

Summary Minutes

Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board

Executive Committee Meeting
Wednesday, February 23, 2011, 9:00 a.m.
2829 University Avenue SE
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Members Present

Kevin Miller, Vice Chair
Pat Lee (by phone)
Gary Pearson (by phone)

Board Members Absent

Paula Fink-Kocken, M.D. Jim
Rieber

Staff Present

Debra Teske
Melinda Buss
Melody Nagy
Robert Norlen

I. Call to Order

Mr. Miller called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

II. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Lee said that he received a question about the RFP. Ms. Teske replied that there will be a conference call with all potential applicants.

Mr. Miller asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Pearson moved to approve the agenda. Mr. Lee seconded. Motion carried.

III. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Lee moved approval of both sets of outstanding minutes. Mr. Pearson seconded. Motion carried.

IV. Operations Review

Ms. Teske said that things are going well. We are on track with our spending. We will need \$24,000 for IT needs in the next two years. Mr. Miller said that the governor's budget has no cuts. Ms. Teske said that we do not have proposals from the house or senate. There will be much discussion to reach the final budget.

Mr. Miller asked about processing of EMS Personnel recertifications. Ms. Teske said that is progressing fine.

Ms. Teske said that she gave a general presentation on the EMSRB at the toward zero deaths(TZD)program meeting.

Ms. Teske said that the community paramedic legislation brought forward by the Minnesota Ambulance Association was heard by committees in both houses, with excellent testimony by Dr. Michael Wilcox.

Mr. Miller said that Ms. Teske is providing information to him on the legislative activities. Mr. Miller said that he appreciates the "weekly reader".

V. Regional Grant Timeline

Ms. Teske said that the timeline was provided at the meeting in January.

The Request for Proposals (RFP) was distributed yesterday. Proposals are due on April 22, 2011. A review committee will need to be named. Ms. Teske reminded the group about conflict of interest in grant activities.

Mr. Lee said that he has received questions on the RFP. He said that the language includes a complimentary booth at conferences. Ms. Teske said that since budgets are tight we have

included this in the RFP. This can be discussed during the conference call. Mr. Lee said that the regions also have tight budgets. The other regions feel that this should be part of the EMS budget. Mr. Miller asked if this can be changed in the RFP. He asked if the Attorney General's office should look at this in case we get challenged.

Mr. Pearson said that if they apply for the grant they should comply with this. Ms. Teske said that this needs to be discussed during the conference call. Ms. Teske said that this language was reviewed by Patty Nolte (grant specialist) at the Attorney General's office.

VI. Communications Issues (800 MHz)

Mr. Pearson indicated he had received some questions about the proposed EMSRB legislative language regarding ambulance radio communications. Mr. Miller said that there is outdated language in the current rules. In 2007 the EMSRB updated the EMS Statewide Radio Plan (Plan) to address the current VHF radio system and the planned EMS transition to the 800 MHz ARMER system. Mr. Miller said that the outdated language would be repealed from Minnesota Rule and the proposed language would move the current Plan to Minnesota Statute. This would give the Board the opportunity to periodically review and update the Plan without having to make legislative changes each time something needs to be updated. This will be very helpful with continued development and transition to the ARMER System and with making updates in the Plan to facilitate the transition for EMS. The Plan is consistent with the standards and policies that have been developed and implemented by the Statewide Radio Board (SRB). Mr. Norlen stated that it should be noted that staff from the Department of Public Safety – Emergency Communication Networks (ARMER System) and the Department of Transportation – Office of Electronic Communication participated in the update of the Plan in 2007.

Mr. Norlen indicated there has been an EMS Workgroup that has been meeting over the last few months. The Workgroup has developed an “EMS Best Practices Guide” for EMS transition to the ARMER System. Mr. Norlen stated this is an excellent document and will be very helpful for ambulance services as they plan for transition to the ARMER System. The document includes the ARMER system standards and policies developed by the SRB. Mr. Norlen said the Workgroup has suggested pointing the proposed EMSRB radio legislative language to the “Standards and Policies of the SRB”. However, the main issue is the SRB does not have authority over licensed ambulance services. Mr. Norlen said the current Plan includes reference to Standards and Policy adopted by the SRB and the Plan would not supersede the Standard and Policies adopted by the SRB.

Mr. Norlen said the current EMSRB radio Plan will still be necessary for the foreseeable future, since all parts of the state have not indicated they will be transitioning to the ARMER System. Therefore, the EMSRB will have a number of EMS providers and hospitals operating on the current VHF system. The EMSRB Plan includes a number of Federal Communication Commission (FCC) rules that are applicable to EMS using the VHF system and the state EMS agency's need for involvement in FCC licensure approval.

Mr. Miller said that if the law does not change the EMSRB can enforce what is in existence. This change would put legislative teeth behind the Plan. We can then change what is needed.

Mr. Pearson asked if the EMSRB could have representation on the SRB. Mr. Norlen said the current membership for the SRB does not include the EMSRB. However, there is a position for the Minnesota Ambulance Association (MAA). Mr. Brad Hanson (Willmar) is currently filing that position. Mr. Miller said that he has had a conversation with Mr. Hanson on the radio communications. Mr. Pearson thanked everyone for the input and indicated his questions were answered.

VII. Budget Update

Mr. Pearson said that Ms. Teske is maintaining the budget well. Ms. Teske thanked Ms. Nagy for her efforts.

VIII. Other Business

Mr. Lee said that he received his card very quickly after his refresher. Ms. Teske said that the program he took his course through is using the third party confirmation, which is very efficient.

Mr. Lee asked Ms. Teske to ask Ms. Benton to provide information to the hiring committee on interview times.

IX. Adjourn

Mr. Lee moved to adjourn. Mr. Pearson seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:50 a.m.