

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

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

Roll call was conducted and the following members were present: Chair Dale Wilson, Vice Chair John Peters, Dave Nelson, Denise Pieroni, Bruce Vander Veen and James Weiss. Lowell Hagen was absent. A quorum was declared.

Others present: Walworth County Administrator David Bretl; County Board Chair Nancy Russell; Elkhorn Fire Chief Rod Smith; Captain of Communications Jamie Green-Sheriff's Office; Teddy Menasco, Town of Delavan EMS; Ashley Vickers, Mercy Health EMS; Lt. John Ennis, Walworth County Emergency Management Director; Tammy Chatman, Flight for Life; Chris Wistrom, Mercy MD-1; Chris Siebeneich, North Central EMS & Rescue; and James Baker, Medix Ambulance Services.

James Weiss made a motion, seconded by Dave Nelson, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried by voice vote.

Vice Chair Peters made a motion, seconded by Dave Nelson, to approve the August 30, 2018 meeting minutes. Motion carried by voice vote.

Dave Nelson made a motion, seconded by Vice Chair Peters, to approve the September 25, 2018 meeting minutes. Motion carried by voice vote.

Vice Chair Peters made a motion, seconded by Bruce Vander Veen, to approve the October 23, 2018 meeting minutes. Motion carried by voice vote.

Public comment

Tammy Chatman, Flight for Life, said Flight for Life has served the southeastern region of Wisconsin for 35 years, and now has two ALS and critical care ground units. Chatman said Flight for Life investigated the potential volume of service needed in Walworth County to see if their organization could provide ground assistance. She urged the committee to determine, based on factual data, what service needs are paramount: ALS, BLS, or both. Once the data is available, her organization can assess whether it is feasible for them to provide ground service.

James Baker, CEO of Medix Ambulance Services, said Medix currently has verbal and written intercept agreements with several EMS providers within the County. He explained the issues with reimbursement for services he is experiencing with some of the municipalities. To date in 2018, Medix is only getting approximately \$88 per trip, which is not sustainable. His company will be sending cancellation notices to slow and non-paying municipalities. A new agreement will be negotiated, with intercept payments in the range of \$350 per event. In addition, the agreement will confirm that Medix will be the highest authority on scene and perform paramedic evaluations and determine the level of transport required. The agreement will also define turn-down protocols. Baker said he would provide ALS service to any requesting municipality; however, Medix personnel will not get into the back of an ambulance for those who do not have an agreement with Medix. Baker noted his service is experiencing the same recruitment issues as the municipalities. Chris Wistrom, Mercy MD-1, expressed concerns about safety in transferring patients from one ambulance to another along the side of the road.

Chris Siebeneich, North Central EMS & Rescue, said his company is housed in Delavan and provides BLS services, and is working on upgrading their certification for paramedic level services. North Central has

experience in mental health transport service as well. He stated he would be interested in working with Walworth County to assist in providing services, on an as-needed or permanent basis.

Unfinished Business

- The County's potential role in Advanced Life Support Services (ALS)
Chair Wilson said concepts forwarded by Committee members and the emergency physicians were discussed at the last meetings, but no action was taken because of lack of a quorum. County Administrator David Bretl thanked the Committee and the doctors for their efforts in formulating proposals for consideration. He would like to update the Executive Committee at its next meeting on potential options developed throughout the study process. Denise Pieroni asked that the option of County participation in service provision be included in the discussion at the Executive Committee meeting. Bretl said it is premature to make formal recommendations to the County Board without sufficient data to support them. The Committee concurred with Bretl. Vice Chair Peters commented that implementing the Pro Phoenix module will provide factual data to help identify priorities. **Vice Chair Peters made a motion, seconded by Dave Nelson, to revisit the County's role in providing ALS services in the future, when the facts are available, and to broaden the scope of service consideration at that time, if warranted. Motion carried 6-0.**

- Follow-up on speakers for consolidated dispatch
This item was tabled indefinitely. The topic may be discussed in the future, if the Committee desires.

New Business

- Potential use for Fire/EMS Study Committee funds
Chair Wilson said committee consensus was to use the remaining study funds of \$35,000 toward the ProPhoenix fire module project. Communications Captain Jamie Green distributed an estimate from ProPhoenix Corporation. The provision of software to the Sheriff's Office would cost approximately \$60,000, which does not include costs to the individual fire departments for the necessary hardware nor any hardware costs for the Sheriff's Office. In addition, Green recommended adding \$5,000 to cover additional hardware needs at the Sheriff's Office and a \$5,000 project contingency, for a total of \$70,000. Green noted that private ambulance services would not be included, and raised the question as to whether to allow those agencies access to private information. Green does not anticipate the new module would impose a significant burden on dispatch staff, depending on whether the CAD will be combined, or separate for fire services. Chair Wilson said he discussed the project with Sheriff Picknell, who is supportive of the project, as it enhances situational awareness. The Sheriff wants to make certain that the individual departments are aware that their obligations might include performing data entry, and that implementation of the module might impose a financial burden on the departments. Sheriff Picknell also wanted to ensure that Pro Phoenix's program would provide the viable data for decision-making and optimizing operations. Captain Green said the implementation costs to the departments haven't been finalized; ProPhoenix will need to meet with the individual departments. Nelson asked if some departments didn't participate, could they still obtain reports, and Green said data on response times could be provided. Discussion ensued about programming needs. Bruce Vander Veen said the recommendation to put the funds toward the ProPhoenix implementation is a positive step in encouraging departments to cooperate to provide better service. **Chair Wilson made a motion, seconded by Vice Chair Peters, to recommend using the existing Fire/EMS study funds of \$35,000 toward implementing ProPhoenix in the Dispatch Center to aid in accurate data harvesting. Motion carried 6-0.** Chair Wilson will add the recommendation to the document being provided to the Executive Committee, and was directed to research available funding sources to complete the project.

- Possibility for Regionalization
Bruce Vander Veen said his group will meet next week. Vice Chair Peters asked if the Committee would benefit from having speakers from entities who have consolidated resources to share their experiences. Bretl

said he would include the presentation on the March 4, 2019 Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee (ICC) agenda. Vice Chair Peters will reach out to engage participants and schedule them to present to the ICC on March 4, 2019 and at the February 2019 Study Committee meeting.

- Additions, deletions or edits to Committee Recommendations document
Committee consensus was to add the fire module to the Draft Recommendations document.

- Topics for next meeting

Chair Wilson will put the regionalization presentations and a follow-up on the ProPhoenix module on the next meeting agenda.

Public comment

James Baker, Medix Ambulance Services, suggested that when the data collection system is implemented that the Committee consider staffing coverage levels and pay particular attention to the hours and areas in which there is no or limited coverage. He noted it would be valuable for each agency to provide a regular staffing report.

Lt. John Ennis, Walworth County Emergency Management Director, said he has been at the Sheriff's Office for 34 years and a fire fighter/EMS provider for 38 years. He thanked the Committee for its efforts to formulate recommendations to improve countywide service. He asked the Committee when evaluating individual department response times to include the capability in ProPhoenix to register the time it takes volunteers to reach the station from the time the tone goes off until the ambulance is dispatched. He also recommended departments enter all of their individual units into the system. Lt. Ennis said lack of departmental resources and increased call volume are ongoing problems. Volunteer staffing has not been able to meet demands.

Next meeting date and time: The next meeting will be held in February 2019, in Room 114 of the Walworth County Government Center. **The date and time will be established upon determining the availability of regionalization speakers.**

Adjournment

On motion by Denise Pieroni, seconded by Vice Chair Peters, Chair Wilson adjourned the meeting at 2:47 p.m.