

Cemetery Response Task Force
Meeting Minutes
September 18, 2019

Members Present:

Lucy McCann – Louisiana Cemetery Board (LCB)
Ryan M. Seidemann – Louisiana Department of Justice (LDOJ)
Henry Yennie – Louisiana Department of Health (LDH)
Amy Dawson – Governor’s Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Management (GOHSEP)

Others Present:

Christine Halling – Louisiana Department of Justice (LDOJ)
David Schultz – Louisiana Department of Health (LDH)
Carol Walker – Louisiana Department of Health (LDH)
Arbie Goings – Goings Consulting Services (GCS)

1. Meeting Start time: 10:07 AM

Quorum present. Prior meeting minutes (supplied by David Schultz) were approved unanimously (motion for approval by Ryan Seidemann, second by Amy Dawson)

2. Old business: Christine Halling reviewed notes on outstanding/unresolved issues from prior events and meetings.

New business: Chairperson required in order to conduct meetings and business, nominations were made (requiring a vote between Ryan Seidemann and Henry Yennie). A vote of 3 to 1 elected Ryan Seidemann as Chairperson of the CRTF.

Christine Halling raised issues regarding activation of the CRTF. Specifically, how activation worked within the wording of the legislation and the risk of non-activation concerning reimbursement for PA purposes was discussed. Further discussion ensued including the questions:

- What is the activation trigger?
- What is evidence under 726.4(D)?

Other concerns included liability issues for contractors conducting response efforts on private land (additionally, good Samaritans or volunteers). Chairperson Seidemann noted that case law should be updated on this issue in the interim since Hurricane Katrina and that DOJ would research this issue and report to the Task Force.

Questions arose regarding 726.4(F)(4) and whether it is authorized under law. Does it exceed GOHSEP authority? What is the effect of this provision? Does it exceed certain authority?

A discussion also arose surrounding the inclusion of keeping the coroners as part of the CRTF because of their absence at several meetings and because there is a substantial question, during disaster response, as to how involved coroners' offices are or need to be in relation to cemeteries.

Concerning training for other individuals or agencies to conduct reviews of cemetery damage around the state, the question was raised as to whether there needs to be formal training, and whether these obligations should be added to the task force's legal responsibilities.

-Amy Dawson reported that GOHSEP is doing YouTube trainings for certain functions. Is this something that the CRTF should consider doing?

Should there be a contact telephone number for cemetery disruptions?

-number can be part of a press release?

-consider partnering with 211?

-general consensus seemed to favor using the general GOHSEP line for such calls.

GIS issues (the production of a digital map with cemetery location data) were raised and will be handled by Christine Halling and Henry Yennie.

Cemetery Response Annex – this is information concerning documents generated and provided to various state agencies. Goings Consulting Services are already generating this under its existing contract with LDH.

Finally, it was noted that we are able to sign in to Web EOC to make a formal request to activate for the next disaster that involves the CRTF.

Next meeting: Ryan Seidemann and Christine Halling will send an email to determine the next meeting dates.

3. Lucy McCann moved for this meeting to adjourn and Amy Dawson seconded that motion. The motion passed unanimously. This meeting of the CRTF was closed at 11:18 AM.