

Rotary District 6510 Disaster Response Committee Minutes

June 10, 2025

Members present on the call: Chair PDG Joe Miller, Debbie Miller, Jill Pietrusinski, Wayne Gerlock, Robin Dean

Chair Joe Miller called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

Joe reported our VRC in Marion after the tornado was successful and the EMA was pleased. Joe estimates we supported approximately 500 Volunteers over the 7 days the reception center was open.

Wayne reported 66 homes affected, 28 destroyed, 26 partially destroyed and the rest with minor damage. There were fortunately no fatalities and a few minor injuries only. Most injuries were from homes that collapsed on them. The man hours will be tough to estimate as some volunteers registered only once but worked multiple days. The few minor issues were easily resolved.

A recognized communication challenge was an issue and Wayne suggested a radio system should be in place for a disaster.

The Church of Latter-Day Saints offered to provide radio systems to the SILCOAD and Wayne has sent out specifications for 6 radios that will be owned by the COAD.

\$2000 were collected from donations through our Rotary request for financial aid. There was another \$5100 donated by Aisin Manufacturing as well. There was a restaurant in downtown Marion that put on a fund raiser and mis-advertised the donations were deductible and incorrect transfer instructions using bitcoin. The advertising was eventually taken down. The event did occur, and a local community foundation supported the financial transactions, and it raised \$50,000 that will be distributed by the SILCOAD through a grant program. Wayne expressed our Rotary response was less than desired to have an effective committee. Our partnership with the SILCOAD and DAUSA provided the resources tot be able to respond. Wayne feels we should have had more financial resources ready, and more members respond to this disaster. Our insurance only covers 100 volunteers daily at an event. If we exceed that we need to contact DAUSA for an extension to cover additional volunteers and that can be handled quickly.

Joe asked if Director Beth Stubbs who was onsite had any feedback. Jill reported her positive impression of the VRC and our organization.

Joe said there will be a key box on the trailers for access.

On 6/29 at 1:30 at Grand Tower we will have additional training on the new filtration system lasting about 2-2 ½ hours. We will have 2 from each of the 5 COADS and we have 10 registered. DG Robin will send out a district communication to encourage registration.

Jill will be presenting to the Belle Clair club tomorrow and promote the filtration training as well as ask for financial support. Joe said the Metropolis club has provided a donation, and he expects Mt. Vernon to also support.

Jeff recommended we offer to cover the mileage of the trainer for coming up at his own expense on 6/29. Dave Antelo also offered to assist us with our first disaster when the filtration system will be used. We do have some funds available from the district earmarked for disaster relief and DG Robin expressed that would be an allowable use. Jeff motioned we contribute \$200 from district funds and Jill seconded. DG Robin will coordinate the check.

Wayne Gerlock announced via email to the committee he will be stepping down as co-chair of the committee effective June 30, 2025, and focus on the Southern Illinois Community Active in a Disaster and Disaster Aid USA. He will remain a committee member. The decision was to discuss with the district leadership team about the change in leadership and the upcoming Rotary year organizational structure.

Wayne wondered if other COADs are forming around the area and to foster that partnership with our committee. Jill will be volunteering at the DAUSA booth at the Rotary International Convention in Calgary.

Next meeting is July 8, 2025, at 7:30 pm

Respectfully submitted, PDG Jill Pietrusinski