

Emergency Services Advisory Council
November 16, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Rick Baker, Michael Robinson, Steve Wantz, Bruce Fleming, Dan Plunkert, Michael Karolenko, Robert Buckley, Eddie Ruch, Linas Saurusaitis, Lynn Karr-Kratz, David Coe, Dr. John Murphy

Members Absent: Dr. Stephanie Kemp, Brett Six,

Guests: Susan Mott- 1st VP CCVESA, Mike Stoner- EMS Officer DFEMS

Chairman Baker opened the meeting at 19:02 with the Pledge of Allegiance and introduction of guests.

Lynn Karr-Kratz requested a spelling correction to pg. 3 of the October meeting minutes. Dr. Murphy made a motion to approve the October meeting minutes with the correction. Michael Karolenko seconded. The motion was passed.

Comments:

There were no comments from ESAC members at this time.

Public Comments:

Susan Mott reported that 12 out of the 14 volunteer fire companies have signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the fire companies and the County.

Director's Report:

- Chief Robinson reported that Chapter 37 of the County Code was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) on October 27th. As a result, the title change from Director to Director/Chief was approved. Also, the issue of overtime/207k exemption was clarified via the following amendment:

Non- exempt employees who work over their scheduled time receive time and a half after they have reached an excess of 168 hours in a 28 day period.

- Chief Robinson will be meeting with Budget in December to discuss what items from the CCVESA budget will be moved to the Department of Fire & EMS (DFEMS) budget for FY24. Fuel is expected to be a priority.

- Tracey Estes, EMS Billing Technician for DFEMS, started work last week. She is working to get the County set up to begin EMS billing. She will also handle HIPPA compliance and requests for records/information.

- Chief Robinson reported that DFEMS will be looking into canceling the contract with AdvantEdge, the third-party billing company, and accepting proposals from other vendors. There have been numerous problems with AdvantEdge already.
- Chief Robinson discussed the purchase of radios which is going before the BOCC tomorrow during open session. ESAC members are concerned about the safety issues posed by the type of lapel microphone being purchased for the portable radio and discussed the possibility of replacing them with a different model microphone. The upgraded microphone will provide greater safety features for the county firefighters and EMS providers. Chief Robinson informed the group that Budget is not able to recommend this action to the BOCC. Rick Baker suggested there be further discussion between Public Safety and Budget.
- Chief Robinson provided an update on the hiring process. All 12 Lieutenants will now be hired in year one along with four Shift Commanders. Applications are currently being accepted and HR and DFEMS are working together to validate credentials for candidates.

Dr. Murphy asked if ESAC could see a report detailing how much of the FY23 budget has been spent per category. Chief Robinson will reach out to Budget and get a report to present at the next ESAC meeting.

Rick Baker brought up a concern about ambulance clubs and how that would work once the County has taken over EMS billing. Chief Robinson will consult with Tracey Estes and provide an answer.

Rick Baker asked about using unspent money from the budget to bring on year two positions in year one. Commissioner Wantz commented that the budget process is very strict. To make a change like that would require reopening the budget for public hearing which is a very involved process.

Commissioner's Report:

- Commissioner Wantz reported that Carroll County's triple A credit rating has been reaffirmed.
- December 4th is the last day in office for the current Commissioners. The new BOCC is in effect starting December 5th. At that time, a new Commissioner President and new ex-officio assignments will be decided.
- Commissioner Wantz has accepted a position on the legislative board for the Maryland State Firemen's Association. He has appreciated the work of ESAC during his term as Commissioner.

- The State of the County address will be held on January 10, 2023 at the Carroll Arts Center. Commissioner Wantz encouraged members of the fire service to attend.

Medical Director's Report: Not present

CCVESA President's Report: Nothing to report

Committee Reports:

FROPS- Eddie Ruch will discuss under new business.

EMSOPS- Nothing to report

Old Business:

- New service, Equipment Replacement Review Committee
 - Rick Baker showed the group a Frederick County policy regarding the purchase of new or replacement apparatus. If we adopted a policy like this it would accomplish two of the strategic plan goals.
 - Frederick County has a Fire/Rescue Planning Workgroup. Rick Baker suggested creating a similar committee and having ESAC review the requests for new service made by the committee.
 - Chief Robinson suggested that, rather than create another committee, this could be a function of ESAC.
 - Susan Mott asked if the company has the funds to purchase the service and does not need a loan from the County, will it be the same process? Yes, because it will still cost the County money.
 - David Coe and Bruce Fleming clarified that this process would apply to any change in service (adding, deleting or replacing).
 - Rick Baker will draft a policy for ESAC to discuss.

- Fire 101 for New Commissioners
 - ESAC discussed plans for a "Fire 101" session to be held at the PSTC in early spring to introduce the new Commissioners to fire and EMS.
 - Lynn Karr-Kratz suggested inviting members from Budget and Management as well.
 - Rick Baker encouraged ESAC regional representatives to get in touch with the Commissioner for their district and speak to them about the event.
 - Chief Robinson will work on setting a date for this event.

New Business:

- Several DFEMS policies were reviewed by FROPS and have been distributed to ESAC. The Incident Management policy, Social Media policy, Duties & Responsibilities of Employees and the Mayday policy will be voted on by ESAC at the December meeting.
- Bruce Fleming submitted a proposal to change the ESAC bylaws (see attached) which will be considered at the next ESAC meeting.
- Sykesville and Winfield fire department representatives dropped off their signed copies of the MOU. All 14 volunteer fire companies have now signed.

Action Items:

1. Chief Robinson will provide an informed answer regarding how ambulance clubs would work with the County handling EMS billing.
2. Chief Robinson will get a firm date for the “Fire 101” introduction to fire/EMS for the new Commissioners.
3. Chief Robinson will follow up about scheduling the meeting between IT, Public Safety and members of the fire service.

David Coe made a motion to adjourn. Linas Saurusaitis seconded.

The meeting was adjourned at 21:26.

November Meeting Report

Department of Fire & EMS



Presented to ESAC

November 16, 2022

Chief Michael W. Robinson, MA, CFO, NRP
Director-Department of Fire & EMS

OVERVIEW:

- Chapter 37 status
- MOU Status
- Budget issues/volunteer payments
- Billing Technician
- Radios/Grant/modifications
- Hiring Process
- Fy-24 Budget



Chapter 37: Carroll County Code



- Codifies all HR areas for the Carroll County DFEMS
- ESAC language has been added
- ESAC bylaws to be codified
- Changes title to Director/Chief, Fire & EMS
- Clarifies FLSA issues-volunteering, 207K exemption/Overtime clarity?
- Passed unanimously by Commissioners on 10/27
- NOW MOVING FORWARD!
- THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

M.O.U- Operational Agreements



- Approved by Corporate presidents on 11/7/22
- All companies have signed except for Winfield
- Sykesville will be signing –this week
- Effective immediately
- A long process but a valuable experience /Allows career employees

FY-23 Budget: Volunteer Billing

- A few implementation issues
- Running smoothly
- Callie is administering/managing questions
- Will expand in FY-24 and fuels will be a priority
- Recommendations for areas to absorb into main budget



Billing Technician Position:



- **Welcome to Tracey Estes**
- **Liaison to billing vendor-HIPPA, compliance**
- **Will handle subpoenas and FOIA requests**
- **Need to get CMS approval to operate**
- **Setting up pay system/Hippa requirements**
- **Housed at the COB**



Radio Grant (AFG)

- Procurement approval-tomorrow
- Will procure new radios, mobiles and accessories
- Separate from recently delivered radios
- Incorporating some design changes for future radios
- Working with DPS and Scott Campbell to replace all microphones with new technology for safety compliance -Issues





Hiring Process:

- Has begun until 11/30/22- 16 Lieutenants
- Attempt to create an “ongoing” hiring list? 88 then 60 positions (1-yr. list)
- Other positions to be hired and to begin advertising by January
- Information sessions this Saturday next Tuesday
- 30 + applicants/Some high quality interest
- By June 1, 2023 followed by July 1!



FY-24 Budget:

- **ESAC support in the process-NOW**
- **63 positions total**
- **1 additional chase car- 4 FF/PMs**
- **1 Logistics technician-Quartermaster**
- **1 Data analyst-(part time) or full time**
- **1 Mobile integrated health paramedic**
- **2 SUVs, 1 passenger van, 2 ambulances**
- **Ongoing employee expenses-upgrade of shift commander-Captain**
- **Replacement equipment: EMS, SCBA, PPE,**

QUESTIONS?

More to follow?



ESAC Bylaw change

11/16/2022

Article VII Quorum and Voting

A. Six (6) voting members of ESAC, representing a simple majority, shall constitute a quorum. ~~These six (6) members must include at least one volunteer representative and one career member.~~