

**Mountain-Valley
Emergency Medical Services Agency
Board of Directors Meeting
August 10, 2005**

Location: Alpine County Services Building
Bear Valley, California

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Board Members Present: Terry Woodrow - Alpine County; Rich Escamilla (alternate for Louis Boitano) - Amador County; Bill Claudino – Calaveras County; Lee Stetson – Mariposa County

Board Members Absent: Jim DeMartini - Stanislaus County

Guests: Mike Skinner, Frank Erdman, Chief Miguel, Tom Brennan, Craig Yale, Gordon Hildebrandt, Dennis Nelson, Rich Harvey, M.D.,

Staff: Steve Andriese - Executive Director; Doug Buchanan – Deputy Director; Marilyn Smith – Contracts Coordinator; Connie Mathewson – Executive Secretary

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chairperson Woodrow. Ms. Woodrow noted that all supervisors were present with the exception of the Stanislaus County representative.

B. Correspondence – No correspondence.

C. Additions/Deletions, Corrections to Agenda –

M/S/C (Claudino/Escamilla) To accept the Agenda as presented.

Vote: Unanimous

D Public Forum – There were no comments from the public.

E. Approval of the Consent Calendar

Supervisor Stetson noted that the minutes of the June 8 meeting should be corrected as follows: The Mariposa County report under *Agency and County Reports* should state that “... there were no major issues to report.”

M/S/C (Claudino/Escamilla) To approve the consent calendar as presented, with the correction to the minutes of June 8, as stated above.

Vote: Unanimous

F. Air Ambulance Rate Formula Interpretation

Mr. Andriese explained that the air ambulance agreements contain a clause that states that their rates will be approved by the EMS Board. At the June 2004 meeting, the Board

approved a rate structure that included a base and mileage rate formula of 197% of the Medicare allowable billing charge. Since that time Medi-Flight has been purchased by Air Methods Corporation, and they have requested an interpretation of the air ambulance rate formula structure.

Frank Erdman, program director of Medi-Flight, gave a brief history of the process which led to the adoption of the current rate formula. He stated that their request to restructure their rates came about due to the implementation of a new contract with Mountain-Valley EMS by Air Methods Corporation. To meet the new company standards, Mr. Erdman asked the Board to approve the restructuring of their rates, which would reduce their overall charges to 170% of Medicare allowable as measured against the Agency's formula. He explained that this would require an increase of the base rate, and a decrease of the mileage rate.

Mr. Erdman handed out an air ambulance rate analysis which illustrated the formula and the effects of their proposed rate structure. He noted that the new rates would reduce the total patient bill for a 50-mile air ambulance trip by \$975. He explained that their motivation for lowering the cost to the patient is to maximize their collections, and reduce the amount of residuals and write-offs.

Mr. Andriese explained that the base rate will exceed the rate approved by the Board in June of 2004, but the mileage will be significantly under. After discussion, the Board voted on the following motion:

M/S/C (Stetson/Claudino) To approve the new rate structure, as the total of the base and mileage does not exceed the formula maximum of 197% of the 2004 Medicare allowable which was approved by the Board in June of 2004.

Vote: Unanimous

G. Modesto City Fire Contract Extension

Chief Miguel explained that the Modesto City Council approved the ALS pilot program two years ago to see if it would be effective within the city limits of Modesto, with the understanding that it would be financially self-sufficient. Modesto City Fire entered into a contract with AMR to provide ALS services which enabled them to stop the response time clock for AMR. This contract has expired and they are in negotiations with AMR for a new contract that will provide funding for fire BLS services, but will no longer stop the clock for response time compliance for AMR.

Chief Miguel asked the Board to approve a six-month agreement extension that would allow the pilot program to continue until the future of the program is decided.

M/S/C (Escamilla/Claudino) To extend the Modesto City Fire ALS First Response Agreement to December 31, 2005.

Vote: Unanimous

H. 05/06 Special Project Grant Funding

Mr. Andriese reported that in the past, special projects were funded by Prevention 2010 funds from the federal government, and administered by the State EMS Authority. Those funds have been cut significantly, and the State EMS Authority will not approve any new projects this year. Instead, they will use the money to fund existing multi-year projects.

However, there is Homeland Security funding available through multi-federal agencies to local areas to prepare for weapons of mass destruction. Unfortunately, these funds have very short timelines. This creates administrative problems, as we don't know what our funding is going to be for the current fiscal year. Most of the funding for EMS and hospitals is being funded through the Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA).

Mr. Buchanan stated that the five HRSA projects that the Agency is involved with are:

- Funding to add a patient tracking module to the current hospital electronic status system on behalf of the 13 counties that are using that system.
- Funding for the two local trauma centers for a trauma burn cache for 50 patients each.
- Funding to create a Web-based medical mutual aid resource tracking system using the E-Team software that the state OES is using. The Agency has been asked to be the fiscal agent to purchase licenses for the system for all local EMS agencies, and regional disaster medical health coordinators and the State EMS Authority.

Mr. Buchanan handed out a budget which illustrated how the funds would be run through the Agency by August 31, 2005. He explained that the State EMS Authority is going before the legislature to request that the funds be added to their budget, and he asked the Board to approve the addition to the Agency budget, should the funds become available.

Mr. Andriese explained that the Agency would know within the next week whether or not the funds would be available. In the absence of a contract, he asked the Board to authorize either the Executive Director or Board chair to sign the contract if the funds become available.

- Funding for the hiring of a contractor to develop a Medical Health communications plan for Stanislaus and Calaveras Counties. Amador and Mariposa Counties have asked to be part of the project, as well. The budget will be amended to include Amador and Mariposa.

It was noted that the only action necessary for this agenda item was the E-team contract.

M/S/C (Stetson/Claudino) To authorize the Executive Director to negotiate the terms of the HRSA Web-based E-team contract and to expend the funds under the signature of the Executive Director.

Vote: Unanimous

I. Job Description Classification and Organizational Chart Update

Mr. Andriese explained that a change to the organizational chart was brought to the Board in February to temporarily address the reduced staffing levels the Agency was experiencing at the time. While the Agency still has unfilled vacancies, all budgeted staff positions are now filled, and it is not expected that the Agency will be able to fill the remaining vacant positions in the near future.

In order to ensure that all of the Agency's major areas of responsibility are covered, staff and administration reorganized staff responsibilities, and liaison and coordinator responsibilities were clarified. Mr. Andriese referred the Board to the attachments included in the Board packet. He asked the Board to approve the revised organizational chart and the updated Job Classifications.

M/S/C (Claudino/Stetson) To approve the revised organizational chart and updated job classifications as presented.

Vote: Unanimous

J. Stanislaus County Report

Mr. Andriese updated the Board on the status of the Stanislaus County task force which was formed to look at Stanislaus County's involvement in the JPA. He reported that the Stanislaus County Health Services Agency is working on a survey to send to constituent groups to get their input on how the EMS system is functioning. He stated that the Task Force is to be administered by the County's CEO's office, under the direction of Gary Hinshaw, the County Fire Warden.

K. Calaveras County Exclusive Operating Area (EOA) Update

Mr. Andriese reported that the new providers began service under their new contracts on July 1, and it was a smooth transition. The challenges ahead are:

- Staff is working with Calaveras County's IT department and Sheriff's department to effect timely collection of dispatch data.
- Ebbett's Pass Fire is the exclusive transport provider for the Ebbett's Pass Highway 4 corridor. The initiative that was passed to give them the funding to add a second ALS ambulance is being challenged. If they lose the funding it could impact their ability to maintain the second unit.

- American Legion's call volume for the first month is less than they had anticipated. Staff is working with them to assess the situation.

L. Executive Session (Government Code 54957, 54957.6)

At 11:00 a.m., the Board adjourned to Executive Session to conduct the annual performance evaluation of the Executive Director and Deputy Director.

M. Results of Executive Session

At 11:25 a.m. the Board meeting resumed and the following motion was made and voted upon:

M/S/C (Claudino/Stetson) The Executive Director will receive an additional week of vacation, a 2% increase in salary, and a \$200 per month increase in health benefits. The Deputy Director will receive the same benefit package that staff received: a 4% increase in salary, and a \$200 per month increase in health benefits.

Vote: Unanimous

N. Agency and County Reports

Agency - Nothing further to report.

Calaveras County – Supervisor Claudino reported that he, too, felt that the ambulance transition went well.

Mariposa County – Supervisor Stetson reported that the National Park Service and the ambulance service are continuing discussions regarding the transferring of patients.

Amador County – Supervisor Escamilla reported that Amador County is quite pleased with the service provided by American Legion Ambulance.

Alpine County – Supervisor Woodrow reported that they are concerned with the Ebbett's Pass issue. They are keeping their Calaveras neighbors informed.

Supervisor Woodrow introduced Dr. Rich Harvey, the Alpine County Health Officer.

Dr. Harvey reported that he has been an emergency room doctor for a long time, and is an active participant and interested in EMS. He is concerned about the provision of the contracted BLS service in the Markleeville and Woodfords area.

Dr. Harvey also reported that Alpine County has HRSA money, and they have a disaster trailer equipped with as a mini hospital. He stated that their biggest weakness is recruiting volunteers. He is interested in helping to improve EMS services in Alpine County and the neighboring counties.

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O. Next Meeting - October 12, 2005, Lake Tulloch Resort

P. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.