

GALENA AREA EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE DISTRICT
Board of Directors' Meeting
217 Summit Street, Galena IL 61036



October 28, 2021

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER President Ben Petitgout called to order the meeting of the Galena Area Emergency Medical Service District Board of Directors at 6:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Board members present: Claire Bersbach, Secretary; Pam McIntyre; Ben Petitgout, President; Jim Rigdon, Treasurer; Jan Splinter; Susan Strand; and Linda Winter.

Absent: Randy Beadle, Vice President. A quorum was established.

EMS personnel present: William L. Bingham, EMS Coordinator, and Aishah Abdul-Aziz, Administrative Assistant.

EMS Association representative(s) present: None.

EMS Association members present: None.

Others present: None.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by President Petitgout.

AGENDA ITEM I. CONSENT AGENDA

Jan Splinter moved to approve the Consent Agenda, consisting of **approve minutes** from the **September 23, 2021**, regular GAEMSD Board of Directors' meeting and payment of estimated **October Invoices** of \$5,982.33 which includes estimated VISA \$401.49 and known October Auto-Pay of \$869.55, as provided to the Board. Seconded by Linda Winter.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Ben Petitgout

- Continued to work with Board Secretary Bersbach on **Policies**.
- Met again with representative regarding **acoustic panels** for the Station. Received quotes of \$11,000 and \$12,000. One would affix acoustic panels to the ceiling; the other would involve a drop ceiling.
- **Ambulance Replacement ad hoc committee** report is given under Agenda item III. Reports.
- Met with **HVAC vendor** at the Station to consider climate control for 3rd bay. Estimated cost for unit plus installation is \$5,000.
- Provided a copy of the **FY2021-2022 Budget**, as amended at the 09-23-2021 GAEMSD Board of Directors' meeting (Ref: Line Item SSA#6 Income), **to Miner, Gilroy, and Meade**.
- Followed up with County's IT Department to resolve **connectivity issues** regarding Public Safety software. County responded to Arrow Digital's questions but the problem is still not completely resolved.
- Picked up **Property Tax Distribution check** from Jo Daviess County Friday, October 15.
- **Deposited Property Tax Distribution check** from Jo Daviess County Friday, October 15.
- Met with Board Treasurer Jim Rigdon, Board member Linda Winter, EMS Coordinator Bill Bingham, and Administrative Assistant Aishah Abdul-Aziz to discuss **wage scale** for paramedic and EMT-I level responders. Report and discussion is on the October 28 meeting Agenda as New Business.

AGENDA ITEM I. CONSENT AGENDA – continued:**PRESIDENT'S REPORT** – Ben Petitgout – continued:

- Met with Nieland Refrigeration to assemble the **ice maker** October 25. After the unit is assembled, it will be plumbed in by Engle Plumbing.
- Met with attorney Roth. Gave him a Board of Directors' Reference Materials 3-ring binder.
 - Discussed **Articles of Amendment to the Articles of Incorporation** (found in Safe Deposit Box). Per Mr. Roth, the "no payment" wording refers only to Board members.
 - Discussed the **Hospital (land) Lease** and SSA (contract) language about who would get the assets should we dissolve. Roth thinks it best to let it go for now. He will draft a memo stating same and forward it for our records.
- **Articles of Amendment to the Articles of Incorporation** were copied for the Board of Directors' Reference Materials 3-ring binders.
- **Transferred funds** from the NGS/Medicare Account into the District's checking account.
- Payroll is approved in the Annual Budget. While Board members will continue to receive the monthly Payroll Report, going forward "**Approve Payroll**" will no longer be a meeting Agenda item.
- Illinois Public Access Counselor's (**PAC**) **website** still "currently down." Unable to complete annual **FOIA and OMA Certifications**.
- 10/22 to Station to meet with crew re: "**bad spot**" in the floor coating in the ambulance bay.
- Ambulance leaking fuel; took to Guy's for repair.

TREASURER'S REPORT – Jim Rigdon

1. GAEMSD District Account Balances as of 10-22-2021:

\$ 858,098.12	District Total All Accounts at Illinois Bank & Trust
\$ 18,830.63	EMS Association Accounts Total
2. Financial Statements for the period ended 09-30-2021:

\$ 1,018,585.95	Assets
	Includes \$209,804.77 Accounts Receivable amounts
\$ 34,344.96	Liabilities
\$ 111,385.45	Revenue
	Includes \$11,675.46 Contractual Allowances
\$ 50,274.74	Expenses
\$ 152,597.69	Year-to-Date Operating Income / (Loss)

SECRETARY'S REPORT – Claire Bersbach

- Continued to work with President Petitgout on Policies.
 - Typed minutes from previous Board of Directors' monthly meeting.
 - E-mailed meeting materials to Board members.
 - Made copies of meeting materials and assembled Board packs.
- Motion carried.

END OF CONSENT AGENDA**AGENDA ITEM II. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS** – There were no comments.

AGENDA ITEM III. REPORTS**1. EMS Coordinator's Report – William Bingham**

In the past month we provided coverage for the October Fest (October 2) and the Country Fair (October 9 & 10). On the schedule are the Galena River Trail Marathon and 8k Race and the annual Halloween Parade, all on Saturday, October 30. We will provide two ambulances – Galena and Elizabeth will serve on North and South Main Street. The second Galena ambulance will be on Hill and Main Street for additional coverage. Thank you to those who stepped up or signed up for these events.

Ken Calvert, Association President, met with me on October 22 to address **changes to the EMS Association by-laws**.

We have **four probationary members** to date. We have the **mentors established** for four current members. We are looking at a date in early November to wrap this up.

EMS Coordinator Bingham and Administrative Assistance Aishah Abdul-Aziz had a conference call with Richard Robinson from SwedishAmerican to **discuss an EMT class in house in early 2022**. There is also a **remote possibility of having an EMR class during this same period**.

Another important SwedishAmerican initiative is to **move ahead with our In-Field Service Upgrade**. The paperwork is in, and we are in the process of reviewing checklist information and application forms. This will allow our service to function in a Paramedic role in times that a Paramedic is available on call.

We have received a draft schedule for **2022 training from SwedishAmerican** and we will be reviewing this information with Tadeo O'Brien and Richard Robinson later this week, at which time all members will have access.

There is a **new IDPH Rule regarding Covid-19 impacting vaccinated and unvaccinated members**. Following review, Bingham anticipates having this information available within the next couple of weeks.

Bingham has been in touch with Lori Stangl, County Health Department, regarding **Covid booster shots for members**. She advised that they should have the booster available at Midwest Medical Center during the second week of November (date to be determined). In addition, Walmart®, Hartigs®, and Walgreens® are also currently offering the booster for those who have had the two previous vaccinations. Bingham will keep everyone in the loop on this.

Bad News: About five weeks ago, Bingham met with Tracy Bauer, Midwest Medical Center CEO, regarding the **manner that the nurses and doctors treated our responders** while transporting patients. There were apologies and attempted reasoning for their behavior. Though this issue settled down, this past week demonstrated a worse problem in which they came completely unhinged. Bingham commented we do not see these issues at Mercy Hospital or Finley Hospital in Dubuque. This is a hard enough job without this blatant nonsense. Bingham reported we are approaching one hundred calls this month and assured the Board of Directors that this issue is a top priority and will be addressed. He will keep the Board posted.

President Petitgout advised Bingham to let him know if GAEMSD Board action is needed.

Good News: We had an **exceptional IDPH Annual Inspection on October 20th**. This is the fifth year with this honor. EMT **Shelley Finley** helped with cleaning ambulances while on call, and Driver **Glenn Harris** and EMT and Administrative Assistant **Aishah Abdul-Aziz** spent over 15 hours preparing, cleaning ambulances, checking equipment and stocking supplies. These members deserve our congratulations.

AGENDA ITEM III. REPORTS – continued:1. **EMS Coordinator's Report** – William Bingham – continued:

In a 24-hour period (from midnight to midnight 10-27 to 20-28), our service was paged out 10 times. **Call volume to date is 89 responses with 92 patients treated.**

Aishah Abdul-Aziz commented on a conversation with Katie Harris (with Mercy Hospital) regarding Midwest Medical Center's ER personnel telling GAEMSD EMS personnel to take "psych" patients to Mercy. Harris advised Aishah our service should not take psych patients to Mercy. President Petitgout suggested a letter from Mercy Hospital to Midwest Medical Center to that effect may be needed.

2. **Administrative Assistant** – Aishah Abdul-Aziz

Submitted **Payroll Protection Program (PPP) Loan Forgiveness Application** September 30. We received approval and a confirmation letter that **our PPP loan in the amount of \$33,620.00 has been forgiven.**

There was an **error** by Miner, Gilroy, and Meade (MGM) **applying Employer Tax Withholding to the wrong quarter.** We received a letter from the IRS on September 27 notifying us that we were in default and owed \$4,852.78. The **error was corrected** by MGM and we received a letter from the IRS on October 4 notifying us that **we do not owe any taxes and are not in default.**

We received a **\$100.00 donation** from Vicky Vondran and Marie Kempert in memory of Kay Hammer. The donation was given **to the EMS Association** and a thank you note was sent. Thank you, Claire, (Board Secretary) for sending thank you notes on our behalf.

We received **\$210.00 from Galena Lions Club** for Standby payment at Oktoberfest. We received **\$280.00 from Jo Daviess County Country Fair Charities for Standby** during the two-day Fair. These checks will be deposited this week. Also, there was a **payment of \$350.00 by the Galena Trading Company for Standby payment at the July 4th Shenandoah Rodeo.** This payment was not assigned correctly to the correct account for Standby. Aishah will submit to MGM for line transfer to reflect the \$350.00 as Standby payment.

2. **Fleet Manager** – Wayne Moyer

Moyer was not in attendance at the meeting. Information provided by EMS Coordinator, Bill Bingham: **1-A18** went back to Platteville this past Monday morning, October 25, to address an **engine light issue.**

3. **EMS Association Representative** – None.4. **Committee Report(s)**

Wage Committee – Board of Directors' President Ben Petitgout, Board of Directors' Treasurer Jim Rigdon, Board member Linda Winter, EMS Coordinator Bill Bingham, and Administrative Assistant Aishah Abdul-Aziz met to discuss **wage scale.** This is a New Business item on this meeting's Agenda.

* Jeremy Werner entered the meeting.

Ambulance Committee – Will have another meeting November 3, 7:00 p.m., to discuss **options for the Driver's compartment** (power pedals, extensions, etc.). Specs from Foster Coach and from Lifeline, both out of Sterling Rock Falls. Committee will review the package of options. President Petitgout commented on a **sole-source purchase** rather than sending out Requests For Quote (RFQ). Sole Source Purchasing is allowed in the Board of Directors' Purchasing Policy. The general consensus was to consider scheduling a Special Meeting to approve the purchase prior to the November 30th Board of Directors' meeting.

AGENDA ITEM IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None.**AGENDA ITEM V. NEW BUSINESS**

1. Claire Bersbach moved to **increase the hourly wage**; seconded by Pam McIntyre. President Petitgout met with Board Treasurer Jim Rigdon, Board member Linda Winter, EMS Coordinator Bill Bingham, and Administrative Assistant Aishah Abdul-Aziz to discuss an increase in the hourly wage.

Board members were provided with a chart showing the financial impact of a raise at 50¢ per hour and at \$1.00 per hour. The wage of \$7.50 per hour would increase annual IPRF \$931.00 per year; the \$8.00 per hour wage would increase IPRF \$1,862.00 per year.

Winter commented we budgeted \$300,000.00 per year for wages. Petitgout mentioned we are averaging around \$20,000.00 per month in wages, roughly \$240,000.00 per year.

A “straw poll” of Board members indicated a preference for a **50¢ per hour increase** at this time and another review of wages in six to eight months. Effective November 1, 2021, the **hourly wage will be \$7.50 per hour**. Motion carried.

2. Linda Winter moved to **establish an hourly on-call wage for EMT-Paramedic** with SwedishAmerican approval, November 1, 2021; seconded by Jim Rigdon. We are currently filling out paperwork/application. Paramedic service would likely be 30 to 60 days a year. The likely wage would be \$15.00 per hour.

Jim Rigdon moved to **postpone further discussion** to the November 30 Board of Directors’ meeting; seconded by Jan Splinter. Motion carried.

3. Linda Winter moved to **increase the report writing wage**; seconded by Susan Strand. President Petitgout met with Board Treasurer Jim Rigdon, Board member Linda Winter, EMS Coordinator Bill Bingham, and Administrative Assistant Aishah Abdul-Aziz to discuss an increase in the report writing wage. Board members were provided with a chart showing the financial impact of increasing the report writing wage by \$2.00 per hour. Depending on the nature of the call, it can take from 30 minutes to 90 minutes to complete a report. Reports may be completed only by EMTs; there are about 8 to 9 EMTs writing the reports. The current wage of \$5.00 has been in place for at least three years. “Cheat sheets” and Voice-to-Text are available in order to facilitate report writing.

Effective November 1, 2021, the report writing wage is increased to \$7.00 per report. Motion carried.

4. Ben Petitgout moved to **change the EMS payday to the 20th of the month**; seconded by Susan Strand. Currently, payday is the day after the Board of Directors’ meeting. The actual pay date varies depending on the meeting date. Payroll is included in the approved budget. Board members will continue to receive the monthly payroll reports.

The **pay period** would be from the first day of the month through the last day of the month. Payday would be on the 20th of the following month. For example, October 1st through October 31st would be paid on November 20th. When the 20th of the month falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, payday will be the business day preceding the 20th of the month.

This change is **effective November 1, 2021**. Motion carried.

5. Claire Bersbach moved to provide **gift cards for EMS members**; seconded by Linda Winter. There was no EMS Appreciation Dinner this year. A gift card of **\$50.00** from Piggly Wiggly for each EMS Responder as was done last year was proposed. The financial impact would be approximately \$1,900.00. Motion carried.

AGENDA ITEM V. NEW BUSINESS – continued:

6. Ben Petitgout moved to approve and adopt **Administrative Policy for Meetings: Closed Sessions**; seconded by Claire Bersbach. Board members were provided with a copy of the proposed Policy which aligns with the requirements in the State Statute. There were no questions. Motion carried.

7. Linda Winter moved to review and **open closed Board of Directors' minutes from April 14, 2021**; seconded by Jim Rigdon. Board members were provided with a copy of those meeting minutes. President Petitgout commented that, in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, Boards are required to review closed session minutes at least every six months to determine whether those minutes should be opened or remain closed. Petitgout stated he did not see any issues with opening those minutes.

The motion carried by roll call vote. Ayes – Claire Bersbach, Pam McIntyre, Ben Petitgout, Jim Rigdon, Jan Splinter, Susan Strand, and Linda Winter. Ayes: 7. Nays – 0. Abstain – 0. Absent Randy Beadle. Absent – 1.

AGENDA ITEM VI. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS – There were no comments.**AGENDA ITEM VII. BOARD MEMBER CONCERNS AND COMMENTS**

Jan Splinter reported she has been approached by someone from Menominee who is interested in being on the GAEMSD Board of Directors. President Petitgout asked Splinter to provide his contact information and ask the person to get in touch with him.

Splinter advised she would not be in attendance at the December and January Board of Directors' meetings.

Jim Rigdon commented he had talked with people in East Galena Township, wondered if we are still communicating with Elizabeth Community Ambulance Service about response time to GTA (The Galena Territory Association – note: The entire Galena Territory is in the Galena Area EMS District service area).

EMS Coordinator Bingham remarked that there was talk at one time about putting an ambulance at the Scales Mound Fire Protection District (SMFPD) station located in The Galena Territory. Bersbach said she understood that there was a "Rescue" vehicle at that station equipped similarly to an ambulance but not able to transport. Treatment could be initiated while the ambulance was enroute. Bersbach further stated that permission to put an ambulance in the SMFPD station would first require approval from their Chief. Bingham noted we do rely on SMFPD's First Responders. Bingham had previously been advised that Elizabeth Fire Department would not respond to "medical" calls.

Claire Bersbach asked Bingham to keep in mind publishing articles when/if classes would be taught in our area instead of Rockford and offered to help with that.

President Petitgout thanked Board members for supporting our EMS members and our EMS Coordinator. It is making a difference.

AGENDA ITEM VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Susan Strand moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Pam McIntyre. Motion carried. President Petitgout adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m. until the Board of Directors' meeting on Tuesday, November 30, 2021, at 6:30 p.m. at the Galena Area EMS District Board Room, 217 Summit Street, in Galena, Illinois.