

**Walworth County Fire/EMS Study Committee**  
**August 30, 2018 Meeting Minutes**  
**County Board Room 114, Walworth County Government Center**  
**100 W. Walworth Street, Elkhorn, Wisconsin**

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The meeting was called to order by Chair Dale Wilson at 1:09 p.m.

Roll call was conducted and a quorum of members was present: Chair Dale Wilson, Vice Chair John Peters (1:46 pm), Denise Pieroni, Bruce Vander Veen, Dave Nelson. Lowell Hagen and James Weiss were absent. Others present: Dr. Steven Andrews-Aurora Health Care; Dr. James MacNeal-Mercy Health (1:14 pm); Walworth County Administrator David Bretl; Captain-Communications Jamie Green; Village of Darien Trustee Cheryl Kaufenberg; Sean Marquis, Mercy Health

**Bruce Vander Veen made a motion, seconded by Denise Pieroni, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried by voice vote.**

Pieroni suggested a change to the July 19, 2018 minutes on page 1, clarifying there are other paramedic services in Walworth County, but Lake Geneva is the only municipality with its own service. She requested the change “municipally-staffed paramedic service” be made. She also noted that her last name is misspelled in the minutes and requested they be corrected. **Pieroni made a motion, seconded by Dave Nelson, to approve the July 19, 2018 meeting minutes as amended. Motion carried by voice vote.**

**Public comment** – Captain-Communications Jamie Green recognized the Committee for acknowledging dispatchers and the stress that their jobs entail. Green commented that Dr. MacNeal had indicated a dispatch-centered response plan would be ideal in last month’s meeting. Green disagreed and stated plans should already be made and written so when the emergency occurs, there is already a plan in place. He added it is unfair to put all of the responsibility on the dispatchers to choose who to send. By having response plans preset between agencies, it allows for dispatchers to more easily follow procedures in times of crisis.

Regarding the summary report of times that Vice Chair Peters had mentioned, Green clarified that Walworth County does not currently have the same ProPhoenix services as Lake Geneva. He added the Sheriff is willing to host the server and infrastructure but the County would need to get the ProPhoenix fire module in order to generate the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) report mentioned. This would also require agencies to be on the fire module and to submit their NFIRS reports to the County. The program would need to operate at the county level and at each agency level as well. He added the agencies within Walworth County need to improve their reporting of call times after the initial dispatch and acknowledgement times. There has never been a request for this information so this will be an operational change for the dispatch center. Green will do research to see if it is possible to go back into calls and enter times retroactively. Currently, the County cannot create a report to display individual calls so it would be very time consuming to get a listing of all calls and times associated with them. Pieroni inquired how quickly the fire module could be implemented and Green said it would take some time to get the same report that Vice Chair Peters is able to request for Lake Geneva. Wilson asked if it is possible to create a similar report with our current software and Green said he will need to talk with ProPhoenix, and there may be an associated cost. He added that most of the information on Lake Geneva’s report should be available to each fire department through NFIRS, but it just may not be in the same readily available form.

Dr. MacNeal arrived to the meeting while Captain Green was speaking and he clarified that he had not meant dispatchers should respond on their own. He agrees with Green that there should be a plan in place for times of crisis.

Cheryl Kaufenberg, Village of Darien Trustee, introduced herself and said she is currently serving her last two year term for the Village. She discussed issues that exist between the Town and Village of Darien and explained

how the Village has tried to solve the issue of insufficient coverage for emergency calls. She discussed the decision by the Village to vote against using Metro and how they had instead chosen Medix services due to the high cost of Metro. She said the Village has been doing better this past June and July since the creation of a POC (Paid-On-Call) program and provided a complete report on progress. She also offered to furnish the report to anyone who is interested and stated that she believes the program is making a difference.

### **Unfinished Business**

- Staffing models for fire and EMS departments

Wilson clarified prior discussions had taken place and this is a follow-up. He said this will be discussed with Item 8D.

### **New Business**

- PSAP guidelines

Chair Wilson read through the enclosure obtained from Rock County and confirmed with Bretl there had not been another meeting related to the 911 board. He asked Captain Green if Walworth County has any agreements with departments like Rock County described in the document and said this would be a good document to use in creating our own. Captain Green said he checked with Kathy Nitsch in the Sheriff's Office and she said there are not any agreements like this between any agencies for whom Walworth County dispatches. Green said there is value in specifying what is expected from dispatchers and agencies and he believes a document like this would be an excellent starting point. Wilson said if we're making recommendations, it should be a change of common protocols and this document would make a lot of sense. He said we could work with Corporation Counsel to come up with a similar agreement that could possibly be discussed with the 911 board. Nelson agreed and said it would be helpful if what is expected from both sides was in writing. Captain Green added that part of the document would address training, so a change in expectations should result. Pieroni inquired about the difference between Rock County and the 911 board and Wilson answered they are comparable, although we do not have the larger municipalities that Rock County does. Vander Veen added we need to have rules. Pieroni asked how PSAPs in the county work together and Vander Veen said he assumed the 911 board would be discussing this. Bretl advised a copy of the ordinance be reviewed.

- Monthly response time reports

Wilson referenced Peters' enclosure and added it was discussed during the public comment period. He said one potential difficulty is a lack of responses from struggling departments and one recommendation would be to rely on departments at this stage, which may present a challenge. Pieroni pointed to page 15 and said this was a great chart to include with the four key response times. She asked if all four of those are currently available but just not put into the right field in the software yet to be able to be reported in the future. Green said there are similar areas in our CAD response times but our current software is not the same. He will be in discussion with ProPhoenix to discuss possible information we could acquire. Green added it is up to ProPhoenix what information we can access. Pieroni inquired about the Cities of Delavan and Whitewater and Green said they are currently on the same system as Walworth County and do not have access to the reports Lake Geneva has. Walworth County has no control over how those dispatchers are reporting times. All departments are trained by the same company but they may have different protocols. Wilson said it would be helpful to this Committee to be able to see monthly response time reports by agency, as well as the 911 board. Vice Chair Peters arrived at 1:46 pm. He inquired how the County goes about Quality Assurance for EMD and Green said there is no report from ProPhoenix for that and they go through EMD calls manually and do a random audit. Pieroni inquired about pricing for each agency if the County were to include the fire module because each municipality would be responsible to send someone to discuss possibilities. She asked if ProPhoenix could provide an estimated cost to the County for hosting the server, along with the cost to each municipality for the basic level of service. Peters said each municipality would also need to pay for the cost of each vehicle and report software, and other hardware that needs to be purchased. Green said the County would pay to host the server, but the price would be

dependent on how many vehicles are connected in each municipality. Green said we would have to get the fire side of the program, at least at the county level, to generate the correct reports. Vander Veen said this is an advantage of taking this discussion to the 911 board. Green said ProPhoenix could possibly create reports from the information we have. Green added that ProPhoenix runs 30-90 seconds behind so dispatchers have to handwrite times and then enter them later, but the system response has gotten better. Vander Veen added the 911 board can look at this information and decide what is important. Bretl distributed ordinance 1117-06/18 regarding the 911 board. Discussion ensued regarding nomination and membership on the 911 board.

- Waukesha County study report

Wilson commented that the top priority identified is dispatch, and this is ours as well. The majority of the other information related to specifics in the Waukesha County area. Vice Chair Peters noted the report recommended regionalization of EMS and better utilization of Fire/Paramedics, keeping ambulances in strategic locations, rather than separation of Fire and EMS. Discussion ensued regarding benefits of cross-training and the federal regulations related to hours and overtime pay for 24 vs. 12 hour shifts. Green said one recommendation was loosening standards for low-threat calls and said he will discuss this idea with the EMD committee. He also recommended having a third party evaluate protocols and added the County is budgeted for a study committee for dispatch in 2019. This can tell us if we need to add staff, change protocols, etc. Peters added it was interesting how many departments had consolidated before this study, Western Lakes Department for example. He believes they have 5-6000 calls per year and they have a minimal full-time staff with part time staff for additional coverage. He said Waukesha County seems to be doing a good job with sharing services. Pieroni inquired if we could get more information and Peters suggested that someone could come and talk to us from one of the organizations.

- Additions, deletions or edits to Committee Recommendations document

Discussion ensued regarding recommended changes document and the following changes were discussed:

- Change item III.B.v. to say: "Develop a unified dispatch protocol for all PSAPs to include, but not be limited to, response time standards and required mutual aid protocols," and remove item III.F, changing item III.G to item III.F.
- Change item III.E to add: "to aid in information sharing, consistent reporting, and GPS monitoring."
- Add item III.G to say: "Require all PSAPS to generate reports of response time statistics by agency to both the Fire/EMS committee and the 911 Governing Board."
- Add item III.H to say: "Encourage regional cooperation in evaluating resources and utilizing financial support, if allocated from the Walworth County budget."

**Vice Chair Peters made a motion, seconded by Pieroni to make changes to Committee Recommendations document as discussed. Motion carried 5-0.**

Pieroni added the Committee discussed earlier that other departments could come in and discuss new methods and how they have been working. Vice Chair Peters said he would contact Western Lakes and see if someone can come to our meeting. Dr. MacNeal asked if someone could come with their PSAP as well to answer questions regarding dispatch and response. Dr. Andrews said there should be a third party to ensure budget and accreditation is correct. Pieroni suggested we look for different certifications and the value of accreditations. Wilson asked Green if he could research different accreditations and how ours line up with what is required. Green will report on current accreditations. Dr. MacNeal said that to be successful, the medical director should be local for any 911 ambulance provider in Walworth County rather than someone from further away. Vander Veen added it would be ideal to have one set of protocols. Dr. Andrews said the state is considering mandatory statewide protocols and said involved medical direction should be a natural requirement but he is unsure how that could be made into a county requirement. Dr. MacNeal said the County should try to prevent private

ambulance services from coming in and taking calls. He thinks that any service responding to a 911 situation should be approved by someone so private services cannot come in and take revenue. Discussion ensued regarding agreements and protocols. Pieroni asked if there could be a recommendation regarding medical direction. She went back to page 15 in report and asked if there should be a recommendation that all PSAPs provide response and Wilson replied that number 5 would cover that.

**Public comment** – Cheryl Kaufenberg inquired about the Southwestern group mentioned by Vander Veen in the previous meeting and Vander Veen confirmed the group was still meeting. She also mentioned that a young woman in her community inquired about joining an agency and said she could pass along the woman’s information to anyone who is interested in hiring her. She also inquired about dive teams in the County and discussion followed.

Sean Marquis, Mercy Health inquired if ALS should be included in recommendations and assessment of ALS utilization and find a way to provide ALS care when needed. He asked about separating BLS and ALS response requirements and possibly tying in private ambulance services when they are needed. Dr. MacNeal reiterated that any EMS unit responding as part of Walworth County would need to have GPS tracking, local medical direction and all be a part of the same system. Vice Chair Peters agreed with Dr. MacNeal, and said we have enough difficulty covering BLS calls. Municipalities and departments need to assess their services provided and see if they are really meeting their needs. If they are not, then they need to come up with a plan to meet those needs. This committee’s charge is to provide recommendations for service. Dr. MacNeal said we should not paint ourselves in a corner with recommendations, but we should provide appropriate response times for Fire, BLS, and ALS calls and find efficiencies for the entire system. The overarching theme of the recommendations should be how to achieve high standards for Fire and EMS services. Wilson said he will have Emily circulate the recommendations after changes are made to all members and ensure changes are being captured correctly.

**Next meeting date and time:** The next meeting was confirmed for Tuesday September 25, 2018 at 1:00 p.m. in County Board Room 114 at the Walworth County Government Center.

Bretl added funding has been carried forward and suggested this be discussed at the next meeting because it will be difficult to roll the funds into next year. Discussion ensued regarding the possibility of using funds towards ProPhoenix to help with reports, analysis, and GPS capabilities. Green agreed to research ProPhoenix and the ability to procure the data this committee is looking for. He will be out of town for next month’s meeting but will get the information to Bretl and Wilson.

## **Adjournment**

**On motion by Nelson, seconded by Pieroni, Chair Wilson adjourned the meeting at 2:56 p.m.**