

Emergency Services Advisory Council

July 15, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Tim Legore, Michael Robinson, Michael Guerin, JJ Lynott, Blane Wright, Jim Mora, Joshua Tohn, Chad Green, Dr. Stephanie Kemp, Brett Six (virtual), Robert Ruch (virtual)

Members Absent: David Coe, Joe Brown, Jeff Fleming, Scott Dickson

Public: Bridget Weishaar- CCVESA 2nd VP

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

Blane Wright made a motion to approve the June meeting minutes. Joshua Tohn seconded. The motion was unanimously passed.

Public Comment: None

Director/Chief's Report: Report attached

Commissioner's Report: (Commissioner Guerin)

- The search for a new County Administrator is underway.
- Discussed the initiative to clean up bylaws and MOUs.

Board Member Comments:

- Chad Green asked Commissioner Guerin to consider 20-year loans for fire companies to purchase apparatus. Companies have had to cancel apparatus purchases because they cannot make the loan payments.
- Commission Guerin is in support of a 20-year loan option.

CCVESA President's Report: Not Present

Medical Director's Report:

- 2026 EMS Protocols are live. There have been some significant changes.
- DFEMS has expanded availability of whole blood. Each Lieutenant vehicle is carrying 2 units now.
- IV pumps and ventilators are out in the field. There have been several uses with positive results.

- Working with Health Department on opioid risk reduction program. This program provides a peer support person and a Mobile Integrated Health Paramedic to administer Suboxone and potentially get the patient into treatment.
- Working on an alternative destination plan where a mobile nurse line would handle nonemergent calls. Baltimore City has had success with this.
- A measles exposure occurred from the Amish community.
- Continuing Education about Twiddlers Syndrome scheduled for August 4th.
- OneDose will replace Handtevy.

Committee Reports:

FROPS (Chad Green)

- Met June 29th
- Discussed Officer Standards
- Discussed General Order about 4th due engine being RIT.

EMSOPS (David Coe)

- Not Present

Old Business:

- Proposed Bylaw Amendment
 - The proposal will need to go before the Commissioners.
 - The County would like the word “union” to be changed.
- Officer Standards Policy
 - Per Chad Green, FROPS questioned why ESAC had an issue with the policy. It was unanimously approved by FROPS.
 - ESAC’s position was that a Lieutenant should be required to have EMT.
 - One fire company has one or two officers that have EMR instead of EMT.
 - Chief Robinson noted that it is a liability situation if we are not able to provide a minimal standard of care.
 - Per the policy, EMT will be required for Lieutenants starting in 2030 unless they were grandfathered in.

- Chairman Legore reminded the group that reps need to communicate with those they represent and ask for input.
- FROPS hopes that ESAC will reevaluate their position and support the policy.
- Chairman Legore noted that ESAC has already made their recommendation, so it is now up to the Chief to decide.
- Chairman Legore suggested the language in the policy be cleaned up so that it flows better.
- Payment of Fire Company Invoices
 - DFEMS is meeting with Fleet on Friday.
 - The Rice Tire invoice is still outstanding.
 - This topic has not been brought up at the CCVESA meeting.
 - Please reach out to Callie if there are more issues.
- Third-Party Study
 - Chief Robinson has formed an internal committee to work on the RFP.
 - ESAC compiled a list of topics that was attached to last month's minutes.
 - Reps should share ESAC's list with the Company Presidents and Chiefs and ask if there are any other topics they would like added.

New Business

- POV Policy
 - Chairman Legore sent out a copy of the POV policy which has been vetted through FROPS.
 - Reps will share with their districts and ESAC will vote on it next month.
- 9-11 Ceremony
 - Chief Robinson is part of the committee that is planning this year's ceremony for the 25th anniversary of September 11th.

JJ Lynott made a motion to adjourn. Jim Mora seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 21:02.



July 2026

Chief Michael Robinson

Monthly Report to ESAC

Attached herein is my report for July 2026. Please review and I will answer any questions at tonight's meeting

Remembering FADO Charles “Chuck” Bittorie Jr.: This past Friday, 7/10 we laid to rest former DFEMS FADO Chuck Bittorie. Chuck came to us in November of 2024 after serving for 35 years with Howard County as a master firefighter/heavy vehicle operator. Chuck developed leukemia and due to his illness was forced to resign in December 2025. Chuck started as a volunteer with Sykesville in the 1980's. A full Line of Duty Funeral was held in concert with Howard County and Waynesboro, PA fire departments where Chuck also worked and volunteered. My sincere thanks to those departments, to my command staff, the Sheriff and his staff as well as Sykesville/Co-12 and Gamber/Co-13 and to the Carroll Professional Firefighters/Paramedic Association, for their outstanding support of the memorial and funeral. We had great participation and provided an excellent tribute to Chuck and his lifelong service. Under both Maryland Cancer Presumption and federal standards this will be a LODD and Chuck's family will ultimately receive benefits, and he should be eligible for the National, IAFF and MD Fire-Rescue Memorials. RIP! This also shows the value of our occupational cancer screening, which will now be a part of our annual physical exams.

So where is our FY-27 first quarter allotment and our funding?

There will also be some new budget accountability processes put into place, and I met earlier with the CCVESA executive committee to brief them on the issue. The funding will be put into place as soon as an MOU for funding is approved and shared with the association. I sent a MOA-Memorandum of agreement to CCVESA yesterday. This is at the request of the Commissioners and is enacted on all non-profit groups who receive county funds. I have met with the Department of Budget and Finance and our budget analyst to expedite this process. In the interim your other county funded items such as utilities, insurance, fuel, medical supplies, COH and other areas that we pay for are in place. I hope we can resolve this in an expeditious manner as we put into place some increased accountability for CCVESA's taxpayer funded budgets.

FY-27 Budget: Began on July 1 and here are the highlights.

1. 4 Safety/training lieutenants (new promotions-internal)
2. 8 float positions (new hires) 4 FADOs, 4 FF/PMs
3. Upgrade of three station lieutenants to Captains (promotions)

4. 4.5% salary adjustment (raise) 1.5% COLA, 3 % merit
5. Enhanced overtime funding for training/continuing education
6. 5 new medic units-working on getting ordered by 7/27/26
7. Funding for complete replacement of all SCBA
8. Funding for phase II of PSTC- burn building, renovation of all outside areas
9. 2 additional/replacement SUVs (replacing highest mileage units)
10. A third-party study of DFEMS with recommendations for future growth
11. Increase for VFC funding-\$720 K additional
12. Creation of low interest loan fund for VFC apparatus procurement
13. Continued funding of all current benefits, pension and D.R.O.P. program

Along with the new budget there will be some changes to procurement of hose, nozzles and appliances and these will be centralized via the quartermaster. DC Supko discussed with FROPS and formed a committee to standardize specs for these items, and we will establish a list of items with your direct input. This will also be the case for training expenditures (except for the Union Bridge rescue seminar.) All other training funding will be centralized under the training committee. Fire Prevention funding will be through the fire prevention committee. IT purchases will also go through the county.

<https://www.carrollcountymd.gov/media/1rjnxtoe/final-operating-recommended-budget-summary-book.pdf>

I met last Thursday with the county's workgroup on **the new loan program for VFCs** which is being developed. We will begin with \$10 million in available funding. ESAC may be the initial gatekeeper who will accept requests to use this fund. We are still working out the other details as far as interest rates and repayment are concerned. I am focusing on a low rate and a 15-year repayment for major apparatus-(Engines, trucks, squads, tankers) and a likely 7-year loan for utilities, command units and smaller apparatus. We will have a recommendation soon and this will then go to the commissioners for approval. Our goal would be to accept applications beginning in the fall. Existing contracts will not be eligible so those anticipating apparatus replacement under this program should not proceed contractually until our policies are in place.

County Administrator's Retirement: As most should be aware, Roberta Windham, our county administrator, has announced her retirement from the county. This will occur on August 20. Roberta has been a great advocate and supporter of the development of DFEMS and has been directly responsible for our rapid growth. The position is being advertised nationally and is being coordinated through a national hiring firm. It is posted on Indeed and the county website if

anyone is interested. I am hopeful that we can have someone with experience from a jurisdiction that has a Fire/EMS agency and can bring their experience in this area. This will likely take several months to have someone in place. In the interim the Deputy County Administrator Debbie Effingham will assume that role.

Operations: A significant number of recent working incidents. The significant storms of July 4th challenged our system and its resources. The volunteers rose to the occasion with over 100 incidents and at least three working fires during the severe weather. A great effort by all, especially given the holiday. At the same time, we also supported the county's celebration at the farm museum with both career and volunteer participation. There has been great staffing and outstanding tactical focus and safety. The new policies are being implemented regularly, and our mutual aid partners appear to be integrating with our new policies. Command is being established effectively and seamlessly. The officer standards were revisited at the last FROPs meeting and I will defer that subject to new business.

We have been addressing the **NERIS issues**, and we will continue with monthly work groups to address ongoing and unresolved issues. Mel our data analyst is the direct contact for this program and she has been providing regular updates as we develop more capabilities with the system. Statistically our overall incidents have dropped by the hundreds, and we are evaluating our data to validate. Thanks to the company chiefs who recently assisted in closing out several hundred unfinished incident reports. We continue to move forward to fine tune our incident reporting system.

PSTC improvements/ Phase II: There is also project in the budget for approximately \$8 million. These funds would be used to remediate the current PSTC practical area which meets the federal threshold for PFAS remediation based on geotechnical drilling and testing conducted during 2024. An additional assessment of the site has been funded and will occur this summer. DPW's construction division has made some recommendations and are now developing a timeline and total project cost. The total for remediation and construction of Phase II will be around \$22 million. The commissioners are funding FY-27, the first phase of this which will be remediation. Once that is complete construction can begin which will provide a new two-story burning building, an outdoor classroom building, new flammable liquid/gas props and associated civil engineering projects such as drainage, new parking facilities and other environmental compliance. There is some additional discussion on the remediation component, and a direction will soon be determined. The impact on our facility and our ongoing training capabilities is a huge consideration with this.

I am awaiting a timeline/cost analysis from DPW/construction. Chief Brothers is our project representative and can elaborate further. The reality of this plan will be a need to shift all practical training from the PSTC to an alternative site for as long as (18-24 months.) Obviously, this will have a significant impact on our training programs and especially fire and rescue courses as well as applicant testing and recruit training. We are working on some alternative plans that will obviously involve MFRI, neighboring jurisdictions and our CCVESA training committee. For many reasons we must have a plan to ensure training continuity given our focus

and mandates in the training area. All elements of county government as well as the commissioners are fully supportive of our needs and our future direction. We will all need to be prepared to improvise and adapt to some temporary solutions. This is subject to scrutiny and alternatives as PFAS is a planet-wide issue and spending millions on remediation may or may not address the issues. We are continuing to prepare for our fall training schedule as if the project will not begin until a later time. More to follow.

STAFFING: We currently have 32 vacancies which include 13 new positions to fill. We have recently had some resignations and terminations. We are actively recruiting and held a successful information session and have received 77 applications for the FF/EMT positions. The recent EST graduates are prime candidates, and several have applied. That testing process will begin in several weeks and hiring from that group should occur in September. Tomorrow two paramedics will begin, and we are processing another 12 paramedics or FF/Paramedics. Our PM and FF/PM positions are continuously posted. Our orientation program will now be extended to four weeks and will contain both EVOC and HM Ops. We will drop the EVOC and HM Ops prerequisites in the interest of recruitment. We also picked up an additional paramedic position through a health department grant and that will be a daywork position that will be paired with a health department employee to manage post overdose treatment and referral. This will bring our department's staffing total to 249 personnel. We would ask each of you to assist us with the recruitment process by referring personnel and marketing our department.

We will be going through a promotional process beginning this month for 4 lieutenants and 3 captain positions. This will cause a cascading effect which will also lead to some FADO promotions which we will address following the officer process. The captain's positions are not additional but will come from our 12 station lieutenants. There will be one captain at stations 1, 3 and 12. We will work with those chiefs to determine the best fit for each station, and the captains will provide oversight for their lieutenants and become the primary point of contact for each chief. Those promotions are slated for around September 11 and tomorrow and the application process has completed with 10 qualified for the captain's position (3) and over 36 for the lieutenant's position (4).

The training/safety Lieutenants positions will be assigned to each of the 24/72 shifts and would focus on the training and compliance needs of each shift as well as the volunteers. They would have an immediate safety officer response profile and perform other duties such as accident/injury investigations, station and PPE inspections and provide driver training and OSHA compliance. All other departments in the region currently have such a position. Our goal is to have this position in place by the end of September or early October. We are working with Gamber/Station 13 as the location/quarters for what will be known as Safety 101. They will report to AC Brothers and operationally under the shift commander. Their office will be located at the PSTC where they will work from 0700-2300 and then will sleep at the designated station.

Logistics Warehouse: Has been turned over to DFEMS. This should streamline all of our logistics capabilities and stock. We have completed our move and are operational out of the

warehouse. We are still waiting for IT and security to be installed and hopefully soon. This centralizes our PPE, EMS supplies and career uniform inventory for greater storage capacity and hopefully more efficient service. We are installing two new ice machines to comply with the state's heat management requirements. One ice machine is in place in the barn replacing an antiquated unit and later this week on the second-floor vending area we will have a unit for use within the PSTC. Chief Brothers will keep us updated on our PSTC remediation and construction status.

Water Supply: This week we will take delivery on a new 30,000 gallon underground water tank that will be installed on the campus of the Carroll Lutheran School in Pleasant Valley's area. This is the result of several years of efforts by Mike Hughes, Pleasant Valley Chief and our DPW personnel. This should be operational by the end of the summer. Also, Mike Hughes and I visited Montgomery County last week and had a tour of an above ground water tank which is the technology that we are going to switch to. We have a farm on Marston Road (New Windsor) that will be the first prototype with a 40,000-gallon capacity.



EMS & Fleet:

We continue to deal with maintenance issues with both our ambulances and SUVs. We have received a new Tahoe which will become Safety-101 (shift safety officer.) We have ordered the F-150 pick-up which will replace BC101 sometime this summer. Today we met with Priority Upfitters in Mt. Airy who will be providing us with the upfitting of all of our SUV's and other staff vehicles. The first of these will be the Safety 101 unit. With the FY-27 budget, we will order 5 additional ambulances and 3 SUVs (Tahoe's.) and an explorer to support our blood program. This will provide us with some needed reserve units as our current reserves are on their last leg of service. We are finalizing those specs and will be ready to begin the procurement

process with an opportunity from one vendor to have 5 medics completed by 7/27. We are also addressing the unresolved maintenance bills that some companies have been challenged with. If you still have outstanding invoices that remain unpaid for ambulance maintenance, please forward them to Callie asap. We have had several meetings with county fleet to resolve these and future maintenance issues and will be meeting with DPW/fleet on Friday to resolve further. The maintenance shop fuel tanks -diesel/gasoline are out of service for replacement. So, if you utilize these pumps at the Meadow Branch facility you will need to defer to using the "Fuelman" card for approximately a month while the tanks are replaced.

Countywide Fire/EMS study: This has also been approved with approximately \$100K in funding. Our first step is to develop an RFP-Request for proposals to identify the scope of such a study. Some of the objectives will be to evaluate our current system, station locations, apparatus, staffing & response times, water supply/capabilities, community risk and prioritization for future development. We will evaluate current standards to include NFPA, ISO, Fire Department Accreditation and community risk. ESAC is currently providing input to the RFP as well as an internal government committee. The commissioners will ultimately approve the scope of the study in concert with the RFP. We look to put this out to bid by early fall and such a study may take a year to complete. If anyone has any specific issues to discuss within the study, please forward your suggestions directly to me. We have discussed this already and under unfinished business we can revisit. Tomorrow, we will meet with some other county agencies: budget, procurement, Emergency management and the Deputy County Administrator to focus on developing the RFP using input from ESAC in the process.

Grants: We applied for two fire act grants. The first is a \$2.4 million grant to replace all current PPE with PFAS free PPE. The second is a \$137,000 grant to enhance our behavioral health resources to include expansion/training of our CISM and peer support training. This would also provide a personal behavioral resource via an app known as CORDICO for all career and volunteer personnel. This is currently available to all sheriff's personnel and also in use in the Baltimore County FD. We have received letters of support from our federal elected representatives, and the awards will be finalized in several months if we are successful.

As you are aware, we were recently notified by Congressman "Johnny O" who represents portions of Carroll that we will be tentatively receiving an award of \$550,000 towards a new reserve fire engine. This would be available as a county reserve and for PSTC use. There are several more steps to this and we should receive this by December 2026. This will require a match from the county so we will be doing a needs analysis and have personnel assigned to work on this project. This will be a "user friendly" and practical apparatus that will need to be cost effective. We can assume features like a 1500gpm pump, 1000-gallon tank and consistent to the minimum standards for a pumper apparatus. We have a small working group developing a specification towards this initiative.

SCBA Replacement Program: We have also been allotted capital funding (CIP) for a complete replacement of all current SCBA. This is in concert with current NFPA standards and a 10-year

shelf life of SCBA. We will continue with SCOTT SCBA and will enhance facepiece communication to blue tooth technology for each officer within our system. This is a multi-year initiative but because of technological upgrades our goal is to replace all units on a 1:1 basis at the same time. Chief Brothers is heading up this project and once we determine the details, we will have a presentation for the FROPS group as well as a timeline for procurement and implementation. Chief Brothers will update further with his report.

Cancer screening grant: The career grant has been funded fully, and we have tested all personnel while on duty with little if any disruption to operations. We have completed our testing with over 210 personnel receiving a test. Remember that CCVESA had a separate grant for this year only so I will defer to Sue Mott who is managing that grant for your logistics and implementation. I believe the volunteer testing is also complete. For Fy-27 and beyond we will integrate into the annual physicals so that everyone is tested in compliance with the state legal requirements. I had a meeting recently with COH and AC Brothers to develop the specifics of this testing, and we will be soliciting vendors under the procurement process.

Training Opportunity: On Saturday, September 19, 2026, we will be hosting an all-day seminar to be broken down into two parts. The first area will be recruitment/retention, and the second portion will be leadership. This is being provided through the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) and we will need at least 20 participants for this to run. This is grant funded and there is no charge for this valuable training which will be at the PSTC (flier on the CCVESA website) from 0830-1700.

Finally, we celebrated the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence on Saturday July 4 with multiple community celebrations throughout the county. Our DFEMS personnel will be wearing a special edition 250th T-shirt to commemorate the 250th and this is authorized for the remainder of 2026 in lieu of the issued DFEMS standard T-shirt. This is also being offered for purchase by any volunteer personnel wishing to do and is available to ESAC members. I have authorized its use by all. See the attachment for information. Once we get our second edition shirts in place I will get one for each member of ESAC.

Respectfully submitted,

Chief Michael W. Robinson

Michael W. Robinson, MA, CFO, NRP
Director, Chief