

Bremer County EMS Advisory Council

Bremer County EMS Advisory Council Meeting Minutes								
Date	Thursday 03-13-2025			Time	6-8PM			
Location	Tripoli EMS			Minutes Prepared By	Dawn Everding			
Members: (P for present)	P	Brunkhorst, Bob	P	Dierks, Rod	P	Everding, Dawn	P	Geise, Tom
	A	Happel, Dennis	P	Ladage, Kip	P	Matthias, David	P	Nedza, Nick
	P	Scanlan, Jason	P	Scharnhorst, Andy	P	Schnadt, Deb	P	Schutte, Jim
	A	Schumacher, Marv	P	Wedemeier, Dan				
Guests:	Joni Poppe, Waverly Health Center, Brandon Tieskotter, SEMS, Mike DeSloover, SEMS, Jeni Scanlan, Frederika First Responders							

Meeting was called to order at 6:02 by Nick Nedza, Interim Council Chair.

Introduction of voting members in attendance as indicated in role call. Introduction of guests also present at meeting and listed previously. Nedza provided clarification on who voting members were that were in attendance of the meeting.

Motion by Schutte/Dierks seconded to have Nedza continue in capacity of Council Chair. Motion Carried.

Motion by Brunkhorst/Wedemeier seconded to confirm Dawn Everding as secretary of Council. Motion carried.

Nedza/Brunkhorst provided feedback on the purpose of the Council and timeframe to have discussions completed. Council will be tasked to develop a plan to present to the Bremer County Board of Supervisors for final consideration to determine if Emergency Medical Services should be recognized as an essential service for taxation purposes. The final goal would include having this on the to have this presented to Bremer County constituents on the November general election ballot. There is desire to avoid a special election for this item only. The Council has been asked to have the plan completed by the end of August for the November ballot.

Meeting frequency was discussed with consensus to meet every other week in Tripoli at the Tripoli EMS building. The Council requested that emails be used as communication and preferred to not utilize a shared information folder.

Nedza reviewed the requirements to post the meeting agenda and minutes for public review. Discussions to have the agenda and minutes emailed to respective mayors to be posted publicly in the individual cities to meet public meeting requirements. Agendas must be posted 48 hours prior to meeting and minutes will be posted after approval is received. Discussion on social media presence and posting on EMS association website. Brunkhorst mentioned potential in having speaking engagements to various groups once plan has developed more.

Nedza provided copies of respective legislative items related to EMS Advisory Council development. Copies of SF615, Sec 55, Section 422D.1 (signed by Gov. Reynolds 6/9/2021), HF307/SF42 (unanimously passed both houses 3/10/25), which would allow the levy funds to be used toward wages (previously only allowed equipment) and HF362 (in subcommittee 2025) were provided to the group. Ladage and Schutte have presented in Des Moines regarding this subject matter several times. Nedza provided results from other counties that have voted on this matter in the past. State requirements are for a maximum levy of \$0.75/\$1000. Under 422D, funds are to be utilized for equipment not people. Legislation in 2025 will allow funds to be used for people. Passage for proposed tax levy will require super majority or 60% consensus.

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Discussion about insurance payments that ambulances receive at the current time. It was shared that private insurance carriers have a better reimbursement than Medicare and Medicaid. Request to have more information provided related to the breakdown of payments from the different payers. Information shared that Iowa is one of the lowest reimbursed states for Medicare, which is related to efficiency in providing care.

Brunkhorst shared the goals of the council will be to determine if the current model of operations for the services are the best model or is there a better model to consider. Discussion regarding current processes with each of the different agencies in relation to volunteer crews or paid crews. Some crews have a hybrid of both and pay crew members a stipend for time spent on calls. The council will look at different options available through a surtax, which would capture anyone that pays income taxes, or levy options. Requests were made to have information per capita and hot spots in the county.

Nedza shared statistical information for the eight services in Bremer County in relation to total call volume, Bremer County calls, calls with transports and no transports and 911 calls and transfer calls. A breakdown of the current staffing models for each of the services was shared. It was noted that Wavery Health Center is the only services that employs all staff. Discussion in relation to the payment structures for each service and how this could affect the overall outcome in the future.

Discussion on what reorganization could look like in Bremer County. Benefitted districts, which would be like school district alignment or fire districts, would be difficult to follow due to availability of services based on call volume. Dyadic dispatching options were mentioned as a means to have individual response rigs located in areas as needed. The council will be asked to look at other items such as: billing, supplies, central location in county or each community.

Brunkhorst asked to have feedback from each of the services in Bremer County to know what their preferences would be. Schutte, Ladage, Nedza, and Scanlan will set meeting up with Bremer County EMS services in next week to have information for next meeting.

Final goals of council were discussed and included: if levy is done, how much it should be, planning for the levy to be presented to Board of Supervisors and public education.

Next meeting set for Thursday, March 28, 2025, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Motion by Geise/Wedemeier seconded to adjourn meeting at 8:00 p.m. Motion carried.