

Summary Minutes

Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board

Executive Committee Meetings
Wednesday, March 18, 2010, 8:30
2829 University Avenue SE
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Members Present

James Rieber
Paula Fink-Kocken, M.D.
Pat Lee
Kevin Miller
Gary Pearson

Guests

Ron Robinson

Staff Present

Katherine Burke Moore
Melody Nagy
Robert Norlen

I. Call to Order

Mr. Rieber called the meeting to order at 8:36 a.m.

II. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Rieber said that agenda item four will not be a closed session because I do not think it meets the criteria for closed session. Ms. Burke Moore said she believes it does. She said that she will consult with the Attorney General's office on this issue.

Mr. Miller moved approval of the revised agenda. Mr. Lee seconded. Motion carried.

III. Approval of Minutes

The minutes are not ready for review.

IV. Discussion of Board Goals

Ms. Burke Moore provided copies of the proposed Board goal document. Mr. Rieber said that he wanted to add information to several parts of the document.

- Goal one objective 3 to develop an improvement plan to score a 5.

Ms. Burke Moore said that we are constantly asking for improvements. We document our tickets and how timeliness of response. This is not EMSRBs system – it is OET's and they manage it to meet the needs of more than one agency. Ms. Burke Moore said that the system contractor has developed a new plan for responding to system issues. The EMSRB contacts the VERSA company contact (not OET) directly for assistance. Mr. Rieber said that we are looking for a plan for improvement to the system for the customer. Mr. Miller said that from his experience the interaction has been positive. How do you identify your process? Are there other things that we want out of the system for improvement? Ms. Burke Moore said that the basic licensing process needs to work efficiently for the users and EMSRB staff first. Then enhancements could be considered. But if enhancements were requested it would cost EMSRB extra money and we are not in a fiscal position to discuss enhancements at this time. Mr. Rieber said that to score a 4 on this goal is to make a list of what would enhance the system. A five would be implementation of the enhancements.

Ms. Burke Moore said that we are trying to measure goals like we are producing "widgets". We do not solely produce a product much of what we do is process. Mr. Rieber

said that this is a management process to make sure we have measurable goals to measure the progress of the employee. A 4 or 5 means you are excelling at the job. Your goal is to exceed the goals.

Mr. Miller said that when you rate yourself next year you will be able to document that you met some of the goals and exceeded in the following measures. Mr. Rieber asked for comments from staff to make the e-licensing system a better system for staff and the end users – write a plan. The plan becomes a 4 and 5 is to implement the plan. Mr. Miller said that gives us a target to work toward. Ms. Burke Moore said that she regularly attends the e-Licensing Users committee and shares specifics to improve the process. If there are problems there is a process to work with the contract vendor and OET to address them ASAP. But we do have not control in whether OET follows through or responds to our needs.

- Goal one objective 5. The investigation plan should be assigned and “initiated” within 30 days. (30 days is a 3 score, 14 days is a 4 score, and 7 days is a 5 score)

Ms. Burke Moore said that when a complaint comes in we look at what information needs to be gathered to appropriately handle the investigation. Everything is not completed in 30 days. Ms. Burke Moore asked if we should track completion time and have this reviewed once a year. Ms. Burke Moore said that some of this depends on legal notice, the depth of the investigation, the number of investigations, etc. Each is unique in the time and scope. This is an example of how these goals cannot be measured like the production of widgets.

Mr. Miller said that we are talking about staff interaction in how the process flows. Mr. Rieber said that the initiation of the complaint does not take longer than 30 days. Ms. Burke Moore said that the initiation is the start of the complaint process the end of the process is resolution of the complaint. In between, the investigation and its length is unique to the facts and the information that needs to be gathered to make the appropriate determination on the complaint. A short time frame could mean adequate information was not compiled to allow an appropriate and legal course of action. You are trying to control or precisely measure a process that is part of a bureaucracy for a good reason.

- Goal one objective 6. Mr. Rieber referred to the Minnesota Emergency Operations Plan.

Mr. Rieber asked if the Board would receive a report that this is completed. Ms. Burke Moore said that she could provide a report of how we responded under the MEOP. Mr. Rieber suggested combining 6 and 7 to have the plan and documentation that staff is trained and have fulfilled their duties. Mr. Miller said that if you cannot fulfill these obligations then you have documentation for a request for additional staffing. Dr. Fink-Kocken said that this is a yes or no goal not a 1 – 5.

- Goal two objective one. (meetings with regional programs – payments to regional programs)

Mr. Rieber said that he is looking for a semi-annual meeting with the grantees to improve the grants. Ms. Burke Moore said that statute is currently written in a way, that the EMSRB has very little control over the grant activity. Mr. Rieber said that I am looking for a plan for improvement. Ms. Burke Moore suggested including that in the grant

document. Mr. Rieber said that I want more interactive communication with the regional programs. Ms. Burke Moore said that she would add a separate objective for this because it is a considerably different role than processing payments to the grantees. Mr. Rieber said that a score of 4 would be an annual meeting with the grantees and 5 would be bi-annual meetings. Ms. Burke Moore said that she would like to see this as objective 2. Mr. Rieber said the scoring of a payment in 5 days would be exceptional. Ms. Burke Moore said that she will change it as requested.

- Goal two objective 4. Monitoring grants.

Mr. Rieber said that the score would be a 3 if you seek new grants and it would be a 4 or 5 if we receive the grants.

- Goal 3 objective one is a yes or no.
- Goal 3 objective 2 is a goal for developing legislation.

Ms. Burke Moore said that this is a process. Mr. Rieber said that if it is completed sooner that would be a 4 or 5 score. Mr. Rieber said it would be a deficiency if we do not have a legislative plan in place by the target date. Ms. Burke Moore said that if the legislative committee meets but there is no progress from this meeting then we have meetings with no results. Some of these goals depend on other deadlines.

Mr. Rieber suggested quarterly meetings with the EMS stakeholders to talk about issues – we need to reach out. Ms. Burke Moore said this could be included in pre-session and post session meetings. Mr. Rieber suggested that this should be a separate goal to have meetings with stakeholders.

Mr. Rieber said that he would like to see the Finance Committee more involved and provide information to the Board on a regular basis. Mr. Rieber said that all financial information should be shared with the Finance Committee and Board. Ms. Burke Moore said that she only withheld information when it was requested by MMB when reductions were being calculated. Once completed it was shared with the Executive Committee and Finance Committee. Mr. Rieber said that he would have a conversation with the Governor's office. Ms. Burke Moore said that she was following the rules that were given to her as a state employee. Mr. Rieber said that you work for the Board. Mr. Rieber said that if this issue happens again this should be referred to the Finance Committee chair. Mr. Rieber said that he wants to see the statutory authority to show this. Ms. Burke Moore said she was told that the Governor's office was concerned that no budget information be released before the Governor's budget was released. This was a political issue. Mr. Rieber said that he does not think that this should have been withheld from the Board.

Mr. Rieber said that the Finance Committee should be more involved in the Board budget. This should be a monthly report. Mr. Pearson said that Ms. Burke Moore and I met yesterday to discuss budget information.

Dr. Fink-Kocken said that the scoring would be that 3 would be meets the goals from MMB. She suggested that objective 6 should include involvement of the Finance Committee and replace Juli Vangness' name with the job title.

- Objective 8 add timeframes for these.
- Goal 4 objective 1 this should be prior to the license renewal.

Mr. Rieber said that he has received complaints on how long it has been between ambulance inspections. The perception is wrong – the renewal is separate from the inspection process. Mr. Rieber said that he has received complaints about the consistency of inspections. Ms. Burke Moore said that she would like to hear this directly from the licensee. She asked Mr. Rieber to encourage them to contact her. Mr. Rieber said that if the EMS Specialists are adding things to inspections (tread depth) add that to the inspection checklist. Ms. Burke Moore said that there can appear to be inconsistencies through misconceptions. Mr. Miller said that you receive a report of each inspection and should look at what is written on those inspections. Mr. Rieber said that this cannot be subjective inspection. We should not have different interpretations of the inspection. Ms. Burke Moore stated that there is a manual that all the specialists use for the inspection process. Again, personal perception of ambulance services will differ. This process will never be one satisfies everyone. A score of 4 or 5 would be developing and implementing the checklist.

Mr. Rieber said that the weight of the goals needs to be determined and they should not all be weighed the same. One and four are primary goals and should be 35%. Goal 2 is a 10% and goal 3 is 20 percent. Mr. Miller asked for a cover sheet of just the goals and weights. This will help with the evaluation process. Dr. Fink-Kocken agreed. Mr. Miller said that there should be a compensation factor for meeting/exceeding the goals. There is no pay increase available and that is too bad.

Mr. Rieber said that this will give Ms. Burke Moore the ability to shift resources to meet the higher goals. Mr. Miller asked Ms. Burke Moore to weigh the goals. Ms. Burke Moore said that they are all very important and they interrelate because goal one can affect goal four and vice versa. Operations and serving the public are the most important. Mr. Rieber said that he would like to present this as a recommendation today for the Board meeting. Ms. Burke Moore asked if the other two goals could be 15 and 15 percent.

V. Red River Flood – After Action Report Discussion

Mr. Rieber said that he would like a report on Red River flood. Ms. Burke Moore said that she has copies to distribute to Board members and would like them returned. She said that she wants open communication from staff when compiling after action perceptions. Employees must feel safe and comfortable to share the worst with the best. We will only receive positive remarks if people are comfortable to communicate honestly. Fear that self critique will result in negative retribution may stifle good information that the agency needs to address shortfalls. Mr. Norlen said that the EMSRB after Action Report is in addition to the after action review conducted by homeland security. Dr. Fink-Kocken said that she would like first and last name and title of person reporting.

Mr. Pearson asked for information about the current flooding situation. Have we repositioned staff in the area? Mr. Norlen replied that we have a local staff person in the area. Mr. Norlen said that last year we had floods and snowstorms all at the same time. Mr. Rieber asked if another staff person will be assigned to the SEOC? Mr. Norlen said if it is needed.

Mr. Norlen said that with the follow up discussions, staff, has followed up appropriately and has a better understanding of EMAC responsibilities. Last year, the response was going on and services were responding and services were trying to backfill. Mr. Norlen said that he participated with HSEM on leader training and that gave him a new understanding of EMAC. The paperwork process and the agreements between states have to happen before the response occurs. Reimbursement difficulties occurred because of the paperwork process. Mr. Miller said that now we have agreements in place.

Mr. Miller said that this report is less than I expected. This has to deal with the bureaucracy. I am not seeing the actual response itself. He asked who was contacted and how the interactions occurred. There is a concern about reimbursement. The EMSRB should direct the agency toward the vehicle for reimbursement.

Mr. Norlen said that he provided details on when services were put in service and when their service ended. At the time this situation was going on, there was no guarantee of payment to any service. If the EMAC agreements would have been in place before the event then this would have been made clear. Mr. Miller said that this was well communicated. An ambulance service needs to make a decision about attending the event and they were notified about the reimbursement.

Mr. Miller said that there was a lack of communication at the scene. He said that he would like to see this in the report. What is our level of commitment to the services? The State never communicated about reimbursement – it happened because Mr. Ross provided assistance. Mr. Norlen said that the reimbursement paperwork was sent to all the ambulance services outside the metro area. Homeland Security was the lead agency for reimbursement and they were responsible for this reimbursement. Mr. Ross volunteered to do this for Homeland Security. Mr. Norlen said that the paperwork was provided to ambulance services and had to be submitted to Homeland Security for payment. The EMSRB is not responsible for the reimbursement process. Mr. Norlen said that is a good role for the MAA. Mr. Miller said that he disagreed -- the EMSRB represents the industry. He feels that the EMSRB should have assisted. Mr. Norlen said that EMSRB staff did assist ambulance services in completing paperwork and receiving accurate information. Each specialist informed the services in their areas that they could assist. Mr. Miller said that there is a perception of abandonment. Mr. Miller said that he would like to see this in the after action report. Mr. Norlen said that he did not hear from any service that the EMSRB abandoned them. The EMSRB sent certificates of appreciation to responding ambulances. Ms. Burke Moore said that the EMS Specialists were in contact with the services.

Mr. Lee said that he has questions and would like to continue this conversation another time.

Mr. Rieber said that from a state bureaucracy standpoint I understand Mr. Norlen's response. Mr. Ross had additional resources available to provide assistance. If something like this occurs again does the Board want to take this on again? The sense of abandonment is that one person had more resources available to assist. Mr. Miller asked what we can do to mitigate this in the future. How can we hand this off better.

The group noted that it was time to start the Board meeting.

VI. Adjourn

Mr. Lee moved adjournment. Mr. Pearson seconded. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned.