

**Mountain Counties
Emergency Medical Services Agency
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
February 16, 2024**

Location: Copperopolis Fire Station Training Room
370 Main St., Copperopolis, CA 95228

Time: 9:00 AM

Board Members Present: Jeff Brown (Chairperson) – Amador County; Miles Menetrey (Vice Chairperson) – Mariposa County; Terry Woodrow - Alpine County; Gary Tofanelli – Calaveras County

Guests: Alan McNany – American Legion Ambulance; Lindsey Clark- Amador County Public Health; Kim Ballard – Deputy Director Public Health Mariposa County; Amy Clubb - Mariposa Health and Human Services; Diana Haley – Amador County Public Health; Chief Mike Johnson- Ebbetts Pass Fire Department; Jesse Figueroa – Mercy Medical Transportation.

Staff: Tom Morton – Acting Executive Director; Susan Watson – Executive Secretary/Financial Services Assistant; Andrea Ramirez- Executive Secretary/Financial Services Assistant; Marc Stevenson – Disaster Preparedness Coordinator; Dr. Kimberly Freeman – Agency Medical Director; Derek Cole – Agency Counsel

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:01 AM by Chairperson Brown with a quorum of four members present.

B. Welcome and Introductions

All meeting attendees provided self-introductions.

C. Correspondence

None

D. Additions, Deletions, Corrections to Agenda

M/S/C (Woodrow/ Tofanelli) To approve the agenda as submitted.

Roll Call Vote:

Alpine County Aye

Amador County Aye

Calaveras County Aye

Mariposa County Aye

Motion Passed 4-0

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
February 16, 2024
Page 2

E. Public Forum

Dr. Freeman asked for the Board to consider providing a letter of support for developing legislation to provide EMS peer support protection similar to the protection already provided to fire service personnel in AB1116 and law enforcement personnel in AB1117. The legislation would make peer support activities not discoverable by legal counsel. Hearings are expected in late March or early April.

The Board directed staff to draft a letter of support for the Board Chairperson's signature.

F. Approval of Consent Calendar

M/S/C (Tofanelli/Woodrow.) To approve the consent calendar.

Roll Call Vote:

Alpine County Aye

Amador County Aye

Calaveras County Aye

Mariposa County Aye

Motion Passed 4-0

G. Board Resolution Required by AB 716

Mr. Morton presented a proposed Board Resolution that is required by AB 716, which went into effect January 1, 2024.

Dr. Freeman explained AB 716 is the legislation requiring the Agency to publicly post ambulance provider rates in order for insurance companies to pay a fair portion of the patient's bill. AB 716 is a preventative action so ambulance providers cannot balance bill patients.

Mr. Morton further noted the legislation uses the words "sets the rates" when referring to the EMS Authority, but "approves the rates" is the correct terminology and is used by choice in this Board Resolution. When the Board approves a provider contract, the billing rates are included in the contract as well as a section regarding the process to obtain an annual rate increase.

A comprehensive discussion ensued which yielded the following clarifications:

- Mr. Cole explained the legislation supersedes the contracts and for the Agency to stay compliant with AB 716, the ambulance rates and every rate increase need to be brought to the governing body for approval. Otherwise, the ambulance providers may not be paid correctly by the insurance companies.
- The Board Resolutions could be added to the consent calendar if the Agency is dealing with them frequently.

- Patients are still obligated to pay their copays and deductibles.
- Government rates will remain as is, but private insurance companies will see most of the changes.
- The legislation applies only to ground ambulances. The safety car is not affected by this bill.
- Building an automatic rate inflator into the provider contracts and publishing those annually could diminish the need to bring frequent rate increases to the Board for approval.
- AB 716's effect on Inter-Facility Transport providers will be discussed at the March EMSAAC meeting.

Vice Chairperson Menetrey has one correction to the resolution. The Now, therefore paragraph in the resolution needs to be changed from Mountain Valley Emergency Medical Services to Mountain Counties Medical Services.

M/S/C (Woodrow, Menetrey) To approve the 2024 fee schedules for its ambulance transport providers and the Board Resolution as amended.

Roll Call Vote:

Alpine County Aye

Amador County Aye

Calaveras County Aye

Mariposa County Aye

Motion Passed 4-0

H. Policy 131.00 Policy Development Process

Mr. Morton presented a revised Policy 131.00, Policy Development Process, which describes the Agency's internal process for creating and updating policies. The revision is intended to improve policy development and update process efficiency as well as reflect the Agency's current workflow and staffing capabilities.

In drafting this revision, the previous Policy 131.00 was combined with the previous Policy 132.00, Policy Revision Process, thereby eliminating the need for Policy 132.00 moving forward.

Supervisor Tofanelli emphasized the importance of completing the policy work in a timely manner. He suggested moving forward with the revised policy 131.00 and bringing it back at a future time if workflow becomes a problem.

Chairperson Brown discussed the importance of standardized review dates so that policies are not released sporadically to the public.

Mr. Morton agreed that internal discussion and monitoring of workflow are an important part of getting the policy work completed.

Dr. Freeman shared she had revised every treatment protocol and provided a summary sheet explaining the changes. These protocol updates will go out for 30 day review and be brought for approval at the April 2024 Board meeting.

Mr. Morton stated since the Covid-19 pandemic, reviewing treatment protocols had come to a halt. Updating all the treatment protocols and review dates in this one large batch will help keep the ambulance providers current on training.

Dr. Freeman said once we are up to date, we can change the cadence. Getting every policy caught up will take approximately 2 years.

In response to her inquiry, Dr. Freeman assured Supervisor Woodrow the Board will have the changes to the treatment protocols at the April meeting.

Chairperson Brown asked if the Agency will be able to get these out soon enough for the ambulance providers to review before the next board meeting.

Dr. Freeman assured Chairperson Brown there will have enough time. The summary sheet and the cover memo will be posted on the website along with the draft updates. Moving forward, treatment protocols will be reviewed annually or every two years.

M/S/C (Tofanelli/ Woodrow) To approve Policy 131.00 and delete Policy 132.00

Roll Call Vote:

Alpine County Aye

Amador County Aye

Calaveras County Aye

Mariposa County Aye

Motion Passed 4-0

I. CDPH Audit Report HPP Grant FY 22-23

Ms. Watson reported the Agency participated in an audit performed by CDPH of our FY 21/22 Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) grant funds. CDPH requires an audit every 3 years, and FY 21/22 was the last year our Agency participated in the program.

The auditor reviewed the use of the funds and how we accounted for the funds received. The report came back with no deficiencies or further actions needed.

The Agency will not receive any further HPP grant funds from CDPH as it is now financially prohibitive for our member counties to contribute the amount mandated by federal funding regulations.

Mr. Morton explained the Agency will still support MHOAC and health care coalitions on emergency preparedness.

M/S/C (Tofanelli/ Menetrey) To Approve the Audit Report from CDPH for the HPP Grant from FY 21-22.

Roll Call Vote:

Calaveras County Aye

Alpine County Aye

Amador County Aye

Mariposa County Aye

Motion Passed 4-0

J. Quote from Jack Light

Mr. Morton presented a quote from the landlord's electrician to address correcting the electrical wiring in the Agency office so that the PG&E meter will correctly reflect the electricity usage by the Agency. This is a remaining issue of the office remodel which expanded into a portion of the next door suite.

There have been multiple discussions of who is responsible to pay for this work. The building owner states it is part of the Agency's remodeling costs. The Agency believes it is the owner's responsibility to pay for this work.

Supervisor Tofanelli asked to hear Mr. Cole's side of the issue.

Mr. Cole replied he hasn't had the opportunity to vet this out with the staff.

Mr. Morton explained a conversation with the owner's son about adding antennas to the building. The son said if the Agency and the landlord split the cost of the financial responsibility of the electrical work, he will let the Agency put antennas up on the building.

Supervisor Tofanelli explained if we want antennas, we must do something in return.

Vice Chairperson Menetrey asked if anyone was in the other suite and if the highly recommended electrician that came and looked at the work has given a verbal quote?

Mr. Morton replied the other suite is empty. The electrician estimated the materials to be about \$1,000.00 but did not provide a verbal quote for labor.

Mr. Morton asked the Board if he can get some more quotes that are more reasonable, then bring this back to the next Board Meeting?

The Board agreed that if a written quote can be obtained to finish the work for not more than \$4,000, it won't be necessary to bring it back for approval and the Acting Executive Director can have the work completed.

M/S/C (Tofanelli/ Menetrey) To authorize the Acting Executive Director to obtain written quotes from other electricians. Any quote under a cap of \$4,000.00 will not need to be brought back to the Board for approval.

Roll Call Vote:

Calaveras County Aye

Alpine County Aye

Amador County Aye

Mariposa County Aye

Motion Passed 4-0

K. Board Resolution Signature Authority Update

Mr. Morton presented a Board Resolution to update the signature authorities for the Agency's bank accounts. The Agency will need to remove all signature authority for Kamron Dirks, and add Marc Stevenson to the signature card for Valley First Credit Union.

Mrs. Watson confirmed that Mr. Stevenson is already an authorized signer for the Agency's account with Umpqua Bank.

M/S/C (Woodrow/Menetrey) To remove Kamron Dirks from the Agency bank accounts and add Marc Stevenson to the Valley First Credit Union signature card..

Roll Call Vote:

Calaveras County Aye

Alpine County Aye

Amador County Aye

Mariposa County Aye

Motion Passed 4-0

L. Signature Authority update for Calaveras County

Ms. Watson explained the Agency would like to remove Kamron Dirks and add Marc Stevenson as an authorized backup signer for approvals if Mr. Morton is not available for signature. The form needs a signature of the Board to make these changes.

Chairperson Brown suggested adding a local Board member as an authorized signer.

Supervisor Tofanelli recommended he be added as a backup signer.

Supervisor Tofanelli suggested moving the motion with an amended form then following it with paperwork.

M/S/C (Tofanelli/Woodrow) To remove Kamron Dirks, and add Marc Stevenson as well as Supervisor Tofanelli to the Agency's Authorized Signature List for the Calaveras County Auditor.

Roll Call Vote:

Calaveras County Aye

Alpine County Aye

Amador County Aye

Mariposa County Aye

Motion Passed 4-0

M. Agency and County Reports

Mr. Morton reported the following:

- The air ambulance agreement with REACH Air Medical Services, LLC has been fully executed.
- The Agency is sending out a recruitment flyer for the vacant Quality Improvement Coordinator position.
- The EMS Authority set the deadline for annual EMS plans moving forward for January.

Mariposa County – Vice-Chairperson Menetrey reported Dr. Sergienko is transferring over to Sacramento but is still available for Mariposa County until his position is filled.

Calaveras County – Supervisor Tofanelli reported California will be having budget cuts and the Agency needs to think of some other income. Since our split with Stanislaus, the Agency has lost revenue.

Mr. Morton shared the State EMS Authority has stated no one's money is guaranteed and to look for more streams of income.

Supervisor Tofanelli would like to keep the communications open.

Mr. Morton said EMSAAC will be discussing money in the March 2024 meeting as well.

Alpine County – No report.

Amador County – No report.

N. Closed Session

The Board entered into closed session at 10:26 AM.

O. Results of Closed Session

The Board returned from closed session at 10:49 AM.

Mr. Cole reported for the first item, the Board of Directors met in closed session to discuss an employee matter. Direction was given to staff and an update was received by the Board, but no other reportable action was taken.

Mr. Morton reported for item #2 The Board of Directors met in closed session to discuss a labor negotiation. Direction was given to staff and an update was received by the Board but no other reportable action was taken.

P. Next Scheduled Regular Meeting

Friday, April 19, 2024, at 9:00 AM in person at Copperopolis Fire Station. A Zoom option will be offered as well.

Q. Adjournment

Chairperson Brown adjourned the meeting at 10:50 AM.