

**Walworth County Fire/EMS Study Committee**  
**October 23, 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 11:11 a.m.

Roll call was conducted and no quorum was established. Chair Dale Wilson, Denise Pieroni and Dave Nelson were present. Lowell Hagen, Vice Chair John Peters, Bruce Vander Veen and James Weiss were absent.

Others present: Dr. Steven Andrews-Aurora Health Care; Dr. James MacNeal-Mercy Health; Walworth County Administrator David Bretl; Village of Darien Administrator Rebecca LeMire; Delavan Fire Chief Tim O'Neill; Larry Lester and Teddy Menasco, Town of Delavan EMS; and Ashley Vickers, Mercy Health EMS

*[Recorder's Note: Although no quorum was established, members present discussed some agenda items. No actions were taken.]*

**Agenda approval** – No action.

**Approval of August 30 and September 25, 2018 meeting minutes** – No action.

**Public comment** – There was none.

**Unfinished Business**

- The County's potential role in Advanced Life Support Services (ALS)  
Denise Pieroni, Dr. MacNeal and Dr. Andrews submitted proposals concerning the potential of County provision of ALS services. [ See the October 23, 2018 agenda packet, pages 8-17, and handouts distributed at the meeting on the specifics of the proposals.] County Administrator David Bretl said he appreciates the thought put into the proposals, and noted there is no funding available from the County to provide ALS services. Funding would have to be acquired through a tax to residents. He added if private and municipal services were also engaged in providing services, it would provide more opportunity for flexibility and buy-in from departments and private vendors. The County Board would ultimately decide on what commitment, if any, it would support. The County could purchase ambulances and equipment; however, there is a legal prohibition on purchasing and equipping fire vehicles and equipment. Discussion ensued as to penalties for non-response and the minimum number of ALS ambulances and staff required to be effective. Dr. MacNeal suggested having private contractors pay to become a County provider for the privilege of billing residents. Teddy Menasco, Town of Delavan EMS, shared her concern about recruiting EMTs with advanced certifications, and asked if the County would consider providing adequate wages and benefits to encourage qualified individuals to remain in Walworth County. She suggested contacting Rock and Milwaukee Counties for compensation information. Dr. Andrews suggested if the County be made owner/holder of all EMS equipment, municipalities could use their funds towards compensation of qualified personnel and improving their stations. Bretl said that could only be accomplished if a Fire District were created.

Discussion ensued on whether the County ALS service provision should be mandatory for municipalities. Consensus was it would work more efficiently if the service was required, along with adherence to County dispatch protocols. Members present concurred that the highest priority is making BLS and ALS available countywide. Continued municipal fire service provision is also a concern because recruiting volunteers has become difficult, but should be addressed separately.

Bretl said he wanted to take recommendations on ALS services to the Executive Committee for consideration before the end of this year. Consensus was to provide options for a County-based public service model and for ALS intercept services only. The proposals will be incorporated into the Recommendations of the Walworth

County Fire/EMS Study Committee for approval by this committee in November, and then forwarded to the Executive Committee for review.

- Follow-up on speakers for consolidated dispatch – Vice Chair Peters is working on this.

### **New Business**

- Potential use for Fire/EMS Study Committee funds

Discussion ensued on using remaining funds for the Study Committee toward financing the ProPhoenix fire module implementation countywide. Nelson said the Fire Chiefs discussed the merits of ProPhoenix at their last meeting and most officers were in favor of using the system in some capacity. Captain Green's handout included a figure of \$50,000 for the County to host the module. Fees for equipping each vehicle would cost the municipalities \$2,000, plus fees for antennas, laptops, internet access and maintenance, depending on the level of service. Bretl suggested contacting Captain Green to see if the overall \$50,000 cost could be negotiated. This item will be discussed at the November Fire/EMS Study Committee meeting.

- Possibility for Regionalization – No action.
- County's role in addressing the staffing and coverage issues – No action.
- Additions, deletions or edits to Committee Recommendations document – No action.
- Public input received by the County Administrator regarding the Fire/EMS study  
Bretl read an anonymous letter he received concerning the Fire/EMS study. The writer noted that volunteerism is diminishing and he has seen individuals die because of lack of ALS response. The author feels the County should have its own Medical Director to monitor private ALS providers, and recommended municipalities move toward funding full-time employees for EMS.
- Topics for next meeting – See above herein.

**Public comment** – There was none.

**Next meeting date and time:** The next meeting was confirmed for Thursday, November 8, 2018 at 1:00 p.m. in County Board Room 114 at the Walworth County Government Center. Chair Wilson suggested members check the County website prior to the meeting to confirm the date.

**The meeting concluded at 12:52 p.m.**