public involvement and participation in the planning process is a requirement of the grant. It was suggested that meeting minutes be posted on the County's new website. Attendees whose organizations have boards of directors or advisory boards were encouraged to ask members of those boards to encourage participation in the planning process.

**All-Hazard Mitigation Planning Task Force Formation:**

Dr. Phelan offered Monday May 1, 2006, as a possible date for a next meeting and asked attendees who wished to participate in the Planning Task Force to so indicate by placing a check next to their name on the sign-in sheet. Fourteen (14) attendees indicated a desire to serve on the Planning Task Force and to receive information about the next meeting. All were encouraged to communicate the formation of the Task Force to others in the community who might wish to be involved.

All-Hazard Mitigation Planning Task Force Members

Robert W. Humiston	Town of Argyle
Hugh Dewey	Town of Greenwich
Floyd Pratt	Town of Hebron
Ken Talkington	Hebron
Doug Brownell	Easton Volunteer Fire Company
William H. Cook	Washington County Public Safety
Chris Rieben	Town of White Creek
Sean Carney	Town of Jackson
Ray Rathbun	Telescope Casual Furniture
Joseph Childs	Village of Salem
Maureen Van Buren	Ft. Ann Central School
John Boyce	Fort Hudson Nursing Center
Willy Grimmke	Washington County DPW
Kyle Vandewater	Washington County DPW
Dr. Thomas D. Phelan	Strategic Teaching Associates, Inc.

**Next Meeting:**

Monday May 1, 2006, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. Washington County Municipal Center

**Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Thomas D. Phelan, Ed.D.

<http://www.co.washington.ny.us>