



Department of Emergency Services

Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

August 17, 2023

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Executive Director Haas called the virtual and in-person meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. on August 17th, 2023. We do not have a quorum.

**Present:**

**Non-Voting Members:**

- DES Director Scott Haas
- Assistant Chief Jeff Morgan
- Assistant Chief Phil English
- Assistant Chief Zach Yerkie
- Medical Director Dr. Joseph Ciotola

**Support Staff:**

- Office Coordinator, Kelly Nelson

**Voting Members:**

- Taylor Oldershaw (Consumer)
- Gabriel Ripley (Consumer)
- Steve Souder (Consumer)
- Steve Wilson (Consumer)

**County Commissioner**

**Approval of Minutes:**

- May 8th, 2023, Minutes: Not approved
  - Lack of quorum

**Announcements/Special Guests:**

None

### **Commissioner Update:**

Attending MACo Conference

### **Departmental Update:**

- Introductions
  - Gabriel Ripley – New Member
    - Lives in Millington
    - Firefighter/ Paramedic for Annapolis City Fire Department
    - Formerly worked for DES for a few years

### **Medical Director's update:**

- Had a massive MI on 6/14
  - Thank you to the crews who transported him to AAMC and University of Maryland
  - 6/16- Had double bypass surgery
  - 6/20- Was released to good friends with a transport unit.
  - Started the cardiac rehabilitation program at Chestertown Hospital
- Attended the 50<sup>th</sup> celebration of MIEMSS in Annapolis
  - Won one of the 50 stars of EMS award.

### **EMS Update:**

- Statistics- April to June 2023
  - Total calls: 2,052
  - Total transports: 964
  - Increase of 50 calls over this time frame last year
- New Units
  - New EMS 4 was delivered and placed in service
    - Was ordered in FY22
      - Two years to get here
  - New transport unit on order from FY24 budget
    - 18-24 month build time
      - 6-12 months just to get chassis
    - 365 days to complete when chassis is in
    - This unit will be for Station 200
- Awards
  - 2023 Mission Lifeline Gold + award
    - 6<sup>th</sup> year receiving this award
  - New Frontier Award category finalist
    - The MICH team was nominated and made the Top 3
      - Over 100 applicants

- The team was featured in an article in JEMS magazine
- Staffing update
  - 5 New hires started on 7/19/23
    - 1 Paramedic
    - 4 EMTs
      - 2 are from local volunteer stations in the County
    - Finished orientation 8/8/2023
    - Will be precepting for 4-6 months
  - P200 will be placed in service depending on staffing
    - Once all new hires are cleared the 6<sup>th</sup> Paramedic unit (P200) will be staffed 24/7
- New Equipment
  - All frontline trucks have received upgraded BiPAP ventilators
  - New IV pumps
    - Currently training personnel
    - Expected to be deployed on units in September
  - Rescue task force/Active threat response
    - Have acquired ballistic PPE
      - Will be in place on units in September
      - Training will be completed by August
- Questions:
  - Q: Are we tracking acuity changes in these additional calls?
  - A: Yes, these are noted in the weekly reports to the Commissioners
    - 150-185 Calls for Service per week
    - 4-5 Echo responses
      - Used to be about 1
    - 40-45 Delta responses
      - Used to be 20-30
    - Increase in low acuity calls as well
      - Inundated with lift assists
        - Almost to the point where a dedicated unit for lift assists might be needed.
        - Require 2 transport units & supervisor if volunteers do not make a response
          - Need 5 people for lifts
  - Q: Do we keep statistics on lift assists where volunteer units do not respond?
  - A: There are in-house statistics and a report can be generated

**Communications Update:**

- Year to Date Statistics
  - 45,117 calls received
  - 20,576 Emergency calls
  - 25,541 non-Emergency
    - Wireless calls- 15,531

- Wireline calls- 1,567
    - VoIP- 880
    - Text to 9-1-1- 39
      - Increase in texts
- Staffing
  - Currently fully staffed at 25
    - 2 new hires since last meeting
      - 1 starting on 8/30/2023
    - 1 Communications Chief
    - 4 Lieutenants
    - 4 Sergeants
    - 9 PSD III
      - CTO trainers
    - 1 PSD II
    - 1 PSD I
    - 5 PSD trainees
      - 1 shift will have 2
      - All others will each have 1
  - Difficulties in recruitment
    - Communications is getting more involved in Public Relations
      - Have participated in:
        - 1<sup>st</sup> Responder Fridays
        - Mission Critical Partners Statewide 911 specialist recruitment video
          - Sent 2 dispatchers
            - Brandon Williams
            - Meg Roney
          - MCP reported that both did an exceptional job
        - 4<sup>th</sup> of July Celebration
        - Centreville National Night Out
- Backup Center
  - Is 99% operational
    - Upcoming meeting to discuss bringing it fully operational
- Training
  - Active Assailant training with EMS
  - QA training
    - Sent 3 staff members
  - PowerFTO
    - New system to track training new hires and documents for compliance
- Upcoming
  - Upgrade to the VESTA system
    - Will submit to 911 Board for funding
    - Currently the phones only ring to certain positions in the room

- Changes to the system will allow all positions to ring with incoming calls
        - This will revert the room to how it was before the renovations
        - Will hopefully improve answer times
    - Participating in the upcoming Motorola Vertical Location service test
      - We are one of two local agencies selected
      - Is an upgrade to Motorola location services
        - Will be able to report call information based on
          - Latitude
          - Longitude
          - Elevation
- Questions/ Comments:
  - C: Take full credit that we are fully staffed
    - We are probably the only 9-1-1 center in America to be fully staffed
  - C: Four Videos are being produced by Mission Critical Partners for 911 career recruitment
    - The videos are different based on geographic location in the state
      - Issues based on location are handled differently hence the multiple videos
    - 911 Board and the subcommittee have a meeting coming up to vote on release dates
      - Need to verify that the required content was included in the videos

### **Fire Marshal Update:**

- Chief Morgan gave a brief explanation of the Division overview slide
- Office personnel
  - Addition of 1 full-time Fire Inspector II
    - John Lane
      - Former Fire Marshal for QAC
      - Retired from Anne Arundel Fire Department
      - Started fulltime 8/2/23
        - Was contractual prior to full-time status
  - 1- 30hr/ week Fire Inspector II
  - 3- 30hr/ week Fire Inspectors
- Projects in Progress
  - YMCA – Centreville
    - Still under construction
    - Expected to be done end of year
  - Postal Rd Apartment buildings- Chester
  - Four Seasons Condos- Chester
    - Buildings #8 & 9
    - More coming

- Perry's Retreat- Grasonville
  - Single-family homes off Perry's Corner Rd.
- Completed Pool AED & phone inspections
  - A few need follow-ups
  - Child size pads are on backorder
- County school inspections
  - About to begin before the school year starts
- Recently completed projects
  - Kent Island Library Renovation – Stevensville
  - Sugar Doodles- Kent Narrows Boatel, Chester
  - Queenstown Assisted Living Addition- Queenstown
    - Will increase capacity from 53 units to 78
    - Waiting for state approval to occupy
  - Everside Health Office- Centreville
  - Tokyo Bay Restaurant- Stevensville
    - Operating at a reduced capacity due to the current sprinkler system
      - When updated the capacity will increase from 99 to 130

**Special Operations Update:**

- Hazardous Mitigation Projects
  - Hazard Mitigation Plan
    - The county is required to have a Hazardous Mitigation plan
      - The plan must be updated every 5 years
        - No update to the plan = no Federal funding
    - The Commissioners have signed off on the Grant to begin this project
      - Need to complete the RFP and select a vendor
  - Cloverfields Drainage project
    - The major issue in this community is drainage
      - If this was a new community, under current construction standards this community would not have been built
    - This project is grant-funded
      - The Department of Public Works is overseeing the project
      - Emergency Management is handling the grant
    - 2 meetings have been held so far
      - Public meeting to be held on 8/30/23
        - Will inform the public of the next steps
          - Some steps might be to buy homes to condemn and tear down
            - There are no good solutions currently to this issue
  - Station 400 Generator
    - Was ordered 2.5 years ago
      - This grant has been extended 3 times due to COVID supply chain issues

- Has finally been delivered and installed
        - Waiting on the final hook-up to the building
          - Expected to be completed by the next DESAC meeting
- Training
  - EMS Training Coordinator
    - We are in the process of hiring an EMS Training Coordinator
      - The current training coordinator on staff has been made the Communications Training Coordinator
  - METERS Instructors
    - have taught three classes
    - The Previous Training Coordinator was the only person on staff qualified to teach
    - We now have two personnel on staff qualified to teach
      - Amanda Darling- Office Coordinator
      - Tracey Johnston- COM Training Coordinator
  - Everbridge
    - Sudlersville VFC is currently the guinea pig for this program
    - Mass notification system
      - Better known as reverse 9-1-1
    - Volunteers are slowly adopting this system for paging needs
      - Text notification when calls go out
  - New Hire Training
    - Completed 5 new hire classes between EMS and COM
    - Implemented use of Agency360\*
      - New training platform
  - Red Cross switchover
    - Currently use ECSI
      - Moving to Red Cross
    - Available training
      - ACLS
      - PALS
      - CPR
      - Advanced EMS Training
    - 6 Instructors are in the process of certifying
      - This will be the first time DES will be able to teach these types of courses in-house
      - The new EMS training coordinator will oversee tracking and organizing training
  - HazMat Transportation Grant
    - DES will be offering 5 training classes across all 3 battalions on Electric Vehicle Fires
      - Classes will start at the end of the month
      - Training will be held at
        - Grasonville VFC

- Queen Anne- Hillsboro VFC
      - Sudlersville VFC
      - 2 sessions to MFRI
    - All sessions are open to everybody
    - Electric vehicle fires are going to be on the forefront and a growing issue
      - Volunteer system does not have the tools to tackle this
  - Active Threat Training/ RTF
    - Process started before COVID
      - Has picked back up
    - Equipment has been bought
    - There are 6 certified instructors
    - Current focus is on training Law Enforcement on their component
      - Volunteers will be trained after Law Enforcement
      - Estimating 1.5- 2 years before all parties are trained up
    - Participating in a FEMA Active Threat tabletop exercise
      - Hope to be able to convert this to a local tabletop drill in the future
- Planning
  - Active Threat Planning
    - Planning is ongoing
    - Volunteers and Law Enforcement are major partners
    - Policies have been completed
      - Volunteers have voted to adopt policy
      - Law Enforcement is in the process of finalizing their policy
    - Plan Progression
    - Training phase
  - Strategic Planning
    - Got derailed
      - Getting back on track
    - 5-year plan
      - Covers all divisions
      - All 5 divisions contribute to the plan
    - Should be completed by the next meeting for review
  - Emergency Operations Plan
    - Is required by the State on a 5-year cycle
    - Currently in the final stages
      - Commissioner authorization
        - Needs to be adopted
      - Sent for final review by all county departments
        - The Fire & EMS Commission has approved their section
    - The plan identifies responsibilities during an emergency
      - Working on how to respond and who responds
      - What plans are being made to execute that response



- Collecting Response Plans
  - Schools
    - We were recently given access to Navigate360 by QACPS
      - Software used to store plans and blueprints
        - Working to have documents uploaded to CAD & Crewforce/ Shieldforce
          - iPads on units will have access to pull-up plans
  - Nursing Homes/ Assisted Living
    - Working to add plans/ blueprints to CAD/ Crewforce/ Shieldforce
  - Churches
    - Intern worked all summer to get local churches to prepare emergency response plans
- Events and Public Outreach
  - Continuing Community Stop the Bleed Training
    - Completed training with all of the Department of Public Works personnel
      - Was a multi-day event
  - Prom Promise- QACHS
    - Assisted by Goodwill VFD
  - Community Events
    - Centreville Day
    - Drink Maryland
    - Queen Anne's County Sheriff's Office open house (October)
  - Hosted Compass Regional Hospice Tabletop exercise
    - Completed in June
    - Focused on evacuation scenarios
  - First Responder Fridays
    - Is a Parks & Recreation program
      - Educates school-age children on what we do
    - COM, EMS, and Animal Control participated
  - July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration
    - Area for the command post was under construction
      - Presented some challenges
    - Use this event as a drill
      - IT to practice setting up command post
      - Command Post familiarization for staff
      - Counts as a Federally required exercise
  - Symphony Village CERT Social Hour & Safety Day
    - Symphony Village is our largest CERT group
      - 50 members
    - Safety Day is coming up
      - Assisting to organize it

- Drug-Free Coalition
  - Townhall coming up on September 21st
    - To be held at KIHS
    - Dr. Ciotola to be on the panel
  - Will be live-streamed
  - Expecting
    - Lt. Governor Miller
    - Special Secretary of Opioid Coordination Center
    - Hoping to have 100 attendees to ask the hard questions
- School CERT program
  - KIHS and QACHS high school programs
  - Stevensville Middle School
    - 3 months of Monday- Friday instruction
  - Teaching
    - Various CPR and Stop the Bleed trainings
  - Attended Back to School nights
- 2023 Bay Bridge Run/ Walk – 11/12/23
  - Beginning to plan
- Questions/ Comments:
  - Q: Does Queen Anne’s County need to do anything notification/ warning wise after Maui fires?
  - A: Civil Defense is not really a thing in Queen Anne’s County
    - 50% of volunteer fire stations do not utilize sirens anymore
    - The communities surrounding the other 50% want the sirens gone
      - Volunteer stations use the sirens for alerting for fire calls
        - Many citizens would not know what the sirens meant if they sounded
          - Less than 50% of the QAC population would be able to hear a siren from their homes
    - We have other capabilities
      - Everbridge System
        - Has the option to give updates on weather emergencies through the National Weather Service
        - Users can set alert settings
          - Over 50 weather alerting options
      - IPAWS- Integrated Public Alert & Warning System
        - 4 personnel on staff are certified to send out messages
      - Breezeline login
        - Provides the ability to interrupt Breezeline service to push out emergency messages
      - NOAA weather radio
        - Bay City tornado
          - Weather alerts were too late

- NOAA weather radio would have been the only way to get the notification faster
    - DES purchased numerous radios
      - Every station has one
      - 6 radios in headquarters
    - Pros- most effective to alert and get your attention
    - Con- No volume control
  - Everbridge is the most effective system
    - The current system has all the phone numbers out of the white pages
      - As people move away from hardlines there are less people getting notified
    - The County PIO is about to begin a social media campaign to get people to sign up
      - 20,000 residents are currently signed up
- C: a notice to sign up should be placed in property tax bills and be made to sign up when paying taxes
- C: People need to sign up for cellphone alerts
  - We get about 3,000 sign ups after an event
    - Tornado was a major example of this
  - There is about a 30 second difference between the NOAA radio alert and the Everbridge alert
  - Has been used to alert citizens in Centreville that there was an escaped prisoner in the area
  - There is the ability to override subscriber preferences in jurisdictional areas to send out notifications
  - Eventually IPAWS will be able to hit cellphones in a specific area regardless of whether you have signed up for notifications
- C: As a resident of the county this information is reassuring
- Discussion on Hawaii notification issues ensued
- C: DES and Queen Anne's County have a huge vulnerability due to geographic oddities (Kent Island and hurricanes)
  - Evacuation needs to be done early and sometimes this does not happen
  - Need to figure out what to do when people do not leave
  - Making a mistake by not informing people to deal with evacuation orders
- R: All flood and evacuation zones have been shared with County, State, and Federal resources and on social media
  - We cannot force people to evacuate
- Q: Regarding the Breezeline notification login has Talkie Fiber been approached to provide the same thing
- A: Talkie has not reached out
  - Plans to eventually be 99% across the county

- The IPAWS monthly test can breach all TV and cable providers
- Q: For events is there an active threat plan? (4-H fair & 4<sup>th</sup> of July)
- A: In prior years there was no capability to respond or preplan.
  - In the process of gathering equipment
    - Have received 95% of orders
    - 2 vests will be on every unit
    - Researching products
      - One size does not fit most in this instance
  - Started adding some training to recert classes in the past 5 years
  - The old plan was to stage until the police get there
- Q: Will plate carriers become a part of the daily uniform and response?
- A: That is a conversation that is currently happening
  - Considering for the following response types
    - Shootings
    - Stabbings
    - Assaults
  - Still in the beginning stages
- Q: Should legal EMS be involved to determine liability?
- A: There is a Governor Taskforce
  - Director Haas has a seat on the Taskforce
    - Is the Subcommittee chair for 1<sup>st</sup> Responders subgroup
    - The group has written the standard for Protective Equipment across the state.
  - The State Attorney will not commit on a legal opinion on this statewide
    - Agencies are being referred to local jurisdictions
    - All jurisdictions have differing legal opinions
      - Cannot even agree on the types of weapons for training scenarios

**Old Business:**

- No

**New Business:**

- No

**For the Good of the Order:**

- No

**Meeting adjourned: 7:20pm**