

City Council Meeting
June 5, 2003
Minutes

This special called meeting of the Ransom Canyon City Council met at Ransom Canyon City Hall; June 5, 2003 at 7:00 P.M. Mayor Robert Englund called the meeting to order. Council members David Peterson, Inez Speed and Dick Hulslander were present. Police Chief Wayne Rawls and Fire Chief Rand McPherson were present. Melissa Verett was also present.

The purpose of the meeting was to explain the evolution of the Emergency Operations Center. Chief Rawls explained that the original disaster act was signed by Mayor Cam Fannin in 1975. Texas Governor Bill Clements issued executive order for cities to write a disaster plan in October 1990. Governor Ann Richards allowed for the Mayor to appoint a disaster coordinator in 1991. 9/11 escalated this issue and President Bush has recently created the cabinet post of Homeland Security. The department of Homeland security provides for small communities to have a small nucleus of equipment, and is providing funds to cities for that purpose. This money helps small cities with things such as radios and other communications.

In Lubbock County, Homeland Security has 900 Bandwidth; this avoids the Lubbock County monopoly that was created when Lubbock County bought up all of the 800 places, and in order to talk to other Lubbock County law enforcement departments, small cities had to pay Lubbock County a fee.

The Mayor could appoint someone other than fire and police to be the EOC coordinator. Wayne cautioned that there would be an extreme learning curve if a new person were brought in to perform this function.

Wayne has written the (new) Ransom Canyon disaster plan in which the state coordinator signs off on such plans as communications, evacuation, resource management mutual aid, shelter HAZMAT and public information. The intermediate plan describes what the fire, police and EMS departments would do in the event of such things as bombs. The advance plan describes what the city would do in the event of terrorism, biohazard, chemical and nuclear and radiological emergencies. For instance, a cloud from Pantex could drift over Ransom Canyon.

The plans that have been completed explain what the city is expected to do in order to determine that the city resources have been expended and that FEMA can come in and help pay the rest of the bills. The expenses do not stop with the event. The life of the event covers planning, training, the event itself, and then recovery. A good disaster plan makes sure that all the paperwork is done, and doesn't get stopped somewhere up the ladder because someone asks for more information.

The EOC takes the city's brain trust and puts it all together in one place. This is Fire, Police, EMS, and Emergency Communications. We have interlocal agreement with other

cities and with Lubbock County. Lubbock County has an agreement with the City of Lubbock.

In an emergency event in Ransom Canyon, and the EOC head called Lubbock County 911 to send back up, there would be a sign up sheet at the fire station/EOC. Other city departments will get paid based on entries that are made from this sign up sheet.

Wayne explained there was a difference between a disaster and a local emergency. He also explained that the furniture and the technical equipment in the fire station/EOC now had all been donated, and only now is the EOC asking the city for funds to make it functional. Some telephone lines, a network, hard-line telephones and fax machine.

Inez Speed had questions about the physical use of the building, the security of the building and equipment and the storage of the new equipment. Rawls and McPherson answered that only four or five fire and police personnel have access to the office. The routine fireman does not have access to the fire office.

Inez Speed questioned the security of the EMS records. She also questioned the use of the building for a police operations office.

There was a good deal of discussion about this building being multifunctional for fire, police and EMS, and now EOC. There was discussion about the city planning for future needed facilities. There was some discussion about city contingency plans and if a new facility were built, if it should have a basement area for an emergency operations center.

Discussion was long, and the meeting broke up late. The council took no action. This was primarily an information session, per David Peterson.

Melissa Verett
City Administrator