

**Stanislaus County
Emergency Medical Services Committee
December 10, 2020
Regular Meeting Minutes**

Location: Via Zoom
 Time: 2:00 PM
 Committee Members Present: Paul Baxter, Mary Ann Lilly-Tengowski, Richard Murdock, Joseph Lopez, Sharon Young, Robert Ott, Dr. Niamh Seavy, Dr. Bruce Laverty, Dan Cummins, Bryan Whitemyer
 Committee Members Absent: Dr. Bruce Laverty
 Guests: Michael Courtney, Kevin Wise, Cindy Woolston, Deb Thrasher, Kain Packwood, Clint Bray, Chantale Pakosz, Tim Tietjen, Reymundo Marquez, Rich Silva, Josh Brace
 Staff: Lance Doyle – Executive Director, Cindy Murdaugh – Deputy Director, Dr. Greg Kann – Medical Director; Susan Watson – Executive Secretary/ Financial Services Assistant; Justin Murdock – EMS Critical Care Coordinator, Mike Vitro – EMS Education/Disaster Coordinator

1. Welcome and Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:04 PM by Chairman Paul Baxter with a quorum of eight members present.

2. Introductions

Ms. Watson conducted a roll call of the Committee members and confirmed the quorum present.

3. Review and Approval of Agenda

M/S/C (Seavy/Murdock) To approve the agenda.

Vote: 8-0

Motion Passed

4. Correspondence

None.

5. Public Comment Period

None.

6. Approval of Consent Calendar

Mr. Lopez requested more information regarding the \$1.5M designated for emergency medical dispatch integration.

Mr. Doyle cited those funds as designated for the CAD-to-CAD project for integration between SR911 and VRECC.

Chief Murdock clarified in 2015-2016 the County wanted to designate System Enhancement Funds for a project to integrate dispatch under one roof that would be Fire and EMS or having them in separate locations with an integration between the two and having them dispatched by the same dispatch agency. At that time, it was believed it would benefit the EMS system to set aside \$1.5M to help start the implementation of that project. The funds have been sitting there and the conversation has not surfaced since then.

Mr. Lopez replied SR911 recently completed a dispatch study and part of that considered integration. Since it has been five years without additional activity it seems appropriate to revisit the designation of that \$1.5M so it can be used for other needs in the system.

Mr. Baxter recommended this topic be added to the next meeting agenda for wider discussion and consideration of other EMS system needs.

M/S/C (Murdock/Seavy) To approve the meeting minutes.

Vote: 7-0-1 (Mr. Whitemyer abstained as he was not present at the September 10, 2020 meeting.)

Motion Passed

M/S/C (Whitemyer/Lilly-Tengowski) To approve the remainder of the consent calendar.

Vote: 8-0

Motion Passed

7. **Committee Reports**

a) System Status – Cindy Woolston

System Status has been meeting virtually and met this morning. Much of what was discussed will be addressed by Lance later in the meeting. At the last meeting subcommittee was formed to review the current System Status Plan that went effect in 2002. There has been very little revision to that plan over the years. The subcommittee provided a document to Mountain-Valley EMS Agency for their comments and look hopes to have the plan review wrapped up by next month's System Status meeting

b) SCHEPC – Deb Thrasher

The last quarterly meeting was on October 5, 2020.

- Aaron Wilson was confirmed as the Chairperson beginning January 1, 2021
- Robert Riess will be the Vice-Chairperson. He is new to Public Health and part of the Emergency Preparedness team.
- Topics of discussion included flu clinics as well as the rollout of the upcoming COVID vaccine.
- There was a motion to set up a workgroup to plan for a psychiatric evacuation in Stanislaus County,
- The SCHEPC is meeting weekly to discuss COVID. It is well attended by the acute care hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, home health, hospice, and the clinic system. Alternate care sites are discussed. Mountain-EMS Agency participates for the MHOAC.

Let the record show Sharon Young joined the meeting at 2:13 pm

c) OES – Richard Murdock

- The Office of Emergency Services / Fire Warden's Office is now a division under the Sheriff's Department and became effective in November 2020.
- OES is currently working with FEMA, Cal-OES and County departments to wrap up the debris recovery process on the SCU Lightning Complex fire in Diablo Grande Canyon.
- Due to the increase in COVID hospitalizations and COVID positive cases there is an increased time commitment to support Public Health and the EOC regarding mitigating the spread and assistance where needed in the Emergency Operations Center.

- OES is assisting the vaccination center with a process for administering vaccinations for first responders. More information will be forthcoming.
- A fire chaplain program is being established for Stanislaus County under the Regional Fire Authority and the Fire Warden's Office. Full implementation is expected in early 2021.

Mr. Baxter asked how the move of OES under the Sheriff's Department has affected the coordination of responsibilities with Fire and ambulance services and the allocation of resources.

Chief Murdock explained the responsibilities have not changed. OES is still a department. The only real change is that now the department reports to the Sheriff instead of the County CEO. The County ordinance was changed to reflect the new organizational structure. This change was fully supported by County leadership as well as the Board of Supervisors.

8. System Enhancement Fund Request

Mr. Doyle presented the Agency's request on the behalf of the Stanislaus County Fire Agencies to purchase LifePak AEDs that are compatible with those used by the ambulance providers. In some cases these will be replacing outdated AEDs and in other cases additional AEDs will be added to fire apparatus. The original coordination of this request was done by Chief Wise of Ceres Fire Department. The County Health Officer concurs with this use of System Enhancement Funds. The amount requested is \$180,344.96.

Ms. Lilly-Tengowski asked confirmation that all of the fire agencies were given the opportunity.

Mr. Doyle confirmed his understanding that Chief Wise coordinated with all of the fire agencies. This was affirmed by Modesto Fire.

M/S/C (Cummins/Lopez) To approve the System Enhancement Fund Request as presented.
Motion Passed
8-0

9. Response Time Liquidated Damages Discovery Period

Mr. Doyle explained this is a follow-up item from the September 10, 2020 meeting. The Agency received approval from this Committee to forward an item to the Board of Supervisors extending the discovery period for ambulance providers as well as establishing a discovery period for the first responding fire agencies.

Based on consultation with County leadership, the Agency's legal counsel, and as approved by the JPA Board of Directors, the Agency has issued a memo to the Stanislaus County ground ambulance providers extending the discovery period per the recommendation of this Committee from September 2020.

Additionally, in cooperation with Stanislaus County Fire Chiefs, County leadership, Supervisor DeMartini, and as approved by the JPA Board of Directors, the Agency has executed addendums to the first responder agreements with the Stanislaus County ALS and BLS fire agencies resolving the outstanding contractual issues.

Staff recommendation on this item is to rescind the recommendation from the September 10, 2020 meeting.

M/S/C (Lilly-Tengowski/Seavy To approve the rescission of the Committee recommendation issued on September 10, 2020 regarding the response time liquidated damages discovery period.

Motion Passed

8-0

10. CAD-to-CAD Update

Mr. Silva reported SR911 and VRECC tested the CAD-to-CAD interface about three weeks ago. Some good progress was made during the hour long test. The project managers will be providing their findings in the next couple of weeks. There has been some headway in some of the things requested by SR911.

11. COVID-19 Response Update

Mr. Doyle reported there has been a significant increase in surge and COVID activity throughout the healthcare system. There are increases in wait times at Emergency Departments. There is a modest increase in EMS activity, but not necessarily abnormal for this time of year. As discussed at this morning's System Status meeting, ambulance providers and fire providers are experiencing significant staffing challenges. Anywhere from 20-38% of staff are unavailable due to either COVID, other medical or FMLA leave. This is impacting the ability to provide 100% staffing to the EMS system. This has been happening for the last 3-4 months on a daily basis.

The Agency has received multiple optional scope of practice approvals from the State EMS Authority. One of these allows Paramedics (and in some cases EMTs) to perform COVID testing. The Agency put together a task force that has been active within the County.

There are Paramedics that are approved to administer vaccinations if needed within the County.

There is a staffing task force that can help staff a skilled nursing facility in an emergent, short term basis in the face of a staffing shortage that could force an evacuation. That has not yet been needed, but the task force can be activated upon request.

The Agency has been active in the MHOAC designee role with resource requests as well as vaccine and medication ordering for the County.

The Agency has been working on some contingency plans addressing the increase of traffic in the system and wait times at the hospitals. There will be a meeting next week with the County. The Agency has put together an Assess and Refer policy that allows paramedics to do patient assessments and refer those meeting very strict and conservative guidelines to another provider.

There has been daily data reporting to the County to help update their pandemic reporting dashboard.

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Chief Murdock asked for clarification of “referral to another provider”.

Mr. Doyle responded this means other than a hospital Emergency Department. It could be a clinic, physician, nurse help line, etc.

Dr. Seavy observed today Doctors Medical Center surpassed 100 COVID-positive patient mark. The issue is not the lack of beds, but the nursing staff shortages. As a trauma surgeon, this is the ultimate mass casualty event and difficult triage decisions may need to happen as this goes on. Even trauma transfers in are becoming limited.

Mr. Baxter asked for more information on the vaccine distribution.

Mr. Vitro explained Round 1A will go to the hospitals for healthcare workers who work in certain areas of the hospital and then to first responders.

Mr. Baxter asked if the Skilled Nursing Facility patients are being prioritized.

Mr. Vitro said those patients will be included in the first round that goes to the public.

12. Stanislaus County EMS Report for CY 2019

Mr. Doyle and Dr. Kann presented the annual EMS Report for Stanislaus County. The report touched on activities in the eight major functions of the EMS Agency, a clinical overview, and a discussion of challenges from CY 2019.

Let the record show Mary Ann Lilly-Tengowski left the meeting at 2:55 pm

Let the record show Richard Murdock left the meeting at 2:59 pm

M/S/C (Seavy/Whitemyer) To approve the Stanislaus County EMS Report for CY 2019.
Motion Passed
6-0

Let the record show Joe Lopez left the meeting at 2:59 pm

Let the record show Sharon Young left the meeting at 3:00 pm

Mr. Baxter recommended there be an Executive Summary developed before providing this report to the Board of Supervisors.

13. Next Regular Meeting

Thursday, March 11, 2020 at 2:00 PM.

14. Adjournment

Chairman Baxter adjourned the meeting at 3:15 PM.