



Frederick County Fire and Rescue Advisory Board Meeting

Approved

Meeting Minutes

Date: February 8, 2016, 1900 hours

Location: Winchester Hall
3rd Floor Hearing Room
12 E. Church Street, Frederick, MD 21701

Attendance:

Battalion 1 (Marc McNeal)	Present	
Battalion 2 (David Remsburg)	Absent	
Battalion 3 (Susan Nicol)	Present	(7:09)
Battalion 4 (Randy Williams)	Present	
Battalion 5 (Tim Clarke)	Absent	
Career Rep (Warren "Jay" Schwab)	Absent	
Career Rep (Chad Cave)	Present	
Citizen Rep (Susan Reeder Jessee)	Present	
Citizen Rep (Carroll Jones)	Present	

Nonvoting Reps:

Frederick County Executive (Mrs. Jan Gardner)	Present	
Jurisdictional Medical Director (Dr. Jeffrey Fillmore)	Present	
Fire & Rescue Services (Chief Tom Owens)	Present	
Volunteer Fire & Rescue Assoc. (President Eric Smothers)	Present	(7:17)
Volunteer Fire & Rescue Assoc. (Chief Chip Jewell)	Absent	
Local #3666 (President John Neary)	Present	

Guests: Tawanda Bailey, HIPAA Compliance Officer
Deputy Chief, Steve Leatherman
Deputy Chief, Thomas Coe

Frederick County Fire Advisory Board Meeting February 8, 2016

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Chairperson, Randy Williams.

II. ROLL CALL OF VOTING AND NONVOTING MEMBERS:

Absent was:

1. Battalion #2 David Remsburg
2. Battalion #5 Tim Clarke
3. Chief Chip Jewell

III. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:

- A. Battalion #2 David Remsburg
- B. Battalion #5 Tim Clarke
- C. Operations Committee, Chief Chip Jewell

IV. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:

Motion to Approve: Moved by Captain Cave; Seconded by Susan Reeder Jessee.

VOTE: YES: 5 NO: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 PASSED

V. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

None.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

VII. EX OFFICIO MEMBER REPORTS:

A. Frederick County Executive, Mrs. Jan Gardner:

January Blizzard

County Executive, Jan Gardner, began her report by thanking the career and volunteer firefighters/EMTs who worked long hours to keep the community safe during the recent blizzard. "Many people, she said, have asked what happens when someone calls 911 with an emergency during snowstorms." She stated that plows respond along with the ambulances, and the National Guard also assists. One issue of note was that too much time was spent responding to people stranded in their vehicles. This diverts people from doing snow removal. County Executive Gardner voiced appreciation for those who cooperated by staying off the roads and encouraged folks to use good judgment to stay safe.

Middletown Fire Station

Ms. Gardner was very pleased to report that plans are moving forward with the new Middletown fire station. A meeting was held earlier in February with Chief Owens, company representatives from Middletown, and the DPW crews. There is general agreement about the site and the design of the station, and she has approved re-

engaging the design team. Hopefully the project can be finalized and put out to bid by the end of the year so that construction can begin in 2017.

FY-17 Budget

Ms. Gardner stated that she is in the height of budget season. There are many requests for additional staffing, she said, and as always, there are more requests than available money, but one of her main priorities this year will be employee raises.

Revocation of Mandatory Sprinkler Legislation

County Executive Gardner acknowledged receiving the letter from the Fire Advisory Board regarding the sprinkler bill that is in the state legislature. She stated that she delivered the letter to the Maryland delegation last Friday and expressed her opposition to the repeal of the sprinkler laws.

B. Jurisdictional Medical Director, Dr. Jeffrey Fillmore:

Ambulance Pilot Program

Dr. Fillmore mentioned that Montgomery County is running a pilot program with ambulances taking patients to places other than hospitals. As this is a pilot program, it is only in that area and it is being watched closely by the state. This endeavor involves at least one outpatient clinic and Kaiser which has a fairly robust outpatient clinic of its own. He is keeping an eye on that, because it could certainly affect Frederick County in the future.

EMT Testing Program

Dr. Fillmore relayed that the state feels it is getting the EMT testing program under control, and that most of the problems are being solved. There are better modular scores, and a statistic has shown that if test takers pass their first module, they have a 90% chance of passing all the other modules.

eMEDS Reporting System

The eMEDS reporting system for EMS through ImageTrend will be called NEMSIS 3.4, a nationalized platform and database. It will include ICD-10, which is the coding system that physicians and hospitals use, and it will be online in December of this year. They will have an LMS (Learning Modular System) with five cases to qualified providers.

SEMSAC Meeting

The State EMS Advisory Council is firmly opposing the rollback of any mandated sprinkler programs. They are also coming up with a program to mandate S.A.F.E. (Sexual Assault Forensic Examinations) programs at every ER. Frederick Memorial Hospital is far ahead of the curve, having already done this for the past 15 years.

Flight Training Device

Dr. Fillmore stated the simulator for helicopter pilots will be delivered in July, and they are currently working on the facility that will house it. It is a big deal, he said, for the state to have a way to train pilots without them actually having to be in a helicopter, and it will definitely cut costs in helicopter maintenance.

Question asked: "I have a question about the ambulance taking patients to some place other than hospitals. Is that based on the amount of care that they feel they require or to not use the hospitals as much?"

Dr. Fillmore answered that they have set this pilot study up for priority-three patients only. It is not for anyone who is seriously ill, and they consult with the hospital as to where the patient should be taken. The purpose of the program is to release some of the burden on some of the ERs.

C. Fire & Rescue Division Director, Chief Tom Owens

January Blizzard

Chief Owens stated that when there is a situation where the Emergency Operations Center is stood up, fire rescue representatives sit side-by-side with Highway Operations. This direct communication allows for very quick access to either county highway assets or state plowing equipment to assist the fire rescue vehicles. During the most recent blizzard, as our units responded, Highway Operations pulled plows to match up with our responding emergency units to get them through. It was a very challenging snowstorm, and a great job was done by all who worked through it. The County Executive has scheduled a recognition ceremony on Tuesday, the 16th, for all the fire rescue staff who were part of the response to this event.

Fire Rescue Code

Chief Owens stated the County Attorney staff has completed putting the code amendments into the proper legal form. He is currently working on the staff report that must accompany the proposed amendments. It will then go to the County Executive for her review and ultimately to the County Council for their legislative action.

Active Assailant Procedures

Chief Owens provided an update on the progress of the Active Assailant Procedures. Work continues with both the Frederick City Police as well as the Frederick County Sheriff's Office. There is a formal MOU that has been completed with the Frederick City Police to establish a tactical paramedic as a member of their tactical team. It has been reviewed by both City and County Legal. Once executed, it will go to the State EMS agency for their review and approval so that *our* medic can operate under the state tactical team protocol.

Assistance to Firefighters Grant

Chief Owens stated that the application for Assistance to Firefighters Grant has been submitted for thirty-four (34) LUCAS CPR devices to equip all of our ambulances, as well as for two AED training devices and electronic training mannequins. The grant submitted was for \$675,000.

Middletown Fire Station

Chief Owens had nothing further to add to the County Executive's earlier report on the Middletown Fire Station.

D. FCFVRA President, Eric Smothers:

LOSAP

President Smothers reported that the new LOSAP database training is tentatively scheduled for February 24th. Hopefully they will be implementing it on March 1st.

E. President of the Career Firefighters Association, John Neary

January Blizzard Recognition

President Neary wished to recognize Firefighter Joe Meister for thinking outside the box and coming to work in his snowmobile. FF Meister made several rescues and even drove the snowmobile from Frederick down to Brunswick and a several other needed places during the snowstorm.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. VFRS, Chief Chip Jewell:

Being absent, there was no report from Chief Jewell. His report was included in the meeting packet.

B. Operations Committee, Chief Chip Jewell:

In Chief Jewell's absence, Chief Coe gave the report on the Operations Committee, stating that the Operations Committee met on Tuesday, January 19th at the Public Safety Training Center. The Operations Committee approved the Emergency Services Rehabilitation Policy, as well as the BLS Station Supply Inventory Policy. The rehab policy defines the medical parameters as to when our emergency services providers can return back to active engagement during a working incident after a rest period. Additionally the Operations Committee will be voting on an EMS Documentation Policy at their next meeting.

The Committee is also reviewing a final report at the Battalion level from the Response Review Committee. Comments are due back on that at the next Operations Committee Meeting on February 16th.

C. Planning and Research Committee:

Nothing further to report.

D. Emergency Medical Services Committee:

President Smothers indicated he had nothing further to add to Dr. Fillmore's previous report for EMS.

E. Budget Committee:

Chairman Williams stated that the committee would be discussing the budget review later.

F. Training Committee:

Chief Owens stated he did not believe there was anything to report.

IX. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Old Business

Update on Fire Rescue Service Initiatives and Projects

Chief Owens stated the update was included in the meeting packet.

Response Review Committee Update

Chief Owens stated the Response Review Committee completed their work. They have developed quite a packet of recommended policies. A presentation of the information was made to the All Chiefs Meeting on January 19th. The recommendation will be reviewed by all Chiefs at the battalion level. It will then be due back for discussion at the next Operations Committee Meeting on February 16th.

Protective Clothing for Volunteers

Chief Owens reported that the spreadsheets have gone out to the corporations for verification of the protective gear that has been issued out to each of the corporation's individual members, as well as their status. Gear is being reclaimed and returned to the logistics warehouse as members are being identified as "no longer active."

Chief Owens further reported that for members who solely ride the ambulances, structural protective clothing could be recovered from them in favor of issuing a much less expensive EMS protective clothing ensemble. The difference between the structural and EMS gear is the level of thermal protection, but it does provide the appropriate barrier for bioprotection. An EMT would not be entering a thermal environment for firefighting. "We are looking for that count to come back as part of the review from each corporation" he said.

Question: "Is most of the returned? Is it usable? Is it viable?"

Chief Owens responded that some of the gear is still brand-new and in its plastic bag – issued, but never used.

Revocation of H.B. 19 - Mandatory Residential Sprinkler Legislation

Chief Owens advised the Board that there is a hearing scheduled before the House Committee on Environment and Transportation. Having been cancelled twice before, it is currently scheduled for February 16th in Annapolis. Chief Jewell is scheduled to attend as our representative. He is also connected with the Maryland State Chief's Association, and he attended a meeting last week with the Association's working group on this issue. Additionally, he participated in a media event in Annapolis. Chief Owens stated that people are coming together in opposition to any change in the legislation from its current form.

Question directed to the County Executive: "What part of the state are these guys from; who are the sponsors?"

County Executive, Jan Gardner, responded that they appear to be coming from the Eastern Shore, and she thinks much the concern there is about cost. Much of the development on the Eastern Shore is on well and septic, so in order to have sprinkler systems, they are required to have holding tanks, etc.

President Neary mentioned there are one or two proponents from Allegany County and Garret County. The rest are on the Eastern Shore. The builders say that it adds extra cost, that it is not going to help them sell houses, and that they have not seen any issues here. There have been two major fires, one last year and one recently, where it was proven that sprinklers would have provided access for the families to exit safely. President Neary said he would be down there next Tuesday, not just for House bill 19, but also for House Bill 227, which is the Firefighter Tax Modification for Public Safety Modification on Pensions.

Question: "They're both on Tuesday?"

President Neary affirmed that they are both are on Tuesday the 16th of February at 1 p.m., in two different hearing rooms, so he will be "bouncing between the two."

Question directed to the County Executive: "When you delivered it, did you get a chance to talk to them about it or get a response?"

CE Jan Gardner, responded that she thinks most of the delegation is aware of how everybody feels here in the county. Her impression was that they are on board, although that was not specifically voiced. While they didn't say much about it in the meeting, she thinks they have heard from the community.

President Neary stated everyone he has talked about the issue has been positive about making sure the Bill is defeated.

B. New Business

Operation: Winter Storm Jonas

Chief Coe talked about January's storm preparation, noting the storm benefited them in a lot of ways, having hit at the end of the week and through the weekend, so traveling was down. All storm predictions were very accurate and consistent, so they did not have to deal with a fluctuating forecast. Fire and Rescue jumped into pre-storm planning operations on Wednesday, January 20th, through a close relationship with Emergency Management by participating in weather conference calls through the Maryland Emergency Management Group and information pushes to the Corporations. Staffing at Station 7, 12 and 23 was bolstered, and a plow unit was placed at the Green Valley station to limit any staff having to be out in what is referred to as a "driver-only situation in the adverse weather conditions." He then went on to detail the logistics of each day of the snowstorm.

Question: "Are they still assessing any damage to any stations or any equipment?"

Chief Coe stated that Emergency Management is still collecting information. At the time of the meeting, he was unaware of any significant damage to any public safety facilities.

Chief Owens noted that from the beginning, the directions to all corporations were to track their expenditures. Corporations are reporting back to Emergency Management, so the data will be ready should the call come forward through the State for a Presidential declaration.

County Executive, Jan Gardner, also noted that they would be doing an after-action review, stating that a lot is learned from these big snow events. Fort Detrick, she said, has requested to participate in that after-action report. She went on to say that "we welcome any feedback, whatever their role was, because we want to hear what everybody thought could have been done differently or better."

Chief Coe added that the lessons from 2010 and other major weather events in the past made our performance through this storm as successful as it was.

County Executive, Jan Gardner, agreed and stated that one of her objectives was to not have people stranded in vehicles overnight. That, unfortunately, did not happen this time, but we still need to stress to citizens the importance of staying off the roads. Vehicle rescues divert a large amount of resources.

Ambulance Billing Vendor Audit

Chief Owens introduced the HIPAA Compliance Officer, Tawanda Bailey, and asked her to walk the committee through the recent Ambulance Billing Vendor Audit. Ms. Bailey distributed a spreadsheet to identify the findings and recommendations from the audit by the independent auditor, and then also responded to those findings and recommendations from our vendor. Additionally, Ms. Bailey provided a breakdown of response reviews.

Ms. Bailey stated Medicare is one of the biggest payees that pays into ambulance billing services and that this audit is a means to measure the efficiency of the claims that are in process. The audit looked at our documentation to make sure that the document claims were properly coded and charged correctly. Ms. Bailey stated that there were certain areas identified as issues, and that they are working with the providers on addressing them. "Overall, though, we did a very good job" she said.

Question: "Why do they continually repeat that "no trip odometer reading on patient care report" when GPS coordinates are allowed and acceptable?"

Ms. Bailey replied that the Vendor is in Ohio, and that that is typically their standard. She believes they will soon make tracking odometer readings a mandatory field

Question: "Where there is a rebuttal to the initial findings, how is that resolved? You've got the Medical Compliance Services audit and response, but is there then another response from those who did the audit?"

Ms. Bailey responded that Medical Compliance Services actually did the audit. She stated that he first column gave the findings and their recommendations. Mr. Ed McKesson from Medical Compliance Services, the billing vendor on our behalf, provided a response to those, and most of the rebutted issues were thrown out.

Question: "I noticed on number 18 that we have two signatures, and it says, 'Refund may be required.' Is that really a major big deal? It's easy to imagine that ALS and BLS providers finish their reports at different times and that the same person may not be there to sign the chart."

Ms. Bailey replied that on that particular one, there was no patient signature, and part of the documentation did not give the reason as to why the patient was unable to sign.

Question: "It referred to the receiving facility's signatures. Was that the reason ...?"

Ms. Bailey clarified that that was her notation. There were two reports, and when they were making their findings, they were basing it on one, and going back and giving a comparison of both reports.

Question: "Does it matter, though?"

Ms. Bailey responded, "Yes. For Medicare, it does," and that any time you make a claim to Medicare, a patient signature is required.

Question: "On the documentation, do they look at all the short form, or is it just the eMEDS report?"

Ms. Bailey confirmed that they basically use the eMEDS report, because that is all they actual see. The short form is at the hospital. It was further noted that they will never see the short form and that it is not intended to be linked to billing at all.

FY-17 Budget Appeals

Chief Owens noted that this would be a challenging process and that there is no expectation of getting everything we have asked for. Chief Leatherman then gave a brief description of the items DFRS has appealed and submitted to the budget office.

Question: "Is it my understanding that everything on this list, again, is above and beyond? These are appeals above the normal budget requests?"

Chief Owens confirmed this, stating that the base budget is in, and that these are requests outside of the base budget."

Question: "Were there any additional positions in that base budget?"

Chief Owens stated there was not. Chief Leatherman stated there was additional funding put in for the matrix.

Question: "The matrix, as far as funding that goes to individual corporations, ... has that remained the same, the parameters within that matrix?"

Chief Leatherman stated that the parameters were mostly the same and that the only other thing added into the matrix was extra funding for departments that house ALS units. A few other requests were for additional funding for Mt. Airy and also monies to help offset some of the 50/50 match grants.

Question: "I had a question about the holiday pay for the career staff. It's regular pay, career staff, and then holiday pay, time-and-a-half on top of that?"

Chief Leatherman advised that this was not the case. We actually pay the holiday to the firefighters – straight time and 9.6 hours.

Chief Owens explained why paying it out is the preference. If a career firefighter is off for a holiday, someone has to be hired back at time-and-a-half to fill the holiday. It is

cheaper to give the holiday payout as straight pay in a paycheck than it is to have to hire back someone to fill the holiday vacancy.

Chairperson Williams then made a motion to allow Chief Owens to move ahead with prioritizing the budget appeals as he sees fit. Captain Cave seconded the motion.

After much discussion, Chairperson Williams reminded the committee that there was a still motion on the floor that he made to allow Chief Owens to move forward and prioritize the budget appeals sees fit. A person-by-person vote was taken. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

Susan Reeder Jesse:	Yes
Randy Williams:	Yes
Carroll Jones:	Yes
Marc McNeal:	Yes
Chad Cave:	Yes
Susan Nicol	Yes

VOTE: YES: 6 NO: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 PASSED

X. ACTION ITEMS

Mass Casualty Policy

Question: "I went back and read the Mass Casualty Policy. Were there no changes since last month – the first time that we got a chance to look at it?"

Chief Owens responded that there were no changes, and that this policy, which was tabled for further discussion at the January meeting, was back on the agenda tonight for action.

Question: "The only concern that I was given is a concern you raised yourself when we first looked at it, the ability for the sixth and seventh and twelfth engine officer to understand exactly, and we all know the chaos of an incident, so the ability to stick and maintain for that, but ..."

Chief Coe stated that once the policy is approved, they can get out into the field and nail down some of the training and let our resource guides help our incident commanders and EMS providers to ensure that the appropriate jobs are completed. This policy mirrors what is done in northern Virginia, and what is currently being done in Howard County, Maryland, and it is what MIEMSS is looking at doing statewide. "We are really trying to be on the front end of that turn, in the event that we do have a mass casualty incident in the county, he said."

Chief Marc McNeal made a motion to approve the Mass Casualty Policy as submitted. Captain Cave seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

VOTE: YES: 6 NO: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 PASSED

Civil Disturbance Policy

Chief Coe stated that it became evident during the time of the Baltimore unrest that we really did not have an operational policy outlining how we would proceed if such an incident occurred within Frederick County. He and others reached out to some individuals in the fire rescue world that have had personal recent experience with these sorts of events, implemented it into a policy. This policy has also been reviewed by both the Frederick County Sheriff's Office, as well as the Frederick City Police, and it matches their procedures.

Chief Marc McNeal made a motion to approve the Civil Disturbance Policy as submitted. Susan Reeder Jessee seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

VOTE: YES: 6 NO: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 PASSED

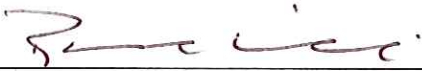
XI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Captain Cave to adjourn. Chief McNeal seconded. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

VOTE: YES: 6 NO: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 PASSED

Meeting was adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

APPROVED



Randy Williams, Chair

APPROVED

3/14/16
Date of Approval

APPROVED



Tim Clarke, Vice-Chair

APPROVED

3-14-18
Date of Approval