

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

Crawford County Emergency Medical Service Commission MINUTES

December 22, 9:00am

- I. Commissioner's Welcome – Crawford County Commissioner Eric Henry welcomed everyone to the EMS Commission Meeting with nine Commission Members and 9 Guests in attendance.
- II. Roll Call of Attendees – EMS Commission Members attending were; Fratus, Basnak, Dennis, Paraskos, Geer, Mason, McClincy, Greer, and Manuel.

Guests: Pete Albaugh, Summit Township Fire and EMS, Jill Dunlap, French COG, Becky Wilkinson, Active Aging, Rob Horvat, Vernon Township Manager, John Crouch Titusville Mayor. From Crawford County DPS; Greg Beveridge, Allen Clark, and Don Bovard.

- III. Testifiers – Commissioner Henry introduced Bob Foulk who began volunteering with Randolph Fire Dept in 1992 and became a paramedic in 1998. He has spent 30 years in EMS with East Mead, Cochran, MAAS, and MEMS agencies. He was asked what is wrong with the EMS? Bob said a decrease in volunteers and low pay for EMS providers. How to solve the problem? He said there are numerous complaints about running non-emergency calls instead of true EMS emergencies. They are running a lot of out of Meadville transports that are non-emergency. Doing the paperwork after every call is time consuming as well. How many of the 20 calls a day are true emergencies? He said 10%. Why are there so many interfacility transports? There is a lack of specialists locally in Crawford County. What was the most ridiculous call he has been on? He said responding 18 times in 21 days to a patient that was not feeling well. Transports comprise of 90% of the 20 calls he responds on per day.

Pete Albaugh mentioned that when patients call their family doctor, the answering machine advises them to call 911 for an ambulance in the office is not open.

Commissioner Henry reported that EMS call volume in the county is up 5,000 calls this year. He reiterated that all doctor's offices answer machines tells patients to call 911 after hours. The PA State Legislatures are not helping EMS quick enough.

- IV. Lift Assists – These types of call have tripled in Crawford County. Currently fire depts. are being dispatched to lift assists to save ambulances for higher level of medical care needs. Some fire depts. are billing the patient \$150 dollars for responding on lift assists. Once billed, the patient then requests an ambulance or they inflate their symptoms to get an ambulance. Active Aging is following up on repeated patients call for lift assists. If someone doesn't want assistance from Active Aging, there is nothing the Agency can do for them. Anyone or any agency can call Active Aging to report patients needing lifting assistance.

It was discussed to create a directory of to recruit people that have been screened through background checks that can be notified of a lift assist need in their area who can respond and help. This can be done by mapping their home locations and sending out a group text to those registered in the system. Active Aging has 40 people who work all over Crawford County that could be called upon to help. It was questioned what the liability was to this system. The Stakeholder Subcommittee will discuss further and report back.

Pete Albaugh reported that Human Services has seen a decrease in staffing. He is a driver for Human Services part time and has driven 13,000 miles taking clients to appointments this year.

V. Report Out of Subcommittees

- a. Communications – Public Safety Director Greg Beveridge reported that beginning January 1, 2023, I Am Responding (IAR) will be used to identify responders going enroute to their station. Letters were sent in December. Dispatchers will dispatch the primary agency as normal and if after three minutes there are no responders reporting in IAR that they are responding to the station, 911 will dispatch the next nearest department. This will get help to the patient quicker. Crawford, Erie, and Warren Counties jointly hired an EMS Plan Administrator to help with compliance with the EMS Plan.
- b. Government – Did not meet.
- c. Volunteer Services – Austin Bates submitted the following report. He is concerned with the municipalities that Albion Fire and Ambulance serves will now be contracting with Cranesville Fire and Ambulance. He said there is an agreement between Springboro and Community Care and Kingsville Ambulance Service.
- d. Paid Services – Some municipalities in the Meadville Area Ambulance Service have agreed to pay .5 mills for EMS coverage.
- e. Stakeholders – Commissioner Henry and Tonya Moyer attended and presented at the Home Health Care meeting. They also are lacking in staffing and they do not like being called to lift assists for their clients' multiple times. Home healthcare is a stakeholder in EMS. Active Aging has a 50-person waiting list. At several long-term care centers, one or more wings are now closed due to lack of staffing. Active Aging is working with Crawford County Human Services to provide services to clients.

The bed bug initiatives in Allegheny County implemented outreach materials. We need to talk to doctor's offices to have them change their answering machine messages. The Commission should draft a letter and send to all the physicians in Crawford County. Senior citizens are driving EMS. One in five residents in Crawford County are a senior citizen. It was reported that one resident called 911 for someone to help her walk down the hallway to get her medications. Transported by an ambulance to the hospital is free to the patient while they have to pay for a taxi or wheelchair van.

- VI. Any Other Topic for Discussion – Jill Dunlop mentioned that the French Creek COG held a panel discussion and has been fielding questions from municipalities about EMS. Their next meeting is January 19th at 11:30am at Vernon Township Municipal Building.
- VII. Action Items for Next Meeting
 - a. Communications – Review the use of IAR
 - b. Government – Attend the COG Meeting
 - c. Volunteers – Identify additional challenges
 - d. Stakeholder – Look at lift assist solutions and see if Allegheny College can help with messaging
 - e. Paid Services – Determine how much does a county-wide EMS would cost
- VIII. Next Meeting, February 23, at 9:00am at Crawford County DPS
- IX. Adjournment – Motion by Krista Geer and second by Josh Manuel, the meeting adjourned at 10:00am.