



# Westchester Regional EMS Council

## General Meeting Minutes

**Date:** March 25, 2010  
**Time:** 6:00 P.M.  
**Location:** Westchester County Department of Emergency Services

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

### MEMBERS

NAME	AFFILIATION	
Barca	Joseph	Yonkers Police Department Present
Blum	Daniel	Chappaqua VAC Present
Briggs	Susan	Valhalla VAC Present
Burke	Alison	Greater New York Hospital Assoc Present
Casas	Jeff	Portchester/Rye/Ryebrook EMS Present
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	Mohegan Fire District Present
Kalish	Chris	Tarrytown VAC Present
Kelly	Eugene	Yonkers Fire Department Present
Labriola	Luci	Armonk Independent Fire Company Present
Lazar	Eliot	General Public Present
Liverzani	Michael	Town of Mamaroneck Amb District Present
Malone III	Eugene	Fairview Fire Department Excused
McGurty	John A.	Hudson Valley Hospital Center Present
Meade	Jeffrey	Phelps Memorial Hospital (ELSP) Present
Mettler	Lorene	Ossining VAC Excused
Minerva	Daniel	Empress EMS Alternate Present – (Ray Cordi)
Nechis	Alex	Eastchester VAC Excused
Nechis	Barry	New Rochelle Fire Department Present
O'Connor	Charles	Croton Fire Patrol Present
O'Connor	James	TransCare Excused
Perez	Cesar	Katonah-Bedford VAC Present
Simpkins	Gilbert	Vista FD Alternate Present – (James Marcarello)
Thomas	Ted	Elmsford Fire Dept. Present
Varlese	Doris	General Public Excused
Volk	Michael	Westchester County Dept of Emergency Services Present

### GUESTS

Kaplan	Gary	Boundtree Medical
Downey	James	NYSVA
Olmoz	Daniel	WC Dept. of Emergency Services / Program Agency
Sutton	Anthony	WC Dept. of Emergency Services

Chair Daniel Blum was called the meeting of the Westchester Regional EMS Council to order at 6:08 P.M.

Dr. John McGurty who recently returned from active duty deployment in southern Afghanistan was asked to lead the meeting attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance. Dr. McGurty was thanked by the members for his service.

Secretary, Dr. Tim Haydock, conducted the roll call and determined that the attendance (23) did meet the quorum requirement of sixteen (16) delegates.

The minutes of the January 28, 2010, meeting were previously disseminated to the members. The minutes were approved without change.

**CHAIR'S REPORT** – Chair, Daniel Blum posed a question to Commissioner Sutton regarding the new County Executive and whether there will be a change in philosophy toward EMS, hospitals or emergency preparedness. Commissioner Sutton commented that he had conversations with the County Executive in regards to the Department of Emergency Services and its mission. It was noted that these are tough economic times that are expected to worsen before they improve.

**VICE CHAIR'S REPORT** - None

**TREASURER'S REPORT** – Cesar Perez reported the following - *We received \$3676, from the state for reimbursements for fees that we put out. \$3100 of that was for accountant that we paid out; \$257 was for travel, and \$199 for food for our meetings. The down payment for the Marriott Hotel, for this year's Awards Ceremonies, has been prepared today. So between the two accounts we're at \$26,000 and change. We are working on creating an RFP for a county wide EPCR contract. We're still in the beginning stage of that but we're hoping to get that done hopefully by the end of the year. Now we're also working on a fundraising letter at some point to start raising some funds. We just found out that we're going to be paying for more of our expense, webcasting services being one of them. So we need to find other ways to be able to pay for our expenses. We're working on closing out this year's budget. And we're working on the budgets for the next five years.*

**SECRETARY** – None

## **STANDING COMMITTEES**

### **Communication –**

**Trunked Radio System** – Chief Volk reported that the system has been working excellent. *Those of you who use the system may recall experiencing a busy tone in the past; however that seems to have been reduced significantly.* D. Blum asked if there was anything significant to report since the County experienced two major meteorological events over the last few weeks. Commissioner Sutton commented that there were no complaints received. Based on monitoring communications, both the fire service and EMS were extremely busy. *The volume of traffic in 60 Control during the last storm was only exceeded by that of the April 2000 floods in the county. That was the second highest volume period in our history and we did actually have open more dispatch positions than we had ever had before. It was a total of 11 and we only have seven seats in the room. We opened up the training consoles and also sent staff to our backup site to operate off those consoles as well. There were backlogs for individual departments for wires down and it was not unusual for a department to have 120 calls waiting for wires down.* Chief Volk added that call volume and communication activity spiked at the onset of the latest snow event but the flattened out as people decided to stay home.

**Finance** – see Treasurer's Report

**Legislation and By-Laws** – D. Olmoz reported that *the regional office received a request from the REMO region for support of some legislation that I believe they're attempting to move forward regarding HIV testing of unconscious source patients in cases of occupational exposure. And so far the New York chapter of American College of Emergency Physicians in the New York State Academy of Family physicians has come aboard in support of this legislation and the region is looking for support from all regional councils and program agencies to support this legislation.*

D. Blum commented as follows - *You know I can only imagine what's going to happen in terms of state funding. The state EMS council and SEMAC meetings have been cut back drastically. I think we're meeting three times a year now. You know the department itself, the Department of Health, has been asked for austere budget cuts by the governor. I don't know if that will translate at all into a trickle down effect to the EMS agencies, the education components of EMS that are funded. We did see this year that the printed PCR wasn't printed and was in a backlog. We almost ran out of PCRs and Lord only knows what's going to happen with funding over the coming year. The bureau has been without some critical staff members for some time - the bureau of EMS. And as you*

know Ed Wronski who was the director retired. Margarie Geiger who was the associate director took a different job within the Department of Health. This is the director of the Patient Safety Center. So Lee Burns is essentially doing three jobs on her own right now. And people below her also have left. So the extension which we rely upon the department of health to do certain things even if it's not an issue of funding back to the REMSCO or the agencies themselves who are out there doing EMS work they themselves are hamstrung in their ability to do certain things because they just don't have the same staff anymore. So I just raise that for everybody's awareness on the legislative side. I'm not so sure that anything positive is going to happen this year. I don't know of a war chest of money that the state is about to inherit.

**Nominating** – No report

**Operations** - D. Blum noted that the newly formed committee had begun meeting with Gene Kelly serving as the committee chair. Gene Kelly reported as follows - *We had our first conference call (March 22<sup>nd</sup>) and I just wanted to thank all the members who signed up to help out. We have many topics that we discussed including mutual aid, MCI, safety, and ALS and BLS coordination guidelines. We have another face to face meeting in April to further discuss the topics, to do some brainstorming, to get a guideline of what we want to try and do and accomplish. And I think the next time we meet here we'll have more to really report on as far as what the committee plans to do.* D. Olmoz added - *Upon Barry's (Nechis) suggestion in looking at what this new committee was really trying to get a handle on, he suggested that the disaster tag become a component of this operations committee and he agreed to continue to serve as our disaster expert. It would also make sense to the same with communications.*

**Policy & Procedures** – Roland Faucher reported - *We finally I believe have an active committee and we're going to be setting up a meeting some time during the last two weeks of April and we'll come up with some brilliant ideas that you'll all -- or might accept.*

**Public Information & Education** – C. Kalish reported as follows - *Well good news the annual awards event will take place on May 19th at 6:00 pm at the Westchester Marriott. I have got to put a plea out here because it is the first year that we have separated out things. First, we have a formal awards ceremony as part of this. And we really want to get applications for this so we get people recognized. If you have people in your agencies or if you have agencies themselves that you want recognized please make nominations. Make sure you get those in. They're due next week. We have a fairly light response so far but it's really important that we get a good response from the agencies in terms of submissions. So if you have people in your agencies that you'd like to recognize, if they're people in the hospitals, nurses, physicians, or with EMS units, please submit your applications. The deadline for submissions is April 1st so please get on those if you can. I'll just quickly talk through the format just to reiterate. I talked a little bit about this last meeting. But again the format of the awards night is going to change a little bit. It's not going to a formal dinner with speakers interrupting and presenting brief segments of awards. There will be a formal awards ceremony that will go for about an hour or so that will start at 6:00. It'll be set up auditorium style. We'll present the awards there in a formal setting. And then we'll break and we'll have an informal buffet with tables for people to sit down and things. So it's kind of broken into two different segments now. So that's going to be the format for the evening. So if agencies have pictures or things to send please send them in to Phyllis. You know I'm concerned about attendance a little bit and I'm concerned about the fact that we don't have a lot of nominations for awards at this point. So I would just ask that you go back to your agencies and make sure that people are aware. And we will send out additional notice to your agencies as well to remind people of the dinner.*

D. Olmoz added - *Also if anybody knows of anyone that may be interested in participating with a journal ad that would also be a huge help obviously. In these financial times it's very difficult to get that kind of support but the dinner is very, very important to the regional council and to adequately be able to do a nice event. The support that is generated by the journal ads is imperative.*

R. Faucher added - *We've been very careful in all the publicity to make sure we do not use the word dinner. This is s not a dinner. It's a reception. So that people are not disappointed and not come back after us next year. This is a reception. There'll be lots of food. But it's a reception not a dinner.*

**REMAC** - Chair Dr. DeRobertis reported that the REMAC had met on March 15, 2010. Among the items that are being discussed are:

**Meeting Schedule**– the meeting schedule has been changed to the third Monday of every other month. This will reduce the number of meetings from 10 to 6. It is anticipated that this will allow subcommittees more time to complete work tasks so there is business for the REMAC to act on.

**STEMI TAG** – a STEMI advisory was approved by REMAC and agencies are working with their medical directors as well as STEMI centers to put together written procedures.

**Protocols**– the committee has begun reviewing the protocols for another update. They have also been discussing the establishment of a regional definition for patient contact and when it technically begins.

**Quality Improvement**– efforts are underway to streamline the QI guidelines in hopes that it will increase agency participation.

**Interfacility Transport** – this is still an issue that needs attention. The committee is still dealing with how to move the issue forward.

**Training and Education** – D. Olmoz reported on the following on behalf of Chair, Alex Nechis:

**Certified Instructor Update** – An Instructor Update has been scheduled for Sunday, April 18, 2010. The class will be held at Phelps Memorial Hospital.

**Transportation** - Chair, Joe Barca reported that there were no actions this period to report on. *Agencies that have previously applied for CON corrections have begun receiving their updated certificates from NYSDOH.*

D. Blum thanked the members of the committee and the Regional EMS Office staff for their work over the last several months dealing with the numerous CON applications. *This was a laborious process and the potential for a misstep here was significant. Their efforts were significant and I'm really appreciative that you all were able to manage this as elegantly as you did. And hopefully our agencies all benefited and the patients that they serve all benefit as a result of this. Again to remind everybody the potential harm here was that if an agency was operating outside its designated territory on a regular basis and billing for their services the concern is that this could be considered health care fraud. And we are starting to see letters from the state and actions occurring elsewhere across the state where the inspector general or the attorney general is looking at those situations. So we tried to be proactive. It was a difficult process but I think ultimately it paid off.*

## **NEW BUSINESS** –

An announcement was made that EMS week is May 16th through the 23rd this year. The New York State EMS memorial service will be held at the Empire State Plaza in Albany on Wednesday May 19th.

The state is really beginning to move forward now on the ePCR system from a state-wide perspective. *They have been approved for the next year's worth of grant monies and they have selected the vendor to actually begin working on the system itself and what they refer to it as a bridge software system so they're designing this product to be able to receive EPCR data from a number of other EPCR platforms that many of you may have already begin using. And this looks like it's going to come -- in the near future as early as possible as next year. So just informational purposes but it looks like it's actually going to happen.*

**Next Meeting** – The next REMSCO meeting will be on **June 24, 2010**, at 6:00 PM.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by D. Olmoz for Dr. T. Haydock.