



Garrett County Government Emergency Services Board

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August 21st, 2025, Emergency Services Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 1600 hours by Emergency Management Director Justin Orendorf. The minutes from the previous meeting were approved by unanimous vote.

Duane Stein II was introduced as the newly appointed member of the Emergency Services Board representing the citizens of Garrett County.

Other board members in attendance:

Bob Stephens
Justin Orendorf
Stephen Smith
Mark Clookie
Richard Carlson
Alex Mellot

Guests

Wayne Tiemersma- MIEMSS
Kevin Null – County Administrator

Reports

Garrett County Emergency Services

- **EMS Chief Stephen Smith**
 - Chief Smith reported on a busy summer thus far for EMS in Garrett County. Weekends throughout the summer have been very busy with crews running incidents consistently each hour. Upstaffing occurred during peak times which helped cover the increase in call volume. Crews were placed at several events including the fair during the daytime hours which proved to be a very positive move as crews handled several patients during standby events.
 - Chief Smith reported that current manpower is at 24 full time staff and 23 part time staff.
 - A new ambulance has been on order for quite some time now to replace one of the ageing units that is stationed at the lake. Expected delivery is Q1 or Q2 of 2026.
 - Once delivery of the new unit occurs, one of the existing ambulances will leave to be remounted.
 - Northern Rescue continues to maintain 3 units with 2 always staffed, 1 in Grantsville and 1 in Friendsville.

- Southern Rescue continues to maintain 4 units and a chase unit. 1 unit is always staffed, and a 2nd is staffed during the daytime hours and occasionally staffed during evenings and overnight as volunteer staffing is available.
- Beginning in May of 2025 Garrett County provided Southern Rescue with an additional clinician during the daytime hours to assist with getting a 2nd ambulance out on incidents. This additional clinician has made an outstanding difference in being able to cover additional incidents and get a 2nd ambulance out the door.
- Bitteringer continues to maintain 2 ambulances and a chase unit. 1 unit is always staffed as volunteer staffing and part time staffing are available, and the 2nd unit is maintained as a backup ambulance.

There was some discussion between board members regarding mutual aid given and mutual aid received incidents. There appears to be an increase on both ends of the spectrum with these types of incidents as all jurisdictions continue to see a gradual rise in incidents prompting the need for mutual aid responses.

Northern Rescue Squad

- **Chairman Terry Spear**
 - Chairman Spear discussed Northern Rescue's response to the increased response time from the Friendsville station. Spear stated that the organization has made changes to accommodate one of their drivers that covers overnight hours and has extended driving time to the station. Northern's remediation plan is to schedule another driver on these nights allowing the unit to respond faster. The driver coming from a further distance away would then meet crews on scene.
 - Northern Rescue continues to hire part-time staff to help offset volunteer shortages.

Southern Rescue Squad

- **Mark Clookie**
 - Nothing to report

Garrett County Chief's Committee

- **Chief Richard Carlson**
 - Chief Johnny Mayne of Gorman has been elected as the new Chairman for the Chiefs committee.
 - A 5-year plan is in the process of being developed to present regarding fire department operations and potential needs for local fire departments to continue to provide adequate services to Garrett County.

Garrett County Fire and Rescue Association

- **Alex Mellot**
 - Nothing to report

MIEMSS

- **Wayne Tiemersma**
 - New Maryland EMS protocols are now in place as of July 1st.
 - The cardiac monitor grant was recently reviewed and announcements for awards will be forthcoming.
 - Planning for Miltenberger 2026 is underway.
 - Volunteer ambulance inspections will be coming up in October.
 - A new hospital tracking system has been created by MIEMSS to monitor hospital statuses.

Old Business

- Northern Rescue addressed the response time issues at Friendsville station.

New Business

- **Emergency Management Director Justin Orendorf**
 - Director Orendorf further discussed emergency services in the county as a whole and the importance of the Fire Chief's developing a 5-year plan to look at shortfalls and begin a phased approach toward providing additional support to local volunteer fire departments.
 - There was also discussion on the potential implementation of a community paramedicine program in the county to help possibly alleviate the increasing call volume for local EMS units.
 - Garrett County 911 is officially transitioning from the Garrett County Sheriffs Office to the Department of Emergency Management. Four additional 911 Specialists were hired to bring total staffing to a total of 10. The official transition date will be later in September 2025. The EOC will become the primary 911 center, and the Sheriff's Office 911 center will become the backup facility which will continue to be maintained as a backup 911 center.
- **ESB Appointee Bob Stephens**
 - Questioned a recent report of a spike in overdose related incidents in the county. Chief Smith reported that Emergency Services is aware of the spike and has been working closely with law enforcement as well as the local health department to provide information to the public regarding this increase in overdoses.

No other information was brought to the board, and the meeting was adjourned.

Meeting minutes recorded by:

Justin Orendorf