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Councilmember Jimmy Rogers
Vice-President

Russell Devorsky
Executive Director

Heart of Texas Council of Governments

Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee Meeting 9:30 AM, Wednesday, January 14th, 2026 HOTCOG – 1514 S. New Road, Waco, Texas

I. Call to Order and TOMA

A. Proof of Posting

- Andy Davis confirmed proof of posting.

B. Determination of a Quorum

- A quorum was present.

II. Welcome and Introductions

A. Guest Recognition

- Adam Stocking (CATRAC)
- Chris Clark (Hill County)
- Samuel Ortiz (DSHS)
- Wayne Stovall (HOTCOG)
- Andy Davis (HOTCOG)
- Russell Devorsky (HOTCOG)
- Harold Ferguson (HOTCOG)
- Amy Rossow (HOTCOG)
- Joanna Whitehouse (HOTCOG)
- Jennifer Goff (TDEM)
- Tim Jeske (Waco/McLennan Co OEM)

B. Member introductions

- Phillip Cantrell
- Chris Cary
- Chris Jackson
- Adam Niolet
- Robert LaFoy
- Danny Guerra
- Michael Graham
- Matt Groveton
- Brian Messman
- Madison Pigg
- Jeremy Shipley
- Leonard Smith
- Terry Townley
- Buffy Waldie
- Jeff Watkins
- Heather Wheeler
- Alicia Wilson

III. Sub-Committee Reports

- Andy Davis presented a staff report on the CERT Sub-Committee that met in November and announced the second meeting that would take place that afternoon. Considerations are being made regarding the CERT program, given the uncertainty of funding as a national priority area in the future.

IV. HOTCOG Staff Reports

A. SERI

- Wayne Stovall provided an update on the progress of SERI-funded projects. Currently, there are multiple sites under construction, replacement, or inspection for the Bosque County radio system.
- Additionally, Wayne announced that the application period for the FY 2027 SERI is now open and that the COG is accepting projects from local jurisdictions. An emphasis was

made that these projects are not affected by the lapse in funding of SHSP and are provided with state funds passed through the COG.

B. 2026 Regional Priorities

- Andy Davis presented the results of the post-SPR update workshop survey. Regional stakeholders selected the top 3 core capabilities to build and sustain in the survey. HOTCOG will release the 2025 revised THIRA/SPR and a supplemental Implementation Plan by the end of January 2026.

C. ENS Migration Project Progress

- Andy Davis gave an update on the ENS migration to the new vendor Civic Plus. The initial migration period has concluded, and the official launch of the new system was on January 1st. Additional features and system modifications will be implemented throughout January. HOTCOG expects the system to be fully functional to quality standards by January 31st.

V. New Business - Consideration of and/or Action On

A. Approval of November 12th, 2025 – EPAC Meeting Minutes

- Michael Graham motioned to approve the November 12th meeting minutes, Leonard Smith seconded the motion, motion carried.

B. Discussion of SHSP/HS Department Outlook

- HOTCOG Executive Director Russell Devorsky provided a detailed overview of the current funding situation affecting the State Homeland Security Grant Program. While many committee members were already aware of the federal lawsuit impacting the program, Mr. Devorsky informed the committee that a stop-work order had been issued by the Office of the Governor for all Homeland Security–related tasks effective February 1. He explained that the lawsuit, funding injunction, and stop-work order have significantly impacted HOTCOG’s ability to provide Homeland Security programs and services.

The EPAC committee was advised that, due to the lapse and uncertainty of funding, Homeland Security Program Manager Wayne Stovall is expected to take a temporary leave of absence beginning February 1. Additionally, Emergency Preparedness Planner Andy Davis will transition most of his duties to the Economic Development Department until the originally anticipated funding is reinstated.

Tim Jeske relayed concerns and questions raised in an email from Chair Ryan Dirker regarding funding and continuity of the emergency notification system service. Mr. Devorsky then facilitated an open discussion with the committee on potential approaches for engaging the Executive Committee and county and city leadership, who would ultimately decide whether to pursue locally sourced funding.

Several EPAC committee members emphasized the critical importance of the emergency notification system as a primary tool for public alerts and expressed concern over the detrimental impacts that would result from losing this capability. Following discussion, the committee reached consensus that a unit-based funding structure would be the most viable path forward. Of the seven organizations participating in the system—the City of Waco and HOTCOG’s six counties—each would contribute \$6,000 in local funds to collectively meet the \$42,000 cost required to purchase the mass notification software, which is scheduled to be invoiced on March 1.

VI. Public Comment

- Longtime committee member and Limestone County Emergency Management Coordinator Matt Groveton announced his retirement, effective at the end of the month. Mr. Groveton expressed his high regard for the work of the committee and commended the contributions of newer members. He also cautioned the committee about the potential challenges posed by artificial intelligence in public service, noting it as a significant issue that will require attention in the future.

VII. Announcements or Future Business Items

A. Regional Needs and Goals Survey

- Andy Davis announced that Committee Chair Ryan Dirker expects to release a survey by the next committee meeting to EPAC members in order to understand the various needs of the committee.

VIII. Next EPAC Meeting

9:30 AM, Wednesday, March 11th, 2026 at HOTCOG

IX. Adjournment

- Michael Graham motioned to adjourn, and Robert LaFoy seconded the motion. Motion carried.