

**Mountain-Valley
Emergency Medical Services Agency
Board of Directors Annual Meeting Minutes
June 11, 2008**

Location: Saddle Creek Resort
Copperopolis, California
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Board Members Present: Terry Woodrow - Alpine County; Louis Boitano – Amador
County; Bill Claudino – Calaveras County
Board Members Absent: Jim DeMartini - Stanislaus County; Brad Aborn – Mariposa
County
Guests: Al Lennox, Don Campbell, Brian Dickson, Eric Lewis
Staff: Steve Andriese – Executive Director; Jim Worobe – Deputy
Director; Tina Casias - Executive Secretary; Marilyn Smith –
Response & Transport Coordinator

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m. by Chairman Bill Claudino

B. Welcome and Introductions

The guests were welcomed, and asked to introduce themselves.

C. Correspondence

No correspondence had been received for this meeting.

D. Additions/Deletions, Corrections to Agenda

Steve Andriese addressed the Board members to request that *Consent Item # 3-Approval of Audit Report for FY 05/06*, and *Consent Item # 7c-Policy # 958.20 Stanislaus County Healthcare System Saturation*, be pulled from the Consent Calendar. He requested Consent Item # 7c be placed on the regular calendar as Item # F1.

Steve Andriese also requested that the Board approve the addition of two Emergency Items to the regular agenda. He requested that a discussion into the possibility of increasing the hours for the new Trauma Medical Coordinator be added to Agenda Item # J. He also requested that a discussion be added to Item # M concerning a potential contract with Calaveras County Public Health Dept. in the amount of \$6500 for a communications project grant. He explained that this was time sensitive, and the submittal date for the grant documentation was prior to the next Board of Director's meeting on August 13th.

M/S/C (Woodrow/Boitano) To approve agenda as proposed

Vote – Unanimous

M/S/C (Boitano/Woodrow) To approve agenda as amended

Vote – Unanimous

E. Public Forum

There were no questions or comments from the public.

F. Approval of Consent Calendar

M/S/C (Boitano/Woodrow) To approve consent calendar as revised

Vote: Unanimous

F1. Policy # 958.20-Stanislaus County Healthcare System Saturation

Steve Andriese explained to Board members that this particular policy is a *county specific* policy, and is handled differently from other regional policies. The process for this policy is to bring it before the Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) to determine whether this policy should have regional application. It was determined by the RAC Committee that this policy can be applied regionally.

The Agency was asking the Board for approval of this policy *contingent* upon approval by the Stanislaus County Emergency Medical Services Committee at their June 12th meeting. If changes are made, the policy will return to the Board for approval at the August 11th Board meeting

M/S/C (Woodrow/Boitano) To approve policy contingent on approval of EMSC

Vote: Unanimous

G. CalStar and Reach Air Ambulance Applications

Steve Andriese began by explaining to Board members that this item was put on the agenda in anticipation of receiving completed applications from both CalStar and Reach Air Ambulance Services. However, completed applications have not been submitted to the Agency as yet. In fact, Reach Air Medical Services has withdrawn its interest in placing a helicopter in Amador County. The Agency has an application pending from CalStar to place an air ambulance in Amador County.

Approval of American Legion Ambulance Rate Increase

Marilyn Smith explained to Board members how the ambulance provider agreements in Calaveras County allowed the providers to request rate increases annually.

One method with which a provider can seek a rate increase is to go directly before the MVEMSA Board of Directors and seek approval for a rate increase not to exceed the Medicare allowable reimbursement rate.

American Legion Ambulance is using this method to request a 2.7% rate increase which will not exceed the Medicare allowable reimbursement rate. Agency staff recommends approval of the rate increase.

The second method of requesting rate increases is to first seek the approval of a rate increase, beyond the Medicare allowable rate increase, directly from the Calaveras County Board of Supervisors. This must happen before coming to the MVEMSA to request a rate increase by the Board of Directors.

M/S/C (Boitano/Woodrow) To approve allowable 2.7% rate increase for American Legion Ambulance

Vote: Unanimous

I. Approval of Ebbetts Pass Fire District Rate Increase

Marilyn Smith explained that according to the Ebbetts Pass Fire Districts' provider agreement, rates were frozen for the first two years at an amount stipulated in their RFP. The agreement allows for an annual adjustment approved by the MVEMSA Board of Directors. This is the first time Ebbetts Pass has requested a rate increase.

The Calaveras County Board of Supervisors approved a request by Ebbetts Pass to increase their rates in order to be equivalent to those charged by American Legion Ambulance.

The Agency recommends increasing Ebbetts Pass rates to be equivalent to those charged by American Legion Ambulance.

M/S/C (Woodrow/Boitano) To bring Ebbetts Pass up to ALA old rate

Vote: Unanimous

M/S/C (Woodrow/Boitano) To approve Medicare allowable 2.7% rate increase

Vote: Unanimous

J. Staff Recruitment Update

Steve Andriese explained to the Board that the current Trauma Coordinator has submitted resignation papers to Mountain Valley, but has agreed to continue employment until the position is filled.

Mr. Andriese stated that the Agency had already gone through the recruitment process to hire at .6 FTE., receiving only three applications, and all three were from unqualified applicants. Mr. Andriese went on to say that there have been several individuals within the Trauma System who have expressed interest in the position, but found the amount of hours not feasible financially.

Therefore, a request was made of the Board to approve an increase in FTE for the position from .6 FTE to .75 FTE. This would amount to an increase in salary of approximately \$12,300.

M/S/C (Boitano/Woodrow) To approve request to raise the FTE for the Trauma Medical Coordinator position from .6 FTE to .75 FTE

Vote: Unanimous

K. State General Fund Augmentation

Steve Andriese reminded Board members that for the past four years the Agency has been working extensively with the Department of Finance of the State EMS Authority, and also with the budget committees of the state senate and assembly in an attempt to secure augmentation funding.

The 10% across the board funding cut proposed by Governor Swartzenegger a few months back effects the Agency's proposed budget for next year, and appears to be a 'done deal' at this point.

However, Mr. Andriese stressed that the alliances formed during the Agency's efforts to circumvent the proposed funding cuts, would play out well in future renewed efforts to secure additional funding.

L. Revised FY 07/08 Budget

Steve Andriese began his report by explaining that Board members had before them some revisions to the current FY07/08 mid-year budget. The current budget was in blue, and approved by the Board in October 2007. The revised budget was in white with revisions shown in red.

The first change to the budget concerned the *Trauma Cache Special Project* funded by the EMS Authority for the purchase and storage of equipment caches at local trauma centers. The Trauma Centers opted not to participate in this funding grant. This grant would have resulted in a \$10,000 administrative fee for Mountain Valley EMS Agency, that had already been integrated in the budget for the year. Now a \$10,000 reduction is reflected in this revised budget.

The second change to the budget is a proposed purchase, made available with HRSA funding and through the Public Health Department, of *Mobile Data Terminals* (MDT's)

for ambulances. This allows them to receive calls on line, communicate via the computer, and increases the communication capabilities within the County. The Public Health Department has asked that those funds be included in the FY07/08 budget of MVEMSA so they would not have to coordinate the distribution of those funds. The MVEMSA has tentatively agreed, with the Board's approval. This line item of \$35,143 will show both as local revenue, and as a field equipment purchase creating a 'wash', or 'pass through' funds.

The last revision involved adjustments to the Trauma Fee column to reflect actual expenditures for the fiscal year. Most of the adjustments involve the movement of funds from 'local travel' to 'out of region travel' so funds could be expended this year.

The Agency requested approval of the revised budget.

M/S/C (Woodrow/Boitano) To approve revised budget

Vote: Unanimous

M. Preliminary Budget for FY 08/09

Steve Andriese explained to Board Members that the documentation they were given in the packet was the preliminary budget for FY08/09. The preliminary budget does not reflect all of the State and Local contracts that the Agency will have for the fiscal year. The Agency needs a budget in place in order to be able to function as of July 1st for the new fiscal year.

Every year the Agency submits a preliminary budget for the Board of Director's approval. Subsequently, if there are changes based upon actual contract amounts, a final budget is submitted in August or October.

Some of the changes in the preliminary budget are: 1)There are no special contracts anticipated for this fiscal year, 2)The 10% reduction in the State General Fund allotment has been included in this budget, 3)Adjustments have been made to both the revenue and expense line items based upon a preliminary analysis of historic expenditures, contract changes, and estimated project needs for FY08/09. That analysis will not be completed until the end of the year when fiscal reports are run.

The salary adjustment for the Trauma Medical Coordinator, an approximate \$12,300 increase just passed by the Board under Agenda Item # J, will be added to this budget.

The Emergency Item added to the agenda was a potential contract for \$6,500. Mr. Andriese stated that the Agency was contacted recently by the Calaveras County Public Health Department. There were HRSA funds available through the CDC for a communications project. For this project Agency staff would help write some policies for the sharing of frequencies among law enforcement, fire, and EMS. Also, it requires the development of some training curriculum. This project needs to be completed

prior to the next Board meeting.

Mr. Andriese requested Board approval to allow the Executive Director to sign this agreement with Calaveras County Public Health.

Mr. Andriese also requested approval of the preliminary budget.

M/S/C (Boitano/Woodrow) To approve preliminary budget for FY08/09 and allow the Executive Director to sign the \$6,500 agreement with Public Health

Vote: Unanimous

N. Alternative Agency Funding

Steve Andriese addressed Board members stating that there are four sources of revenue for Mountain Valley EMS Agency.

- 1) The State General Fund dollars that the Agency receives in the form of a contract. Several attempts for augmentation to this funding have been made unsuccessfully. Instead, the Agency will be receiving a 10% reduction for the FY08/09 contract. It is doubtful that an increase will be forthcoming over the next couple of years.
- 2) Special Project funding. This funding has basically dried up, and is no longer available.
- 3) Contributions received from the counties. There are some issues to explore with regard to this revenue.
- 4) Fees that are charged by the Agency.

Currently, the contributions are at \$.41 per capita. That figure may be lower than that charged by other counties in regional systems. The difference may be that other agencies have a base contribution for each county (i.e. \$10,000 base rate) plus the per capita fee. That additional charge would dramatically effect the smaller counties, such as Alpine County whose population is only 1,200.

The other alternative to consider is to increase the \$.41 per capita fee charged to the Counties. The down side to that is that most of the counties are in bad financial situation this year. Increasing this fee would not create enough revenue to make up the \$197,000 budget deficit.

A question was asked by Chairman Claudino as to who's decision it will be to increase these fees. Steve Andriese stated that any decision to increase fees would be a decision of the Mountain Valley Board of Directors.

The last source of revenue is the fees charged by the Agency. Most of the fees are being charged at a maximum level. An increase to these fees, at this time, would negatively

effect volunteers, and again would not make up a \$197,000 budget deficit.

Another alternative is something currently being done only in Stanislaus County. The Agency charges a fee associated with air and ground ambulance services that we authorize and monitor. Stanislaus County currently uses this fee to pay toward their contribution. However, if there was, for example, a \$5.00 fee per ambulance call in each of the counties, this would generate enough revenue to eliminate the budget deficit.

A suggestion was made to approach Tuolumne County to rejoin the region. Mr. Andriese stated that this has been suggested in the past, and a decision was made that the approach should be made Board member to Board member. Steve Andriese was asked to be a member of sub committee on this subject along with Board members Boitano and Woodrow.

The Board directed Mr. Andriese to provide a report on the following at the next meeting:

- 1) Subcommittee of Boitano, Woodrow, and Andriese to meet with Tuolumne County CAO
- 2) Re-poll all regions to find out per capita fee of each county
- 3) Provide additional information on provider fees

Al Lennox representing American Legion Ambulance asked if he could speak to the issue of 'provider fees'. He reported on reduced revenue over the past 5 years due to an increase in expenses, and said any additional fees would eat away at their already low profit margin. He requested that prior to any decisions on this matter, the Agency seek provider input. He was assured that this would take place.

- O. Nomination and Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for FY 08/09**
Board members reviewed attachment # O.1 which documented the recent history of the EMS Board of Directors chairman and vice chairmanships.

M/S/C (Boitano/Woodrow) To nominate and elect Louis Boitano for Chair and Terry Woodrow for Vice-Chair

Vote: Unanimous

- P. Executive Session # 1 (Government Code 54954, 54954.5)**
At 11:31 a.m., the Board adjourned to Executive Session in which this session would approve/disapprove an MOU allowing for temporary relocation of the EMS Agency office in the event of a disaster or evacuation.

- Q. Executive Session # 2 (Government Code 54957, 54957.6)**
This Executive Session would be to conduct the annual performance, salary, and benefit evaluations of the Executive Director, and the Deputy Director.

Both sessions were continuous, and the Board reconvened at 11:41 a.m. with the results.

R. Results of Executive Session # 1 and #2

Chairman Claudino announced the results.

In the first Executive Session, the Board approved the MOU between the Mountain Valley EMS Agency and AMR allowing for temporary relocation of the Agency in the event of a disaster or evacuation.

In the second Executive Session, the Board evaluated the salary requests for the FY08/09 budget year for both the Executive Director and Deputy Director, and have agreed to parallel any salary adjustment with that of other Agency staff. This will amount to a 2% Cola, and a 3% merit increase for both the Executive Director, and the Deputy Director.

S. Approval of Draft Resolution for Participation in the Stanislaus County Operational Area Council

In making his report, Steve Andriese provided some history to Board members. He stated that in California during World War II, County *Disaster Councils* were established for multi-agency coordination of disaster preparedness. Some time after the war ended, these councils were eliminated. Today, with homeland security issues in the forefront, these councils are being reestablished.

Stanislaus County has chosen to approach this issue by requiring centralized planning. So, it was decided to establish a *Disaster Council*, within the County, whose membership will consist of County personnel, as well as, other local government organizations, and political subdivisions.

An *Operational Area Council* is being established as a working group of this *Disaster Council*. Their proposal is to include not only County personnel, local government organizations, and political organizations, but to also include all the faith based organizations, the community organizations, schools, etc. The scope of the *Operational Area Council* is to provide a single point where all disaster plans can be evaluated to ensure interaction with other disaster plans or proposals of other member organizations prior to enactment.

Mr. Andriese stated that he feels this Council is very important, and would ensure that all funding sources for planning, and all local planning is done cooperatively among all agencies. The Agency is asking for approval of this resolution from the Board.

Terry Woodrow cited a misspelled word in the heading of the document. The misspelled word was 'decision'. Steve Andriese stated that this can easily be corrected since it was on the first page of the document, and does not effect the signature page.

M/S/C (Woodrow/Boitano) To approve the Resolution for Participation of MVEMSA in the Stanislaus County Operational Area Council

Vote: Unanimous

T. Agency and County Reports

MVEMSA – Staff had nothing to report.

ALPINE COUNTY – Supervisor Woodrow had nothing to report.

AMADOR COUNTY – Supervisor Boitano had nothing to report.

CALAVERAS COUNTY – Supervisor Claudino had nothing to report.

Al Lennox representing American Legion Ambulance reported on the purchase to two ambulances and an expedition. They will be up and running in 45 to 60 days.

He also reported on the purchase of two new electronic programs. The first is a program that will automatically perform employee scheduling functions, and backfilling functions for sick or vacationing personnel. This program should be implemented by mid July.

The second electronic program is the Automatic Vehicle Locator (AVL), and it will be installed on all ambulances. This means company management will know where their vehicles are located at all times. This program is cell phone driven. Unfortunately, there will be some dead zones, but they already know where these are located.

Board members requested a report on call volume by County and provider for the past two years.

U. Next Scheduled Meeting

The next scheduled meeting will be held on August 11, 2008 in Bear Valley.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Bill Claudino at 11:53 a.m.