



PENNSYLVANIA EMERGENCY HEALTH SERVICES COUNCIL
Your Voice In EMS

PEHSC Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, March 18, 2020
Webinar (PEHSC Office)
1000 hours

Minutes

CONVENE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Mr. Jones, President, called the meeting to order at 1000 hours

- Welcomed the attendance

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Allegheny General Hospital – David Lindell/Robert McCaughan
Ambulance Association of PA – Donald DeReamus/Douglas Garretson/Heather Sharar
Center for Emergency Medicine of Western PA – Walt Stoy, Ph.D./Ron Roth, M.D.
Chester County Department of Emergency Services – Harry Moore
City of Allentown EMS – Eric Gratz
Community Life Team – Barry Albertson
Cumberland Goodwill EMS – Nathan Harig
Emergency Nurses Association, PA – Kay-Ella Bleecher, CRNP
Good Fellowship Ambulance and Training Institute – Kimberly Holman, RN
Harrisburg Area Community College – Robert Bernini
Non-Profit Emergency Services of Beaver County – Steve Bailey
Penn State M.S.H. Medical Center – Scott Buchle
Pennsylvania ACEP – Gregory Hellier, DO
Pennsylvania Fire and Emergency Services Institute – Jerry Ozog/Robert Timko
Pennsylvania State University – J. David Jones
Pennsylvania Trauma Systems Foundation – Juliet Altenburg, RN
Second Alarmers Assoc & Rescue Squad of Montgomery County, Inc – Ken Davidson/David Tepper
Thomas Jefferson University – Jean Bail, RN
Tower Health – Mervin Wertz
Valley Ambulance Authority – JR Henry
Williamsport Area Ambulance Service Cooperative – Gregory Frailey, DO

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

American Medical Response Mid-Atlantic Inc. – Edward Powers
American Trauma Society – Krista Brands
Bucks County Regional EMS - Michele Rymdeika
Cetronia Ambulance Corps. – Larry Wiersch/Chris Peischl
EMS West – Brian Shaw
LTS EMS Council – Wendy Hastings
Lower Allen – Anthony Deaven
Pennsylvania Neurosurgical Society – Jack Jallo, MD
Portage Area Ambulance Association – Terry Sloan
UPMC Presbyterian – Myron Rickens
Uwchlan Ambulance Corps – Emily McCarthy

BUREAU OF EMS

Dylan Ferguson, Director

OTHERS

PEHSC STAFF

Janette Swade, Director
Donald Potter, Sr. EMS System Specialist
Andy Snavely, EMS System Specialist
Duane Spencer, EMSC Manager
Kelli Kishbaugh, Administrative Assistant

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Ms. Bleecher and Mr. Wertz seconded the motion to accept the December 4, 2019 Board of Directors meeting minutes as prepared. Motion carried.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

J. David Jones reported the following:

1. There has been two line of duty deaths this year. Matthew Smelser from Carroll Township and was a supervisor at Rostraver-West Newton EMS Department. Theodore Dybus from Ashville and worked for Veterans Ambulance Service in Northern Cambria and worked part time for Med Van.
2. There should be a vote on Monday for Bill 1862 – Balance Billing

TREASURER'S REPORT

Dr. Roth, Treasurer provided a report, a copy of which is on file for the member's review.

A motion was made by Dr. Frailey and Mr. Harig seconded the motion to accept the Treasurer's report. Motion carried.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Swade reported on the following:

- Please make sure you complete the Conflict of Interest paperwork.
- You must be signed on to the Webinar today to vote for the Board of Directors. We cannot have a vote by phone.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH REPORT

Director Dylan Ferguson reported on the following:

- There is currently 96 cases of Covid – 19 in Pennsylvania. This number will rise.
- Department of Health pushed out publications related to EMS regarding the following:
 - RC Memo 2020-04 EMS Agency Licensure – Medical Command Facility Recognition – Educational Institute Accreditation
 - RC Memo 2020-05 QRS Agencies Desiring to Suspend Activities
 - RC Memo 2020-06 EMS Certification by Endorsement (CBE) Candidate Verification
 - EMSIB 2020-06 Covid-19 Policy and Protocol Updates

- EMS Agencies whose licenses are due to expire should complete and submit the electronic application in the usual manner. Following review of the application, if the regional EMS council is not able to conduct an onsite inspection, they will forward the application to the Bureau for approval to avoid any lapse in licensure. All Commonwealth staff are working from home except for a few essential staff which includes Director Ferguson.
- CPR certifications due to expire will be extended until July 1, 2020.
- Pearson-View testing centers are closed nationwide for NREMT cognitive testing. Dr. Heller asked about PPE gear running out and what they can do?
 - Director Ferguson stated that the process is to submit to County EMA's and then it will be sent to the Department of Health. They will push out available portions.
- Dr. Heller asked about the availability of meter dose inhalers (MDIs) that have been suggested as a replacement for nebulized respiratory treatments. Dr. Heller also expressed concern regarding the cost of MDIs.
 - Director Ferguson acknowledged both concerns and stated use of an MDI is voluntary and will need to be assessed by each ALS agency.
- Mr. Harig commented about patients keeping their insurance checks with not working. We need to figure out how EMS will fund the next 45-60 days out. This could cause EMS companies to shut down. This needs to be a priority issue.
 - Director Ferguson responded by stating that this issue was raised on a conference call the other day. He encourages any EMS agency to send their data to their regional EMS council and Director Ferguson compile the information to help sound the alarm bell. Need the entire EMS community to help me help you.
 - Dr. Frailey suggested that it is time for the Department of Health or the Governor to address the Insurance Commissioner that we need immediate relief for patients to be transferred to an alternate transport site. EMS needs to be able to get paid for that.
 - Director Ferguson responded that he will continue to have those conversations and that they needed to get out the 2020-06 out to ensure that the toolbox was open. This is step one.
 - Mr. McCaughan asked if they are considering taking steps for alternative staffing, like Minnesota did, where retired staff might want to come back into service to help with this pandemic? Modified requirements for these individuals to come back?
 - Director Ferguson stated that the action Minnesota took might have been the only option by their law. May not have had the ability to tailor or make specific decisions in a timely fashion. I am monitoring daily staffing levels and EMS volume on a daily live basis from the patient care reports.
- Also, for the record, New Jersey took an action to step away from their requirements of a medic/medic system and dropped to a medic EMT, which we do not have in Pennsylvania. Their BLS level they also dropped from two EMT's to an EMT and an EMR.
- Mr. Albertson asked about communications to Police and Fire who may have gotten to the patient before us and been exposed to Covid-19. Does this violate HIPAA and how can we relate this information to them?
 - Director Ferguson stated that public safety answering point should be using screening questions. Contact tracing is being performed on confirmed cases and part of this tracing should be notified of this exposor. They will not be told which call but will be told that you were on a call possibly were exposed.
 - Director Ferguson also stated public safety answering points should be following screening guidance that is updated and being sent out from the CDC guidelines that are through the Bureau of 911 and relayed to all responders, not just EMS. Have those conversations with your county's responders. Should not be entering into those situations unless it is a life-threatening situation.
 - To answer the question if you can tell a department that they might have been exposed, that is not an issue and you can. The HIPAA issue is to not identify the individual who

may have exposed the responder. This is why there should be blood born pathogen or a respiratory protection plan in place.

- Dr. Roth made the comment that they are unable to get answers from the state or local health department regarding potential provider exposure through back tracing. Dr. Roth offered to be a clearing house for his region.
 - Director Ferguson stated that he is aware of Dr. Roth's situation. It is being handled at levels appointed above Director Ferguson, but is continuing to engage discussion within the Department of Health.

Mr. Jones stated Director Ferguson will continue to answer your questions at the end, but we need to proceed with the remainder of today's agenda, because we know everyone is busy

TASK FORCE/COMMITTEE REPORTS

MAC, Community Paramedicine and Special Operations Workgroup provided reports for view. (added post meeting and not presented at the abbreviated meeting)

The Medical Advisory Committee met by webinar on January 15th.

1. The Bureau of EMS reported the update to the AEMT protocols is complete and they are awaiting receipt of the education program from EMS West. This program will update current AEMTs on the changes to the protocols and approved medication list.
2. Director Ferguson reported bureau staff is working on a draft document in response to VTR 1219-01 regarding dispatch and utilization of intermediate ALS agencies. Some aspects of this informational bulletin are more complex than others. In the future, the bureau will be engaging stakeholders, including PEHSC, for their input.
3. Dr. Kupas provided an update on a previous MAC recommendation for prehospital ultrasound pilot in southern York County. At this point, the pilot's medical director is still working through some technical issues with transmitting the images in real-time to the primary receiving facility.
4. Dr. Kupas presented a statewide pilot project proposal for the prehospital administration of antibiotics in cases of open extremity fractures. This protocol is currently in use in other areas of the US and yielding positive results in reducing the incidence of infection associated with this type of fracture. This pilot will be open to all ALS agencies and will require completion of an online education program and post-call data collection. The bureau anticipates launching the pilot sometime in the 2nd quarter of 2020 and additional information will be provided at that time. The MAC unanimously supports this proposal.
5. The MAC has been asked by the bureau to provide a recommendation on new technology for point-of-care testing for carbon monoxide. The technology utilizes breath analyzation to detect and quantify the presence CO. Currently, Pennsylvania's scope of practice only permits CO-oximetry; if recommended, an amendment to the scope of practice would be required to accommodate this testing method. The MAC will continue discussing this request at its April meeting. Staff will attempt to secure a sample device so the committee can become more familiar with the technology.

The MAC is scheduled to meet in-person on Wednesday, April 22nd in the Mechanicsburg area.

The community paramedicine task force met by webinar on February 12, 2020.

1. The members shared updates on good things are happening in their respective programs:
 - a. Several are planning or have initiated programs targeted at the opioid crisis in cooperation with law enforcement and other agencies.
 - b. One program is developing a program for post-discharge follow up of septic shock patients, while another is exploring a fall reduction heart failure follow up program.
 - c. Dan Swayze shared the CONNECT has moved from the hospital to the health insurance side of UPMC. They are also involved in standing-up (5) CP programs in surrounding counties that will focus on substance abuse. There is also a project in the planning stages related to postpartum care for moms and babies.
2. During the legislative update, the members were informed that HB1113, re-introduced in this session by Rep. Ryan Bizzaro, has been put on hold due to the Department of Health's interpretation of the EMS Act. Director Ferguson shared the same information with the members as he presented at a prior PEHSC board meeting:
 - a. The Department currently lacks authority under Act 37 to regulate CP services as part of EMS System.
 - b. Because CP is currently not part of PA's EMS system, agencies and providers do not have liability protections afforded under the EMS Act. As such, these services are currently being delivered based on the agency medical director's authority under the delegated practice provision of the PA Medical Practice Act.
 - c. DOH is supportive of CP programs and would like to work with stakeholders to develop draft enabling legislative language.

Because CP services do not enjoy the liability protection afforded by the EMS Act, President Dave Jones recommended CP agencies consider communicating this information to their medical director, insurance carrier and legal counsel to identify any risk management concerns.

PEHSC has developed a brief survey to members of the CP task force to gather information on the services they provide and solicit their opinion as to whether the EMS Act should be amended to include community paramedicine, or if these services should remain a function of delegated medical practice.

PEHSC Special Operations Workgroup

BOD Update – 3/18/20

The PEHSC Special Operations Workgroup began meeting again in January following a long hiatus. The goal of the group is to revisit and update the expanded scope of practice recommendations for both tactical medicine and wilderness medicine (VTR 0617-01 and VTR 0617-02) initially submitted to BEMS in 2017. At the request of BEMS, the group is initially focusing on the tactical paramedic scope of practice as it is felt that this is a more pressing need at this time.

To date, the group has spent a significant amount of time reviewing the initial VTR and reaching consensus on needed updates, additions, and deletions on items such as the proposed scope of practice, educational objectives, reciprocity, medical command, and canine care.

The next meeting, originally scheduled for March 30, 2020, has been postponed due to the current public health situation and will rescheduled as soon as possible in order to keep the project moving forward. Following completion of the tactical medicine project, the group will address wilderness medicine in a similar fashion.

EMSC: Mr. Spencer reported the following:

- There is a packet online which includes a reminder for last call of the 2020 EMSC survey. We are expected to be at 80% and are currently at a 20% reply rate. Everyone on this call who are an EMS agency that respond to 911 calls is included in the survey. You can login to the website and if your service is listed, then your survey needs to be completed. If your service is not listed, then you are ok.
- VTR #0320-01 Update to Pediatric Voluntary Recognition Program – PECC
 - This revision will designate a Pediatric Emergency Care Coordinator (PECC) at the master and expert levels. This VTR supersedes VTR 0619-01 by amending a new implementation date of July 1, 2020.
- Poll was posted for vote and majority approved the recommendation.

A motion to accept was made by Ms. Bleacher and Dr. Frailey seconded the motion to except VTR 0320-01. Motion carried.

Membership Committee

Mrs. Swade reported

Application was received from Brooks Foland, Esq. to become an affiliate member. Per the bylaws, an individual can become an affiliate member.

A motion to accept was made by Mr. Harig and Mr. Gratz seconded the motion to except affiliate member. Motion carried.

Mr. Jones stated to Ms. Bail that we will need a slate of Officers for the June meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Harig and Mr. Lindell seconded the motion to adjourn the Board of Directors Meeting. Motion carried.

Annual Council Meeting

- I. 1100 hours - Convene Annual Council Meeting
 - a. Nominating Committee Report – Jean Bail, Chair

Nominating Committee Report - 2019
Slate of Organizations – PEHSC BOARD OF DIRECTORS
TERM 2021-23

Organization	Type	Geography
Cetronia Ambulance Corps	Ambulance Company	Eastern
*Cumberland Goodwill EMS	Ambulance Company	EHSF
Forbes Hospital	Hospital	EMS West
Highmark Inc.	Statewide Organization	Statewide
Lower Allen Township EMS	Ambulance Company	EHSF
*Non Profit Emergency Services of Beaver County	Ambulance Company	EMS West
*The Center for Emergency Medicine	Educational Institute	EMS West
VFIS Education and Training Services	Educational Institute	Statewide
Wellspring York Hospital	Hospital	EHSF
West York Ambulance	Ambulance Company	EHSF

* Re-nominated for a second term

- **Additional nominations – none**

- b. Elect 2021-2023 Board of Directors

A motion was made by Mr. Wertz and Ms. Holman seconded the motion to accept the slate of nominees. Vote was taken with the majority voting electronically, and motion carried.

- Mr. DeReamus stated HB1862 is on hold right now. The House suspended their rules to vote off-site. They will only be working on Covid-19 related legislation.
- Mrs. Swade stated good opportunity that because of the previous conversation to fund EMS on what we are experiencing now and in the future.

A motion was made by Mr. Wertz and Mr. McCaughan seconded the motion to adjourn the Annual Council meeting. Motion carried.

The next scheduled meeting of the PEHSC board of directors will be

Wednesday, June 10, 2020 at 10:00 am

Additional Questions for Director Ferguson

- Mr. Wertz asked about certification and training requirements due to schools shutting down, clinical requirements and if individuals getting sick.
 - Director Ferguson stated that an emergency meeting with the national registry will be coming up and they will get more answers at that time.
- Mrs. Swade asked about consideration regarding Replica under the currently circumstances?
 - Director Ferguson stated that compact was activated earlier than anticipated. Do not have an official position at this time as it relates to Replica. Defer back to PEHSC as to whether or not the Board felt that was an inapplicable step. We do not know how long this is going to last.
- Mr. DeReamus asked if there is a faster way to for test results to get back to us? We currently have six people sidelined waiting for results.
 - Director Ferguson stated that they are moving as fast as we can. These tests are performed at the State labs and when those labs got their ability to test, we were already halfway into the pandemic. Labs are running non-stop.
 - Mr. DeReamus added that he does not think it's the testing, it is notifying us the results
 - Director Ferguson will follow-up with the Bureau of Community Nurses.
- Mr. Dereamus also commented that we are an east coast community, with considerable commuter traffic between New York to Pennsylvania, are they looking to shut down the interstate?
 - Director Ferguson stated that shutting down an interstate highway would require action by the federal government.
- Mrs. Swade stated that maybe we should have another conference call next week with Director Ferguson and have questions submitted to him in advance of the call.
- Director Ferguson wanted to close the meeting by stating he personally, along with the Bureau of EMS, appreciates everything that you do, and that public safety is the backbone of this country. He is proud of each and every one of you, and your brave and valuable staff. We need to look out for and protect each other. Continue to ask for what you need, and Director Ferguson will advocate for every single one of the 40,000 EMS providers and 1,300 EMS agencies. We need to work together to come out of this on the other side of this.