

**Trumbull Emergency Medical Service  
Commission Meeting  
February 28, 2012  
7:00pm**

**Present:** Mark Smith, Vi Watson, Philip Lukianuk, Joseph Rodriguez, Diane Mayo, Barbara Crandall, Michael DelVecchio

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman, Joseph Rodriguez at 7:15pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Public Comment**

No public comment.

**Past Minutes**

Joseph Rodriguez presented the following corrections to the minutes of January 24, 2012: 1) Last paragraph on first page should read: Joseph Rodriguez noted that discussion of any coverage needs should include improved response times and the quality of care that would result. Moved by Mark Smith, seconded by Vi Watson and approved unanimously. 2) Under New Business #5 should read: It was noted that the TEMS Association has published a newspaper ad to inform residents about Trumbull EMS. Moved by Vi Watson, seconded by Diane Mayo and approved unanimously. Motion to approve the minutes as amended made by Mark Smith, seconded by Vi Watson and approved unanimously.

Jim Henderson, Trumbull Internal Auditor was present to discuss receivables and disposition of accounts currently with Comstar, TEMS billing service, and the current collections agency. Mr. Henderson noted that he has investigated the receivables and it appears that reports have been sent to EMS and the Finance Department for review and disposition. However, any action taken with regard to the accounts has not been consistent. Mr. Henderson noted that the Finance Department does not have the time nor the closeness to the accounts as TEMS does. It was noted by several commissioners that TEMS does not have the resources to work with these accounts and is not privy to any information outside of that presented at the time of the call. The Board of Finance has requested that TEMS Commission monitor these accounts on an on-going basis. Mr. Henderson recommended that any account beyond 90 days should be written off.

John Butkus entered the meeting at 7:30pm.

Discussion of past practices with Danbury Ambulance handling our billing was held. It was noted there needs to be checks and balances in reviewing these accounts. Because of privacy issues, it was felt that this work needed to be done within the Finance Department.

John Butkus noted that a policy should be written by TEMS to cover the handling of these accounts so that we may move forward. The current Comstar contract will be reviewed to see if there is any language reflecting any type of policy. A reasonable limit should be placed regarding how long accounts are worked by the billing service and collection agency before they are considered bad debt.

Barbara Crandall noted she contacted several of the surrounding towns regarding their billing practices which vary greatly from town to town, but commented that in all cases, the finance department of the town was ultimately responsible for the collection and disposition of all patient accounts. It was agreed that the contract with Comstar will be reviewed and changes considered to specifically address the outstanding accounts.

Mark Smith moved to recommend to the Director of Finance that outstanding accounts from 2009 and 2010 be written off and to send all accounts listed for 2011 to the collection agency. A policy will then be put into place to handle future accounts so we can move forward. Seconded by Vi Watson and approved unanimously.

### **Chairman's Report**

No report from the chairman. Joseph Rodriguez noted there is a TEMS Association meeting next Tuesday at 7pm and noted all commissioners are considered members of the association and should consider attending. He also noted the commission gathering on February 12 was well attended.

Budget meeting with the Board of Finance was reviewed. It was noted the \$30,000 removed by the First Selectman was requested to increase base pay to a competitive level for paid staff.

### **Chief of Service Report**

Barbara Crandall reported the following:

- 1) January activities included six public events - Girl Scout/Boy Scout visits for merit badges, TEMS Explorer meetings and a First Aid class. February activities included Girl Scout merit badge, TEMS Explorers, medical coverage at the Color Guard show at THS and an instructional class at Stern Village with regard to their new AED.
- 2) Letters of appreciation from patients were received for the following crew members: Jeff Adams, Barbara Crandall, Michael Sereno, Tony DeSimone, Keith Kerr, Wayne Sakal, Gail Sawicki and Frank Petrucci.
- 3) Personnel update – three paid staff have been hired and two additional in the process of testing; 16 volunteer applications have been received and are in various stages – reasons for coming to Trumbull EMS – give back to the community, get experience in the medical field and location. Eight of the above are students in nearby colleges.
- 4) EMT class is scheduled to begin March 5 with approximately 20 students; EMT/EMR recert held the last weekend of January. It was noted that the Police Department has asked that the fee for this recert be waived for the police officers in attendance. Mark Smith moved to waive the fees for the police officers, seconded by Vi Watson. Discussion. Vote – all in favor of waiving the fee for the police department – none. Motion defeated. A letter will be sent from the commission to the Chief of Police regarding this decision.

- 5) A preliminary drawing was reviewed for the proposed assisted living/dementia unit facility on Reservoir Avenue on the Guida Dairy property. Also briefly discussed was the potential facility proposed by Sacred Heart University on the Henderson hardware site.
- 6) Call statistics for January and February were reviewed. It was noted the greatest number of calls has switched from the daytime hours of 9am-3pm to 6-11pm.
- 7) It was presented at the CEDC meeting that TEMS has placed money in the budget to contract C-Med to do their dispatching. A meeting with representatives from NexGen, a computer program currently utilized by the police department was held on February 16. To accommodate the EMS requirements, a third party sources would need to be utilized to interface with our programs.
- 8) Southwest EMS Council is planning a gathering at the arena/ball park on May 20 for EMS Week. This will include resources from the region such as our gator, field hospital, and other equipment. It will coincide with a ball game at the park. Specifics are being worked on by the committee.
- 9) New training procedures have been implemented to help streamline the process and avoid confusion for new members.
- 10) The First Selectman has announced the first annual First Selectman's Cup. This will be held at Tashua Golf Course in September and volunteers from the various town departments will be working the event.
- 11) DMV inspections have been completed. Liz Johnston will be contacted to complete the OEMS inspections within the next two weeks.
- 12) HeartSafe Community signs are being placed at the edges of town by the highway department.

### **Assistant Chief Report**

Michael DelVecchio reported the following:

1. Discussions are being held with Northeastern Communications regarding our progress towards narrowband compliance. He noted letters of concurrence from five locations are required – 2 from CT and 3 from NY. Interference at these locations has been a problem in the past. Because of this obstacle, progress is slow and we are actually behind where we should be with regard to our time line for completion. Building of equipment is contingent upon receiving approval from these areas.
2. Doug Smith announced that the state has given the town equipment purchased through UASI money. TEMS will be receiving a radio system that will piggyback our VHS system and the states trunking system. We will have direct contact with the state police and Trumbull police. This radio will be installed in our paramedic vehicle as it has been set up to be a command center for EMS.
3. The Vehicle Committee has met with two prospective ambulance manufacturers, PL Custom and Osage. Wheel Coach has also contacted Mike. Specifications must be drafted and a unit will most likely need to be built to meet our needs and stay within our \$150,000 budget.
4. Vehicle repairs have been much better with the new notification system. We still do not have a paper trail for our records but Mike is working on this.

### **Old Business**

1. Mission Statement – Discussion was held regarding the TEMS mission statement and several sample statements were reviewed by the commission. Mark Smith noted that this statement should come from those that have been involved in EMS for a long period of time and know the essence of the service through their years of experience. All members were asked to draft an email with key elements they consider important to have in the statement and send them to Barbara who will compile

them for the next meeting. Mark Smith noted that a solid draft should be available for the April meeting.

2. TEMS Business Plan was discussed. It was agreed to develop the current operating model for operations and finances and then a target plan. Mark Smith agreed to work on this plan with other members of the commission.
3. Mark Smith noted that the Marketing Committee did not meet this past month but several areas have been explored which include a Facebook page, Channel 17 ticker requesting volunteers, and the possibility of an infomercial. The Facebook page was discussed and it was felt by the commission there should be no posting allowed from the public. Mark is also working on a poster about volunteerism.

John Butkus presented two different websites for the commission to consider with regard to publicity. Several ideas were found to be very good. The TEMS website needs to be updated. This is currently being worked on.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, Vi Watson moved, seconded by Diane Mayo, to adjourn the meeting at 10:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Crandall  
Administrative Assistant

The above minutes are considered a draft until they are approved at the next meeting of the TEMS Commission.