

Summary Minutes

Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board

Executive Committee Meeting
Thursday, February 26, 2009
Minnesota Department of Health
Freeman Building
625 Robert Street North
St. Paul, Minnesota

Members Present

James Rieber
Brenda Brown
Robert Jensen

Members Absent

Laurie Hill
Kevin Miller

Staff Present

Katherine Burke Moore
Melody Nagy
Debra Teske

Guests Present

Lance Ross
Dan Williams

I. Call to Order

Mr. Rieber called the meeting to order at 1:50 p.m.

II. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Rieber asked to remove item number seven from the agenda. He said that he did not place this on the agenda and wanted this discussed at the next Board meeting. Mr. Jensen said that Ms. Burke Moore has the right to add agenda items. Ms. Burke Moore said this is not controversial but I would like the Executive Committee to discuss it. Mr. Jensen moved approval of agenda without changes. Ms. Brown seconded. Motion carried.

III. Approval of Minutes

Ms. Brown moved approval of the October 21 minutes. Mr. Jensen seconded. Motion carried.

IV. Current EMS Related Bills and Positions

Mr. Rieber asked Ms. Burke Moore to provide an update to the committee. Ms. Burke Moore said that the housekeeping bill with the variance language “primarily” has been introduced in the house. She will check Senate introduction. The Minnesota Department of Health asked if we would allow them to amend a non-controversial bill to this if they need to. Ms. Burke Moore said that she will discuss with Mr. Schoenbaum and would only add this if it is non-controversial

Ms. Burke Moore reminded all that the Board’s position on the MRU pilot project bill (HF 161) is to oppose it. The Board voted to give the Executive Committee the authority to act on behalf of the Board. Mr. Rieber said that we are opposing taking money from the fund but we should not oppose the other programs because they have value. Ms. Burke Moore said each time she talks about the bill she makes it clear that we do not oppose the programs but the taking of funds from the longevity program. Mr. Rieber said that this is not clear right now. If we re-

define our position, we should not oppose the programs, but consider supporting the bill. Ms. Burke Moore said that opposing is a harsh position to take but changing the position to support would be a huge change – as we do oppose the use of the longevity funds. Ms. Burke Moore suggested that the Board consider the position of neutral with reservations. Mr. Jensen said that we have made our position clear; I do not think we should change our position on this.

Mr. Rieber suggested that we take the position of being neutral on the bill and oppose the taking of the funds. Ms. Burke Moore said that when legislators hear that we oppose the bill they do not hear the explanation that we oppose the use of the funding. She emphasized that she always states that the opposition to the bill does not mean that the EMSRB does not view the programs listed as worthy programs. (She recently sent letters to the programs ensuring that the EMSRB supports their efforts.) Mr. Ross said the message that we have been hearing is what I am hearing from you today. This is the confusion that exists.

Ms. Brown said that we are going to lose the money no matter what. This is taking away our safeguard for volunteers.

Ms. Burke Moore said if the Board chooses neutral we are not opposing it or supporting it. It would result in us having more opportunities for conversations with legislators on our concerns about the longevity program and retaining volunteers.

Ms. Burke Moore also said that she discussed the EMSRB's concerns with the original bill with the Minnesota Ambulance Association. The original bill was amended in committee addressing some of those concerns. Some clarifying language was added and less funding is taken from the longevity fund. Mr. Jensen said if we change our position we open the fund to be taken by legislators for other purposes. Ms. Burke Moore agreed this bill draws attention to the fund and there could be other attempts to fund other initiatives with the longevity funding.

Mr. Rieber said that if they take the funding from the program that does not end the program.

Ms. Burke Moore said that the number of volunteers claiming their award has increased each year. We anticipate having to take additional funding from the investment funds each year to make the payouts. If the fund is gone, there may be some volunteers who do not get paid in the year they claim their award. Ms. Burke Moore said that we realize that they are not taking the whole fund and I clarify that with volunteers who call asking about the program. Mr. Rieber said that if we don't have enough money to pay next year then we would delay payment until the following year. Ms. Burke Moore clarified that the investment fund could continue to decrease. Mr. Rieber said that there are two options in the future. We would seek funding from the legislature in the future or we would defer payments until the following year. Mr. Rieber asked for a motion on this

topic. Ms. Burke Moore said she recommends the Boards position would be neutral with reservations. She would then share our strong concerns regarding volunteers and the preservation of the longevity fund.

Mr. Jensen moved that the Boards position would be neutral with reservations. Ms. Brown seconded. Motion carried.

V. Process for Legislative Communications and Strategies During Session

Mr. Rieber said that he would like to set a regularly scheduled meeting. Ms. Burke Moore said that she discussed this with other boards and the legislature moves too fast that with the three day notice the issue has already passed.

Ms. Burke Moore said that a set time and place would be a good idea to discuss important issues and the meeting could be cancelled if not needed. Ms. Burke Moore suggested Tuesday or Wednesday would be best. Ms. Teske said that the committees that are EMS related are scheduled for afternoon sessions. Ms. Burke Moore said that depends on the committee schedule. Mr. Rieber suggested every Tuesday from 1 – 2:30 p.m. Mr. Jensen said he would have to look at his schedule back in the office. Ms. Brown said that she can set up her own schedule. Mr. Rieber said if it were Wednesday it would need to be 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. Mr. Rieber asked that staff survey committee members to see which members could attend on which date and get the majority.

VI. Use of Legislative Committee

Ms. Burke Moore said that she has been asked if the legislative committee should be involved in all these discussions. Ms. Burke Moore said that the Board authorized the Executive Committee to act on legislative matters on behalf of the Board during session. Ms. Burke Moore said that the meeting notice must be posted three days before the meetings due to open meeting requirements. We can assure the legislative committee members get the meeting notice so they could attend.

Mr. Rieber said that the IOP states that the chair sets the agenda for meetings. Mr. Jensen said that he would review this when he returns to his office.

VII. Federal Legislation

Mr. Rieber said that he received a letter requesting support of federal legislation for air medical transportation. He said he has had conversations with air medical services, legislators and others. This is an attempt to have federal legislation regulate air medical services. He said that he would like this addressed at the full Board meeting and have someone speak on this topic.

Ms. Burke Moore said that the National Association of State EMS Officials position is that if there is going to be regulation regarding patient care at the state level this regulation should be with the same agency that regulates ground medical transport. Mr. Rieber said that the Board needs to have more discussion before we take a position on this bill. Ms. Burke Moore said that NASEMSO is

not concerned about the aviation regulation. Mr. Rieber said that out-of-state ambulances (air or ground) do not need to follow Minnesota rules. It is not urgent that we have a position on this today. Ms. Burke Moore said that this would not have an impact on Minnesota. Mr. Ross asked if Minnesota would support this. Ms. Burke Moore said the EMS interest is the patient care portion of the legislation. Ms. Burke Moore said that her role is to bring issues to the Board and seek the recommendation of the Board on a position that is why she is bringing it to the committee's attention.

Ms. Brown asked that an explanation of the proposal is provided to the Board before the meeting so that members have information to take a position. Mr. Rieber said that he has asked for letters from air medical transports to explain their position. Ms. Brown asked about training of air medical personnel. Mr. Rieber said that the air medical transport services have a discussion group and he will ask them for information. Mr. Rieber asked for a motion to table this to go to the Board meeting, the group agreed.

VIII. Other Business

Ms. Burke Moore said that at the last Board meeting we discussed some investigations, closed some issues, and identified some board training. Ms. Burke Moore said that she discussed the training with Cindy Greenlaw Benton and Ms. Greenlaw Benton is available to provide training to the EMSRB at no cost. This training would be for all Board members and EMSRB staff and she proposes this be done in two parts at the meetings in March and July.

Ms. Burke Moore said she will be absent from the May Board meeting. Mr. Rieber suggested moving the date of the May Board meeting, if needed. Mr. Rieber suggested discussing this at the next Board meeting.

IX. Next Meeting

Mr. Rieber said that we will set the next meeting based on the availability of Executive Committee members.

X. Adjournment

Ms. Brown moved to adjourn. Mr. Jensen seconded. Motion carried.