

LEPC Meeting, Aug. 12 2025

Attendance:

Alyia Gaskins - Absent
Anthony Kelly - Present
Karl Bach - Absent
Kirk McPike - Absent
Lucas Dushac - Absent
Russell Furr - Present
Christine Macey - Absent
Vernon Miles - Present
Robert Dube - Present
Curice Paulus - Present

Election:

Robert Dube unanimously elected chair of LEPC. Russell Furr unanimously elected vice chair of LEPC.

Adopt Dec. 2024 minutes:

Minutes are unanimously adopted.

LEPC Overview:

Furr said one of the things the committee has lacked is the required training on a plan of action. Fairfax does an annual drill for hazmat incidents. Part of the Commission is supposed to be, not the tactics, but overall planning for hazardous materials.

“Fairfax does an annual drill every year and it can be tabletop, and that’s something that in all my years we’ve never done,” Furr said.

Dube said a focus should be on recruiting people to the LEPC.

Paulus said a plan exists but it’s pre-Covid and outdated, it needs to be updated.

Kelly suggested the fire department can assist.

Ryan Belmore – news@alxnow.com -- possible replacement for Vernon Miles. LEPC is still searching for media representatives.

Norfolk Southern, Covanta, DASH and AlexRenew all represent largest hazardous materials in Alexandria, should have representation on LEPC.

Noted that Gaskins used to attend, but other City Council members rarely attend.

Paulus noted that the attendance was limited in part due to time, and Dube suggested that having the meetings during the day – like around lunch – might attract more attendance. Suggested doing that at 11 a.m. and offer lunch.

City Agencies:

Kelly said there's been an increase in lithium ion battery fires. Not just cars but smaller devices are catching houses on fire, like scooter batteries. The fire department is working on revising procedures for those fires and making the public more aware.

Been meeting with DASH and discussing their plans for EV buses.

Getting ready to embark on research program with a company called Toxic Suppression for a new EV fire nozzle for dealing with EV car fires. Current EV blankets can create smog explosions.

The fire department is also looking at state hazmat team status; Prince William will be the lead agency.

Dube noted that Gaskins had raised the possibility of adopting lithium ion measures similar to Arlington.

Suggestions for handling lithium batteries included discussions with PIOs about a campaign for safe disposal.

Furr said there have been some incidents, including one at a gas station where a person drove away with the nozzle in the car and it caused a small oil spill.

Fire in April involved two commercial vehicles in the middle of the night – an accidental fire and, in the late stages of suppression response, discovered the back of one of the trucks was full of used asbestos material. It was a contractor that did abatement work and filled that up in the truck. That created chaos and everyone exposed to it had to be decontaminated.

Said Loudoun is submitting code modification changes to the state for consideration of changes to propane delivery after a firefighter was killed.

Office of Emergency Management report: a few exercises are coming up, one with EMS and another building out a tabletop exercise or a functional exercise around spill dispensing. May push that to March next year. Other than that, no major health department outbreaks.

Paulus said the city is approaching hurricane season and there will be a preparedness fair at City Hall in September.

Meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.