

# Utah Seismic Safety Commission

## Quarterly Meeting Minutes

On April 26, 2012, a regularly scheduled quarterly meeting of the Utah Seismic Safety Commission (USSC) was held at the Veterans Affairs (VA) Hospital, Emergency Operations Center (Building 18). Chair Roger Evans called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

### **Members Present:**

Roger Evans, Chair	Utah League of Cities and Towns
Rick Allis	Utah Geological Survey
M. Leon Berrett	American Public Works Association
Keith Koper	University of Utah Seismograph Stations
Meldee Love	Utah Insurance Department
Peter McDonough	American Society of Civil Engineers
Jim Higbee	Utah Department of Transportation (Representing Joshua Sletten)
Enzo Calfa	Division of Facilities, Construction and Management

### **USSC Staff Present:**

Chris DuRoss	Utah Geological Survey
Steve Bowman	Utah Geological Survey
Bob Carey	Utah Division of Emergency Management
Sheila Curtis	Utah Division of Emergency Management
Judy Watanabe	Utah Division of Emergency Management

### **Guest Present:**

Rep. Larry Wiley	Utah House of Representatives
Barry Welliver	Structural Engineers Association of Utah
Kris Pankow	University of Utah Seismograph Stations
James Stritikus	Emergency Management Coordinator, Veterans Administration

### **Members Not Present:**

Keith Squires	Division of Homeland Security
Joshua Sletten	Utah Department of Transportation
Michelle Jones	Association of Contingency Planners
Evan Curtis	Governor's Office of Budget and Planning
Senator Peter C. Knudson	Utah State Senate
Rep. Mike Morley	Utah House of Representatives
Mark Petersen	U.S. Geological Survey (Ex-Officio)
Doug Bausch	Federal Emergency Management Agency (Ex-Officio)

## **Welcome and Overview**

Introductions were made from Jim Stritikus of the Veterans Administration (VA) Hospital. He talked about the VA's Emergency Operations Center and how they participated in the Great Utah ShakeOut and showed a video about the VA Hospital. Sheila Curtis with Utah Division of Emergency

Management (DEM) gave an overview of how the Open Meeting Law works and how the Commission should be holding their meetings to comply.

## **Legislative Update**

- a. H.B. 271 – Public School Seismic Safety Committee – replaced with H.B. 279.
- b. H.B. 275 – Seismic Requirements for Condominium Conversion Projects - did not pass in committee.
- c. H.B. 279 – Utah Schools Seismic Hazard Inventory – did not pass in committee.
- d. H.B. 305 – Construction Code Revisions – referred to as the parapet ordinance.
- e. H.B. 414 – School Bonding for Seismic Purposes.

**Roger Evans** presented an overview of the legislative bills that the Commission supported in the past legislative session. He thanked everyone who attended the session for their support. Roger gave out copies of the Putting Down Roots booklet to the legislators and received supportive comments back about the publication. He referred the legislators to the Commission’s website and spoke about the publications they will find there.

**Roger** spoke about a meeting with Governor Herbert and his Chief of Staff on H.B. 305. The Commission sent a letter to the Governor encouraging him to veto the bill because of the liability that it creates for building owners.

**Representative Wiley** stated that he will continue to support the Commission’s efforts with the bills they have before the legislature.

**Pete McDonough** inquired as to why the bills are not being passed—in particular H.B. 279. This bill was doing well in Committee, but Representative Morley tabled the bill to hold for the Appropriations Committee. When H.B. 279 came up for a vote in Committee, Representative Morley was not present to support the bill. Several legislators spoke against the bill saying it was a local issue.

**Representative Wiley** stated that the legislature seems concerned over the cost associated with this bill. Later in the session, he removed the fiscal note with the bill, but the bill still did not pass in Committee. Representative Wiley stated that getting a grass roots effort going to support the school inventory would be useful. Getting the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) involved so that parents are aware of the safety of their school buildings is an ideal strategy. Additionally, school building off the Wasatch front need to be addressed in our strategy.

**Rick Allis** encourage the Commission on their continued efforts and stated eventually people and the legislature will listen.

## **Discussion – USSC Strategic Plan**

**Barry Welliver** suggested that the Commission needs to revisit the Commission’s Strategic Plan on school building safety. He stated that Commission should be working

the public relation end of this issue. The Commission was created to help protect and educated the state about earthquake related issues.

**Leon Berrett** asked all the Commission members to rally all their family and friends on this issue and look to social media as a way to get the message on school building safety out.

**Pete** suggested that the Commission needs to review the school report that Barry and the Existing Buildings Committee created. He indicated that he felt it was the most relevant strategy for this day and age. Pete encouraged the Commission to forge ahead with the legislature and the need to better communicate our issues by using the media and social media tools.

**Roger** requested that Barry email a copy of the schools report out to the Commissioners. He suggested that everyone take a look at the strategic plan and email their ideas to him. He will take their ideas and use them to update the strategic plan.

**Representative Wiley** stated that the Rapid Visual Screening (RVS) of schools produces good information. The Commission needs to find a better way to communicate this information to parents and concerned citizens through print media or town hall meetings. The issue needs more exposure, but do not expect things to change overnight.

**Roger** mentioned that he committed to doing a talk on un-reinforced masonry (URM) buildings at the Public Safety Summit in May. Schools would be included in his presentation. He reiterated he need to for new and fresh ideas on communicating our issues.

**Barry** mentioned that he had attended the National Earthquake Conference in Tennessee. He stated that the participants of the conference approached him with how effective the ShakeOut was with information people of the risk due to earthquakes. Having people signup to participate in the drill was a great way to bring awareness to the hazard. Barry suggested that the Commission have some kind of kick off for the ShakeOut next year. He wants the Commission to look at their progress over the past year and take credit for their accomplishments and to let people know. This would help in building up the Commission's credibility and get our issues out on the street.

**Roger** stated that since the ShakeOut he has received 30 calls from concerned citizens about their chimneys and what can be done to make them safer.

**Rick** said it seems that the school building inventory was a top priority for the Commission. He indicated that the Commission should get their funding request earmarked in the Governor's budget. This would need to be accomplished by August or September. He mentioned that Lt. Governor Bell has shown a commitment to the schools bill and that we should continue to ask for his support.

**Bob Carey** stated that many Wasatch front school districts are already replacing their older schools, in particular, middle, junior high, and high schools. He suggested that the

Commission turn its focus to the rural school districts of the state that have a great need outside support.

**Enzo Calfa** asked if there was a non-structure review being performed on the schools, old and new. He indicated a concern about the necessary peer reviews that new school construction needs. He stated that schools do not get enough funding to have these peer reviews completed.

**Bob** indicated that California has an agency devoted to school construction instead of school districts. He mentioned that the Division of Risk Management may be able to help with the non-structural issues in schools.

**Barry** spoke to his presentation at the Western States Seismic Policy Council conference on older schools. Rural schools have insufficient funding to either rehabilitate or build new schools.

**Roger** asked everyone to develop a “Top Ten” list of issues that the Commission can work on. He suggested that the Commission revisit this discussion next meeting.

**Representation Wiley** said that we should seek the support of the Governor’s Office and develop a list that he can support.

### **Report on the Great Utah ShakeOut**

**Bob** gave a presentation on the State's participation in the Great Utah ShakeOut. He hoped that all the Commission members were able to participate in the drill and exercise. The Shakeout will be an annual drill. FEMA would like to have this happen nationwide and in October, but October does not work very well with other activities in Utah at this time. He explained the layout of the ShakeOut website and indicated that The Commission was a sponsor and a participant. Everything about the ShakeOut can be found on this site; there were participants from every county and all schools districts.

### **Structural Engineers Association of Utah (SEAU) and USSC Existing Buildings Committee Update**

**Barry** provided an update some projects of the Committee. The Committee had completed development of Utah home-owners three-page brochure. They are bringing the rehabilitation designs to current building standards and making more applicable for homes today. They will expand it to a larger brochure, foldout type brochure later. This should be done in the next few months and ready for distribution. SEAU gave a presentation to the Legislative Committee that addressed the parapet bill. SEAU volunteered to assist an Ogden area church with their re-roof plan and review their steeple stability. They are about 50% into the plan they should finish the latter part of the summer. He indicated that issues with schools are always on their agenda, along with RVS, and ROVER (Rapid Observation of Vulnerability and Estimation of Risk). We need to put these tools in the school districts now to get them trained to do RVS themselves. He talked more about the National Earthquake conference. Earthquake Engineering Research Institute (EERI) granted Utah a

chapter. ROVER upgrades have been completed and the training has been updated to use the tool. The program is ready and waiting to be implemented. He would like to see the State use this tool for all State buildings.

## **News Items**

- a. **Rick** announced that the Western States Seismic Policy Council (WSSPC) 2012 Award in Excellence for Research was awarded to Utah Geological Survey for the Utah Earthquake Working Groups. Rick stated the award was for the working groups since 1995. Getting topics put together to produce reports has received National attention.
- b. **Pete** stated that the USSC hosted the Seismic Safety Commission meeting. They had good turnout and all states were interested in Commission's the schools project. Colorado would like to hold joint meetings with the Commission as we have with Nevada. Pete encouraged the Commission to contact Colorado and invite them to hold a joint meeting. He suggested that we may include Nevada when we do our joint meeting next year. Roger indicated that he would follow up on this with Colorado. Pete said there are policies that are put out from WSSPC and that we need to utilize them more. They are a good resource to use.
- c. USSC Strategic Plan/Annual Report update (this was discussed previously)
- d. Budget. Bob stated the Commission budget remains the same at \$14,000 per year. North Summit Middle School will be participating in the Grant program this year teaming up with South Summit Middle School for their annual trip to Yellowstone.
- e. Other – **Kris Pankow** said that they now have more net quake instruments (seismographs) that need to be installed. This is for private installation. If anyone would like one, there is a form on their website to fill out.

**Roger-** Next meeting will be at the new EOC, July 19, 2012 9:00 – 12:00  
Elections will be held at the next meeting.

**Motion to Adjourn; motion was made by Leon Berrett and second by Peter McDonough.**