

**NEMA 2025 Mid-Year Forum
March 21 – 25, 2025
Washington, DC**

General Session Minutes

March 22, 2025

PRESENT *p = proxy

Region I

Connecticut
Maine
Massachusetts
New Hampshire
Rhode Island
Vermont

Region II

New Jersey
New York

Region III

Delaware
District of Columbia
Maryland
Pennsylvania
Virginia
West Virginia

Region IV

Alabama
Florida
Kentucky
North Carolina
South Carolina
Mississippi
Tennessee

Region V

Indiana
Michigan (p)
Minnesota
Ohio
Wisconsin

Region VI

Arkansas
Louisiana
New Mexico

Region VII

Iowa
Kansas
Nebraska

Region VIII

Colorado
Montana
North Dakota
South Dakota
Utah
Wyoming

Region IX

Arizona
California
Northern Mariana
Islands
Hawaii
Nevada

Region X

Alaska
Oregon
Washington

President Lynn Budd (WY) opened the meeting and asked Secretary Bryan Fisher (AK) to call the roll. A quorum was declared.

Resilience in the Storm: Recovery Lessons from 2024 Hurricanes

Anne Bink, Director of Mitigation and Resilience, IEM; William Kehler, Emergency Services Director, McDowell Co., North Carolina; Don Campbell, Chief of Staff, North Carolina Emergency Management Division; Kevin Guthrie, Director, Florida Division of Emergency Management; Patrick Sheehan, Director, Tennessee Emergency Management Agency; Kim Stenson, Director, South Carolina Emergency Management Division; John Scrivani, State Coordinator, Virginia Division of Emergency Management

The impacts of Hurricanes Helene and Milton in 2024 pushed emergency management systems to their limits, revealing critical insights into disaster recovery strategies. This session offered insights into challenges and opportunities in post-storm recovery in affected communities. Lessons learned and practical tools for improving resilience in recovery were shared.

**Federal Emergency Management Agency - Cameron Hamilton, Senior Official Performing
The Duties of FEMA Administrator**

Mr. Hamilton's remarks came on the heels of President Trump's Executive Order on creation of a FEMA Review Council as part of FEMA reform and the overall restructuring of numerous federal agencies. Hamilton discussed the mission creep that FEMA has experienced in recent years which has stretched the agency's resources thin. His goal is to assemble a team of teams from among federal, state, local and other stakeholders to work together to collectively address the challenges facing us today. Other goals include building state and local capacity; FEMA being disaster survivor centric; and addressing the challenges of tomorrow through improved operational readiness. He also voiced support for the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC). Finally, Hamilton referenced the need for training, technology, and enhanced information sharing.

Disaster Response at a Crossroads: Examining FEMA, State and Local Roles, and the Future of Emergency Management - Mark Ghilarducci, President & CEO, Emergent Global Solutions; Mayor Joe Grandy, Washington, Co., Jonesborough, Tennessee; Lynn Budd, Director, Wyoming Office of Homeland Security; Sima Merick, Executive Director, Ohio Emergency Management Agency; Mike Byrne, Specialist Executive, Deloitte

The panel explored the evolving role of FEMA, state governments, and local agencies in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. Experts discussed the balance of federal, state, and local responsibilities, and examined whether the current emergency management system meets the needs of the public.

Game Planning for Safety: Preparing Emergency Management for World Cup 2026 - Dawn Brantley, Director, Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency; GB Jones, Chief Safety and Security Officer for The FIFA World Cup 2026™; Sara Zalieckas, Special Events Planning Program Specialist, Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency; Dominick Mireles, Director, Office of Emergency Management, City of Philadelphia

The FIFA World 2026™ is set to be one of the largest and most complex global sporting events in history, spanning 16 cities across North America, including 11 in the United States, with millions of attendees and countless fan events. The panel explored the critical role of emergency management in ensuring the safety and success of this massive event. From crowd control and public safety to interagency collaboration and contingency planning, experts discussed the unique challenges of hosting a high-profile, multi-venue international event. Also discussed was the potential need for resources through EMAC.

Partners Panel: 2025 State and Local Priorities for the New Administration - Thad Huguley, Director of Government Affairs, International Association of Emergency Managers; Renee Antoine, Legislative Director, National Governors Association; Nicole Ezeh, Associate Legislative Director, Law and Public Safety, National Conference of State Legislatures; Brett Mattson, Legislative Director, Justice & Public Safety, National Association of Counties; Laura Waxman, Director of Public Safety, The U.S. Conference of Mayors

The speakers shared common themes around emergency management priorities including streamlining federal programs, getting financial assistance into the hands of disaster survivors more quickly, improved housing options for survivors, wildfire mitigation, and appropriate funding for emergency management.

Congressional Guest Speakers -

Congressman Jared Moskowitz (D-FL) provided luncheon remarks which focused on his ideas for reforming FEMA. He, along with Rep. Byron Donalds (R-FL) co-sponsored a bill to remove FEMA from under the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Congressman Dale W. Strong (R-AL), Chair, House Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emergency Management and Technology. Rep. Strong, having been an emergency responder early in his career, shared his views on the importance of supporting disaster survivors and improving federal programs to reduce bureaucracy to increase speed and efficiency.

NEMA Business Meeting

Secretary's Report – Bryan Fisher

Presented the draft general session minutes from the 2024 Annual Forum for approval.

Moved: RI **DISPOSITION: PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**
Second: MD

Treasurer's Report – Robert Ezelle

FY25 Year-to-Date Financial Report – The budget calls for spending down the fund balance by \$120,000. As of January 31st, NEMA had \$2.7 million in its fund balance and \$867,152 in revenue over expense. Most of the anticipated revenue for the year has been realized and the rest of the fiscal year budget activity will consist mainly of expenses which will decrease the revenue number.

FY25 Year-to-Date Development Report – NEMA has been awarded \$2.9 million dollars in federal grants. All of NEMA's grants have been under review against the President's Executive Orders. Grant funding is incredibly important to NEMA's budget as it covers nearly 50% of salaries for the NEMA staff and associated costs.

Baird Trust Report – Since 2022, NEMA has invested \$1.25 million with Baird. As of January 31st, the portfolio was valued at \$1,765,855.

Membership Dues – Treasurer Ezelle reported that the Board of Directors confirmed authority for the Association to implement a dues increase of 3% based on CPI for FY26 which begins on July 1, 2025. This modest increase will help mitigate larger, more challenging increases can be prevented in the future.

Closing Remarks – Pres. Lynn Budd

President Budd closed out the 2025 Mid-Year Forum with thanks to the attendees, speakers and sponsors. She invited everyone to the 2025 Annual Forum in Cheyenne, WY on October 1-4, 2025.

There being no further business, the forum was adjourned:

Moved: AZ **DISPOSITION: PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**
Second: AK