

# WAVOAD General Meeting

April 4, 2023,

Zoom Meeting led by Marty Grisham, WaVOAD President, LDS Charities

## In Attendance

Marty Grisham – LDS Charities, WaVOAD President	Dan Wilcox – UMCOR Alaska
Kathy Bryson – PNW UMC Disaster Response, WaVOAD Vice President	Christian Burgess – Disaster Distress Helpline –Vibrant Emotional Health
Dave Zablony – Habitat for Humanity - WaVOAD Secretary	Geri Chumley – Whatcom County COAD
Ray Shjerven – SWWA ELCA - WaVOAD Treasurer	Cindi Barker – Seattle Emergency Communication Hubs
Jim Mahon – Church of Scientology - WaVOAD Member-at-large	Carlene Anders – ED – Disaster Leadership Team
Christie Merrill – Red Cross – WaVOAD Member -at-large	Jill Watson – Seattle Human Services Dept.
Andrew Chadick – Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle – SAFE Washington, WaVOAD Member-at-large	L. George Adams – Spokane County Coad - Former FEMA Region 10 VAL
Kyle Christiansen – Whatcom County LTR – Dir. Client Supt.	Brady Figueredo
Emily Goertz – Wa MDS unit	Patty Marsh – Adventist Disaster Services
Gerry Bozarth – Spokane County EM	Chad Johnson – EWU EH&S
Randy Bode – World Renew Disaster	Eric Williams – Second Harvest
Frank Hutchinson – Eastern WA Section EC	

**Meeting called to order by Marty Grisham for April 4, 2023, at 10:01am**

## Minutes Review

The minutes from the February 7, 2023, general meeting were presented with no edits. Ray Shjerven moved to accept. Randy Bode seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## Financial Review

Ray Shjerven presented the following review of the financials as of March 31, 2023:

Jan. 1, 2022	Segregated Savings	<b>\$5,095.34</b>
	Interest earned	\$8.45
March 31, 2023	Segregated Savings	<b>\$5,103.79</b>

Jan 1, 2022	Operational Checking	<b>\$19,838.82</b>
	Dues Income – Checks	\$ 1,800.00

Dues Income - Electronic	\$ 240.00
Expenditures NVOAD dues	( 35.00)
March 31, 2023 Operational Checking	<b>\$21,843.82</b>

**Seventeen of twenty-nine WaVOAD agencies are paid in full**

**One organization (Food Lifeline) prepaid in a previous year**

**Eleven agencies will receive a second invoice**

Kathy Bryson moved to accept. Christie Merrill seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**President’s Report/General Information**

Marty Grisham reported on the following:

- Mountain West Conference next week in Salt Lake City – Looking to possibly hold 2024 Conference in WA State next April - Typically about 125 participants. Need to give thought to potential locations.
- National VOAD Conference coming up in May – Marty will be attending. Asked that anyone else who is attending please let him know.
- Grays Harbor Elected Officials Workshop – about 70 attendees. There was a broad agenda that included wildfire and Hazmat topics. Marty attended and delivered a presentation on WaVOAD that highlighted interaction with State agencies.

Kathy Bryson then introduced Gerry Bozarth – Spokane County Emergency Management. He and other members of their COAD are joining today’s meeting.

**Agency Spotlight: Seattle Emergency Communications HUB – Cindi Barker**

**“I am Safe” Welfare Project Overview**

Purpose and Goal of Welfare Messages

Neighbors want to contact loved ones outside of the affected area to let them know they are OK – but not everyone has an out of area contact, and even when they do, test messages may not get delivered. So, the goal is to develop a process using HUB/community-based group and ham radio capabilities to perform this task.

Factors Considered:

Seattle is large urban area – many are not prepared for an all-communications-down event  
 Shelters may not be established for days/weeks in a major earthquake event  
 Applications typically used will be internet constrained in disaster zone  
 There is no generally available Welfare Message system in the NW  
 Traditional ham radio has been improved to be “email over radio” frequencies  
 Communities and ham radio operators can perform on their own without agency guidance

Agencies/Groups involved in the project:

- Seattle Emergency Communication HUBS
- Seattle Auxiliary Communications Service (ACSO)
- Amateur Radio Relay League (ARRL)
- Radio Relay International
- Tacoma Radio Club (as Regional Traffic System point of contact)
- Red Cross

HUBS, ACS, and other ham radio operator roles

- HUBS are pre-established gathering places for self-help by neighbors (no cell or internet available)
- Seattle ACS role focused on response and recovery – Amateur radio, public service radio, SHARES, Winlink and other digital gateways

Radio operators – unaffiliated

- Other HUBS
- City services
- Welfare messages

Cindi then provided an overview of the delivery methods for “I am safe” messages noting the differences for each (email, phone, mailing address)

She also noted the message flow and shared examples of the forms utilized in the various scenarios

## **Report Outs:**

### **Long term Recovery Updates:**

**Okanogan County LTRG** – Carlene Anders reported that they are finishing up their final houses. They have 20 volunteers this week and ten more next week to frame up their final home. There will be a presentation on what has been accomplished by the Long-Term Recovery Group on April 28 and 29. She again thanked all those who have provided support throughout the process.

**Whatcom County LTRG** – Kyle Christiansen – Director of Client Support – Reported that World Renew teams are currently assisting. They had over 1,000 volunteer hours contributed by three college groups in March. They are currently assisting about 200 families. Their Disaster Case Manager position is funded for another year, and they are looking to fund a Volunteer Coordinator and Bookkeeper position for another year.

A question was asked about what is being done to build back and be better prepared in the future. Kyle said that government entities are working on mitigation programs and some modeling work (what would happen if another significant weather event occurred) but progress has been slow. They are looking for CDBG funding for long term mitigation efforts.

**Clallam County** – No report out available.

**Skagit County** – No report out available.

Kathy Bryson introduced Dan Wilcox from UNCOR Alaska who reported on an NVOAD call earlier today pertaining to the recent tornados in the Southeast U.S. A total of 15 states have been impacted and eight reported out during the call. Impacts include loss of life with 17 dead in Mississippi and 12 in Tennessee and significant property damage with hundreds of houses destroyed in several states.

Kathy said UMCOR is looking at their potential response and she will report back on what she learns.

### **Guest Presentation**

#### **Christian Burgess – Vibrant Health – Disaster Distress Helpline**

This is a subnetwork of the suicide prevention helpline - 988

Overview – a national hotline - 1-800-985-5990 – available to anyone in the U.S. before, during and after natural or human caused disasters. The goal is to assist individuals and families experiencing emotional distress related to a disaster, to help them move forward on the path to recovery.

This is a national routing model where calls are routed to a local helpline that is equipped to provide suicide prevention support.

The primary focus is psychological first aid but also provide:

- Disaster crisis counseling
- Crisis assessment, intervention, renewal
- Just in time training/support

The approach used is to Engage, Explore, Connect and Conclude

There is also a DDH Videophone for ASL Users which offers a 24/7 connection to trained counselors fluent in ASL using a videophone enabled device or via the SAMHSA website

There re also DDH online peer support communities offered via Facebook groups

Additional DDH Resources:

**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Admin (SAMHSA) Website** – Information and resources for providers, risk groups and general public - <http://disasterdistress.samhsa.gov>

**Strength After** – Online platform for sharing stories of hope and strength during recovery - <http://strengthafterdisaster.org>

Marty Grisham thanked Christian for the presentation and noted the value of these services as he was exposed to many suicides over his years of work with the fire service.

## **Member Report Outs**

**Christie Merrill – Red Cross** – Reported that about 1500 volunteers have been deployed to tornado impacted areas in the Southeast. There is a high level of activity in several states, mostly in the Southeast and Midwest, with the worst being a level 6 in Mississippi.

**Randy Bode – World Renew** – Reported that their first team has begun work in Whatcom County. Hope to have 3-4 more teams deployed in the coming months. They are working on the “First 55” houses identified. The LTRG has set up some volunteer housing and space for material storage.

**Emily Goertz – Mennonite Disaster Services** – Reported that they are still active in Okanogan County – final houses should be wrapped up soon.

**Eric Williams – Second Harvest** – The need remains constant, but their supply is down about 33%. For NW Harvest and Food Lifeline supplies are down about 80%. Food costs have gone up, but food availability is now an issue. They have made some recent operational changes to address the shortages using Regional Distribution Organizations (RDO).

**Jill Watson – Seattle Human Services Department** – Mentioned that recent work has been focused on the impacts of heat events and what can be done to address this. Seattle has developed a heat annex. Also noted that King County has received FEMA funding for an extreme heat mitigation strategy.

### **Miscellaneous:**

Marty added that the WaVOAD leadership team has discussed holding one in-person meeting per year. Attendance has proven to be better with zoom meetings, but there is value in face-to-face interaction. The proposal is to hold the August 1, 2023, meeting in person in Western WA. More to come on this.

**Next Meeting – Tuesday, June 6, 2023 - 10am via zoom**

***Meeting adjourned by Marty Grisham at 11:53 am.***

***Respectfully submitted by Dave Zablotny, WaVOAD secretary***