

**Mountain-Valley
Emergency Medical Services Agency
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
December 10, 2008**

Location: Copperopolis Fire Station 1
Copperopolis, California
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Board Members Present: Louis Boitano – Amador County; Bill Claudino – Calaveras
County; Jim DeMartini – Stanislaus County; Terry Woodrow –
Alpine County
Board Members Absent: Brad Aborn – Mariposa County
Guests: Barry Hurd, Don Campbell, Jeanne Boyce, Bryan Santos
Staff: Steve Andriese – Executive Director; Jim Worobe – Deputy
Director; Richard Murdock - Field Liaison

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m. by Chairperson Louis Boitano.

B. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed those present. All in attendance were acquainted with one another.

C. Correspondence

No correspondence had been received by the Agency.

D. Additions/Deletions, Corrections to Agenda

M/S/C (Woodrow/Claudino) To approve agenda as submitted

Vote – Unanimous

E. Public Forum

Berry Hurd from Patterson District Ambulance restated his objections to the ambulance service provider fees that are being proposed to address the MVEMSA budget deficit.

F. Approval of Consent Calendar

M/S/C (Claudino /Woodrow) To approve consent calendar as presented

Vote – Unanimous

G. Request for Approval of Proposal to Address the Current MVEMS Agency Budget Deficit Draft #2

Following the Public Hearing from earlier this morning, the Agency recommendations to address the current Mountain Valley EMS Agency budget Deficit are as follows:

1. Recommendation #1-State Augmentation

To continue Agency efforts to pursue State augmentation funding with a goal amount of \$250,000. Proposed implementation – Ongoing, target goal of 2010/2011

2. Recommendation #2-Revised Fee Schedule

To adopt a revised EMS Agency fee schedule with the target revenue at \$18,000 based on 2007/2008 data estimates. Proposed implementation - Effective 30 days following approval

3. Recommendation #3-Ambulance provider fees

Eliminate the current Stanislaus County ambulance fees of \$39,500, and establish a region wide ground ambulance service provider fee, to cover the cost of EMS administrative service, of \$5.35 per emergency call and \$2.00 per non-emergency call. Proposed implementation - Effective July 2009

4. Recommendation #4-County contributions

Increase the annual base per capita for county contributions from \$.41 to \$.44 per capita. There has not been an increase prior to this since 1981. An estimated \$18,000 would be generated. Proposed implementation - Effective July 2009

Mr. DeMartini made the comment that the Board has looked at the problem, we need Emergency Medical Services, and nobody wants to pay for it. He agreed with the statement that the Counties ought to pay more. Mr. DeMartini stated that the Board should revisit the issue in the future as this is such a bad time for any increase. He further stated that there is no agency in Stanislaus County that is getting any increase this year, if this agency gets an increase, its doing better than 26 other departments.

Mr. Claudino stated his agreement with Mr. DeMartini with regard to the current fiscal difficulties being experienced by the Counties. He also stated his understanding of the concerns from the representative from Patterson Ambulance District Ambulance.

M/S/C (Claudino/Woodrow) To approve the Proposal to Address the Current MVEMS Agency Budget Deficit

Vote: Unanimous

H. Update on State Funding

Mr. Andriese provided the Board with an update on the current status of State Funding. The “bad news” is that the projected mid-year State Budget deficit is between \$28 to \$30 thousand. The “good news” is that when the Governor’s Office published its list of agencies that most probably would be impacted by reductions in funding in the first draft, EMS had not been identified. The State EMS Authority had not been advised that it had been considered for any further cuts. The State EMS Authority has been actively working on trying to get additional augmentation. The reality is that we do not expect additional funding, but we are working diligently to try and prevent additional cuts.

I. Approval of the Revised Policy #958.20 Stanislaus County EMS/Hospital System Saturation

Mr. Andriese advised the Board that this policy is ajenized because the policy was brought before the Board at the June 11, 2008 meeting, and was approved with the caveat that it be approved by the Stanislaus County Emergency Medical Services Committee. During the presentation at the Stanislaus County ESMC there was concern by some present that some language in the policy addressed other agencies. This was not the intent of the policy. There were suggestions for revision, which were made, and the changes were accepted at the last EMSC Meeting. The policy is brought before the Board to accept those revisions and approve the policy.

M/S/C (DeMartini/Woodrow) To approve the revised version of the policy.

Vote: Unanimous

J. Agency Staffing Report

Mr. Andriese asked for direction on the issue of hiring a Quality Improvement Coordinator. Most of the funds generated by the approved changes to address the budget deficit will take effect next fiscal year. Should the Executive Director wait until July to fill that position?

The question was raised because the need to have the position filled is critical to address the Quality Improvement functions that currently are not being accomplished. The State and Federal EMS Data requirements are now out. The Agency will be required to produce data reports to the State and Federal Government. The current data collection system was put in place as an interim utility during the development of the State and Federal Data Set and is somewhat obsolete, incapable of producing the required data, and is in desperate need of replacement. The Quality Improvement Coordinator would be integral to the process of implementation of a new system.

Direction to Staff. Carry the discussion over to the February, 2009 agenda and be prepared to provide costing information and a Job Description.

K. Update on the HPP Disaster Grant for a LEMSA Half Time Staff Position

At the October 22, 2008 Meeting, the Board voted to allow the Executive Director to sign the necessary contracts associated with the LEMSA Half Time Staff Position and necessary personnel to ensure no delays in meeting timelines.

Mr. Andriese reminded the members of the specifics of the project: to assess the EMS preparedness by the local EMS Agency; to assess ambulance service response and emergency department response; and to develop the tools for this assessment.

The Agency was initially looking at securing approximately \$70 thousand from this grant. The Guidance Document instructed that since the grant period was going to be nine months, the amount of the grant would be prorated to \$54 thousand. The funds were to be split amongst the member counties, rather than sending to the Agency in one lump sum. As a caveat, the document specified that if one of the member counties were to agree to administer the funds, and the rest agreed, that would be allowed. This was to reduce the administrative overhead required to reproduce documentation and activities multiple times. Stanislaus County agreed to administer the funds and the rest of the counties agreed to this arrangement.

Just as the deadline for submission was approaching, and after Stanislaus County had submitted the grant proposal, they were informed that the 15% administrative allowance would only be allowed from the part of the grant apportioned to Stanislaus County, not the whole grant. Stanislaus County decided that it would not be able to provide the administrative support to the grant for the amount of money that would be allowed.

Mr. Andriese has been in contact with the Emergency Preparedness Office (EPO) from the State in an effort to try and get clarification; however he has not received any reply from those who are responsible for any answers. The frustration is compounded by the fact that when the question was posed to five different people in the same department, he received five different and contradictory answers. We are now two months into the grant period. None of the counties have received any funding. All the multi-county regions have had similar difficulties.

The concern at this point is that, while the agency would like to have the funding, the funds would not have any effect on current operations. The funds would be earmarked for the purpose of the grant and would be going out to a consultant for services. However, the work is essential to the Emergency Medical Services System as a whole. There is also a possibility that this program would continue to the next year and the position would be increased to a full-time equivalent for funding.

Mr. Andriese expressed his frustration with working with the Emergency Preparedness Office. He has invested over 60 hours in the project to this point without any real indication that any funding is forthcoming. EPO seems to making up rules as they go along. There has been no correspondence from EPO that shows what has and has not been approved. Mr. Andriese restated his reluctance in this matter based on his interaction (or lack thereof) so far.

Mr. Andriese reminded the members of previous grant experience in which the administrative allowance did not provide for the actual costs of administration of the grant.

Direction to Staff. The Executive Director will continue to have the latitude to sign the necessary contracts associated with the LEMSA Half Time Staff Position and necessary personnel to ensure no delays in meeting timelines.

L. Farewell Presentation to Supervisor Bill Claudino

On behalf of the Mountain Valley EMS Agency Board of Directors and Staff, Steve Andriese presented Bill Claudino a plaque commemorating his service from 2005 to 2008.

M. Agency and County Reports

Alpine County – Supervisor Terry Woodrow had nothing to report.

Amador County – Supervisor Bill Claudino had nothing to report.

Calaveras County – Supervisor Louis Boitano had nothing to report.

Stanislaus County – Supervisor Jim DeMartini had nothing to report

Agency – Executive Director Steve Andriese reported that there has been an ongoing challenge in Alpine County on the East Slope for ambulance service. About a year ago there was a proposal from El Dorado County to station an ALS ambulance in Alpine County. The new CEO of Alpine County has been working with Agency Staff to resurrect this project. Agency will keep the Board informed of the progress on this project.

N. Next Scheduled Meeting

The next scheduled meeting will be February 11, 2009. The meeting place has not yet been determined.

O. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Chairperson Louis Boitano at 11:04 a.m.