

# Crawford County



## *County Commissioners*

### **Chairman**

Eric S. Henry

### **Vice-Chairman**

Francis F. Weiderspahn, Jr

### **Secretary/Treasurer**

John Christopher Soff

## **EMS Commission Members**

Neil Fratus, City of Titusville

David Basnak, EMERGYCARE Inc.

## EMS Commission

c/o Crawford County DPS

632 Pine Street

Meadville, Pennsylvania 16335

## **EMS Commission Members**

Jason McPherson, Meadville Ambulance

Kurt Dennis, Greenwood Township

Maderia Paraskos, Conneaut Lake Amb

Austin Bates, Springboro Ambulance

Krista Geer, Active Aging

Megan Mason, Linesville Ambulance

Bill McClincy, EMMCO West

Jodi Greer, Centerville Ambulance

Josh Manuel, Crawford County DPS

Bill Taylor, Townville Ambulance

Tonya Moyer, Crawford County Care Ctr

## Crawford County EMS Commission

### MEETING MINUTES

August 25, 2022 at 9:03 a.m. Crawford County DPS and GoToMeeting

**Attendance:** David Basnak, Austin Bates, Kurt Dennis, Neil Fratus, Krista Geer, Jodi Greer, Josh Manuel, Megan Mason, Bill McClincy, Jason McPherson, Madeira Paraskos, Bill Taylor, Gerard Glock, Commissioner Eric Henry, Greg Beveridge, and Don Bovard

**Excused:** Tonya Moyer and Allen Clark

**Commissioner's Welcome:** Commissioner Eric Henry welcomed the EMS Commission members and guests in attendance.

**Roll Call of Commission Members:** Per Commissioner Eric Henry's request, Don Bovard conducted a roll call of Commission members. Twelve Commission members were present.

#### **Communications subcommittee:**

- Kurt Dennis reported the countywide **I Am Responding** application project is in the works. Greg Beveridge reported **I Am Responding** would cost \$24,000 per year. The cost would drop to \$21,000 per year if a 5-year contract was purchased.
- Kurt Dennis reported a policy is being written to place EMS agencies out of service when they fail to respond to 9-1-1 calls for service.
- Greg Beveridge stated having an Emergency Communications Nurse is a great idea. It works well in other areas of the world. Elk and McKean counties are also interested in the idea. Each dispatch center would need to be accredited. It's expensive to become accredited. There are 20 steps to become accredited for Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) and Emergency Communications Nursing. There would need to be lots of cooperation with hospitals, doctors' offices, transportation services, and other agencies.

#### **Government subcommittee:**

- Neil Fratus reported the committee discussed the idea of municipalities implementing a .5-mil property tax for EMS. There were questions regarding where the funding would go, how would it be administered, etc.

- David Basnak stated EmeryCare would use the funding for payroll. Also, there's a legal mechanism already in place that would require transparency and reporting.
- Eric Henry stated the funding would go towards sustainability and survivability.
- In regards to other roles government should play, Neil Fratus reported the committee suggested government should educate the public about the problems with EMS.
  - Eric Henry said the EMS system can be compared to the problems municipalities are having with Raccoon Refuse going out of business. If an EMS agency pulls out of a municipality, then the municipality needs to provide the service.
- Neil Fratus stated four police officers attended the virtual committee meeting to discuss the reasons EMS is requested for behavioral incidents. The reasons included patients on drugs or off their medications, it's safer to transport patients strapped to cots rather than handcuffed in the backseats of cruisers, they're short-staffed too, etc.

**Testifier:** Gerard Glock, Meadville Area Ambulance Service Paramedic Supervisor, was present to testify. He's been in EMS for 36 years. EMS personnel are being beaten up to the point nobody wants to do it anymore. Eric Henry asked if he had any solutions to the problems. Gerard replied weed out habitual people and get other services involved like Active Aging. He added it needs to be fixed from the top down. The hospital needs to be a hospital. There are too many unnecessary transfers.

- Bill Taylor stated Meadville Medical Center doesn't have specialists anymore.
- Kurt Dennis stated calls are received from patients whose doctors told them to call 9-1-1 and request ambulances to go to the hospital.
- David Basnak stated everybody is afraid of being sued and resources are scarce.
- Eric Henry stated patients being transferred from Titusville Area Hospital to a hospital in Erie are probably a higher priority than most 9-1-1 calls.
- Eric Henry asked Gerard how many calls out of 10 he actually used his ALS skills. Gerard replied 2 out of 10.
- Eric Henry asked Gerard if he would recommend going into the EMS field. Gerard replied yes because he loves the field.

#### **Volunteer Services subcommittee:**

- Austin Bates reported the Volunteer Services subcommittee is onboard with implementing the **I Am Responding** system. He mentioned there are issues with Pierpont and Community Care, EMS agencies just across the state line in Ohio. Discussions are ongoing with Kingsville and Monroe-Sheffield, other EMS agencies in Ohio. Austin stated there are tax levies for EMS in place in Ohio.
- Eric Henry stated Ohio agencies want to transport patients because the reimbursement rate is higher for transports than for ALS assists. He also stated we should have meetings with those agencies to discuss them being dispatched into Crawford County.
- Austin Bates stated billing standardization for all EMS agencies in the county was discussed.
- Eric Henry stated language needs to be similar in billing policies.

#### **Paid Services subcommittee:**

- Jason McPherson stated revenue is the biggest issue. Perry Hi-Way Hose Company in Erie County sending invoices to municipalities for \$150 per call was discussed. Other topics discussed by the committee members were millage, over usage/misusage of EMS, too many transfers from Meadville Medical Center due to no specialists on staff, police calling EMS for mental patients, and habitual patients.

- Eric Henry stated Perry Hi-Way Hose Company is one of the best-funded EMS agencies because of the casino in Summit Township, Erie County and because of a better payer mix. He added that state legislators might listen to officials from municipalities which received invoices from EMS agencies.
- David Basnak stated EmeryCare has a lawyer looking into the legalities of billing municipalities. He estimated it costs about \$1.2 million per year for each 24/7 ALS crew and ambulance. EmeryCare does not receive funding from any municipalities or hospitals. Discussions regarding funding are ongoing with the City of Erie.
- Krista Geer asked if the casino only contributes to its municipality. Eric Henry replied Erie County has a committee that distributes the money.
- Jason McPherson stated options regarding the management of hospital transfers were discussed. Factors included patient acuity, availability of other EMS resources, etc.
- Josh Manuel asked if Vantage started a wheelchair service. Eric Henry replied yes. We encourage people to use Vantage.
- David Basnak stated one of the barriers is the patient's wish to go by ambulance. The EMS Act hinders us.
- Eric Henry stated we take patients to Meadville Medical Center instead of their requested hospital out of necessity. Too few resources are available.
- Madeira Paraskos stated patients don't have to go to Erie even if their PCPs are in Erie. Sometimes we just need to put our foot down and go to Meadville Medical Center.

#### **Stakeholders subcommittee:**

- Krista Geer reported Dr. Kraeling attended the subcommittee meeting. He will talk to PCPs about the appropriate use of EMS. He will review lists of frequent flyers. Dr. Kraeling told the subcommittee Meadville Medical Center is starting telehealth. Also discussed during the subcommittee meeting were transportation issues and mental health issues.

#### **Recruitment and Retention Programs:**

- Eric Henry stated the county Commissioners approved grant funding for a paramedic course. There are currently 9 people registered for the class. Eric stated we need to fix the EMS system before recruiting more people into it.

#### **Action Items:**

- Eric Henry entertained a motion for the EMS Commission to request Crawford County to fund the **I Am Responding** application countywide for all EMS agencies and fire departments for 5 years for \$105,000. A vote was conducted and the motion was approved.
- Eric Henry entertained a motion for the EMS Commission to encourage EMS agencies to request their municipalities provide them with .5-mil property tax revenue. A vote was conducted and the motion was approved.
  - Madeira Paraskos stated a lot of poor people in her area can't afford a tax increase. She stated a sales tax would be a better option.
  - Eric Henry agreed with Madeira. He stated this will encourage the municipalities to put pressure on the state legislature to address the problem.
  - David Basnak stated the system will have to collapse to get the politicians' attention.
- Eric Henry stated meetings should be set up with **I Am Responding** representatives and mental health providers.

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 9 a.m. at Crawford County DPS

The meeting adjourned at 10:41 a.m.

## **Crawford County EMS Commission**

### **Members**

Neil Fratus, City Manager, City of Titusville	<a href="mailto:manager@cityoftitusvillepa.gov">manager@cityoftitusvillepa.gov</a>
Dave Basnak, Executive Director, EmeryCare, Inc.	<a href="mailto:DBasnak@emerycare.org">DBasnak@emerycare.org</a>
Bill Taylor, EMT, Townville Ambulance Service	<a href="mailto:taytool@windstream.net">taytool@windstream.net</a>
Jason McPherson, Supervisor, Meadville Area Ambulance	<a href="mailto:jmcperson3320@gmail.com">jmcperson3320@gmail.com</a>
Kurt Dennis, Supervisor, Greenwood Township	<a href="mailto:kurtdennis@zoominternet.net">kurtdennis@zoominternet.net</a>
Madeira Paraskos, Chief, Conneaut Lake Area Ambulance	<a href="mailto:chief31@zoominternet.net">chief31@zoominternet.net</a>
Austin Bates, EMS Captain, Springboro Ambulance Service	<a href="mailto:springborobilling@gmail.com">springborobilling@gmail.com</a>
Krista Geer, Executive Director, Active Aging	<a href="mailto:kgeer@activeaging.org">kgeer@activeaging.org</a>
Megan Mason, EMS Captain, Linesville Ambulance Service	<a href="mailto:mmam105@gmail.com">mmam105@gmail.com</a>
Bill McClincy, Executive Director, EMMCO West Inc.	<a href="mailto:bill@emmco.org">bill@emmco.org</a>
Jodi Greer, EMS Chief, Centerville Ambulance Service	<a href="mailto:jodipeterson1167@yahoo.com">jodipeterson1167@yahoo.com</a>
Josh Manuel, Crawford County DPS/911 Center	<a href="mailto:jmanuel@co.crawford.pa.us">jmanuel@co.crawford.pa.us</a>
Tonya Moyer, Administrator, Crawford County Care Center	<a href="mailto:tmoyer@co.crawford.pa.us">tmoyer@co.crawford.pa.us</a>

### **Administration**

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Greg Beveridge, Director, Crawford County DPS	<a href="mailto:gbeveridge@co.crawford.pa.us">gbeveridge@co.crawford.pa.us</a>
Allen Clark, EMA Coordinator, Crawford County DPS	<a href="mailto:aclark@co.crawford.pa.us">aclark@co.crawford.pa.us</a>
Don Bovard, Ops/Training Officer, Crawford County DPS	<a href="mailto:dbovard@co.crawford.pa.us">dbovard@co.crawford.pa.us</a>