

Emergency Services Advisory Council
February 15, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Rick Baker, Michael Robinson, Michael Guerin, Michael Karolenko, Robert Buckley (virtual), Eddie Ruch, Linas Saurusaitis, David Coe, Brett Six, Dr. John Murphy, Dr. Stephanie Kemp, Bruce Fleming, Lynn Karr-Kratz (virtual)

Members Absent: Dan Plunkert

Public Present: Marianne Warehime- CCVESA Secretary, Mary Carol Stiffler- CCVESA Treasurer, Charlie Blocher, President for Harney Volunteer Fire Company

Chairman Baker opened the meeting at 19:01 with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Eddie Ruch made a motion to approve the January meeting minutes. Linas Saurusaitis seconded. The motion was passed.

Board Member Comments:

Chairman Baker shared that he would like ESAC to focus on the DFEMS hiring process, reviewing DFEMS policies and supporting the budget build for FY24.

Public Comments: None at this time.

Director/Chief's Report:

- Chief Robinson shared that conditional offers have been extended to 16 individuals for the Shift Commander Lieutenant and Station Lieutenant positions. The Lieutenants will work 14 hour shifts (6am-8pm) for the first three months. The goal is to staff the first three stations (Westminster, Taneytown & Sykesville) by June 8, 2023.
- Approximately 170 people are eligible to take the written test for the Firefighter/EMT, Firefighter/Paramedic, Paramedic and FADO positions for FY23. It is expected that about 150 will pass and move on to the next step in the hiring process.
- There may be a need to readvertise in March if there are not enough applicants.
- Chief Robinson reported that an RFP was put out for an EMS billing company. Three companies were invited to give presentations. The objective is to bring all the fire companies on board under the county and the new billing company.

-With all the fire companies on board there is a possibility of receiving significant supplemental money from the state. Chief Robinson plans to hold a separate meeting in March to discuss EMS billing.

-Chief Robinson shared information about the upcoming Carroll County Chamber of Commerce Public Safety Awards on May 15th from 8:00-10:00 AM at Pleasant Valley's Social Hall. Awards will be presented for the 2020, 2021 and 2022 calendar years. The deadline to submit a nomination is March 20th. Submit a nomination or register for the event online at <https://carrollcountychamber.org/carroll-county-public-safety-awards>.

Bob Buckley asked Chief Robinson how many of the Lieutenants and other positions are currently working at a Carroll County fire company (and will be pulled from that role when they are hired by DFEMS). He emphasized that pulling people from one fire station will create a larger call load for other stations who will have to cover those calls.

Chief Robinson replied that by the next ESAC meeting he can provide a list of how many and which stations that they are being pulled from for the Lieutenant positions. He also said the floaters will be Firefighter/Paramedics and may help with this issue (after the first group is hired). Chairman Baker would like to monitor this information as we continue this hiring process the next two years.

Eddie Ruch asked is there a possibility of utilizing the ALS Lieutenants to staff some of those vacant positions within the fire stations right away. Chief Robinson replied that on their days off they could volunteer. If they were to get hurt though, it would not be considered an on-the-job injury. Eddie Ruch also brought up that people may not want to work at their current jobs once they receive a conditional offer from DFEMS because of what will happen if they get injured during that time. Chief Robinson will try to keep the hiring process moving as quickly as possible and is open to hearing suggestions about these issues.

Medical Director's Report:

-Dr. Kemp reported that the hospital is working hard to make improvements to patient transfer of care, but progress is slow.

-Other nearby regions have developed forced off-loading policies. She and others are working on crafting a policy for Carroll County but will only implement it if the other regions' policies begin to have a negative impact on Carroll.

-Dr. Kemp reported that the Medical Review Committee has been very active and is working to improve the quality of medical care the county provides. When it is an issue of patient safety, they will meet on an emergency basis.

- They are also doing random chart audits through which they have identified several opportunities for improvement. As a result, Advanced Life Support (ALS) re-certification was done in-house this year. They also offered skills review sessions and requested that all ALS providers attend.

Commissioner's Report:

- Commissioner Guerin reported that an application was received for an ESAC citizen representative. He would love to have the individual on board and believes the matter will be on the Commissioners' agenda soon.

-Commission Guerin is ready to assist DFEMS in getting the second EMS Billing position and the Data Analyst position approved.

CCVESA President's Report: Nothing to report.

Committee Reports:

FROPS- Eddie Ruch reported he, Chief Robinson, Troy Hipsley and Mike Stoner cleaned up some running assignments. They will be looking at the Structural Firefighting Policy next as well as minimum staffing requirements on certain call types. Also, they are looking at new reporting systems to replaces ERS/ESO. The goal is to move to one silo by June.

EMSOPS- Nothing to report

Old Business:

- ESAC voted on the following DFEMS policies:
 1. MAYDAY policy
 - Eddie Ruch made a motion to approve the policy. Linas Saurusaitis seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.
 2. Duties and Responsibilities of Employees
 - David Coe made a motion to approve the policy. Mike Karolenko seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.
 3. Social Media policy

- Linas Saurusaitis made a motion to approve the policy. David Coe seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

- Bylaw Change
 - Bruce Fleming explained his intent behind the proposed bylaw change.
 - Chairman Baker asked for a motion to take from the table the issue of the proposed bylaw change. No motion was made. The issue of the proposed bylaw change remains tabled.
- Strategic Plan Update
 - Chairman Baker shared his analysis of the stoplight chart created from the 159 strategic plan objectives.
 - 20% are complete
 - 77% of the objectives have been completed or have been addressed and have some work done to them.
 - 34 of the 159 objectives involve the need for data/statistics, showing that there is justification for employing a Data Analyst.
 - Budget and Volunteer Enhancement are the two categories of the seven that need the most attention at this time
- ESAC Meeting with BOCC
 - Chairman Baker has requested a meeting between the BOCC and ESAC in March. County Administrator Roberta Windham suggested the meeting take place in May. Chairman Baker is trying to get it scheduled earlier so that ESAC can discuss budget and future concerns/issues with the Commissioners before it is too late in the process. ESAC has not met with this board and he feels, as does the rest of ESAC, that it is important that we have a dialog. Almost 250 people are going to added to the county workforce by the end of CY2024. ESAC needs to provide guidance to the Commissioners.

New Business:

- Proposed Policy Committee
 - Eddie Ruch explained that the Policy Committee would help streamline the policy approval process. A policy would start with the Policy Committee, then go to ESAC and the individual fire companies via their

regional reps at the same time. The Policy Committee would develop policies using a template so they are consistent.

-Chief Robinson suggested that one of the four Shift Commander Lieutenants should be on the committee.

-Eddie Ruch suggested that once DFEMS has a policy in place, the individual fire companies no longer need their own policy on that topic.

-Chairman Baker agreed to the formation of the committee. He will talk with Vice Chair Linas Saurusaitis and Chief Robinson to put the committee together.

- Discussion of FROPS & EMSOPS Committees

-Chief Robinson stated that FROPS and EMSOPS can be standing operational committees under either ESAC or DFEMS.

-Bruce Fleming suggested that they be under DFEMS but asked that a volunteer remain the chair of those committees.

-Chairman Baker suggested that they not fall under ESAC since ESAC is not an operational council, but advisory in nature.

-ESAC members requested an updated organizational chart from Chief Robinson with these committees included.

-Linas Saurusaitis asked for consideration to sunset the EMS committee. He believes there is a way to maintain the voice of the EMS volunteers without having to have a separate committee.

- Linas Saurusaitis recommended, per input from his region, that a committee be created to discuss budget. There have been significant changes in how monies are distributed and there is a need to ensure all stakeholders are taken care of. This relates to one of the goals in the strategic plan, to have an interdependent budgetary process.

-Rick Baker will reach out to Gene Curfman and the other members of the budget group from the strategic plan to see what can be done to address concerns.

Action Items:

1. Chief Robinson will provide a list at the April ESAC meeting showing how many of the 16 Lieutenants are being pulled from which Carroll County fire companies.
2. Chief Robinson will provide an updated DFEMS organizational chart showing FROPS and EMSOPS committees.

3. Rick Baker will reach out to the members of the budget group from the strategic plan to ask the group to address budget concerns. Several of the issues are currently in their objectives..

Chairman Baker made a motion to adjourn. Linas Saurusaitis seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 21:21.