



# Westchester Regional EMS Council

## General Meeting Minutes

**Date:** January 22, 2009  
**Time:** 6:00 P.M.  
**Location:** Westchester County Department of Emergency Services

**OFFICERS**  
 Daniel J. Blum, Chair  
 James O'Connor, Vice Chair  
 Jeff Meade, Treasurer  
 Dr. Tim Haydock, Secretary

**MEMBERS**

NAME	AFFILIATION		
Barca	Joseph	Yonkers Police Department	Present
Blum	Daniel	Chappaqua VAC	Present
Burke	Alison	Greater New York Hospital Assoc	Present
Collins	Brendan P.	Larchmont VAC	Absent
DeRobertis	Nicholas	St. Joseph's Medical Center	Present
Faucher	Roland	Mohegan Vol. Fire Assoc. VAC	Present
Haydock	Timothy	White Plains Hospital Center	Present
Jackson	John	Westchester County Dept of Emergency Services	Present
Kalish	Chris	Tarrytown VAC	Present
Eugene	Kelly	Yonkers Fire Department	Present
Labriola	Luci	Armonk Independent Fire Company	Present
Lazar	Eliot	General Public	Absent
Liverzani	Michael	Town of Mamaroneck Amb District	Absent
Malone III	Eugene	Fairview Fire Department	Present
McGurty	John A.	Hudson Valley Hospital Center	Present
Meade	Jeffrey	Phelps Memorial Hospital (ELSP)	Absent
Minerva	Daniel	Empress EMS	Absent
Nechis	Alex	Eastchester VAC	Excused
Nechis	Barry	New Rochelle Fire Department	Absent
O'Connor	Charles	Croton Fire Patrol	Present
O'Connor	James	TransCare	Present
Parsons	David	Harrison VAC	Present
Cesar	Perez	Katonah-Bedford VAC	Present
Simpkins	Gilbert	Vista FD	Present
Frank	Straub	White Plains Department of Public Safety	Present
Doris	Varlese	Westchester Medical Center	Present
Volk	Michael	Westchester County Dept of Emergency Services	Excused

**GUESTS**

Smalley	Phyllis	WC Dept. of Emergency Services / Program Agency
Singer	Guy	WC Dept. of Emergency Services
Olmoz	Daniel	WC Dept. of Emergency Services / Program Agency
Robinson	Richard	NYSDOH EMS - MARO
Sutton	Anthony	WC Dept. of Emergency Services
Ochs	Adam	Association of Fire Districts

Chair Daniel Blum called the meeting of the Westchester Regional EMS Council to order at 6:15 P.M.

DES Deputy Commissioner John Jackson was asked to lead the meeting attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Secretary, Dr. Tim Haydock, conducted the roll call and determined that the attendance (19) did meet the quorum requirement of sixteen (16) delegates.

The minutes of the September 25, 2008, general meeting was disseminated to the members. The minutes were approved without change.

The Chair announced that the previous meeting scheduled for December 11, 2008, was cancelled due to adverse weather conditions.

**CHAIR'S REPORT** - Chair Daniel Blum reported on the following.

**Regional Program Coordinator** – The Chair discussed a letter from Commission Sutton to the members regarding a recent change in Program Agency personnel. It was mentioned that the Department of Emergency Services is in the process of realigning some of their resources in order to maintain a state of operational readiness and assure that personnel are cross-trained. As a result, the chief steward of the program agency, Katherine O'Connor, has been shifted over to another role within the DES and Dan Olmoz has assumed the Program Agency Coordinator role. The Chair expressed his appreciation for Katherine's service since the inception of the Council.

**Homeland Security Grant** - It was announced that EMS agencies should be aware that there is a Homeland Security grant available to not for profit organizations that reside within the urban area security initiative zone of metropolitan New York. It was mentioned that there was some consideration for the REMSCO to apply for the grant but do to the rapidly approaching application deadline it is uncertain if that will occur. Interested agencies were directed to contact the Regional EMS Office for details.

**ALS First Response Inquiries** - It was mentioned that there have been a number of letters of interest received from police departments regarding ALS first response approvals. It is believed that the departments are specifically interested in looking at the potential for their department to operate in a tactical capacity related to their police service. One request was received from the state police of New York and was acted upon. Additional requests will be handled as they are submitted.

**Community Hospital at Dobbs Ferry** - It was mentioned that Community Hospital at Dobbs Ferry is going to reconfigure. It was mentioned that letters were sent to the current and future operators of the facility as well as the NYS DOH, Bureau of EMS as the REMAC is interested to see if there will be any changes to the facility's capabilities once the reconfiguration takes place. A formal response was received from the current operators containing encouraging information. The reconfiguration is scheduled to occur on April 1, 2009.

**E-PCR program** - It was mentioned that after several requests to participate in the E-PCR program were received at the Regional EMS office, it appears that there have not been any new requests. Several agencies remain in the testing phase and are awaiting approval from the DOH. It was mentioned that the Northern Westchester Hospital EMS group was considering collaborating on an E-PCR program. A brief discussion ensued regarding the benefits of digitizing medical data. Interested agencies were reminded to contact the Regional Office for related information.

**Westchester County Idling Law** - It was mentioned that there has been some recent legislation enacted in Westchester County related to limiting idling of vehicles. It appears that there has not been any adverse impact on EMS so there was no move to oppose its adoption.

**EMS Mutual Aid Plan** – It was mentioned that County EMS Mutual Aid plan is due for a review as there have been several changes to items such as the county-wide radio system, new county EMS zone coordinators, and the National Incident Management System. The Disaster Sub-committee will need to be re-activated to continue the process and those interested in participating on the sub-committee were asked to contact Barry Nechis.

**Associate Director of the NYS DOH, Bureau of EMS** - It was reported that Marjorie Geiger, Associate Director of the NYS DOH, Bureau of EMS has accepted a new position dealing with patient safety in the Department. Marjorie was thanked for her assistance and was wished good luck in her new position.

**Line of Duty Death** – It was mentioned that there was recently an incident where an EMS responder stopped to render assistance and he succumbed to an unknown cause. It was noted that Mr. Richard Quigley was an employee of Transcare. Vice Chair, Jim O'Connor expressed his condolences and shared some background information related to the incident.

It was also mentioned that Dr. Rich Conti, a medical director for several local EMS agencies over the years, passed away three weeks ago. Dr. Conti was noted to have been an advocate of the EMS system in the Westchester area.

**Paper Consumption** – It was reported that the County has initiated efforts to reduce paper consumption and as a result paper copies of the meeting minutes were made available through e-mail and were posted on the website.

**STEMI program** – New York City recently started a STEMI program which is a very difficult program to get up and running. They are in the process of fine tuning their protocols. The Westchester REMAC has established a TAG to review and will look to NYC for lessons learned in setting up the program and the general oversight.

**Therapeutic hypothermia protocols, within the EMS realm** are being reviewed by the Westchester REMAC and whether or not they can be used – logistical impediments and costs are being considered. Positive feedback has been received from those areas that have implemented the hypothermia protocols, so the REMAC will review and get back to us.

**Capnography** – a letter from New York State was sent to all ALS Agencies in regards to the internal waveform capnography and that as of right now it is not a mandatory process at regional level. The letter clearly remarks that it is considered basically a good standard of care and the SEMAC has strongly gone on the record stating that they feel this is definitely the state of the art standard of care and should be implemented by services that are out there intubating and certainly those that are out there intubating people that are still alive and paralyzing them. Our new protocols do make it mandatory in anticipation of the State making it mandatory.

**AEDS on Ambulances** - was a big point of discussion at the SEMAC meeting. Not all transport vehicles in the State of New York have an AED on board. Under the equipment list in Part 800, AEDs are not mentioned and the State is now in the process of making them a requirement. The State realizes that there could be a financial hardship for Agencies who have numerous vehicles and will look into unfunded mandates.

**VICE CHAIR'S REPORT** - None

**TREASURER'S REPORT** – None

**SECRETARY** – None

## **STANDING COMMITTEES**

### **Communication –**

Trunked Radio System – DES Commissioner Sutton reported on behalf of Chief Volk that a letter was recently distributed to agencies advising them of an exchange program for leather holsters that were made available as it seems there were inadvertent button activations occurring due to the structure of the initial holsters.

Disaster TAG – None

**Finance** – Given under Treasurer's report.

**Legislation and By-Laws** - None

**Nominating** – It was announced that there were four openings on the WREMSCO. The terms of Joe Barca, Daniel Blum, Alison Burke and Scott Harding have expired.

Joe Barca (Police) and Alison Burke (Hospital Association) were running unopposed. Charlie O'Connor was running for EMS Municipal Category – Scott Harding's slot. Charlie's previous position was EMS Independent Fire, but since Croton EMS is no longer affiliated with the fire department, he is no longer qualified for this

position. A motion was made that the Secretary cast one ballot for the slate where the position is not contested. Second. Roll call was taken and the slate was unanimously approved.

EMS Volunteer Independent position is being contested by Dan Blum, Lorene Mettler and Elizabeth Sanger. Mr. Blum was asked to leave the room. A discussion on the individuals was held and a vote by the members was taken. The vote for Mr. Blum was unanimous. There are still seats available on the Council – Nursing Association, General Public, EMS Independent Fire and Hospital. It was noted that anyone who fits into these categories is encouraged to run for the positions.

It was also suggested that the Executive Committee review the attendance of current members and make any necessary recommendations.

## **Policy & Procedures – None**

**Public Information & Education** – Chair Chris Kalish reported on the following:

**Annual EMS Awards** – the committee would like to suggest some minor changes to three award categories:

**Civilian Award** – the criteria today reads “an individual contribution to the community by a civilian whose selfless act during an emergency medical situation demonstrated commitment to helping his or her fellow man”. And the proposed amendment is to add, “or off duty provider”. The award would now read, “An individual contribution to the community by a civilian or off duty provider whose selfless act during an emergency medical situation demonstrated commitment to helping his or her fellow man”. This gives the committee the ability to be able to acknowledge and recognize people who may be EMS responders, but didn’t have a duty to act. To be able to acknowledge an emergency responder who was really acting as a civilian, not as emergency responders.

**Dawson Award** - again for clarification, to just specify a little bit broader because there’s been consistently some confusion in submissions on the Dawson Award. But this award is not a state award and there is much more latitude as to how it is awarded and therefore wording was intentionally left very broad. The criteria as it reads today is, “exceptional contribution to EMS by an individual”. The committee suggests changing the wording to “exceptional contribution to EMS by an individual broadly affecting the quality of EMS in the region”. This award is looking at more of a broad impact to the region as opposed to somebody who made an exceptional commitment to a specific agency and hasn’t really impacted EMS as a region in a broad way.

**Council Award** - The third one is not a nominated award, and is a new criteria. This is a council award that would be nominated by the executive committee and issued by the chair. Criteria for this would be exceptional contribution to EMS by an individual through philanthropic efforts, legislative action, significant personal sacrifice in service to EMS, or other considerable contribution to EMS. Eligibility does not require a regional agency or facility submission, may be nominated for any other award in the same year. This award may not be given every year, and more than one such award may be given in a single year. The rationale behind this was to recognize people, they could be civilians, it could be a postmortem award that we would issue.

Discussion was held on the three awards. And going forward to consider designate a name to an award such as the Physician of the Year in memory of Dr. Richard Conti who recently passed away. Requested that any feedback, please contact Chris Kalish.

**REMAC** - Chair Dr. DeRobertis reported that the REMAC had met on December 15, 2008. Among the items that are being discussed are:

**Dobbs Ferry Hospital** – the hospital’s status has been discussed before and will be discussed again at the next REMAC meeting.

**STEMI Protocols** – a draft protocol has been created and will be presented at the next REMAC meeting.

**Hypothermia Protocols** – will be sent to the Protocol Committee for review. Most likely to recommend universal protocols that have already been passed by the State.

**Hudson Valley Paramedics** – while under restructuring in the Fall it was discovered the majority of their medics were not Westchester MAC certified. Since this discovery HVP has worked diligently to rectify this and are still in the process of having their medics complete our written and oral exams.

**Ryan White Act** – went into affect and there is a loophole where EMS is unable to be notified on some communicable diseases. This is being investigated and we are anticipating additional information form the State.

**EMS Conference** – being sponsored by Empress and Evolutions on April 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> in Yonkers. Additional information will be coming shortly.

## **Training and Education – No Report**

**Transportation** - It was mentioned that there seems to be issues with the Certificate of Need (CON) for several agencies here in the Westchester Region. Agencies have been operating outside of their operating authority that is listed on their CON. The Council would like to make sure that all the agencies in our region are compliant by working with them to correct this. This has been an issue not only here in Westchester but throughout the State. A letter will be sent to all the agencies reminding them to keep an eye on their expiration date of their operating certificate and to verify the territory their operating authority covers.

**OLD BUSINESS** - None

**NEW BUSINESS** – None

The new Program Administrator, Dan Olmoz is looking forward to working with the Council and if anyone has any questions or concerns to please contact him.

**Next Meeting** – The next REMSCO meeting will be on March 26, 2009, at 6:00 PM.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by D. Olmoz and P. Smalley for Dr. T. Haydock.