

**Interior Region EMS Council  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Minutes of 02/14/14**

**MEMBERS AND GUESTS PRESENT:**

Crystal Stordahl – TCC  
Jeannette Hansen – Urban  
Brad Paulson- FNSB  
Sylvia Pitka – Rural Highway

Yvonne Howard – Rural Non-Highway  
Rusty Lasell – Rural Highway  
Dr. Danita Koehler – Rural Highway

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Scott Learned - Urban  
Dr. Brian Tansky- Med. Dir.  
Clint Brooks – FMH

Jack Willard – Urban  
Myra Thumma – Rural Non-Highway  
Cecelia Grant – Rural Non-Highway

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Dan Johnson, Executive Director  
David Rockney, Training Coordinator

Wilma Vinton, Accountant  
Tom Dean, Sub-Regional Coordinator

**ROLL CALL & CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chair Crystal Stordahl called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. It was determined that a quorum was present.

**Approval of Agenda**

Crystal called for approval of the agenda.

*Motion was made by Brad Paulson and seconded by Jeannette Hansen to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously.*

**Approval of Minutes of 10/25/13**

Crystal called for approval of the minutes of 10/25/13.

*Motion was made by Jeannette Hansen and seconded by Sylvia Pitka to approve the minutes of 08/02/13 as presented. Motion was passed unanimously.*

Discussion was held regarding the posting of the draft minutes on the web, it was determined that it would be better to email the draft to the members and post the final version to the web.

## **Board Member General Comments**

### **Rusty Lasell**

The primary care clinic in the Denali Park area will be moving by the end of 2014 due to the loss of their current space. The owners are trying to find a alternative location. Denali Borough has proposed that the Clinic in Healy be the alternate location.

The Tri Valley Fire Department will be staffing the ambulance for the summer with their own members which includes 8 EMT -3 and 2 EMT-2.

### **Brad Paulson FNSB**

The Fairbanks North Star Borough will be surplusung 1-2 ambulances in the spring. They will have 60-80,000 miles on them.

The Borough EMS Department is currently writing a strategic plan for the Borough EMS. They are working on the next year's budget.

Medicare payment process is still up in the air with the changes form the Health Care Reform Act.

### **Jeannette Hansen**

No major changes. Building at station one is almost complete, working on the inside now. Fire service area is helping with the cost of the new building.

### **Sylvia Pitka**

LifeMed from Anchorage came to Northway to pick up a patient due to poor road conditions and Tok EMS was unable to safely drive on the roads. Discussed the option of using the Health Aide on the ambulance. It is a matter of the policy of the employer of the Health Aide whether or not there are barriers for the Health Aide to go with a patient if the need was there.

### **Yvonne Howard**

Eagle has had a few more runs than last year. Activity during the Yukon Quest was quiet, no calls this year.

### **Danita Koehler, MD**

Danita is the current chair of the Governor's Advisory Committee on EMS (ACEMS). ACEMS has proposed three priorities:

- 1) Reimbursement and financing
- 2) Restructuring and coordination of care
- 3) Recruitment and retention

ACEMS also supported an increase in Code Blue funding proposed by the Regional Coordinators and Directors and changes in Regulation proposed by the Training committee. Danita voiced concerns that EMS has been ignored for many years, ACEMS is poorly supported – (difficult to even get minutes completed) and they have approached the Governor for support.

Discussion was held regarding the difficulty of acquiring funding for something that has never appeared in the state budget because of the heavy use of volunteer labor. There is need for the communities and volunteers to come forward and express their concern regarding the sustainability of a wholly volunteer system.

Danita is a member of American College of Physicians subcommittee on Para-medicine. This group will be presenting a "White Paper" on safety in ambulances.

### **Crystal Stordahl**

Staffing at the new Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center is dependent on federal funds. That funding has been approved and there will be additional hiring soon. A good portion of the funding will go to rural clinics. It will allow TCC to increase salaries of health aides which will aid in retention and recruitment.

Video teleconferencing (VTC) in rural clinics is moving forward. It is installed in every clinic, and being tested, this will allow the clinic to have direct contact with a physician for medical assist by real-time video. Current focus is Galena sub-region.

### **Financial Report**

Dan Johnson and Accountant Wilma Vinton presented the attached financial report as of 12/30/13. Dan discussed changes in this year and last year.

Dan also discussed the State-wide regional concern that the 20% increment that was approved in July was not received until Feb 2<sup>nd</sup>. IREMSC staff has followed the budget that was approved by the Board, that included the 20% increment, even though actual funding had not been received. IREMSC had the fund balance to do this without cash-flow concerns, but other regions were not as flexible.

***Motion was made by Rusty and seconded by Jeannette to approve the Financial Report as presented. Motion passed unanimously.***

### **Training Report**

Dave Rockney presented the attached training report and the following items:

- Symposium schedule is attached. Hotel information is on the IREMSC Website. This year's symposium will provide lunch on both days since there is not an on-site restaurant. There will be a Luncheon for the Medical Directors on Saturday. Dr. Ken Zafren, State EMS Medical Director will attend that meeting.
- The State Training Committee met in January. Recommendations/Action items are attached. The state is moving toward doing all their testing to an online process. The state is also working toward online administration of EMT certification.

***Meeting Recessed at 10:45 AM for break.***

***Meeting Reconvened at 11:10AM.***

### **Aurora Report – Wilma Vinton**

Wilma gave an update on the attached AUROROA Data Program Report. She explained that the program is in transition from NEMESIS Version 2 to NEMESIS Version 3 data set which involves some improvements in the cost portion of the program and the devices that can be used for reporting. The new AURORA Platform will be different from the current platform. The demographic information will transfer, but the patient care reports (PCRs) will not. Reporting on this information will stay with the older platform.

The implementation date to transfer to the new platform is January 1, 2015 for large volume ambulance services and the smaller services will be brought online throughout 2014 (after June).

Reminder:

- If your ambulance certification requires expanded scope capabilities, you must report through Aurora and there is a new form required which has been put on IREMSC's website.
- Expanded scope will require using Aurora for reporting. Wilma has just taken a class on how to develop the report specifically for your service.

### **Tok Area Sub Regional Report**

Tom Dean presented the attached Tok Sub Regional Report.

Using the AURORA system, Tok can report 5,144 training hours for Tok Sub-Region and over 5,454 volunteer man-hours for the 513 responses within Tok EMS Sub-Region . Additional hours of commitment are listed on the Sub-Region Report.

### **Resource Report**

Rachel Mulvihill presented the attached Resource Report.

### **Executive Director's Report**

- **Lighting and classroom upgrade/Security upgrade**  
This project has been completed. The security set up is complete. The system is used for monitoring testing. It has recording capabilities but it is not being utilized at present. This finalizes the Rasmuson Grant funded project.
- **State 20 % incremental funding update**  
As reported, the funding has finally been received after a delay of more than 1/2 of the fiscal year. The increment request was made to make up for eroding funding due to steadily increasing costs. Dan estimates that this increase will give us at least three years relief from budget difficulties.
- **State Symposium Update**  
There is a possibility that the State EMS Symposium will be combined with the Preparedness Conference rather than as a stand-alone conference. Will report more at next meeting

- **Regulation Changes Update**

Regulation changes have been identified as a number one priority for the Regional Coordinator's and Directors Group (RCDG). Many discussions have been held with high level officials within the Department of Health and Social Services as well as the EMS Unit to put a high priority on getting regulations brought to current standards of practice. The RCDG is working with the Legislature to fund \$150K to get the project completed and implemented. The EMS Unit provided a timeline and an explanation of timeline which projects regulations reform to be completed by the end of 2015, approximately 14 years since the last regulations revision.

- **Code Blue Funding**

The RCDG recommended changing the Code Blue funding to \$1 million, up from \$450,000. This did not get included in the Governor's budget. He did however request an increase of \$50,000 which indicates on-going support for Code Blue from the administration.

- **State Office Update**

On-going staffing challenges at the EMS Unit have made it difficult to maintain support of the various committees, including the Code Blue Committee, and ACEMS.

- **NHTSA Site Visit to Alaska May 12-17<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

There will be a NHTSA site visit on May 12-17<sup>th</sup>, 2014 to look at the Alaska EMS system and present recommendations. At present the meeting is planned to be in Fairbanks, with a road-trip made to on-highway communities within the interior and at least one flight to a rural community in the State. The location of the off-highway visits is still in discussion and could be within the Interior, or elsewhere in the state.

**Medical Director's Report:**

Dan reported for Medical Director Brian Tansky. He reiterated that there will be a Medical Directors' meeting at symposium. He also reported that Dr. Tansky, while often unable to attend these meetings, plays an active role in the Region-- he attends our Hospital/Pre-hospital Liaison committee meeting and assisted in the revision of the regional model standing orders. He also is a medical director for some of the regional services.

*Meeting Recessed at 12:35 PM for a lunch break.*

*Meeting Reconvened at 01:00 PM.*

**BUSINESS:**

- **Strategic Plan Evaluation:**

General Progress: Dan reported the progress on meeting and the objectives in the Strategic plan. (See attached Progress Report). One of the basic criterion that is used to measure progress against the various objectives is the number of services that qualify for mini-grants under our current mini-grant policy. This indicates their viability and level of

functioning in terms of communications, personnel, training, protocols, etc. The objective for the end of 2013 was 22 services qualifying and that general objective was met. This indicates success in objectives in several goal areas as indicated in the attached progress report. The attached report provides the basis for progress on the Strategic Plan and the following indicates additional discussion regarding that report.

Goal A Training: Discussion was held regarding a mechanism to determine if a service is a viable EMS responder other than being eligible for a mini-grant. There was also a discussion of the need to be familiar with the capabilities of services that do not necessarily fall under the ability of IREMSC to influence their functioning. Examples are military, park service and private company EMS response services. These entities should be reported in the Strategic Plan. Dan will revise the report to show those services for the next report.

Goal B Data: Discussion was held on how we could get information from non-certified services regarding their responses. Electronic data collection may not be viable, and the simple, written EMS Survey may be the most viable way. Additional strategies might include a "call-in" system, where a first responder could call into our office and provide demographic information on their calls.

Goal C Equipment: The recommended first responder equipment list, including patient transport options, is still being developed in conjunction with the RCDG as a statewide priority.

Goal D Communications: A discussion was held regarding the ALMR system and the opinion held by many that it was never really meant for EMS daily operations. It was meant to allow for inter-operability among different types of agencies (Troopers, EMS, Fire, etc.) But that is not fully functional now that the Troopers are encrypting their communications. VHF is still functional, and may be the communication system in the future.

Goal E Community Outreach: Dan explained that a benefit of the above progress on the Strategic Plan would provide a planning tool and outline for community visits. Visits will focus on communities that have not been seen in several years. We are hoping to make two off-highway site visits during FY 14 or early in FY 15.

***Motion was made by Jeannette and seconded by Sylvia to approve the Strategic Plan Evaluation Report as presented. Motion passed unanimously.***

***Meeting Recessed at 2:15 PM.***

***Meeting Reconvened at 2:30 PM.***

- **Appoint Code Blue Review Committee**  
Brad, Rusty and Jeannette were appointed to the Code Blue Review Committee along with staff members Dan Johnson and Dave Rockney.

- **Discussion on agenda and length of meeting**

Discussion was held to determine how we can pare down the length of time the Board Meeting takes. One suggestion is if staff reports are in the form of a written report, there is no need for a verbal report. These reports could be sent out one week prior to the meeting for review, if there are questions regarding the report, they could be addressed at the meeting. Only discussion would be for an action item annotated in the report presented.

Member's reports were also discussed and it was pointed out that the length of these and other off-agenda discussions also added to the length of the meetings. Member reports and other off-agenda discussions could be moved to the end of the meeting; this would allow members to stay, if time allows, to listen to them. Action Items could be annotated on the Agenda, so that business can be handled efficiently.

Time-frame would include a working lunch, completing the meeting from 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM.

Concern was expressed regarding notices for meetings. Normal routine is to send out notices 30 days prior to the meeting. It was requested that the notice be sent out via Google Calendar as well so that it can be answered and placed on the member's calendar.

***Motion was made by Brad and seconded by Rusty to limit the regular meeting to a (4) four hour block. Motion was amended by Brad and seconded by Rusty to change the start time to 10:00 AM to accommodate the out of area members. Motion passed unanimously.***

Changes to Meeting Format:

- Send out Google calendar meeting request.
- Send written staff reports 1 week before meeting for review and comments/questions.
- Add notes to financial report of differences rather than verbally reporting it.
- No verbal reports by staff
- Start meeting at 10am and continue until 2pm with working lunch. (No breakfast foods.)
- Change Member's comments to end of meeting.

- **Planning for upcoming Annual Meeting**

Discussion on the past practice of separating it into 2 sessions, one meeting that reviews the governance of the organization and do nominations; the next meeting is for elections and election of officers. The decision was made last year to do all the business at one meeting on Friday evening and not hold the second meeting on Saturday. This will be the first year trying this format and we will evaluate its effectiveness afterwards.

Discussion was held on how to get more EMS members of the community to attend the IREMSC reception. This is a good opportunity to promote IREMSC and what we do for the EMS system.

Suggestion was made to offer a substantial door prize to increase attendance in addition to the food offerings.

*Motion was made by Brad and seconded by Rusty to form a marketing work-group to develop ideas for promoting IREMSC. Motion passed unanimously.*

Discussion included the suggestion of using the Strategic Plan as a basis for promoting IREMSC and developing a marketing program from it. It was also suggested that a slide-show be developed of accomplishments within IREMSC.

**Marketing Work Group**

Brad, Rusty, & Jeannette (same as Code Blue Review Committee); Staff. This meeting will be held in conjunction with the Code Blue review meeting.

- **Schedule Next Meeting.** The next meeting is the annual meeting scheduled for April 4th. The following meeting is Friday August 8th, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.
- **Executive Session - Executive Director's Annual Evaluation**

*Meeting Recessed for Executive Session at 3:45 PM*

*Meeting Reconvened from Executive Session at 4:15 PM*

*Motion was made by Brad and seconded by Jeannette to delegate the authority to the Executive Committee to address the Executive Director's evaluation. Motion passed unanimously.*

*Motion was made by Brad and seconded by Rusty to adjourn.*

**Meeting adjourned at 4:20 PM.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Wilma Vinton, Accountant for  
Linda Callender, Senior Administrative Assistant**

*Linda Callender*  
For

**Jeannette Hansen, Secretary**