

REMO Committee Meeting AGENDA

MODL Council Chambers, Hybrid Meeting

10 Allée Champlain Drive Cookville NS and Via Audio & Video Teleconference

Monday, May 27, 2024 – 1:30 p.m.

Page

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Approval of Agenda – Added Items**
- 3. Approval of Meeting Notes:**
 - January 15, 2024 (circulated)
 - February 26, 2024 Special Meeting (circulated)
- 4. Business Arising From Meeting Notes**
 - 4.1 Letter from NS Municipal Affairs and Housing re Vulnerable Person Registry 2
 - 4.2 2024/25 REMO Budget – Letter, briefing note, and presentation to Chester Council .. 3
 - 4.3 Ground Search & Rescue Financials 15
- 5. New Business**
 - 5.1 Provincial Emergency Management Exercise – May 29 & 30
- 6. EMO Updates**
- 7. REMO Updates**
- 8. Added Items**
- 9. Next Meeting – Monday, July 15, 2024 at 1:30 p.m.**
- 10. Adjournment**

**** This meeting will be held as a hybrid meeting, in-person and virtually through Microsoft Teams. The link and phone number are available through the meeting invite. ****

Any problems connecting, please call Angela at (902) 930-3480.

January 31, 2024

Mayor David Mitchell
Town of Bridgewater
Via Email: david.mitchell@bridgewater.ca

Dear Mayor Mitchell:

As Deputy Minister, Municipal Affairs and Housing, I am responding on behalf of Honourable John Lohr to your letter dated January 16, 2024, regarding voluntary vulnerable persons registries. I appreciate your perspective on this matter.

Research demonstrates that voluntary registries are far more effective if managed at the local level. Municipalities lead evacuations and local emergency responses, which is where these registries are utilized. The vast majority of registries in North America are at the regional or community level.

There are questions regarding how vulnerable persons registries affect personal emergency planning and preparedness, creating unrealistic expectations as to what supports are available from local responders immediately following a disaster. In addition, larger, more centralized registries are difficult to keep up-to-date, and keeping the information centrally can create delays in access to the information by local Emergency Management coordinators and first responders.

For all of these reasons, there are no plans to establish a provincial vulnerable persons registry at this time. Nova Scotia Emergency Management Office (NSEMO) is engaged in discussions with the Accessibility Directorate and advocacy organizations on how vulnerable Nova Scotians can best be supported during emergencies.

In the interest of providing a more consistent framework for vulnerable persons registries, the NSEMO is developing a discussion and best practices document which will soon be circulated to our municipal partners.

Sincerely,



Byron Rafuse, FCPA
Deputy Minister

C-1120/le



May 21, 2024

ATTN: Warden Allen Webber and Council
Municipality of the District of Chester
151 King St PO Box 369
Chester NS B0J 1J0

RE: 2024/25 REMO Operating Budget and Outstanding Questions

Dear Warden Webber,

The Regional Emergency Management Organization (REMO) Advisory Committee hoped to meet the Municipality of the District of Chester's Council at our upcoming REMO Advisory meeting on May 27, 2024.

I understand the Chester Council no longer wishes to attend the May 27, 2024, REMO Advisory meeting to discuss and receive further information about the 2024/25 REMO budget, including the new staff hire. Unfortunately, the proposed alternative to have Ms. Henhoeffler, Mr. Dumaresq, and myself attend your Council meeting on May 30, 2024, is not feasible as two of us are unavailable and it coincides with a long-planned province-wide emergency exercise.

Attached you will find a briefing note and presentation that we prepared for the REMO Advisory meeting. I believe this information addresses some of the questions raised at your March 28, 2024, Chester Council meeting. Since there is a desire for REMO Advisory representatives to answer questions, we invite you and your Council members to submit any outstanding questions in person or via email prior to the REMO Advisory meeting. Chester's Council members are still welcome to attend the REMO Advisory meeting at 1:30 PM on Monday, May 27, 2024. This meeting is a hybrid meeting that can be attend in person or virtually. If attendance is not possible, we encourage you to present the questions on behalf of the Chester Council and relay any answers back at your May 30, 2024, Council meeting.

At the REMO Advisory meeting we will discuss the new hire and our intention of moving forward with the core budget as presented. We feel we have provided ample time for discussion since the February 28, 2024, REMO Advisory Special Council meeting.

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In addition, there was no motion made by your Council before March 31, 2024, to signal any withdrawal as per the Inter-Municipal Services Agreement.

We strongly believe Chester is an integral part of the Regional Emergency Management Organization and we hope we can move forward with the budget intentions.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized loop followed by a long horizontal stroke.

David Mitchell
Chair, REMO Advisory Committee

cc: Angela Henhoeffler, REMO



**BRIEFING NOTE TO REMO ADVISORY MEETING
FOR INFORMATION RE CHESTER REMO BUDGET**

PURPOSE

To provide an update following the February 26, 2024 REMO Advisory Special Meeting and the Municipality of the District of Chester's March 28, 2024 Council meeting and their dissatisfaction with the REMO 2024-25 Budget.

BACKGROUND/TIMELINE

- **January 3, 2024:** Met with CAOs regarding proposed budget; they approved the draft budget for the REMO Advisory Committee.
- **January 16, 2024 REMO Advisory Meeting:** Presented the 2024-25 REMO Budget. *Motion: Moved by Warden Webber, seconded by Mayor Bolivar-Getson, that the Regional Emergency Management Advisory Committee recommends a total 2024/25 representing the core budget of \$410,418 to partner Municipal Units for approval. Carried unanimously.*
- **January 23, 2024:** Municipality of the District of Lunenburg Council approved the budget.
- **January 25, 2024:** Town of Mahone Bay Council approved the budget.
- **January 29, 2024:** Town of Bridgewater Council approved the budget.
- **February 8, 2024:** Ms. Henhoeffler was asked to present the budget to Chester Council. Chester Council declined the budget. *Motion: Moved by Councillor Veinot, Seconded by Councillor Assaff that Council request a staff report on what an Emergency Services Coordinator Position and resources would entail for just the Municipality of Chester. Five in favour, two opposed.*
- **February 26, 2024 REMO Special Meeting:** Chester representatives requested REMO Advisory write a letter from REMO Advisory to Chester Council regarding an enhanced consultation process and consideration of the budget formula. *Motion: Moved by Councillor Thorburne, seconded by Councillor Oickle, move that the Advisory Committee authorize the Chair to write a letter to Chester Council and commit to an enhanced budget consultation process where a significant increase in the budget is proposed. Further that the letter express a willingness to discuss the content of the shared service agreement, at Chester's discretion. Carried unanimously.*
- **February 27, 2024:** Town of Lunenburg Council approved budget.
- **March 28, 2024:** The staff report was presented to Chester Council. Discussion occurred, no motion. *It was agreed to continue the discussion when all members of Council are present.*
- **April 24, 2024:** CAO Maquire emailed Mayor Mitchell, Chair of REMO Advisory that Chester Council has requested a meeting with REMO Advisory to discuss the approved budget. The purpose of the meeting is for Chester Council to have an opportunity ask questions of Advisory and to discuss the change in the scope of services. There was also some discussion around the possibility of a second meeting that would include all the five councils to discuss REMO and the reconsideration of the budget.
- **May 16, 2024:** CAO Maguire notified Mr. Dumaresq that Chester Council no longer wanted to attend the Advisory meeting on May 27, 2024, they would rather have the REMO

Manager, Mayor Mitchell, and himself attend their Council meeting on May 30. This date conflicted with Mayor Mitchell and Ms. Henhoeffler.

- **May 16, 2024:** Mayor Mitchell suggested the presentation and briefing note that was prepared, be sent to Chester Council in advance of the Advisory meeting and invite Chester to respond with any outstanding questions they have, and they are still more than welcome to attend the REMO Advisory meeting on May 27, 2024 for further discussions.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- REMO's Inter-Municipal Services Agreement states that the budget has passed if 51% making up at least two units passes the budget.
- Since Chester did not give notice by March 31 as stated in the Agreement, their earliest withdrawal date would be April 1, 2026.
- The new staff hire has been held off out of respect for Chester, however a decision of Advisory is required to determine if we continue or postpone the position or begin the hire.
 - If we do not hire, response will become the priority like before, thus preparedness and recovery will decline (See Estimated workplan attached)
- If Chester gives notice and the staff person remains in the budget, this will affect the other four units' budget. An example of the budget is attached if Chester was removed from the budget allocation (See Uniform Assessment breakdown attached)
 - There are some items that would not be carried into future budgets however the equation is based on actual core budget as presented this year.
- The Advisory Committee indicated a willingness to discuss having an enhanced budget consultation process if the increase is over 15-20%.

IMPLICATIONS

- If Advisory chooses to keep the new staff person in the budget this year, there is a risk of Chester's displeasure and their removal from the regional approach in two years.
- If Advisory chooses to pause the staff person for this year, the workplan extends with only one person. An estimated workplan is attached.

NEXT STEPS

- Chester Council to attend the REMO Advisory meeting or provide questions in advance so REMO Advisory can address them.
- REMO Advisory discuss moving forward with the proposed core budget as four units have approved it and ample time has passed for Chester to address REMO Advisory.

ATTACHMENT(S): Uniform Assessment of removing Chester from the budget
Estimated workplan

CORE BUDGET as presented January 16, 2024


Uniform Assessment if Chester gives notice and is divided by four units*

Cost Sharing	2023/24 Proposed Budget			2024/25 Proposed Budget			If Chester gives notice, divided by 4 units	
	UA 2022/23	Share	Contribution	UA 2023/24	share	Contribution	Share	Contribution
District of Lunenburg	2,887,963,821	49.7%	\$85,715.37	3,129,872,293	49.7%	\$204,182.36	71.2%	\$292,165.67
District of Chester	1,741,116,861	30.1%	\$51,676.71	1,894,549,276	30.1%	\$123,594.03		
Town of Bridgewater	715,142,664	12.3%	\$21,225.58	772,045,224	12.3%	\$50,365.64	17.6%	\$72,068.47
Town of Lunenburg	298,368,092	5.2%	\$ 8,855.63	329,745,875	5.2%	\$21,511.51	7.5%	\$30,780.94
Town of Mahone Bay	145,777,562	2.6%	\$ 4,326.71	165,006,224	2.6%	\$10,764.45	3.7%	\$15,402.91
Totals	5,788,369,000	100.0%	\$171,800.00	6,291,218,892	100.0%	\$410,418.00	100.0%	\$410,418.00

* There are items in the budget that would not be carried over into future years.

Estimated REMO Workplan


REMO Workplan	2024/25		2025/26		2026/27	
	Manager	Manager + EMC	Manager	Manager + EMC	Manager	Manager + EMC
Training/Exercises	3	5	3	10	3	10
Emergency Preparedness:						
Social Media	48	48	48	48	12	48
Newsletters	1	4	1	4	1	4
Public Presentation & Outreach	4	6	4	12	6	18
EP Week	0	0	0	1	0	1
Stakeholder/Partner Engagement (hrs)	78	85	78	100	78	155
Be Ready Training	1	2	1	4	1	4
After Action Report Items	25/109	35/109	25/109	45/109	25/150	60/75
Contingency Plans	1	2	1	3	1	6
Activations	8	8	8	8	8	8
Communication Plan	completed	completed				updated
Shelter Generator	started	started	ongoing	completed	completed	
Volunteer Roster				started		ongoing
Vulnerable Persons Registry						started
Evacuation Routes						



REMO Advisory Committee Special Meeting

May 27, 2024

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Background

- Higher number of activations in 2023 than previous years including active monitoring, partial, and full activations.
- The 2023 Flooding After Action Report listed over 100 recommendations to improve the program and close the gaps.
 - Some will be easy to improve, others will take more time to improve.
- Recognizing resource demand, the REMAC recommends a budget based on 2 FTEs.

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Timeline

- January 16 – REMAC recommended the budget for partner Councils
- February 8 – Chester declined the budget, asked for a staff report
- February 26 – REMAC Special Council meeting and writes letter to Chester Council offering enhanced budget consultation
- March 28 – Chester staff report was presented and no motion

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Program Improvements (since 2019)

- Emergency Management Program updates
- Stakeholder and partner engagement
- Situational awareness and monitoring
- Regular training and exercises
- Public education and outreach
- Emergency Management Week
- Walker Road Cut, Bridgewater senior home and hotel evacuations
- Fire coordination aid for Shelburne Fires

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Rationale


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Increased Provincial Risk

- Paul Mason, Director of NS EMO, “The events of the past five years have made it abundantly clear that Nova Scotia can expect more frequent and intense hazards caused by climate change”.
- The province recently recognized they too are unprepared and have created a new Department of Emergency Management to increase visibility and importance of emergency preparedness due to the increased number of activations.
- They have recently indicated all municipalities should be part of a REMO and are moving away from side of the desk support at the municipal level.

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Increased Municipal Risk

- Last year we had nine partial-full activations of varying length and input.
- Over 30 days were involved in an emergency, where regular workflow was pushed aside.

Activation	# of days	Date	Overtime
NS Wildfires	8	28-May-30	26
Beech Hill fire	2	30-May-23	7
Flooding	9	21-Jul-23	51
Hurricane Lee	4	13-Sep-23	23
Hurricane Phillippe	3	18-Oct-23	9
Rain Event	3	16-Nov-23	
Rain Event	3	10-Jan-24	
Prolonged Winter Storm	3	03-Feb-24	
Winter Storm	2	12-Feb-24	6

*Does not include active monitoring, recovery (debriefs, after action reports, recommendations meetings with the province, etc.)


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Increased Program Demands

- Recognized the gaps to effectively staff the ECC during activations. Staff complement allows two partially staffed shifts.
- Increased training/exercises to monthly to improve staff preparedness for activations.
- REMAC instituted Be Ready training. Over 50% of staff are trained to date.
- Completing community preparedness outreach, running training, completing projects, and responding to emergencies is more than one FTE.
- Our closest comparator, Kings County REMO has one full-time staff, and the Municipality of Kings has a new full-time Emergency Services Coordinator.

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Projects In Waiting


- REMO app for alerts
- Generator project for evacuation shelters
- Volunteer Roster
- Vulnerable Persons Registry
- Evacuation Routes

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Impacts


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Financial Impact of Chester Leaving

	2024/25 Proposed Budget			If Chester pulls out, and is divided by 4 units		
	UA 2023/24	share	Contribution	UA 2023/24	share	Contribution
District of Lunenburg	3,129,872,293	49.7%	\$ 204,182.36	3,129,872,293	71.2%	\$ 292,165.67
District of Chester	1,894,549,276	30.1%	\$ 123,594.03			
Town of Bridgewater	772,045,224	12.3%	\$ 50,365.64	772,045,224	17.6%	\$ 72,068.47
Town of Lunenburg	329,745,875	5.2%	\$ 21,511.51	329,745,875	7.5%	\$ 30,780.94
Town of Mahone Bay	165,006,224	2.6%	\$ 10,764.45	165,006,224	3.8%	\$ 15,402.91
Totals	6,291,218,892	100.0%	\$ 410,418.00	4,396,669,616	100.0%	\$ 410,418.00

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Workplan Impacts Without New Hire

- Exercise and Be Ready Training reduced from 14 to 4
- Reduce Social Media, Newsletter, Public Outreach
- Stakeholder Engagement maintain existing level
- After Action Recommendations implementation reduced
- Contingency Plans from 3-6 to 1
- No capacity for special projects

The above impact are based on the ability to maintain activation readiness as required.

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LUNENBURG COUNTY¹⁵ GROUND SEARCH & RESCUE TEAM

OPERATING ACCOUNT # 301168 - 2023
FINANCIAL STATEMENT

INCOME

Balance forward from 22-12-31	\$23,384.66	
WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE	\$2,755.63	
REIMBURSEMENTS RCMP & EMO SAR EXPENSES	\$3,795.88	
Federal Grants	\$0.00	
PROVINCIAL GRANTS	\$13,000.00	
MUNICIPAL GRANTS	\$20,000.00	
Other Rebates	\$0.00	
FEDERAL REBATES	\$1,659.57	
Sale of Backpacks		
Sale of 2005 Ford SUV	\$1,800.00	
	\$66,395.74	\$66,395.74

EXPENSES

TELEPHONE (CELLULAR & BUILDING)	\$597.19	
ELECTRICITY	\$919.54	
PROPANE	\$1,271.00	
GAS (VEHICLES)	\$1,256.59	
VEHICLE REPAIRS	\$8,888.32	
TAXES	\$382.16	
INSURANCE	\$4,571.00	
OPERATING EXPENSES	\$5,037.04	
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	\$603.74	
Transfer to Training a/c 304787		
Purchase Term Deposit	\$20,000.00	
	\$43,526.58	\$43,526.58
		\$22,869.16

AMOUNT ON DEPOSIT OP A/C AS OF : 23-12-31

Chequing Account:	\$22,869.16
Total:	\$22,869.16

TOTAL AMOUNT OF FUNDS ON DEPOSIT IN ALL ACCOUNTS AS @ DECEMBER 31, 2023

Operating Account	\$22,869.16
Term Deposits	\$114,821.72
Training Account	\$10,199.97

TOTAL FUNDS: \$147,890.85

Audited by :

Dan Elliott Dan Elliott
 Anne Zwicker Anne Zwicker
 Date : Feb. 8/24

Lunenburg County Ground Search and Rescue

2024 Budget

Actual Expenses to Dec/23

Telephone	\$ 597.00
Electricity	\$ 920.00
Propane	\$ 1,271.00
Gas (Vehicles)	\$ 1,257.00
Vehicle Repairs	\$ 8,888.00
Taxes	\$ 382.00
Insurance	\$ 4,571.00
Operating Exp	\$ 5,037.00
Capital Exp	\$ 604.00
Training Supplies	\$ 1,528.00
Transfer Tr A/C	\$
To term deposits	\$ 20,000.00
Totals	\$ 45,055.00

Budget Expenses 2024

Telephone	\$ 700.00
Electricity	\$ 1,400.00
Propane	\$ 2,700.00
Gas (Vehicles)	\$ 1,600.00
Vehicle Repairs	\$ 9,000.00
Taxes	\$ 450.00
Insurance	\$ 5,250.00
Operating Expense	\$6,500.00
Capital Exp	\$12,000.00
Training Supplies	\$ 2,600.00
Funds to Cap Res	\$ 9,000.00
Totals	\$51,200.00

Actual Income to Dec/23

Ways and Means	\$ 2,756.00
Reimburse EMO	\$ 3,796.00
Prov Grant	\$ 13,000.00
Municipal Grant	\$ 20,000.00
Federal Rebate	\$ 1,659.00
Assoc Grant	0.00
Sale Backpacks	\$ 0.00
Sale 2005 Ford	\$ 1,800.00
Totals	\$ 43,011.00

Budget Income 2024

Ways and Means	\$ 3,200.00
Reimburse EMO	\$ 4,350.00
Prov Grant	\$ 3,000.00
Municipal Grant	\$10,000.00
Federal Rebate	\$ 2,200.00
Totals	\$22,750.00