

Central Texas VOAD Meeting
May 9, 2013
United Way, 2000 MLK Blvd

A meeting of the Central Texas VOAD was held at 10am Thursday May 9, 2013, at the United Way at 2000 MLK Blvd, Austin, Texas.

Present were: Toni Silver, Bill Dorman, Josh Jackson, Jose Dominguez, and Perla Santillar with American Red Cross, Reno Gomez with Travis County Health and Human Services, Bill Degnan and Cheryl Lassiter with Volunteer Emergency Response Unit, Natasha Rosofsky with United Way Capital Area 211, Mr. Loh with the Tzu Chi Foundation, Michelle Acevedo and David Stone with Texsar, Alva Edwards with Texas Baptist Men, Chris Bugbee with One Star Foundation, George Barnett with Blanco County Volunteers, Better Learned with HAND, and Cathy Norman with Churches of Scientology Disaster Response.

David Stone gave a welcome and introduced a guest, Chris Latham, who was attending the meeting as an expert on using twitter in disaster.

Minutes:

The approval of the minutes of the previous meeting will be delayed until the next meeting so there is a chance for more people to read them.

Membership application:

David, acting as chair of the membership committee, proposed Shoreline Church be accepted as a member with Partner agency status. They are a 501 (c) (3) and active throughout the area in responding to disaster and qualify as Partners. Cathy seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the Partner members present.

Election of Officers:

The slate of officers presented by the nominating committee for the coming year was as follows:

President: David Stone, (Texsar)
Vice President: Bob Andrews, (Texas Baptist Men)
Secretary: Cathy Norman (Churches of Scientology Disaster Response)
Chairman, Communications Committee: Toni Silver, American Red Cross
Vice Chair: George Barnette (Blanco County Volunteers)
Chairman, Education Committee: Anna Tangredi (State VAL)
Chairman, Long Term Recovery Committee: Betty Learned (HAND)
Chairman, Membership Committee: Anita Strychalski (Shoreline Church)
Vice Chair: Alva Edwards (Texas Baptist Men)

Other nominations and volunteers were requested from the floor. The only other nomination/volunteer was Cheryl Lassiter, Volunteer Disaster Response Unit, who had previously held the Education Chair and expressed an interest in doing this again. It was clarified that she was not volunteering to be Vice Chair but rather Chair.

As the position of Chair of Education Committee was contested, a vote by ballot of the Partner members was taken. Anna Tangredi was unanimously voted as Education Chair.

The remainder of the slate of officers were accepted by unanimous voice vote of the partner members present.

Chair David Stone emphasized that the Committee Chairs would ideally be heading up actual committees, and invited all concerned to consider becoming active in any committee they wished.

Using Twitter in an emergency:

Chris Latham did a presentation on the use of Twitter in an emergency.

There was consensus that if we decided to use Twitter in an emergency situation, it would be best if we set some social media policy and if those using twitter on behalf of Central Texas VOAD would need some social media training.

David suggested that perhaps a meeting could be set up under the banner of the communications committee to talk about details. Chris Latham offered to help.

Update on West:

The Red Cross gave a brief report of their activity in West in responding to the explosion there. 14 people died in this disaster and over 200 were seen in local hospitals. By midnight of the day of the disaster, they were on scene. A joint assistance center was convened. Over 30 organizations participated and hundreds of people were seen. Red Cross is now wrapping up casework. FEMA has now opened a center there. Many VOAD agencies are or have been on scene there. Toni was instrumental in getting out data and this was much appreciated.

Long Term Recovery Exercise:

Red Cross has been leading, in coordination with CTX VOAD, a “long term recovery exercise.” Today’s discussion was about donations management. There was discussion of issues that have come up in various disasters concerning donations management. Ideas include and questions were presented. How can we prepare in advance for the massive amounts of donated goods? We can find out how the various donations management people handle “leftover” donations and coordinate in advance the message and handling for this. There could be a donation management resource book created out of these discussions. We can bring on board to the VOAD those groups that work in this area

such as Goodwill. We can research in advance such resources as the rag merchants who can cart used clothing away and put it to use.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be Thursday June 13, 2013, 10 am, at United Way.

The meeting was adjourned.

Cathy Norman
Secretary, Central Texas VOAD