**WTEM FY2023 Year End Narrative**

The EM department has worked diligently in both planning and response this year! WTEM is a part of many planning groups, both town and regional, to help understand the challenges to West Tisbury and the Island. A good example would include the Climate Action Plan development project. Here, WTEM, along with the MV commission, various town and community agencies worked on the public safety group section to identify future needs of public safety in relation to climate change.

The resulting plan identified many areas where Emergency Management would be needed to bolster West Tisbury Emergency Response. While significant, our Island’s volunteer organizations ranks are depleted, we need more help! This issue has been identified and includes a push for CERT, a Citizens Emergency Response Team, both town and regional. This group is meant to help support shelter, community outreach or relief efforts needed in the emergencies. We have been engaged at the State level to work on developing a program to approach the citizens of West Tisbury and encourage their participation in CERT.

In EM response, a clear highlight would be our collaborative efforts with the regional group in the development and implementation of the new Regional Emergency Manager position. This new, part-time, Island funded, position helps coordinate the towns’ efforts -- first beginning with a collection of the various town emergency plans into a single, regional resource. In this work, the regional manager can help find additional resources for West Tisbury in our response efforts. This is a huge step for both West Tisbury and the Island!

We have adjusted the salary budget this year to better align with the Deputy Director’s position, which is much more active. The Deputy’s role to help revise the town CEMP(WT’s Emergency Response Plan), along with committee work, has increased and should be supported with more funding. The rest of our budget has little change.

Finally, we would like to recognize our Deputy Director, Jennelle Gadowski, for her exemplary work during the migrant issue this fall. With the director and the board of health out of office, Jennelle worked as the West Tisbury EM during a most difficult and challenging time. Her dedication and collaborative work with the regional group was a huge part in our Island’s response! WE thank you Jennelle!

Respectfully Sumbitted,

Russell Hartenstine

Director of WT Emergency Management