

## EMERGENCY SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD

The Carroll County Emergency Services Advisory Board met on March 25, 2010.

Present were: Debby Brady, Horace Leonard, Lola Sutphin, Markel Cochran, Paul Cooper, Richard Sowers, Andy Jackson, Manus McMillian, Kathy Surratt Joe Roma, Gary Larrowe. In the audience, Supervisor Wes Hurst and Supervisor Sam Dickson.

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Brady, Chairman at 6:40 p.m.

(Order)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR PREVIOUS MEETING November 12, 2009.

A motion by Andy Jackson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Lola Sutphin to approve the minutes. Minutes were approved and accepted.

(Order)

### ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Gary Larrowe told the board that meetings of the rescue squads and fire departments had been attended by himself and Nikki Shank. At these meetings they had listened to the fire department and rescue squad meetings to hear the good things that were happening as well as the concerns. There are two agencies, Laurel Fork Fire and Laurel Fork Rescue meetings that have not yet been attended. Once all the agencies meetings have been attended, the plan is to compile information and bring back a full report to the Board of Supervisors. The overview thus far is that we have great emergency services in Carroll County and there is no way that the county could afford to pay for the services that are being provided by the volunteers. It has been a learning experience and the openness at the meetings is very much appreciated.

The Board of Supervisors defined the roles and responsibilities for Emergency Services Advisory Board in January so that the Advisory Board could understand the role and responsibilities. Mr. Larrowe read them and they are as follows:

## CARROLL COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD

**Purpose:** The Carroll County Emergency Services Board is in place to advise and make recommendations to the Director of Emergency Services that will enhance the operations of the Department of Emergency Services through a planning process that allows for ESB Member, Volunteer Agency, Staff and Citizen input for improved emergency operations of the County.

**Responsibilities:**

- Planning in conjunction with the Emergency Services Director and staff for the current and future needs of the Department in the following areas:
  - Facilities
  - Technology
  - Vehicles
  - Equipment
- Review policy amendments in the above mentioned areas

Recommendations and/or suggestions are to be made to the Director who will present to the County Administrator and to the Board of Supervisors for potential action and approval.

Meetings will be held in the Board of Supervisors Meeting Room at the Government Complex quarterly on the 4th Thursday of that month at 6:30 p.m. or hold called meetings at the request of the Director of Emergency Services. A schedule is to follow:

March  
June  
September  
December

Wired Road update which is a high speed internet network between Grayson Carroll and Galax, Phase I is near completion. Phase 2 involves a grant request in order to have fiber in the ground to the fire rescue building which will put in a total new level of communication. An example was that there have been praises from Mr. Applebaum at the Twin County hospital who deals with stroke patients and Lola Sutphin attested that the tele-neurologist can see the patient and see what is going on with that patient off-site through this technology.

**EMERGENCY SERVICES COORDINATOR REPORT**

1. Monthly run report – Total calls for January 2010 was 415, February 2010 was 375. Dugspur has not provided a report since July last year 2009.
2. Working on Training: EMT basic, re-certifications, passed out training survey of who is certified to train and in what capacity and (b) what are the classes needed. Once these are received back a comparison will be made to see what opportunities we have within the county to offer training and if not a search to find someone from a surrounding area who would be willing to come and provide the training. At this time no surveys have been returned.
  - A. We have already received a quote from a 2 person team who could provide Basic EMT but in order to get this approved 2 other quotes must be obtained. Requests have been put out but no other quotes have been turned in at this time. EMS Council told us nothing will available until new fiscal year and then we can be put in the pool to see if we get picked for the funds and have the training after July 1, 2010.
  - B. MAY--- Training (Incident Command Training on May 22 and 23)

- C. Fire training – Dale Edmonds Laurel Fork will let us know the dates when they are available and a yearly calendar will be prepared.

**Comments:**

- a. Paul Cooper asked who would be paying for the books for the training. Mr. Roma responded that there is some money available for training and a portion could possibly be used for books.
  - b. Gary Larrowe asked if the training was for existing or new members or would it be available for the outside. Mr. Roma responded that we would make sure that the members and mutual aids services would be covered first and if there were seats available it would be advertised to the outside to fill the seats.
  - c. Mr. Larrowe suggested that we have a web-based application for classes as well as a calendar of classes being offered with location, date and time.
3. ToughBooks have been deployed to all the volunteer squads, state training classes have been attended by at least 1 and up to 3 members of each squad. Each squad is responsible for training their staff on the use of the computer for state reporting. Also Diversified Billing came to the captains staff meeting and explained how the reporting needed to be handled to avoid doubling billing and reporting. DAB obtained email addresses for each squad, provided a set up sheet that outlines the steps that must take place before going fully electronic. DAB will continue to submit the state reports until a defined date is set to go fully electronic. This time must be coordinated between the captain of each agency and Lyndee Tripp with DAB. All agencies have been provided the contact information for Ms. Tripp as they work thru getting their agency setup.
4. Update on the building and organization at Carroll Fire and Rescue. Mr. Larrowe commented that the maintenance department was doing an outstanding professional job. This upgrade provides privacy for the staff in that there are 5 nice bedroom quarters and a bay that enters toward the road for an ambulance, an office area for the billing and public access.
5. Cana fire truck chassis is here and looking like the end of May or first of June to be ready. It will be a 3000 gallon tanker-pumper-Class A.
6. Laurel Fork retirement of fire truck – a 1972 fire truck that they want to take offline to keep as a parade truck and if they can they want to get an antique license tag. It will need to be disposed back to Laurel Fork with a title transfer-license and tagging.

(Order)

### **MOTION TO RETIRE THE TRUCK BACK TO LAUREL FORK FIRE**

Andy Jackson made a motion to dispose back to Laurel Fork Fire Department a 1972 fire truck to be used for parades and events as an antique, the motion was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Richard Sowers and all other members of the board voted yes, an unanimous vote approval of the motion.

7. Radio system progress report—90% complete and will create better communications with the fire departments.
8. Insurance claim packets have been provided to ensure that everyone has information on what to do in the event of an injury or loss of property. This information has been disturbed previously but this is an effort to make sure everyone knows the procedures and processes.

Debby Brady asked to speak. She expressed due to miscommunications that she and Mr. Cochran had never meant to be negative in the previous meetings. She stated that there had been a lot of unhappy rescue squads. She stated that Kathy Surratt and she had reached the consensus that they understand the reports. Ms. Brady said that she could explain to the squads the questions they might ask about the reports. She asked that the ESAB be allowed to back up to where they were with monthly meetings. Ms. Brady asked what training had been provided to the new leadership of the squads and whose responsibility that was. She expressed that a county training committee be organized to explain the duties, data, minutes, treasury duties, financial reporting and other reporting that is needed. She feels if there was a committee like this, it would allow the squads to have someone to voice needs to. There is a feeling of no communications with the squad/Mr. Roma/Ms. Surratt/the Board of Supervisors/Mr. Larrowe. She continued to say as Debby “the citizen” if the supervisors want to get rid of the squads, we need to continue to give them the “chin” action. All that is needed is to just continue like we are and we will be successful in getting rid of them. She stated that Laurel Fork Fire old administration let the new administration down because the new administration was not provided guidance, never discussed policies and procedures. She stated “I knew better” and did not do anything about it so I let them down also.

Ms. Brady requested “ respectfully, I ask that we be given back the monthly meetings to help volunteers to have a place to come and talk about concerns. Board of Supervisors, you keep personnel.” In the meetings she has attended the people she met are all outstanding people.

Ms. Brady asked Mr. Larrowe what had been done and are we any closer on the Chesterfield insurance matters. Mr. Cochran stated that he had been trying to get something about the life insurance at \$50,000 to be increased as well the cosmetic insurance since June 2009. Ms. Brady expressed that \$50,000 life is just not enough because at least one fourth of it would go for the funeral expenses. She

asked to find if there is another insurance company that could provide better coverage. Mr. Larrowe told her that there was no problem and that we would go to Libby Lineberry with this request.

On the subject of the reports for the billing, Ms. Brady, stated again that she has figured them out and if any of the squads need help she is willing to explain them. Ms. Brady then asked for comments. It was asked when the insurance manual packet was developed and what has been in place in the past so the persons responsible could respond to questions that were asked of them.

Mr. Roma responded that the squads are provided with the insurance cards and information which is supposed to be kept in the vehicles for reference.

Mrs. Cheryl Coleman, mother of Jason Nester a member of the Laurel Fork Fire Department, told the board about events around her son's injury in January and voiced her concerns and frustrations about the handling of the bills around the event. Mrs. Coleman was told by Mr. Larrowe that Libby Lineberry is the liaison on any insurance issues. In the event that Ms. Lineberry is not available she can contact Kathy Surratt, Joe Roma, or the administrator's office to get information on her needs.

Dale Edmonds, new assistant chief of Laurel Fork Fire Department expressed that they were not adequately trained in how to handle the insurance issues and felt that because of this he had let Jason and his family down. Mr. Edmonds now feels that he knows what to do in the event this should happen.

Lola Sutphin pointed out that the preparation of the book with the insurance information has been prepared for helping this situation. Mr. Edmonds commented that it is appreciated and that the desire is to provide the best services to the staff as well as out in the community.

Sam Dickson, Supervisor in the audience, expressed that he was sorry for the incident and very sorry for the issues that Jason and his family have faced. He expressed how important that it is that the ESAB be allowed to address these issues and that he never wanted the ESAB to go to the quarterly meetings and that he was going to ask the Board of Supervisors at the next meeting to give them back the monthly meetings. He asked why it was March 24, 2010 that the packet was done and who was responsible for the packet being done. He commented that if he was not mistaken that the Board of Supervisors had budgeted for a qualified Training Coordinator. Mr. Larrowe responded that there was at least advertised two searches done for such a person and upon interviews and reviews that one, the individuals who applied were not qualified (per Dr. Edsall, there were ones that were qualified in fire not rescue and visa-versa) and the ones that were qualified in one or the other, were not interested in the position due to the funds made available to pay for the position. When the billing issues arose and it was evident that there was a need for a billing coordinator there was a decision to put in someone already on-board for the billing and to train that person to coordinate the training needs, and search for resources outside if there is none internally. This was a cost savings due to the staff member being moved. Mr. Dickson also expressed many communication problems and Mr. Larrowe pointed out that there were monthly captain and chief meetings being held with Joe Roma and Kathy Surratt to address needs and that the

goal was to one work issues out and if they were not worked out, bring them to the county administrator and/or Board of Supervisors for review and resolution.

Ms. Brady stated that she felt that the county in the past has been continuously reactive and that the goal was for this advisory board to be proactive and need to be ready ahead of the “curve”. A joint meeting of the Board of Supervisors and the Emergency Services Board would be a move in the right direction.

Wes Hurst-Board of Supervisor’s Chairman who was also in the audience, stated that having of joint meeting was fine but voiced the question does the ESAB have goals and objectives set and a measure to gauge the success of the goals. He told that there needs to be long term as well as short term goals set.

(Order)

Approve April Meeting

Lola Sutphin then made the motion to have a called meeting of the ESAB on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday in April at 6:30 in the Board room to discuss the mission, goals and objectives, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Cochran, and motion passed by all other members voting yes.

Debby Goad responded that when she came on board the advisory board was centered on billing and collecting revenue appropriately which would allow for equipment and training revenue to come in and also help relieve the taxpayer. In talking with rescue and billing there seem to be so many questions that focused on this and finances that she was side tracked and after sometime she met in the middle but could see both sides of what was going on. Manus McMillian responded that communications on everybody’s part is credited to the situation and each person gets focused on personal agendas and that none of us should put blinders on.

Mrs. Coleman voiced that Hartford don’t deliver, they don’t pay as they should—they (she, Jason and Jason’s step father, Butch Coleman) were told that disability would pay and cover Jason but as of today not \$1 has been received. She told that 101 pages have been faxed to them and stated the policy for disability needs to be looked at. She told it is not paying and asked how can Jason be provided for better financially?

Manus McMillian explained that he is self-employed and it takes a big chunk of his income for insurance coverage and he pays dearly. He told he has had grave sickness in the past and that you (referring to Jason) are on the typical course insurance companies take and that is to deny insurance benefits to the death. He told it is a sad part of the real world but it is true.

Jason Nester responded that he did not think it was his Mom’s place to fight the insurance company. He expressed that his Mom’s insurance with Anthem should not pay any of his claims. His step-father,

Butch Coleman stated that the customer is not Jason but the Board of Supervisors with the insurance company. He stated that as member of a fire department he would not want to continue to serve because of the fact that if he faced an injury like this that his wife would not be able to deal with it and the loss of financial backing through the insurance. Citizens fund the coverage and it should benefit the people who serve on the citizens. As to answering a question of Mr. Leonard on the ESAB it is irritating to think that board members do not know who we are or what is going on.

Mr. McMillian suggested that we get a representative from Hartford to come and meet with the captains and chiefs to understand the policy.

Ms. Brady asked Mr. Larrowe to contact Libby Lineberry and have her set up a Hartford case manager to cover this case and Horace Leonard commented that the meeting with captains and chiefs on the policy coverage should help with future claims and that the Board of Supervisors and County Attorney should stand behind this and say that we expect the benefits be applied to each case the way they should be.

Dale Edmonds stated that he believed that Andy Jackson could confirm that a family on Snake Creek years back had been put out of their home because the owner of the home was a volunteer, was injured and the insurance failed him which caused the loss of his home and land and he now resides in a single mobile home rather than the nice brick home on a good sized piece of property. Mr. Edmonds stated that he is willing to volunteer but that it bothers him that insurance might not pay in the event of him having an accident while on call and the loss of income could cause be a devastating loss such as his home and everything he has worked for. He stated that he was grateful that the county had provided him training and education but he still has a concern as to who would take care of his family in the event of injury or death while on a call. He stated he felt that many volunteers have been lost due to the lack of enough insurance coverage. There needs to be an increase in coverage which in turn shows the volunteers that it is important they be cared for in cause of an injury. He told this would give every volunteer a reason to feel better about volunteering in this respect.

Mr. Jackson indicated that he recalled the incident that Mr. Edmonds was talking about and that he remembered for a long time it was hard to get anyone to volunteer to assist on the trucks. He addressed Mr. Dickson by telling him that when he found out what had happened with Jason Nester, he suggested that we put something together with the insurance information in some type of packet so that the squads and fire departments could confirm that they had all the information needed in the event of a injury or loss.

Butch Coleman stated that survivor benefits are very important and the volunteers are at high risk when on call. He stated that education to the chiefs and captains is important. He expressed that the best work many times comes out of bad circumstances.

Debby Brady responded that we need to learn from mistakes and 99% of the time insurance companies are going to do everything they can before they pay a claim.

Jason Nester asked what is the county going to do for him since the insurance may fail.

Manus McMillian responded that the insurance will be held responsible to take care of the claim and if needed the county attorney would be called on to be involved. He told that to avoid this in the future that the insurance company will be advised that they are expected to step up to the plate.

Debby Brady stated that everyone has been enlightened, there will be discussions with Hartford and that there is a need for a better working relationship with Jason Nester. She requested that Mr. Larowe, Ms. Surratt, and Ms. Lineberry contact Hartford. Manus McMillian asked that we demand a higher level of service and hold Hartford responsible to process the claims and if there needs to be a change then a change will be made.

Markel Cochran stated that he had just received information about the Cana Rescue Building and asked who is being held responsible to get the information on Cana Rescue Building. There have been many attempts to get the information and things need to change. He told this is a situation where the "sins of the father" has lead Cana to have a \$430,000 building not able to be used, a building put up by a contractor with no permit issued during 2002/2004 and with a question of any inspections being done.

Manus McMillian responded that there has been a lot inherited but for 2 years 3 months and 22 days that he has offered extensive amounts of time to assist in coming to a resolution. At what point do you stop and take responsibility, you can't help someone until they help themselves. How much progress has been made on the business plan was a question to Gary Larowe? Mr. Larowe stated that Bernie Deck and Dallas Garrett have and are still spending time assisting with this and if not done, it is very close. There is some question on some tax returns that are needed but not sure where that stands. Mr. McMillian also pointed out in response to Mr. Cochran's statement "he had just received information" that the issue did not pertain to the advisory board and that it is not the business of the advisory board as the county is assisting Cana with the payments on the building.

Richard Sowers mentioned that before the present administration no one at Cana was involved in the building and the events before and that he believes that this administration does not understand the circumstances and what needs to be done. He believes they are really trying to get their arms around the whole situation but feel overwhelmed.

Debby Brady stated that she went to Cana and she does not believe that there is anyone there with a bit of business knowledge.

Richard Sowers responded back that he did not agree and stated that the captain (Jason Busick and his wife) are trying very hard to get things back on track.

Mr. McMillian stated that Jason Busick is the 3<sup>rd</sup> captain and he thinks that they are trying to get back on track but go 2 steps forward and 3 steps back and are treading in quick sand. The same information that Mr. Deck still needs, Mr. McMillian said that he had tried more than once a week for weeks to get. He

stated that he has told them that if there are any questions call him, any of the Board of Supervisors, or Mr. Deck. He said that if they don't ask that we do not know how to help.

Richard Sowers stated that they are not a lost cause.

Mr. McMillian stated that anyone who can perform the kind of medical care which is the finest anywhere, he wants to see them on track but feels that he does not know what else to do.

Mr. Larrowe indicated that someone would find out what is needed for Mr. Deck and someone would get that information.

Debby Brady requested that the next Board of Supervisors meeting she would like that the ESAB be given back everything except personnel and that a person be appointed for the Fancy Gap District so that there is a full slate of members. She told that once there is a full slate of members then the ESAB can hold an election.

Wes Hurst, Chairman of Board of Supervisors in the audience, expressed again that a set list of goals and objectives be done. He told that there were several things that came up at this meeting tonight that should be a part of those goals and objectives and a defined way of measuring and told that a "Shotgun" activity does not work. He stated that if the ESAB ask for a joint meeting that they need to come prepared with the set of goals and objectives. He expressed his appreciation to the ESAB for their work and being responsible in their role.

Debby Brady asked that everyone remember the called meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday in April at 6:30 in the Board room.

Mr. Cochran addressed Joe Roma that he had been told that Dugspur Rescue had been told they would get the next ambulance.

Mr. Roma explained to Mr. Cochran that all captains and chiefs had been asked to submit a request to him for budget reasons and that the CIP schedule is based on the request and the time frame submitted. Mr. Roma stated that to his knowledge that no statement like that had been made to Dugspur.

Paul Cooper asked the question about Jody's Towing and wanted to know if they had to take their vehicles to him for service.

Mr. Larrowe stated that they were awarded the contract but that there will be a different process this next budget year which starts July 1, 2010 and it will most likely be a non-exclusive contract and there will be a list of approved locations with the type of services that they offer.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.