

HARTSVILLE/TROUSDALE COUNTY GOVERNMENT  
**EMERGENCY SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
NOVEMBER 8, 2023 | MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

Amber Russell, *Chair*

David Thomas, *Secretary*

Lesley Overman

David Nollner, *Vice Chair*

Brian Crook

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS BY POSITION, NON-VOTING PRESENT

Matt Batey     Mark Beeler

Meeting was opened by Chair Lesley Overman.

Minutes from August 9<sup>th</sup> had been passed out prior to meeting and were read for corrections or amendments. Brian Crook made the motion to approve, David Thomas seconded the motion.

**Minutes were approved as presented.**

Officer Elections

- Chair – Amber Russell
- VC – David Nollner
- Secretary – David Thomas

**Fire Dept** – Chief Beeler presented his monthly reports to the committee. Numbers have remained as previous months. Members have gone into the schools and daycares to educate children on fire safety. Partnered with the National Fire Safety Council that solicits local donations for fire safety material. The program is of no additional cost to the department.

Next year will be the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the fire department. Not sure of the exact organizational date but have records that show the first truck in April of 1924. Will hold open houses and celebrations in the coming year.

Still seeking bids on turn out gear. Need at least ten sets. Estimated around \$3,000 a set for 30,000 total. Initial bids show an increase in price at \$3,150 per set. Department has applied for a grant of \$12,000 to be used towards the purchase of the gear.

Chief Beeler informed the Committee that the department is outgrowing its space. When built, the Fire Hall was designed to hold six emergency vehicles, the department has eight with the pending brush trucks – one being repaired, and a new purchase expected in December 2023. Committee asked about space at the Rescue Building. Batey said there was no room available as they would also like to expand. Beeler added that it would add to the response time if equipment was at two different locations. However, a satellite station was proposed that would be equipped with a truck and additional equipment to efficiently respond to calls. This thought has been in the minds of officials for some time as the county is growing. A study was done several years ago based on populated areas as to where satellite stations could locate. A concern would be recruiting the needed manpower that live in the area for those stations. The Committee had concerns on the satellite location as the Commission is in the process as asking taxpayers for funding on a new jail and repairing the EMS/Rescue facilities. Beeler said he didn't have answers and was looking for solutions.

At the request of Mayor McCall, Kevin Lauer with Tristar Public Solutions has been evaluating the fire and rescue programs to look at the possibility of merging the two. Beeler has visited with Mr. Lauer and Batey is in the initial phases of collecting the requested information for Rescue. Once the evaluation is completed, Mr. Lauer will present his recommendation to the Mayor.

Call report summary from January through October 2023.

- 131 calls
  - 12 Structure Fires
  - 8 Vehicle Fires
  - 21 Grass, Brush, Woodlands, or Controlled Burns
  - 1 Medical
  - 14 Hazardous Conditions or Service Calls
  - 56 False Calls or Good Intention Calls
  - 19 worked with rescue in different roles and capacities either mutual aid backup or where we were on lift assist or something like that with the EMS
- 34 Mutal Aid Efforts
  - 2 Received from other entities
  - 32 Given to other entities
- No casualties or injuries
- Response / Manhours
  - 875 manhours
  - 7.5 personnel per call (average)
  - 3 trucks per call
  - Daytime - 8 minute response time
  - Nighttime – 8.6 minutes response time

Fire, Rescue, and EMS use E-Dispatch for radio calls. This system also has a mobile app that members use for pages. Tones can be customized for each group to be paged. It does go down when the power at the Administration Building goes out. In those instances, members are alerted to turn on the handheld radios until power is restored. County may be able to apply for a grant that will purchase a new generator for the Admin Bldg to support the county's internet/fiber connection.

**EMA/Rescue/EMS** – Director Matt Batey reviewed reports and numbers from August through October.

- 146 calls – *averaged*
- 8 minute response time – *averaged*
- 66 transports with Trousdale Medical – *averaged*

The Basic Emergency Operation Plan has been approved and renewed for another five years.

Our current Medical Examiner/Coroner is retiring at the end of the year. Mayor and Batey will be reviewing candidates to appoint to this position. Batey will see if there is any interest in Sumner or Wilson counties.

The new ambulance is on track to be delivered in 2024. This was purchased with ARPA funding and has been a two year wait due to supply chain issues and manufacturer delays. When this does come in, the oldest ambulance will be moved to standby. Will still have two ambulances per shift as the call volume still doesn't dictate an increase to three.

Cliff Sallee brought his contractor contact Oscar up to the building to evaluate construction needs. Waiting to hear back on a quote and timeline for repairs. Darren Gregory with the workhouse crew will also be able to assist with the finishing work.

Batey was asked how the contract with AmeriMed worked. That is mainly with the Sheriff as it can get convoluted with who needs to be contacted and when. From what Batey understands, the process seems to be running well.

Rescue - The Tahoe just returned from Truckers Lighthouse for the emergency light installment. Next step is to get it striped and equipped. There is a waitlist for this but should be done in the next few months.

Mayor asked to hold the appointment of a Rescue chief until Mr. Lauer completes his evaluation of the fire and rescue programs. Kirk Sutherland has taken the interim lead and things are going well.

**Ambulance Billing Waiver Policy.** When the policy was revised in February, the curtesy extended to employees was removed. This update will put the language back in to extend this professional curtesy again and adds language to waive remaining fees for elderly and nursing home residents.

A previous version included the immediate family of the employees but has since been revised to limit to only the employee which does include elected or appointed officials. Overman made the motion to remove "and their immediate family" from the header under Courtesy Write-Offs; seconded by Nollner.

**Motion Approved**

Discussion was had to remove the language pertaining to elderly or over the age of 80. Members felt that this demographic could file under the hardship clause for assistance. A question was raised about those in assisted living and it was agreed that they could also file under the hardship clause. Thomas motioned to remove the language of "for patients aged 80 and older and"; seconded by Noller.

**Motion Approved**

Crook made the motion to recommend the revised policy to the full Commission; seconded by Overman.

**Motion Approved**

Next meeting to be scheduled in January 2024 or February 2024.

Motion to adjourn by Crook; seconded by Nollner

**Adjourned at 7:58pm**

Minutes submitted by  
David Thomas