

Speaker 1 ([00:00](#)):

(silence) Welcome to free conference calling. The conference has not started. If you are the host, please enter your four-digit host code to open the conference. If you are not the host, please press ... We will now connect you to your call. You are the first attendee in this conference. Your host has joined.  
(silence)

Jim Sheehan ([05:59](#)):

[inaudible 00:05:59] between rainstorms and pandemics and [crosstalk 00:06:09] projects going on, you know?

Tom ([06:13](#)):

Yeah, it has been kind of an Armageddon, hasn't it?

Jim Sheehan ([06:16](#)):

Yeah. I keep on saying, "This wasn't a retirement job."

Tom ([06:23](#)):

Right. Right. How's family? Everybody healthy?

Jim Sheehan ([06:38](#)):

That's sad to hear. That's sad to hear about Bob.

Tom ([06:40](#)):

Yeah. Yeah, I-

Jim Sheehan ([06:44](#)):

He was such a good guy.

Tom ([06:44](#)):

He was, and I had talked to his wife, I think about two and a half weeks ago, and ... Anyway, he was in hospice at that point. He had some strange liver disease they couldn't quite get a handle on. It was unfortunate. But yeah, I'll miss Bob. He was a good man.

Jim Sheehan ([07:10](#)):

Yeah. He was one of our founding fathers, though.

Tom ([07:12](#)):

Yeah.

Jim Sheehan ([07:13](#)):

If you think back to that period of time there.

Tom ([07:17](#)):

Yeah. No question. I just remembered, there was so much going on at that time, right? We were just early stages, and ... Anyway, great memories. All right. Great memories. He and I rode motorcycles together, and-

Jim Sheehan ([07:44](#)):

Oh, really?

Tom ([07:45](#)):

Yeah. So, we did three or four trips together, and he did a cross-country by himself. He went all the way from Virginia to Seattle, down to San Diego and home. Unbelievable.

Jim Sheehan ([08:03](#)):

I just remember him at the point where he bought into the [All Hazards 00:08:09] consortium, but at that level it was like ... It was ... He cleared the path for other state directors to join in. He bought into it real quick, and was very active. Like I said, it really helped, when you had Bob on your side, it really helped to convince other state-level directors to join in.

Tom ([08:42](#)):

Yeah. No, as a matter of fact, Bob was instrumental in us getting involved, along with Chris [Geldar 00:08:52], in the catastrophic planning grant-

Jim Sheehan ([08:54](#)):

[inaudible 00:08:54]

Tom ([08:54](#)):

...program, right? That was a big one for us. Hey, John.

Jim Sheehan ([09:00](#)):

It's-

John Molnar ([09:02](#)):

Hi, fellas. Bud's here.

Jim Sheehan ([09:04](#)):

Hi guys. Hi, Bud.

Tom ([09:07](#)):

Hey, I just got a note from Joe, and he's going to rotate off the board effective 1 October. He sent me a nice note. I'll forward it onto the board. He said, "It's time to let the younger guys ..." So, I hope ... He's going to be on today. He said he was going to be on the call today, so I hope he's healthy, you know, he's not having any health challenges. So, I just wanted to give you a heads up. So, John, you've been busy with the audit. I know that's fun.

John Molnar ([09:47](#)):

Yeah, you see ... Yeah. Think we're doing okay so far. I'm not seeing any [inaudible 00:09:54] so far, but never say no. I've got to send you a note too, Tom. I didn't tell you, and I didn't send it to you yet, I just got busy and I forgot about it, but DHS also did an audit of the auditors, and they just gave us a thumbs up about two weeks ago.

Tom ([10:14](#)):

Really?

John Molnar ([10:16](#)):

Yeah, that they actually checked the audit of auditors we did against our [inaudible 00:10:24] grants that we did, and it got our thumbs up there as well.

Tom ([10:29](#)):

Well, very good.

John Molnar ([10:31](#)):

But yeah, I don't know what route the DHS does ... Must be some audit [inaudible 00:10:36] within DHS. I'd never heard of it before. I'd never had it done before.

Tom ([10:40](#)):

Yeah.

John Molnar ([10:42](#)):

So, I guess it was our turn.

Tom ([10:45](#)):

Wow. I can hear Jim Spears talking about how we handle money, right? Remember that?

John Molnar ([10:55](#)):

Oh yeah.

Tom ([10:58](#)):

He was ... Not only was he right, I just hear him talking to us at his house when we drove down there for that meeting. So-

John Molnar ([11:10](#)):

Carlos is on.

Tom ([11:10](#)):

Hey, Carlos.

Chris Eisenbrey ([11:11](#)):

Chris Eisenbrey.

Tom ([11:12](#)):

Hi Chris, good afternoon.

Chris Eisenbrey ([11:15](#)):

How are you doing, Tom?

Tom ([11:16](#)):

Very good. Anyway, John, I just remember that fireside chat we had with him setting up the process-

Joe Picciano ([11:30](#)):

Joe Picciano.

Tom ([11:32](#)):

Hi, Joe.

John Molnar ([11:32](#)):

At his big house.

Tom ([11:34](#)):

Right. Well, let's share that story with the board here. That's a good story. That's good for everybody to hear.

Darrell Darnell ([11:41](#)):

Darrell Darnell.

Tom ([11:44](#)):

Hey Darrell, welcome.

Darrell Darnell ([11:47](#)):

Thank you, Tom.

Tom ([12:05](#)):

So, while we're waiting, just for the folks just arrived, John, why don't you share that story real quick from DHS audit, which is great news, and we can share our Jim Spears story?

John Molnar ([12:26](#)):

I'll send this. I was looking for it right now, Tom, and I'll find it and you can send it on to the board after the call. But anyway, no, we had just got word about a week ago that we had just been audited, which I didn't even know about, by DHS, who had audited our auditor, I guess, who takes a look at our DHS grants through [inaudible 00:12:53], and I guess ... I don't know if we hit a magic button there after we passed 2 million or whatever, but this was the first time that we had ever had an audit done against ... You know, DHS had done the audit against them as well, and checked out the audit to make sure that they were doing everything properly and that nothing was [inaudible 00:13:17] on our accounts.

John Molnar ([13:18](#)):

Anyway, they said that ... So, we got thumbs up on that, and Tom was talking about ... I don't know what that ... That had to have been 10, 12 years ago, Tom.

Tom ([13:28](#)):

Probably-

John Molnar ([13:28](#)):

With Jim Spears.

Tom ([13:32](#)):

2006, something like that.

John Molnar ([13:34](#)):

Yeah. Jim Spears had ... I don't know if anybody knows [inaudible 00:13:38] West Virginia, but there's a college there, [inaudible 00:13:40] college, and several of the [inaudible 00:13:44] have mansions as administrative buildings. One of the actual buildings, one of the parts of [inaudible 00:13:51], was one of Jim Spears' house. We're sitting in the big fireplace there, I mean, humongous fireplace, like 10 feet wide and 10 feet high, and sitting in the leather chairs there and getting the lessons from up above, Jim Spears, telling us of how we had to be careful with the dollars related to the AHC because trust was everything, and without that the AHC doesn't exist. We just got a kick out of remembering those times with Jim Spears.

Tom ([14:27](#)):

Yeah. So, Jim was our first treasurer, and was adamant about auditing the auditors, and putting in appropriate procedures so that the consortium would not just appear to be handling the money correctly and ethically, but also actually doing it. So, we've certainly stayed true to that over the years. That's great. Good story. Let me just pause. Let me just do roll call real quick. I've got Jim Sheehan, Joe Picciano, Bud Mertz, Chris Eisenbrey, Darrell Darnell, Carlos Torres, Tom Hyatt, John Molnar. Did I miss anybody?

Chris Geldart ([15:07](#)):

Chris Geldart.

Tom ([15:07](#)):

Only Chris. How are you?

Chris Geldart ([15:21](#)):

Good afternoon, everyone.

John Molnar ([15:21](#)):

Hey, Chris.

Tom ([15:21](#)):

Okay. Chris, I don't know, do you have the agenda in front of you, or I can run the agenda with you, whichever you prefer.

Chris Geldart ([15:29](#)):

Tom, you always do it once [inaudible 00:15:32].

Tom ([15:34](#)):

Okay. All right, first off we'll call the meeting to order, which I think we've got. We ... I think we just made a quorum, so we do have a quorum. So, the first order of business is to approve the June 2021 board meeting minutes. Any discussion, or a motion to approve?

Chris Geldart ([16:02](#)):

Tom, I've got a motion to approve.

Tom ([16:03](#)):

Okay. We have a second? Do we have a second to approve the minutes?

John Molnar ([16:13](#)):

Bud Mertz would like to second.

Tom ([16:15](#)):

Okay, Bud. Very good. We have a motion to approve the minutes. All those in favor?

Joe Picciano ([16:19](#)):

Aye.

Chris Eisenbrey ([16:19](#)):

Aye.

Tom ([16:23](#)):

Okay, opposed? Okay. Minutes approved. Next order of business is the finance report. John provided the attachment to the invite. John, can you just provide a summary for that, and we can have any discussions you want.

John Molnar ([16:44](#)):

Yeah, I'll be very quick. As you can see, most of certainly the income, is ... A lot of the income this year as far as the grant [inaudible 00:16:57] probably ... We're are on [inaudible 00:17:00] here, as you can [inaudible 00:17:01] 23 June, and it's about \$2 million-

Tom ([17:05](#)):

Hey John, you're clipping ... John, you're clipping in and out, sorry.

John Molnar ([17:12](#)):

Okay, I'll see if I can do better.

Tom ([17:16](#)):

Okay.

John Molnar ([17:17](#)):

I'll at least come off speaker. Anyways. So, we are about halfway through the year on the income, and it is about \$2 million in grants that that represents. I don't think we've hit \$2 million ... Maybe we hit that last year, maybe not, but this is half a year. I don't think we'll hit \$4 million total, but we'll probably be a little bit over \$3 million here at the end of the year. \$3 million to us, the reason that's important, is that's 9% of \$3 million, and that's about \$270000. So, we're pushing \$300000 in income on just the grant projects alone. Then down on the expense category, really the three big expenses, you can kind of see it, especially with the executive director services, the PMO, and certainly Tom and my salaries. Then the next one, you'll see marketing and communications. It's underneath professional services. It's about \$50000, and the bulk of that is really [Abel Markius 00:18:33] and his team of probably about five people that are working through the IT and a lot of the automated marketing campaigns, as well as serving out IT services needs as well. So, you'll see Abel's team is about a \$50000 dollar team that we have for that as well.

John Molnar ([18:56](#)):

Those are really ... In terms of the bulk of the expenses, that's going to be ... Out of the overhead expenses, I added it up quickly and I think it was about \$170000 of the \$200000 are those salaries within those areas. So, anyway, that's really where we're coming with. We're a little bit ... The net income shows us a little bit light, only because we get the reimbursements a little bit late, and they're probably in arrears, and we probably have above \$150000 that is in reimbursed accounts now within [HCMA 00:19:44], and that would have moved that needle up to probably closer to \$200000, is where we are within the half-year mark at this point in time.

Tom ([19:58](#)):

Okay.

John Molnar ([20:00](#)):

Anybody ... That's about all I had to say on that. I didn't want to-

Tom ([20:04](#)):

Any questions?

John Molnar ([20:05](#)):

Does anybody have any questions? Yeah.

Tom ([20:12](#)):

Okay. No questions on the finance report. Next item is Chris Eisenbrey has nominated Carlos Torres to be a board member. So, Chris, let me just turn that over to you for some comments here, then we can talk with Carlos.

Chris Eisenbrey ([20:31](#)):

Sure, Tom. Thanks for letting me do this. I guess a couple of weeks ago I contacted Tom and put a nomination in for Carlos. Many of you may know Carlos already, but some may not. Carlos, I've had the privilege of working with him for ... Gosh, it's got to be close to a decade. I think we first met after super-storm Sandy when the EEI got more involved in the power restoration in support of our members, and he was a member at that time working for Con-Edison of New York. Then I had the privilege also of working with him and supporting him as the power restoration director for the Governor of Puerto Rico after Maria. In fact, EEI was brought in to help determine how we could help PREPA, the utility down there, and one of the first people ... In fact, the first person we thought of was Carlos. He can tell you the story perhaps better than I can, but I think we called him to offer the job when he was at his retirement party from Con-Ed, so he didn't have much of a retirement, but we're grateful for his service to the industry, and to obviously the people of Puerto Rico.

Chris Eisenbrey ([21:46](#)):

I don't know how much more I need to talk and filibuster, but I just value his guidance, his leadership, and secondly his friendship over the last 10 years here at EEI. So, thank you Carlos, and thank you Tom, and any questions.

Tom ([22:09](#)):

I also provided Carlos' bio into the documentation for this, and for those of you who may or may not know, Carlos was also pretty instrumental in the founding of the Multi-State Fleet Response Working Group, one of the early adopters there. So, he worked with John [inaudible 00:22:26], myself, John Molnar, a number of us, as that started coming out of the ground. Hosted a workshop at his Con-Ed facility, which led to ... Really became the development for the SISE, the Sensitive Information Sharing Environment. So, anyway, I wanted to talk with Carlos, just with the board. Carlos, what ... Just a couple of simple questions for you. Maybe you can talk about your perception of the consortium, and why you wanted to become part of the board, would be helpful from your perspective.

Carlos Torres ([23:04](#)):

First of all, thanks, Chris, for the kind words, and I think Tom, you said it well. I know we first met shortly after super-storm Sandy, and we at Con-Edison ... I was the vice president of emergency repairs and business resilience team back then. I saw the need of much-improved coordination, and I think that I got together with you, and then we got involved with the [inaudible 00:23:34] response working group, and SISE, and I am so proud that it's gone where it is today. I know it's not because of me. I know I was a true believer of the need of it. With people like John [Shaner 00:23:52], John, yourself, we've really got together, and [inaudible 00:23:55] a need for cross-sector coordination. A lot of these reside in silos, and I saw that be the huge stumbling block that we had to deal with.

Carlos Torres ([24:09](#)):

Now that ... [inaudible 00:24:12] and I still see that need, because I see a lot of times history repeating itself, and I think we need to help [inaudible 00:24:22] in these situations. I'm happy to say that I think a lot of these events nowadays are much smoother in terms of the support and actions done. I want to continue to be part of that. I really ... I feel the urge to be part of the board, because I think I can add value to the board and to all of the sectors, not just to the utility sector, because I'm not a myopic thinker. I think about all stakeholders, and I think we've got to work together to get things done. So,

again, I think I will add some value to the board. I'm a good sounding board, but I want to be challenged and I will challenge others, because it's always about getting there.

Tom ([25:12](#)):

Okay, very good. So, I know we have some other folks that aren't on this call, but I know Kelly and Ira, Kelly McKinney and Ira Tenenbaum, have worked with Carlos before. Tom Hyatt, I've got a question ... First of all, let me just open it up for any questions. I'll just go around the horn, and if you have any questions or comments feel free. So, Chris Geldart, I'll start with you and just go down the list.

Chris Geldart ([25:36](#)):

So, I don't necessarily have any questions except for great nomination, and Carlos, I don't know if we've really had a chance to work one-on-one together, but I know we've worked in the same spaces together-

Carlos Torres ([26:00](#)):

Yeah, we have, and again I've seen really great things from you, and I think you really add a lot of value to this board.

Chris Geldart ([26:09](#)):

Thank you. My thing, Tom, on this is, I don't think we've had the ability to have the conversation on the initiation ceremony for this yet, because it's been a while. So, we'll have to figure out how to do that.

Carlos Torres ([26:19](#)):

We're not talking hazing, right?

Chris Geldart ([26:25](#)):

Of course not, no. [crosstalk 00:26:30]

Tom ([26:30](#)):

Is that the public version, Chris, or the private version?

Chris Geldart ([26:37](#)):

No, honestly, Carlos, you're going to be a huge add to the board. I'm glad to have you.

Tom ([26:41](#)):

Very good.

Carlos Torres ([26:42](#)):

Great, thank you.

Tom ([26:43](#)):

Mike. Mike Ambrosio? Okay. Jim Sheehan?

Jim Sheehan ([26:52](#)):

I have no questions. Impressive. I've read through the resume. I endorse.

Tom ([26:58](#)):

Awesome. Okay. I know Ira and Kelly couldn't be on today, he had a firestorm at the last minute. Joe Picciano?

Joe Picciano ([27:07](#)):

Simply, welcome and just keep in mind you've got to watch out for Chris. He's been known to attack folks from utilities.

Carlos Torres ([27:14](#)):

No problem.

Tom ([27:17](#)):

Very good. Thank you, Joe. Joe, I'm going to come back for some comments from you here in just a few, so stand by. Let's see. Bud Mertz?

Bud Mertz ([27:28](#)):

I don't have anything more. He gave an excellent introduction speech that makes me wonder why he hasn't been here all along. So, welcome aboard.

Tom ([27:39](#)):

Very good.

Carlos Torres ([27:40](#)):

Thank you.

Tom ([27:40](#)):

We heard from Chris Eisenbrey. Tom Hyatt. Tom, you there?

Tom Hyatt ([27:46](#)):

Yeah, I'm here, Tom.

Tom ([27:47](#)):

Yeah. So, Tom, we have a quorum. We can ask for a vote now, or we can do it via email for the entire board to vote on. I just wasn't sure here protocol-wise. Maybe you can advise.

Tom Hyatt ([28:00](#)):

Yeah, you don't need the entire board. As long as we've got a quorum you can do a motion and sign him up right now.

Tom ([28:06](#)):

Okay, very good. So, are there any further questions or discussion on the nomination for Carlos to the board? Okay, hearing none. Do we have a motion?

Chris Eisenbrey ([28:23](#)):

I'll motion, since I got him into this in the first place.

Tom ([28:25](#)):

All right. So, Chris Eisenbrey has motioned adding Carlos Torres-

Chris Geldart ([28:32](#)):

Chris Geldart will second.

Tom ([28:32](#)):

Chris Geldart-

Chris Geldart ([28:35](#)):

Chris Geldart will second, just so Carlos can talk trash about me for the rest of time.

Carlos Torres ([28:38](#)):

Oh boy, okay. Here we go.

Tom ([28:39](#)):

Okay. So, we have a motion to add Carlos Torres to the board by Chris Eisenbrey. Chris Geldart as second. So, all those in favor say aye. [crosstalk 00:28:50] Okay. Opposed? All right. Carlos, welcome to the board.

Carlos Torres ([28:56](#)):

Right. Thank you very much, folks. I really appreciate it, and I won't let you down.

Tom ([29:02](#)):

Looking forward to it, Carlos. On that same note, we have some news from Mr Picciano regarding his board tenure. Joe, I'm going let you talk for a minute. I got your-

Chris Geldart ([29:12](#)):

We can skip over this, Tom. We can skip over this part of the agenda. There's nothing that Joe has to say [crosstalk 00:29:18].

Joe Picciano ([29:18](#)):

That's always been the case, Chris. No, I just wanted to thank ... I'm going to resign, and allow the opportunity for the board to get some young blood in. There's so many ... It's funny. There are so many young and really bright people out there. When I was working with Kelly at NYU, I was just impressed with the new influx of really talented people into emergency management, mitigation [inaudible 00:29:54]. But I just ... It was an honor working with the board. I sent Tom my resignation letter today. I'll always remember the folks here. I'm always here if you need information I can be helpful on, but

probably the best thing about you guys, you are never afraid to share your opinions, and nobody is shy about doing the right thing. So, it was just an honor to be a part of the board, and it'll be a really important part of my life. Thank you so much.

Tom ([30:33](#)):

Joe, thank you.

John Molnar ([30:33](#)):

Tom, I don't know what to say. Joe Picciano has been part of my career. [inaudible 00:30:44] looked up to for so long that I ... I'm not going to believe this. He's going to resurface somehow with us.

Tom ([30:55](#)):

I've got to say as well, Joe and many of you taught me the business. I remember when I went to Jersey and I met Joe for the first time, this was years ago, and I knew right away Joe had been down this road a lot, and had tremendous trust from so many people in government and industry it was amazing. I just listened and learned. Jim Sheehan and [Sherry Black 00:31:24], Joe P. This is who taught me the business. So, the consortium is here, Joe, because of you. You played a major role in this with your strategy. You've got us through tough times on a number of fronts. It's just been wonderful to have you as part of this, from my perspective. So, I'll open it out for any other board comments.

Bud Mertz ([31:49](#)):

Well, this is [inaudible 00:31:51] and I have to say that even though we're saying thank you and so long, this organization's sort of like the Godfather movie, where every time you try to get out they drag you back in. So, I'm sure that we're going to be dealing with Joe in the very near future. But I have to say, [inaudible 00:32:10] my strongest partner on the board here, that I ... I've always been impressed every time that Joe speaks. So, it just amazes me, the comprehension of the most complicated issues that come out of DHS and how he handled it, and I have to say that throughout my different careers that I've had, that I've always relied on his opinion and I've learned an awful lot from him. So, I don't think he's going too far away.

Tom ([32:48](#)):

Very good.

Chris Eisenbrey ([32:52](#)):

It's ... First of all, I can't believe Joe would be resigning because he never walks away from anything. Is there an emeritus position or something that we can give Joe on the board?

Tom ([33:06](#)):

Yes.

Chris Eisenbrey ([33:07](#)):

So we can keep sucking him back in every time we need him.

Chris Geldart ([33:14](#)):

He did bail on me in New Jersey. Believe me, I tried to explain New Jersey to him. Even though he lived there with FEMA, whatever, he still often wondered how New Jersey worked. Joe, what I told you back then, what's moving forward in New Jersey? How you measure success, do you remember?

Joe Picciano ([33:32](#)):

Yeah, two steps backward.

Chris Geldart ([33:36](#)):

As long as it's not three. It hasn't changed. But I can't ... Joe's the one that sucked me into the All Hazards Consortium early on. He always had a vision for private-public partnership. He understood that government had a role, but government's really role was to support so many of the things that the All Hazard Consortium supports, like what keeps us running? Electric. I still deal with people talking about the Exit 14 project that Joe spearheaded. He taught everyone in New Jersey what dependency meant. Everyone in New Jersey thought dependency meant someone you were hooked in politically with, but he told us it was electric, primarily. So, I can't believe you're stepping out, Joe, but hopefully we'll get together very soon.

Tom ([34:32](#)):

Very good. Any-

Chris Eisenbrey ([34:34](#)):

I do have to tell Joe, though. Joe, I've linked up this week with an old dame that you may remember, [inaudible 00:34:43].

Joe Picciano ([34:44](#)):

Oh yeah. Good old Tom. Another New Jersey guy.

Chris Eisenbrey ([34:49](#)):

An old road trooper.

Joe Picciano ([34:52](#)):

Yeah, and [FCO 00:34:52] for a number of years too.

Chris Eisenbrey ([34:52](#)):

Yeah.

Tom ([34:57](#)):

That's funny. Well, Joe, we ... There is an emeritus, and with your permission that's how you'll be listed on any documentation we have referencing the board. We'd love to invite you back from time to time. So, hopefully-

Joe Picciano ([35:15](#)):

I'd really appreciate that.

Tom ([35:19](#)):

Just-

Joe Picciano ([35:19](#)):

Thank you for all the kind words, and I really appreciate it. The bottom line is, I've learned more from folks in this organization probably than any other organization. The most entertaining part of it is that you can pleasantly disagree, and in doing that you learn so much. So, I really appreciate pushback and the work that you guys all do. Keep it up, don't stop.

Tom ([35:49](#)):

Very good. Okay. What I was going to ... I was talking ... I was emailing Joe back and forth with Dennis Schrader, and he was wondering when we were going to get the group together again like we did in Philly. It was almost ... 2018, right? So, if we plan something on a Saturday morning I'll make sure I give you the invite. I'd love to have you join us if we do it, right? Okay.

Tom ([36:24](#)):

Next up, we've got legal ... On the agenda is our legal update. Tom Hyatt, I'll give you the mic.

Tom Hyatt ([36:35](#)):

Yeah, thanks Tom, and thanks all. Nothing much to report on the legal end, just in terms of generally the non-profit regulatory environment. As [inaudible 00:36:46] by now this administration is much more interested in regulation and developing regulations than the prior administration, so we're seeing more in terms of agencies staffing up again, paying more attention to regulations. Some of the projects for getting rid of regulation from the prior administration have been stopped or stalled from happening by executive order, just as they have in several recent administrations. So, much movement in that direction, although nothing in particular that would affect the consortium at this time.

Tom Hyatt ([37:19](#)):

A lot of attention being paid to the budget bill, of course, right now, and where that goes will determine what happens in terms of spending of additional regulation sectors. We'll be keeping an eye on that as well. Part of this that could impact us down the road, but I'm comfortable with it either way, is that there's been some additional budget support now, and additional staffing up, for the IRS. They've been really suffering from brain drain from loss of staff and lack of funding in recent years, caught in the political cross-hairs all the time, which doesn't help. So, their audit rate has shot to darn near zero, and really focused [inaudible 00:38:00]. They're now starting to ramp up a bit on the audit side again, and doing enforcement as well as education. There's still a very small audit rate, and should that include the consortium we're very comfortable where we stand and all the work that Tom and John and I have done over the years, that that will hold up while we continue to file regular 9-90s, record all the activities that we're doing.

Tom Hyatt ([38:22](#)):

Plus, the only thing that comes up for us from time to time is, some have different ideas that we always kick around that may or may not create what [inaudible 00:38:33] commercial activity or taxable activity for us that we would have to pay taxes on to go down that path. We haven't had to do that yet, but it's a part of innovation. It's a part of growth. There's definitely nothing wrong with doing that as long as you

report it, pay taxes on that. So, that's potentially in the mix for us down the road, but not at this moment in time.

Tom Hyatt (38:52):

So, that's it. Quickly, Tom, on the regulatory update, one thing on conflict of interest. If you have not received your COI disclosure form from Tom and turned it back in, if you would please do so. We're happy to send it back out to you again if you haven't got it, [inaudible 00:39:06] still need one from you as well. Very straightforward to fill out, and happy to answer [inaudible 00:39:15]. But we do want to get those into the file. Pay some attention to that, that would be greatly appreciated. Tom, that's all on my end.

Tom (39:22):

Okay, very good. Any questions for Tom? Okay. Carlos, Tom is our legal counsel and keeps us-

Carlos Torres (39:34):

I'll have a look out for that COI.

Tom (39:38):

Yes. It's on the board website. I'll send it to you, you can download it right from there. We have all the past minutes and recordings and everything on that one website. Okay.

Carlos Torres (39:47):

That's great background.

Tom (39:50):

Okay. Next up is our AHC services update. I invited Darrell Darnell. For those of you that may or may not know, I know a lot of you know Darrell, but Darrell was a former board president and board member for several years. We brought Darrell back in because when the FEMA BRIC grant came out it had a 25% match, and Darrell and a lot of you worked on addressing 25% match with the FEMA Catastrophic Planning Grant program, so we have been asked by some states to help them with that, and that has evolved now into not just matched development but possible multi-state project development. I asked Darrell to come on and just say hello, and provide just a snapshot of what we've done to date, and where we see this going. So, Darrell, first up just introduce yourself for those that may not know you.

Darrell Darnell (40:45):

Yeah, thanks Tom. As Tom said, I'm Darrell Darnell, former director of HSEMA between 2007 and 2009. I participated in the board and all those different types of things. I've been just listening to the people announce themselves as you guys did roll call. I think I know just about everyone on the call, either directly or we know each other indirectly with one degree of separation. So, it's nice to meet up with you all. As Bud said, it's like The Godfather. Every time you think you're out, Tom just pulls you back in. So, here I am.

Darrell Darnell (41:25):

But before I get started, I want to just say thanks to Joe, along with everyone else. Joe, you have been, as Chris said, not only a colleague, a friend, but you've been a mentor, really. I know that when I was at

HSEMA, then when I went to DHS, I couldn't have done my job without your mentorship and your knowledge of Jersey, and your knowledge of New York. You're going to be sorely missed, my friend. So, like everyone else said, I'm sure we'll find a way to suck you back in, even if it's just for a quick phone call or something, or some kind of sage advice, or somebody will pick up the phone and make the [inaudible 00:42:02]. So, I don't know what your next plans are, but Godspeed to you and I wish you the best. Whatever it is, it's well deserved.

Joe Picciano ([42:12](#)):

Thank you. Appreciate that.

Darrell Darnell ([42:17](#)):

So, yeah, as Tom said, Tom brought me back on and asked me to help out with BRIC as it was getting off the ground, because this is the second year, I think the second year, of the BRIC grants and stuff like that, and he really wanted to know, how could we bring some states in that really hadn't been involved in dealing with the 25% match. So, we had some outreach meetings with several states, North Carolina, Louisiana, Alabama, and probably some others, Tom, but I can't recall all of them, when we met with the private sector liaisons. We sort of explained the process, explained BRIC to them in more detail, and how the AHC could possibly help them in obtaining that 25% match, whether they get dollars or whether they get kind, and giving them some sort of guiding advice on what types of grant that they may be able to go after.

Darrell Darnell ([43:20](#)):

One of the things that we discovered in the process of talking to them, and you all know this, all states aren't equal. That's just the way it is. States and cities, some have more resources. Some emergency management departments are more sophisticated than others. So, that's really been a sticking point for some of these states. They're saying no matter what they do, they can't seem to get these match ... Get the matching. So, one of the ideas that I suggested was that rather than them trying to go through the state process ... Because as you know there's three categories of grants. You've got the state level, you've got the [tribal 00:43:58] set-aside, and then you've got the competitive grants. So, for me, in my background of emergency management and homeland security, I always felt that power was the critical infrastructure. That we could talk about the [inaudible 00:44:19] equipment, [inaudible 00:44:19] sectors, but nothing [inaudible 00:44:21] nothing happens unless you've got power.

Darrell Darnell ([44:24](#)):

So, one of the things that I suggested was, rather than putting all their eggs in one basket, how about if the states went together to submit a competitive grant, and worked with the private sector, worked with some of the energy utilities that are common to some of these states, and then put in a grant that way. That way, they could come up with a project, maybe a micro grid or something like that, that would do a couple of things. One, it would combine all their resources together as a state. They could get a match [inaudible 00:44:58] and technical assistance help from the utility companies, and then finally, if they're successful with this, what they can do is, as they're writing these grants, they can focus on some of those community lifelines that are very important to FEMA and to the administration in terms of climate change, meeting the needs of under-represented communities in rural areas and urban areas and so forth.

Darrell Darnell ([45:30](#)):

So, there seemed to be a lot of ... A lot of the states that we talked to seemed to be very receptive to that idea. So, that's the direction that we're heading in. So, that's really the 50000-foot view of where we are. I know we've got some phone calls this week, and Tom can go into more detail about that with some of the utilities, some of the states that we've reached out to initially to get them some updates on where we're going, because we think we [inaudible 00:46:00]. We have at least two utility companies that are ready to get on board. [inaudible 00:46:08] utility companies, but it looks as if they're ready to do some of those ... To back some of those [inaudible 00:46:17] application costs, because part of the BRIC is that FEMA will reimburse the costs for states to put together their application, but only if they're approved for the grant. So, there's no guarantee that they will spend ... That if the states spend money to develop a grant, if they didn't get the grant they wouldn't get reimbursed for that.

Darrell Darnell ([46:42](#)):

So, while it sounds good that they can get reimbursed on the back end, the reality is that if they don't get the grant, they've invested a significant amount of money for writing the grant application, and they don't get anything out of it. But it looks as if these utility companies are willing to say, "You know what? We'll take that. We'll take that challenge on, and then if you don't get the grant then it's just the cost of doing business." So, I think that's a significant win for the states, and I think that's just one more thing that is really driving them to say, "You know what? We want to be a part of this."

Darrell Darnell ([47:13](#)):

So, happy to discuss this or answer any questions, and Tom, if I missed anything, please by all means hop in. Jump in.

Tom ([47:23](#)):

No, that's perfect, Darrell. Any questions for Darrell? Okay.

Darrell Darnell ([47:34](#)):

I don't think I've ever seen this group so quiet.

Tom ([47:42](#)):

All right. I think the utilities are on board. Chris Eisenbrey, we're working with Channing Spencer on next year.

Chris Eisenbrey ([47:49](#)):

Okay.

Tom ([47:49](#)):

Right? We're going to start this year with two states, two utilities. Next year we're going to tee up a few more, but I think we're going to brief some of the seniors at EEI working with Channing, once we have the information put together. The last piece as well is, the AHC is already involved in the BRIC project for DC. Darrell, maybe just mention that real quick, because we're not just talking about it. We're actually in the early throes of doing it with DC, on a pretty significant project for micro grid.

Darrell Darnell ([48:24](#)):

I don't know that we're in the throes of doing it with DC. I think John can talk about that. [inaudible 00:48:32] discussions with Chris, with Chris Rodriguez. They've already been approved, the grants that Chris got. I'm sure you're aware of this, but they're in the certification process that they have to go back with FEMA now that they've been selected, to say that yes, in fact, they can do the grant with those different types of things. I think they're looking at their options in terms of how they will take care of some of the program management pieces of that. So, because it is significant that the sub-grants that go down below the state level to those entities that are taking on some of those projects, it's a significant auditing process and program management process that yeah, we think as AHC that we could help, but it's really up to the states to make that decision on how are they going to do that.

Darrell Darnell ([49:22](#)):

Some states are well versed in their programmatic offices right now that they have the resources and staff to do that. [inaudible 00:49:30] we do that, and that's what the AHC, what the consortium, does in terms of helping them [inaudible 00:49:34] a match if they need that, but also helping with program management once they receive the grant. So, I think [inaudible 00:49:46] other states are assessing their needs right now. Then once they get through the certification process, I think that's when we [inaudible 00:49:53] to make some decisions.

Tom ([49:56](#)):

Great. Thank you, Darrell. Any questions for Darrell?

Chris Geldart ([50:03](#)):

Tom, I don't necessarily have a question. I just want to say thanks to Darrell. He's been a stranger for so long, I'm just still wondering if he's around DC right now, because I haven't heard from him in a minute. But no, Darrell, I really appreciate the work that you're doing now, buddy, and yeah, we're going through the process right now in DC. So, that's working, and I'm sure that the folks over at HSEMA, a place that you and I know very well, will get back to us on that shortly.

Darrell Darnell ([50:32](#)):

Yeah, thanks Chris, and no, I see you, brother. You've got your new [inaudible 00:50:37] and stuff. I'm always here to help if you need me.

Tom ([50:42](#)):

Very good. Thank you, Darrell. It's been fun. It's been a fun project, and I know North Carolina and Virginia have already said, "We are ready to go when you guys are ready." So, I think it's a great public-private partnership on some rather large projects that I think are ... Well, I'll quote [Persia 00:51:02]. These are generational projects, right? Putting in this type of resilience is affecting people for many years.

Tom ([51:11](#)):

Next on the agenda is the storm update. The consortium had multiple working groups involved in Ida. I won't go into all the details, but we are now in a position where we have captured so much information that we developed a custom dashboard for the Louisiana governor, who used that dashboard to determine where there was open/closed facilities, road closures. The consortium has one of the few databases that's national on road closures through our partnership with INL. They used it to find porta-

potties, oxygen, dry ice, navigate fleets, post up declarations. It really became a one-stop shop operational dashboard for the electric sector, comms, fuel, and food.

Tom ([52:08](#)):

The second thing we did was, we held an exercise in July, and our of that was the need for a realtime cross-sector chat function. So, we very quickly set up a chat between six sectors in eight states, and it was realtime information sharing during that storm that we've really never seen before. So, we're going to take that now to the next level. Once again, we had FEMA and DHS calling us to ask us what's going on. "What's going on down there in the Gulf?" Because they're just not operationally connected to the states. Still. It's unbelievable that I'm even saying that, Joe. Joe P, you and I have been talking about this for a long time.

Tom ([52:56](#)):

Operationally, I think the consortium's role is growing even further now as far as an operational information sharing entity, so I wanted to make you guys aware of that. That's the short version. Any questions on that?

Chris Eisenbrey ([53:14](#)):

Hey, Tom. If I can spike in, Chris Eisenbrey here. The amount of effort put into the Fleet Response Working Group over the last decade, more than a decade, has been amazing, just because if you go back even four or five years ago, a lot of these cross-border pass-through state issues were still hanging our industry up. The last couple of storms, we really haven't seen any issues. So, I'm thinking a lot has resonated across the states. So, I was really glad that Chris Geldart and John [Chaynor 00:53:51] got in that canoe about a decade and a half ago, because it's really paid off.

Tom ([53:51](#)):

I still-

Chris Geldart ([53:51](#)):

I'm still sitting in it. John Chaynor got out.

Chris Eisenbrey ([53:54](#)):

That's true, you are in the canoe.

Tom ([54:10](#)):

I still have that graphic that they drew here. I should share that out with the board here. Okay. That's it for current ... Any new business that the members would like to put on the parking lot?

Chris Eisenbrey ([54:31](#)):

Nothing on my end.

Tom ([54:35](#)):

Chris Geldart, just as an FYI, we're going to work with Ron [Prader 00:54:40] in the big cities for January at our annual event. Ron's going to do a session on civil unrest with several of his big city members. You

and I talked about that before, and I just wanted to keep you posted as that evolves. I'll let you know. But I think ... I'd love to have DC participate in that at some point, once we know what the agenda is. But anyway, that's coming up in January, 25, 26, 27, and we expect to have another 800, 900 people attend that already. So, any other new business? Okay. Well, I will ... This is Joe P's last board meeting, so Joe, I'll give you some final comments and then Chris Geldart, you can close us out. Joe.

Joe Picciano ([55:36](#)):

All I can simply say is just keep up the good work. Everything you do pays off in the end when something happens, and then you know your worth. So, just keep it up.

Tom ([55:47](#)):

Great. Thank you, Joe. Chris, I'll give you the last word and we can close it out.

Chris Geldart ([55:58](#)):

Tom, I just again want to say welcome aboard to Carlos, great addition to our board, thank Darrell for his time and all his efforts, everything that he's doing, and Joe, just firstly, brother, don't go away, man. You're too important to folks like me. Then I think I'll end out with the best positive note I had of the day in my briefing earlier, which is arson is down 75% in the city, and that's about the best thing I can say right now.

Tom ([56:29](#)):

All right. Good leadership, Chris. Good leadership.

Chris Geldart ([56:41](#)):

[inaudible 00:56:41] all the rest of the numbers.

Joe Picciano ([56:44](#)):

Hey, Chris, you know that [inaudible 00:56:46] people that burn stuff out in the rural areas, not in cities anymore.

Chris Geldart ([56:49](#)):

That's it. [inaudible 00:56:54]. Thank you, everybody, for your attendance today, and really appreciate it. We got a quorum, [inaudible 00:57:00] and glad to hear from everybody. Thanks, Tom.

Tom ([57:03](#)):

All right. All right, folks. That will conclude our board meeting. I don't think we need a motion. We can just close it. Thanks, everybody, and have a great evening. Okay. Carlos, welcome Carlos.

Carlos Torres ([57:15](#)):

All right. Have a good night.

Tom ([57:21](#)):

All right, everybody. [crosstalk 00:57:21]

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Darrell Darnell ([57:21](#)):

Take care.