

Emergency Services Advisory Council
August 20, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Rick Baker, Michael Robinson (virtual), Michael Guerin, Dr. Stephanie Kemp, JJ Lynott, Tim Legore, Michael Karolenko, Jim Mora, David Coe, Blane Wright, Joe Brown, Robert Ruch,

Members Absent: Scott Dickson, Brett Six, Jeff Fleming,

Guests: Gene Curfman

Public: Susan Mott- 2nd VP, CCVESA, Max Nickey- Battalion Chief, DFEMS

Chairman Baker opened the meeting at 19:00 with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Robert Ruch made a motion to approve the July meeting minutes. JJ Lynott seconded. The motion was unanimously passed.

Board Member Comments: None at this time.

Director/Chief's Report:

-Chief Robinson shared an update on staffing: DFEMS will be hiring one person on Aug. 28th and four people on Sept. 11th. There are six remaining vacancies.

-Policies: DFEMS is working on a train-the-trainer program for the Operational Policies. Hard copies of the policies will be provided to the stations. A PowerPoint will be uploaded to the Learning Management System (LMS). Career personnel will attend a half-day class and volunteers are welcome to attend as well. September will be the awareness phase before the policies are fully implemented.

-Chief Robinson commented that the Battalion Chief and Volunteer Chief worked together seamlessly on the recent fire on Coldsprings Farm.

-There will be a NERIS Q&A session with the State Fire Marshal's Office on Mon. Aug. 25th at 10:00 the PSTC for jurisdictions in Central Maryland.

-ESO is being rolled out in Jan. There are three dates scheduled for training, Sept. 26, 27 & 28 in the PSTC auditorium. Bring your own device. Every company needs to send a representative.

-Thank you to Commissioner Guerin for coming out to Mt. Airy with Deputy Chief Supko to speak with the shift that was on duty for the recent drowning. It

was a tragedy, but the community has come together in support. DFEMS is looking at adding on-duty career members to the swift water rescue team.

- Insurance: We are still using VFIS, but Dave Bollinger is no longer the local agent. Contact Callie if you have not received an insurance binder or insurance cards for each piece of apparatus. The number of claims has increased recently.

- Chairman Baker noted that deductibles have increased drastically, and a conversation needs to be had. Chief Robinson suggested a meeting with Risk Management to discuss.

- The Accident Review Committee will be going into effect in the next few weeks.

- A meeting with the Comptroller and the fire companies is being scheduled for Sept. 30th to go over the low-interest loan process and answer questions.

- DFEMS is going before the Board of Commissioners (BOC) soon for the purchase of two new Chevy Tahoes. This will add two reserves to the fleet. DFEMS is using a new upfitter. Hoping to take delivery by Jan.

- The bids for the new ambulances are being finalized. Chief Robinson feels we need to be buying five units per year. He has been approved to purchase three for FY26. He mentioned that recently we had to borrow a medic unit from Frederick County.

- Chief Robinson stated that the 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony will be held at the PSTC at 8:30 AM on Sept. 11th and is open to the public.

- The Maryland State Firefighters Association (MSFA) Executive Committee Meeting will be held at Pleasant Valley's social hall this Sat. Aug. 23rd.

Commissioner's Report:

- Commissioner Guerin shared that there will be a new District 5 Commissioner. Former Delegate Susan Krebs is the prospective appointee. He is encouraged by her concern and attention to fire and EMS.

Chairman Baker mentioned that in December, it will be one year since ESAC met with the BOC. Commissioner Guerin will look into this.

CCVESA President's Report: Not present

Medical Director's Report:

- Dr. Kemp reported that we have had six whole blood administrations in the county since going live with the program. 50% were medical (all GI bleeds) and the other 50% were trauma. Four out of six survived to hospital discharge. The two that did not were trauma arrests.

- Carroll County will transition our whole blood distribution to Sinai next week.

EMS can restock at a repository in their blood bank, cutting the courier costs and making blood more readily available.

-Direct to triage is up and running with Carroll Hospital. No issues reported at this time.

-Dr. Kemp will be involved in the selection process for the chase medic Lieutenants. She will create a super mega code that will test their clinical, leadership and scene management abilities.

-DFEMS continues to work on our airway policy and developing the RSI program. We are working on a policy that will require recording of airway attempts so we can do additional airway QA.

-DFEMS is working on purchasing and implementing IV pumps and transport ventilators.

-Dr. Kemp will have two emergency medicine residents from Johns Hopkins doing some focused training in EMS.

Committee Reports:

EMSOPS - David Coe reported that EMSOPS met July 20th. They are moving a number of policies forward.

FROPS - Tim Legore reported that FROPS discussed Incident Management Policy 4.1.1, Officer Standards and the weather policy.

Old Business:

- Apparatus Replacement Policy 1.14
 - Chairman Baker incorporated the suggested changes into the policy.
 - The apparatus request must be received 15 days prior to the next ESAC meeting to allow time for ESAC members to push it out to those they represent.
 - Jim Mora stated that a comment from his area was that FROPS should see the apparatus request first, before ESAC. Discussing timelines, the additional 15 days should allow time for FROPS to discuss the requests.

David Coe made a motion to accept the changes made by Chairman Baker to Apparatus Replacement Policy 1.14. Tim Legore seconded. The motion was unanimously passed.

Callie will send a revised version of the policy and it will be voted on at the next ESAC meeting.

- Low-Interest Loans

- Commissioner Guerin stated that the county's current low-interest loan program does not provide enough funds for what the fire companies need. It is being reviewed.
- Commissioner Guerin stated that the insurance issue is being reviewed as well.
- Chairman Baker reiterated some of the main questions:
 - Who makes the final decision when multiple companies apply for a loan and there is limited funding?
 - Why is it a stipulation that we can't be under contract before applying?
- Gene Curfman was invited by Chairman Baker to share his expertise. He explained several options that the county could consider to assist the fire companies with funding to purchase apparatus.
 - The county could sell bonds to strictly 501c3 organizations. There would be some added expense because the bond council would have to verify that the fire companies meet the requirements for a 501c3. He estimates the cost at \$25-40k. There would need to be a public hearing.
 - The county could sell bonds to qualified volunteer fire companies for fire engines, buildings or land. They do not have to be 501c3s. He is unsure with squads and other apparatus would be included.
 - The other option is taxable bonds. The interest rate will not be as good as a normal tax-exempt bond but will be more favorable with the county issuing them. The county has issued taxable bonds previously.
- Chairman Baker asked Commissioner Guerin to take this information back to the BOC. He is also okay with Gene Curfman reaching out to the Comptroller directly.
- Gene Curfman noted that the county does not need to issue the bond money right away. Example, if a company is approved for a low interest loan, the money does not have to be obligated until the department takes receipt of the equipment. This timeline could be several years later than when the request was made due to manufacturing delays. Authorization from the state will still be on the books.

- The Maryland State Firefighters Association Volunteer Company Assistance Fund (VCAF) loan program has \$5.5 million to disperse this year. This amount of money for the entire state.
- Collaboration Committee
 - Mike Karolenko shared that the Collaboration Committee is meant to be a proactive group that looks at vulnerabilities of the system and brainstorms solutions. It is meant to lift the system up. There would be equal career and volunteer participation.
 - JJ Lynott stated that the goal is to get ahead of any issues and be able to support providers. For it to be effective, leadership must want and value it.
 - Chief Robinson shared concerns about redundancy.
 - Robert Ruch added that communication is necessary to avoid duplication of efforts.

Mike Karolenko made a motion to move forward with the initiative by having a meeting between the two Presidents and the Chiefs. David Coe seconded. The motion was passed with Jim Mora opposed.

New Business

- Winfield Apparatus Request
 - Winfield Community Volunteer Fire Department requests to replace their Duty vehicle with a new model.

Mike Karolenko made a motion to recommend approving the purchase. JJ Lynott seconded. The motion was unanimously passed.

- Chain of Command/Battalion Chief Decision
 - Chief Robinson stated that he made the decision to make the Shift Commanders Battalion Chiefs based on the functionality of the Shift Commander position and them being the senior county representative in the field. The Shift Commanders have Fire Officer III, are Paramedics and Quality Control Officers.
 - Chief Robinson stated that nothing has changed as far as volunteer response. The functionality of the volunteer Battalion Chief program still exists.

- David Coe commented that DFEMS should have been transparent about it and worked together with the volunteers. While he doesn't disagree with the decision, it was poorly rolled out.
- JJ Lynott agreed that the problem was with communication and the way it was rolled out.
- Tim Legore shared the sentiment of disappointment in the implementation, noting that there was a FROPS meeting held just before and it could have been discussed there.
- Mike Karolenko commented that this was a functional decision, not to put anyone down. It does not affect day-to-day operations. Chief Robinson usually does lean into ESAC and value its input.
- FY27 Budget
 - Chief Robinson stated there is a problem with staffing on the fire side. He wants \$50-60k to do a study looking at accreditation standards, NFPA 1710, and insurance ratings. We need an understanding of how we're doing.
 - Chief Robinson is requesting to make one Lieutenant per shift a Captain at the three stations that have Lieutenants, to get assistance for the Quartermaster, two Training Lieutenants, a Community Paramedicine program and the eight Floaters.
 - He is also requesting reserve engines.
 - Chief Robinson emphasized that the department is not built out or complete. We are just getting started. A study is needed first, then we need to continue making steps forward.
 - Chief Robinson feels changes are needed to the way the volunteer budget is set up so that procurement of equipment and supplies are more consistent and cost-effective.
 - He has not heard a counterproposal from CCVESA regarding building maintenance/projects and the MOU. ESAC agrees that a proposal from CCVESA needs to be presented to Chief so he can add this to his budget request and discuss with the commissioners.
 - JJ Lynott commented that volunteer incentives are also needed when considering the budget.

Action Items:

1. Callie Williams will send out the revised Apparatus Replacement Policy 1.14 to ESAC members.

2. Commissioner Guerin will initiate a meeting with Gene Curfman and the Comptroller.
3. Chief Robinson will send the apparatus approval letter to Winfield.

David Coe made a motion to adjourn. JJ Lynott seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 21:27.