



February 27th, 2025, Emergency Services Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 1600 hours by Chairman Chris Nichols. The minutes from the previous meeting were approved by unanimous vote.

REPORTS

Garrett County Emergency Management

- **Director Justin Orendorf**

- It was reported that the Emergency Services Board had to cancel the previous meeting due to inclement weather.
- There have been 2 EOC activations since the previous meetings. Both activations were due to Blizzard Warnings. Coordination of the storm related incidents as well as the opening of several warming stations were conducted by Emergency Management personnel.
- Chief Stephen Smith was introduced as the new Chief for Garrett County Emergency Services.
- The final projects to complete the backup 911 center which is located at the EOC in McHenry is now finished and the backup 911 center is now able to be utilized as needed. This wraps up about 10 years' worth of work and numerous grant projects to complete the project.
- An update was given regarding the tornado that impacted Garrett County in the Bear Creek area. The tornado caused significant tree damage in the area resulting in numerous trees down in Bear Creek itself. Garrett County has partnered with MD VOAD and they have worked in the area to assist citizens with cleanup. There was some discussion amongst the committee members regarding the difference in weather alerts since the transition from Pittsburg to Sterling NWS. Garrett County Emergency Management does continue to monitor both weather centers for information regarding weather impacting Garrett County.
- The NWS is splitting the county into 2 separate boundaries in hopes to be able to better forecast events impacting the county.
- Emergency Management is working with the courthouse staff to update and finalize and courthouse EAP.
- Emergency Management is working closely with the LEPC and the Garrett County Hazmat Team to update the Garrett County Hazardous Material Response Plan for Garrett County.
- The Garrett County LEPC has recently been updated with newly appointed members, and the committee will begin meeting regularly.
- Garrett County is slated to get 3 Mesonet weather stations. One site is already installed in the Bittinger area on state property. An additional site is to be located in the southern end of the county as well as one in the northern end of the county.

- Emergency Management is working through some grant projects
 - Everbridge mass notification enhancements
 - EMS airway manikins were purchased for EMS personnel to train on airway and difficult intubations.
 - MDT's are being provided and installed in select emergency vehicles.
 - A drone program for emergency services in the county is being developed.
- Garrett County conducted our 5-year JEMSOP review with MIEMSS, and the jurisdiction was approved for another 5-year cycle.

Garrett County Emergency Services

• Chief Stephen Smith

- Chief Smith reported that the department has been closely monitoring call data and call volume has been significantly higher over the last few weeks and trends continue to show a steady annual increase in call volume as much as 49% in the last 9 years.
- Response times for EMS have been below the standard. Station 3 in Friendsville had 1 quarter where they were over the standard but were able to provide a plan to fix the issue and their response times have improved since then to below the standard.
- Southern Garrett Rescue Squad has submitted a request to the county requesting a 2nd EMS clinician 12 hours a day 7 days a week to assist with increased call volume and help respond a 2nd ambulance when necessary.
- The EMS division is currently fully staffed with 23 full-time personnel as well as 24 part-time employees.
- Mutual aid given and received calls are closely monitored each month.
- Emergency services will be reviewing and updating the policies and procedures manual as well as rolling out some new equipment to the field.
- Emergency Services currently has a new ambulance on order through Lifeline as well as a remount project for the current ambulance that's in service. Budget requests have also been made for a replacement chase vehicle as the current vehicle is approaching 90,000 miles.
- Northern Rescue has been experiencing some maintenance issues with their units and have had to utilize the Emergency Services reserve unit at times. Our current reserve unit has 170,000 miles on it and is slated to be decommissioned once the arrival of the new ambulance and the remount project is completed.
- Emergency Services has implemented a new scheduling platform (Ninth Brain).

MIEMSS

• Alex Kelly

- The registration continues to be open for the Miltenberger conference at Rocky Gap.
- EMS clinicians are encouraged to finish their reports by the end of their shift and click completed and submitted.
- Several new medications will be available for EMS clinicians starting in July.
- Video laryngoscopes will be required on all ambulances starting in July.

Old Business

- Alex Mellot requested an update on the memo that was sent to Northern Rescue regarding the Friendsville station and their response times that were over the standard for the last

quarter in 2025. Director Orendorf stated that nothing had been received in writing, however, at a recent meeting with Northern Rescue's Board of Directors this was a topic of discussion. Northern had appropriately identified the problem surrounding their delayed response times and had a plan to correct the issue.

- The committee requested that Northern Rescue provide documentation laying out their planned actions to correct the delayed response times.

New Business

- Chairman Nichols discussed the importance of good data and collecting data to appropriately backup needs and requests to the Garrett County Commissioners regarding the financial needs for Emergency Services across the county.

No other business was brought to the committee. The meeting was adjourned at 1705 hours.