

Meeting Notes

COSTEP-CT met Dec. 7, 2011 at the State Library's Van Block facility.

Present: Jane Cullinane, Conn. State Library; Mark Jones, Conn. State Library; Todd Jones, FEMA-EHP; Tom Paske, FEMA-EHP; Anne Leeney Panagrossi, Albertus Magnus College; Lizette Pelletier, Conn. State Library; Rob Novak, Conn. League of Historical Organizations; Ryan Potosnak, FEMA-EHP; Bill Sullivan, Conn. State Library. Note taker: Jane.

NHPRC SNAP GRANT STATUS UPDATE

Changes at the State Library Fiscal Office mean we cannot bring the money into Accounts Receivable right now. Ken Wiggin, State Librarian, is working to prioritize this so we can begin to plan for starting Mutual Aid groups.

NEMA SUMMIT – NEW ENGLAND COSTEP GROUPS

Massachusetts has a Memorandum of Understanding that allows cultural resources to work together and share personnel and stock piles. Jane will share copies.

LIBRARIES AS DISASTER RECOVERY CENTERS

The October snow storm was designated by FEMA as Disaster #4046. December 17th is the deadline to get application forms in. Institutions must apply for a SBA loan first. If denied by SBA, they then apply to FEMA.

Bill Sullivan suggested we invite the chair of the Conn. Library Association Public Libraries Section to join COSTEP-CT. He also suggested inviting a library director from a library that managed to stay open immediately after the last storm when most of the rest of the town was out – I think that was Edith Wheeler Memorial Library in Monroe. That library and others are mentioned here:

http://ctlibraryassociation.org/content.php?page=Any_Library_In_A_Storm

Can every library plan to have power and internet when there is a mass power outage? Will libraries agree to what it would take technically and financially to do this?

Rob Novak asked libraries in Fairfield County about their experience after the power outage. The Monroe Public Library could not continue [as a warming center] because the sewer and septic were overwhelmed.

There is a lack of visibility for COSTEP-CT.

- We need to reach out to the Conn. Conference of Municipalities. But to exhibit, you have to buy a table.
- The Historic Documents Preservation Account program maintains a mailing list of Conn. Executive Officers.
- CEMA is the Conn. Emergency Management Association <http://www.cemaonline.org/>

We have to go in person. But time is an issue for us. We need volunteers to participate in the outreach, perhaps members of the Steering Committee.

We discussed a Pilot Program to follow up on the recent experiences with storms. We were looking at establishing 4-6 libraries as vital community support centers (wi-fi, water, etc.) during times of prolonged disasters. The program would establish criteria to specifically designate libraries as support

centers in the hopes it could potentially introduce a new funding source for both COSTEP-CT and the libraries.

- A pilot program could include big and little, country and city, public and academic libraries, historical societies and others
- Jane Cullinane and Rob will design a pilot project
- These places would not open till it is safe to travel to the library
- Libraries might be eligible for federal funds if their activities are eligible as “sheltering”, e.g., as a power station

Historical societies are in a different category than libraries, which have a professional staff and a budget. It is okay to get the two groups to talk but a practical result may be not so much.

Next Meeting: Jan. 4, 2012