

Notes from EMS Regionalization Exploratory Committee meeting May 8, 2007

Present: Freeholder Helene Reed
Charlene Vitale – EMS Career Chiefs
William Holmstrom – Ambulance & Rescue Assoc.
J. Thomas Butts - Emergency Response
Michelle Pandolfo – Special Projects
Gerald White – Deputy County Administrator
Thomas Fromm – Mayor’s Assoc
Robert Dougherty – Boro/Township Administrator

- ✓ Welcome by Freeholder Reed and round table introductions of Municipal Administrator Robert Dougherty, from National Park was the first order of business.

EMS Coordinator

- ✓ The group discussed the first round of interviews held May 3rd.
- ✓ Discussion ensued about the command structure and the assistance a Coordinator would need for development and implementation as well as on-going operational support.
- ✓ Candidates will be recommended for a second interview with the Board of Chosen Freeholders.

Visits to Municipalities

- ✓ Since last meeting: Logan, Pitman, Glassboro, Swedesboro
- ✓ # visited: 10
- ✓ Total scheduled: 20
- ✓ A presentation to the Mayor’s Association is being requested.
- ✓ A presentation to the Administrator’s Association was held April 19th.
- ✓ Tom Butts commented that there were good questions. A few towns asked if they were in the first phase.

Municipalities

- ✓ The cover letter to the Mayors is being prepared with a target date of mailing May 18th. This letter will be requesting a letter of intent from the municipalities by June 8th and will include lease and inter-local agreement information and the FAQ’s.
- ✓ The cover letter will explain that the County will provide the opportunity to all municipalities for county coverage 24/7 and that EMS regionalization is anticipated to be implemented in phases.

Frequently Asked Questions

- ✓ Michelle Pandolfo fine tuned the FAQ’s and they are just about ready for distribution. The committee reviewed the responses discussed at the last meeting.
- ✓ A question which has been asked numerous times is if a town chooses not to participate will they still have to pay. The answer is yes - “broad-based support for broad-based benefits”. This service will benefit County residents as a whole.

Operations Committee

- ✓ Tom Butts reported on his progress with the State licensing application. Many details have to be on the application; such as the name of the service, ambulance design, and other

details being worked on at this time. Jerry White added that the State has indicated that they will be very cooperative with our undertaking.

- ✓ It was decided that the name on the rigs will be Gloucester County Emergency Medical Services.
- ✓ Tom Butts is hoping to have a proposed design for the rigs for the next meeting. This will have to be NFPA compliant with State approval. A waiver can be applied for, if not completed by, September 30th.
- ✓ The group discussed the truck design. Color, lettering and so forth. The State DOT may have mandates. This will be researched.
- ✓ SOP's were requested from Deptford, Logan and Washington Twp. for the purpose of creating our own.
- ✓ Tom Butts will be meeting with Joe Devine from Kennedy Hospital to discuss the project.

Administration Committee

- ✓ The county requested from NJ Division of Personnel a trainee title. The trainee title will provide the County with more flexibility in bringing in EMTs and allow the County a year to develop consistency in training and abilities. A trainee title, if approved and used, pertains to new hires until their first anniversary, at which time they will apply for a "promotional" exam which would only be open to those in the *trainee* position, rather than an open competitive test.
- ✓ Jerry and Michelle are working on the third-party billing specification. They hope to award in July instead of August.
- ✓ The group discussed collections for non-county residents. Answers to questions such as – a relative visiting from out-of-county, a person who works in Gloucester County but resides elsewhere - how will balanced billing be handled. Those answers will have to be discussed. The concern is that money that is not collected from non-residents would be picked-up by tax-payers.

Miscellaneous

- ✓ Discussions on when the "exploratory committee" should change to an "advisory committee" ensued. Helene Reed feels more group discussions and decisions will be needed; she wants to meet as the exploratory committee for at least the next 4 to 6 weeks and then revisit the advisory idea.
- ✓ The time frame of September 30th was discussed and how confident the group was with the schedule. It was determined that once the letters of intent are received, the committee will have a much better idea of the magnitude of participation. In the meantime, a lot of the groundwork is being done – licensing application, SOPs, billing specs, medical direction, etc. All agreed that it's a challenging time frame and acknowledged that roll-out should be in phases with two, possibly three regions, at the onset. The County is going to do their best to accommodate all who choose to participate in a timely and responsible manner.
- ✓ The group reiterated that the letters of intent will be the driving force.

Next Meeting: May 24th @ 6:00 pm, Freeholder Conference room.