

Summary Minutes

Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board

Executive Committee Meeting
Thursday, April 8, 2009, 1:00 p.m.
Gold Cross Office
2800 7th Street North
St. Cloud, Minnesota

Members Present

James Rieber, Chair
Brenda Brown, Treasurer
Robert Jensen, Secretary
Kevin Miller, Vice Chair

Members Absent

Laurie Hill, At-Large

Staff Present

Katherine Burke Moore

Guests

Bill Snoke

I. Call to Order

Mr. Rieber called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

II. Approval of Agenda

Ms. Brown moved approval of the agenda. Mr. Miller seconded. Motion carried.

III. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Miller moved approval of the March 19, 2009, minutes. Ms. Brown seconded. Motion carried.

IV. Review of EMS Related Legislation

Katherine Burke Moore reviewed EMS related legislation with the group. The MRU bill (HF 161, SF 109) is moving in the Senate and is currently laid on the table in the House Housing, Financial Security Committee. The chair is awaiting the fiscal note. The fiscal note does not include \$10,000 in general funds to cover the cost of the EMSRB managing an additional 10 grants. One person, Talia Landucci, manages all grants in EMSRB. Currently that totals 35 grants. She also has additional duties such as compiling and editing the bi-monthly newsletter, etc. The \$10,000 does not fund another position, but would allow EMSRB to reclassify another position to take on grant management duties. It is difficult for a staff of 13 to take on additional activities without appropriately classified staff and additional resources.

The Board's decision to do what we can to protect the Longevity Fund was discussed by all. Ms. Burke Moore continues to find opportunity to educate the legislature on the value and importance of recruiting and retaining volunteer EMS personnel. But it can be difficult to get an opportunity to be heard. MAA and Rep. Thissen have testified about the fund, but their testimony is a little bit off. They do not have the information about the awards, the use of the fund, the reduction of the fund in the past year, etc. Ms. Burke Moore plans to share information about the Cooper Sams Ambulance Fund, its purpose, use and value and with a number of legislators such as Senators Berglin and Marty, Representatives Clark and Huntley.

There was also discussion about whether the Board is clearly behind the decision to do what we can to protect the Longevity Fund. It is difficult when some Board members are conceding that the fund will be taken without discussing the value and purpose of the

longevity program. Mr. Rieber stated that for many volunteers the award is small and does not determine whether they serve or not. Mr. Rieber also stated that he asked legislators to not take the entire fund. There was also discussion about why EMS personnel do not have a pension fund similar to the volunteer fire fighters. Ms. Burke Moore believes that there is the misunderstanding that the general fund appropriation that the Board receives can cover all awards. It has in past years; but we exceeded that amount this year and had to use the investment monies to award all eligible applicants. The Cooper/Sams program appears to be working, almost every year since the program started 15 years ago, more awards were made and more awards were distributed to EMS personnel.

At times Ms. Burke Moore said she feels she gets mixed messages from some Board members about informing legislators and/or attempting to prevent other uses of the funds. She asked that if she is taking the wrong direction. If she is; she would like clear direction.

The group discussed the characteristic of a Board. We have a 19-member Board with varied backgrounds and opinions. When the Board determines a course of action and directs staff to implement, there is often a member or members that did not agree with that course of action. Those individuals, can speak their mind on the issue, however, they should make it clear that they are speaking as an individual and not for the EMRSB. Ms. Burke Moore received the reassurance that she is following the direction of the Board.

Sen. Sheran's/Rep. Thissen' bill (HF374, SF244) establishing a different level of Special Transportation Services (STS) using the term "ambulette" has been amended, replacing the term ambulette with "special" transportation. That was the main concern of the EMSRB.

Mr. Buck McAlpin from MAA informed Ms. Burke Moore that the bill (HF1561, SF1343), which creates a pilot project in Hennepin County assessing whether using paramedics to assess a patient's medical condition and determine if ambulance or STS transport was most appropriate may be dead. There are funding issues and potential opposition.

Mr. Bill Snoke was in attendance and gave a good update on others bills that may impact EMS and hospitals.

Ms. Burke Moore handed out the EMS budget worksheet showing state fiscal year 2009 expenditures through March 2009. There was discussion about shifting funding between lines. Ms. Burke Moore said that she feels strongly, that the Metro Specialist position must be filled if we can find the funding. The other specialists are carrying very heavy loads. The committee agrees that the budget should be scrutinized and if funds are available, the Metro Specialist position should be filled.

In other business, Mr. Miller discussed the deployment of ambulance services, EMS personnel and the strike teams during the response to the Red River Flooding at the end of March. What is EMSRB role in the SEOC, the EOCs in Cass and Clay Counties? Ms. Burke Moore stated that it is spelled out in the MN Emergency Operations Plan. Additional discussion covered communication and reimbursement issues. Burke Moore noted that the EMSRB is doing an internal debriefing and believes that both the SEOC and the EOCs in the Red River Valley will also be doing the same and creating an after

action report. Reviewing EMSRB's role and other entities' roles would be more appropriate once the debriefings are completed.

Mr. Rieber suggested that if there are no significant action items; the Executive Committee should meet by phone. Mr. Miller and Mr. Jensen commented that they believe the Open Meetings Law precludes phone meetings as it does not allow public participation. Ms. Burke Moore said she thinks that is correct, but she will review and inform the committee members.

Ms. Burke Moore thanked the group for their direction and let them know that although the requisite meeting posting will be done on Friday; she does not expect that an executive committee meeting will be necessary next week.

V. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:04 pm.