

**TOWN OF TRUMBULL
CONNECTICUT**

Trumbull Emergency Medical
Service Commission

Joseph Rodriguez, Chairman



TEMS
250 Middlebrooks Avenue
Trumbull, CT 0661
203-452-5146

Joseph Laucella, Chief

**Trumbull Emergency Medical Service Commission
Tuesday, June 25, 2013, 7:00pm
Trumbull EMS Headquarters**

Present: Chairman, Joseph Rodriguez; Commissioners John Butkus, Philip Lukianuk, William Schietinger, Diane Mayo (7:15pm). Also present Joseph Laucella, Chief of EMS

Absent: Commissioners Gwen Summ and Joseph Peddle

The meeting was called to order at 7:05pm by Chairman Rodriguez followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and the reading of the core values and mission statement.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Past Minutes: Minutes of the regular commission meeting of May 28 had no corrections. Minutes of the special commission meeting on June 3 had two spelling corrections. Mr. Butkus moved to approve the minutes as noted; seconded by Ms. Mayo and approved unanimously.

Unfinished Business

- Discussion of possible action on a patient financial hardship policy: Chief Laucella reviewed a document drafted after a meeting with Ms. Pires and Mr. Ponzio to discuss account balances. He noted most debts range from a few dollars to \$1,000. He noted guidelines need to be set. A meeting was held with Comstar to review these balances and discuss moving forward with new hardship and collection policies. At this point in time, Trumbull residents with a balance over one year will be sent a letter stating they will be sent to collections unless their account is paid (over \$300). It was suggested that this letter be sent to all accounts, even under \$300. Ms. Mayo noted the letter should include a notation for the client stating they should have their insurance information ready so that we have the correct information. Chief Laucella recommended that all non-residents be sent to collections immediately. Chief Laucella noted he has found unpaid balances on patients from St. Joseph's Manor and will meet with the administrator to see how their process works for paying these debts. Mr. Schietinger noted that repeat trips for the same or like medical treatment, the hospital is responsible for the payment and questioned whether Comstar is tracking this. Mr. Butkus moved to approve the hardship policy as presented to begin July 1, 2013.

Seconded by Mr. Lukianuk. More discussion. Mr. Schietinger noted the service does need this policy to make sure we are collecting revenue for the services rendered to ensure a high quality service. Chief Laucella noted with the past debt gone, it will be easier to monitor current accounts. A meeting with residents will be held in late July/early August with EMS and Comstar. Chief Laucella will draft a letter for review to be sent by August 1, 2013 with a payment date of September 1, 2013. All accounts not paid will then be sent to collections according to the policy. Motion passed unanimously.

New Business

1. Discussion and possible action on mutual aid agreement: Mr. Schietinger recused himself and left the meeting room for this discussion as previously agreed upon by the commission. Chief Laucella discussed the proposed change in the mutual aid paramedic intercept agreement with AMR noting we use a paramedic intercept approximately 20 times a month. Under certain circumstances, Medicare patients are billed for the transport and the other services bill directly for the ALS portion. However, we currently have a bundle billing agreement with AMR which allows us to bill the entire call and then we pay AMR for the ALS service. We currently pay \$310.00 per intercept and Chief Laucella noted AMR has agreed to lower the rate to \$280.00. We also pay Nelson Ambulance \$250.00 per intercept. Chief Laucella noted he would like to move forward with having neighboring ALS services respond to mutual aid calls such as Stratford and Shelton. However, C-Med would be responsible for finding the closest available unit. Chief Laucella noted AMR would be primary for mutual aid with Stratford second and Nelson/Shelton third on the list. Motion was made by Mr. Butkus to accept the redraft of the mutual aid agreement and the mutual aid priority list. Seconded by Ms. Mayo. It was noted that this is a benefit of having C-Med as they track all available ambulances. Motion passed unanimously. Mr. Butkus moved that the commission accept the document in principle providing for the two-way transport agreement for \$280 with the understanding that the edits from the town attorneys be put in the agreement. Seconded by Ms. Mayo and approved unanimously. Mr. Schietinger returned to the meeting.
2. Discussion and possible action on the establishment of a TEMS auxiliary unit as part of TEMS: Chief Laucella noted that members need to have meaningful work at TEMS. Dispatchers and members who are only drivers were discussed. Members need to have skill sets within our organization. We have seen a decline in our membership and we need to find position that would support our functions at various times. An auxiliary member would need to agree to take on an operational function in emergency management such as CPR, OSHA/HAZMAT and sheltering. Current members may be interested in this type of function and others outside of EMS who are not certified have also expressed an interest. We would have to set up criteria for this type of membership which could include the number of members allowed in the unit, hours of events covered, uniforms, etc. Chief Laucella was requested to draft a proposal for the next meeting and it was suggested that other towns be contacted about their requirements, if they have such a unit. This could be a new category of membership for volunteers in the service.
3. Discussion (action to support) Administrative Assistant's job reclassification: Chief Laucella presented to the commission the proposed changes to the job description noting these changes

have already been discussed with the town and the MATE union representative. Both felt the proposed changes were appropriate given the added operational responsibilities. Hours per week would remain at 35. Title will be changed to Executive Assistant. Discussion of Supervisor was held and it was requested to be changed to Chief Laucella. Experience and training requirements were discussed. It was noted that this is a skills oriented position. Mr. Schietinger motioned to approve the reclassification of the administrative assistant with the change in title to Executive Assistant. Seconded by Mr. Butkus and approved unanimously.

4. Motion was made by Mr. Butkus to add to the agenda the approval of the minutes of the May 28, 2013 meeting. Seconded by Ms. Mayo and approved unanimously. Motion made by Mr. Butkus to approve the minutes as written; seconded by Ms. Mayo and approved unanimously.

Committee Reports

1. Recruitment and retention of volunteers: Chairman Rodriguez noted that he would like to conduct a survey of all staff but would like to wait until the fall because of the new staffing contract. Chief Laucella noted interviews have been done and offers have been extended. It is important to conduct this survey and make it clear that the administration and commissioners are listening to all feedback. Some areas to be included are: communications, training, facilities and equipment, recognition and appreciation of members, mission and vision. It was felt that the recruitment and retention committee should spearhead this initiative. With the results of the survey, an action plan can be developed. Ms. Mayo will join the committee. A draft survey will be presented to the commission in August for review.

Budget Report

1. Chief Laucella noted the service is over in two accounts – overtime pay due to staffing at the EOC and equipment due to the elimination of the alpha pagers. The transfer of funds was approved and the \$15,000 for the chief's car will cover two years of leasing fees. He also noted a new copy machine, supplies for the new ambulance and new first-in bags have been purchased. He noted revenue for the last quarter will be low due to the holding of Medicare payments. Comstar will be rebilling some calls for ALS intercepts due to the new agreement currently in the attorney's office. Paramedic assessments are currently not being billed. Specific criteria needs to be reported in order to bill these calls.

Chief of Service Report

1. Call stats were reviewed: call volume 378; covered 345; 91%.
2. Vehicle status was reviewed.
3. Summer EMT class was cancelled.
4. Revamping our training – EMT refreshers and continuing education will be the focus of the staff. Initial classes will be re-structured so that appropriate resources are available. An EMR course is scheduled for September with a bridge class to follow. Fairfield University has agreed to have a partnership with us to host EMT courses. CEVO class to be held July 11.

5. Community Events: Graduation, Relay for Life. Charging for certain types of events was discussed. It was noted that having a space on the permit paper would be advantageous for many events, even if we are not required to cover them. An IEP was done for Trumbull Day.
6. Additional paramedic coverage was reviewed noting that ALS intercepts are being monitored to determine if the payroll expense offsets/exceeds putting an additional paramedic on a rig. This may also be influenced by charging for paramedic assessments and the increase in ALS calls.
7. Shortfall in the Vintech account for this year. Will need very specific numbers to justify.

Chairman Rodriguez noted the committee was unavailable to work on the chief's evaluation.

Adjournment

There being no further business, motion made by Ms. Mayo, seconded by Mr. Lukianuk to adjourn the meeting at 9:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Crandall
Administrative Assistant

These minutes are considered a draft until they are approved at the next Trumbull EMS Commission meeting.