

EMS Subcommittee
Monday, February 9, 2026

Matthew Stanley - Chairman

Supervisor Stanley called this EMS Subcommittee to order at 9:30 am with the following in attendance: Clayton Barber, Matt Brassard, Ken Hughes, Clayton Menser, Jim O'Bryan, Tim Pierce, Cathy Reusser, Matt Stanley, Davina Thurston, Ike Tyler, Meg Wood, Mike Mascarenas, Josh Favro, and Jody Whitney.

Deputies Present: Bill Tansey, Dina Garvey, and Michael LaVallie.

Also Present: Randi Swires

STANLEY: It's 9:00, we'll go ahead and call this meeting to order. Jody, do you want to start.

WHITNEY: We have one resolution request which is authorizing the Director of Emergency Services execute agreements with EMS agencies for the temporary use of the County ambulance.

STANLEY: Can I have a motion? Motion by Clayton, seconded by Ike.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY SERVICES EXECUTE AGREEMENTS WITH EMS AGENCIES FOR THE TEMPORARY USE OF THE COUNTY AMBULANCE

Barber, Tyler

STANLEY: All in favor?

MASCARENAS: Do we need to bring that to Full Board?

TANSEY: Yeah, probably should because we're delegating authority.

MASCARENAS: We're changing authority.

STANLEY: I will bring it up during Public Safety.

TANSEY: We drafted a contract, so that the ambulance can be loaned out for 24-36 hours and the Director of Emergency Services, probably should be able to do that because it happens fairly frequently.

MASCARENAS: That's it

TANSEY: It's not a long term loan, it's not a long term lease, it's a borrow.

WHITNEY: Trying to make the process easier.
Staffing updates; I believe we're done with the layoffs. The first round of layoffs.

MASCARENAS: Yeah

WHITNEY: From agencies that didn't take the waiver.
We're looking at reducing pre-diem pool, the people that have not been active and we also conducted three paramedic job interviews for the fly cars.
Contracts updates; Newcomb, has signed their renew for this year. Etown-Lewis, Willsboro-Essex and Ticonderoga, are pending. We don't have any amendments and the new contracts are being worked on with Mr. Tansey and we have a draft one here, for the stabilization plan. Along with that, we've made up the payment request cover sheet, that will go to each town when they receive the payment.

MASCARENAS: So, how close are we, Bill, with that? I have a number of Supervisors, asking me about payment.

TANSEY: The contract is drafted very similar, I mirrored a grant project that came out with subrecipient agreements, so, essentially the County giving money to the towns. There is some violation of the contract provisions at the end. I am not sure how in forceful those are, because once the money is given, how are we going to crawl it back from the towns. But it certainly can be used for following years, based on bad behavior, not giving money to the certain towns.

MASCARENAS: Right, so if you remember some of the guideline, rules we adopted in terms of program. There's some benchmarks that have to be hit in order to maintain the funding levels for all the different agencies that are receiving EMS funding. Most of it is terms of performance response rates, those types of things. They don't lose the money instantly. We prefer they work with our individuals, Jody, Josh, Michael, in terms of figuring out ways of getting that response rate better. So, it would only be through repeat failure that we would consider pulling the funding in terms of individual agencies. Just so you know, in those contracts, that money is tied to specific benchmarks.

STANLEY: Would it better to base it on the previous year's track record?

MASCARENAS: We could, what I really want to encourage is that the service is getting on the street. So, if somebody's failing, it's not really about the money as much as it's about the service, right? And making sure that when you call 911 that you get an ambulance and I think that's our primary concern. So, to have somebody fail for 6-8 months in getting people out there, I think before we even reach out to people and start working on a better response or change, would probably not be a great idea.

STANLEY: Like, do we have a benchmark of what we want? Just because I know, looking at last month, AuSable Forks Ambulance, utilized the fly car, once. Yet, we're actually getting the funding for, so is there a number of how many?

MASCARENAS: There is. Why don't we send that out? We've got some many new members, what we're looking at, so it's about 3 straight months of failure rates. I think, it's 90%?

WHITNEY: 95%

MASCARENAS: 95% response rate, so you have to fail that 3 straight months to kind of be on the hey, we want to come and help you, it's not meant to be disciplinary, I guess is the big thing. It's meant to be helpful and how can we assist you with scheduling? Are you struggling getting people? We have a pool of individuals that we can send you, those types of things.

WHITNEY: So, it's all going to be listed in the appendix, along with a contract. It's got everybody's responsibilities, the town, EMS agency and this office.

STANLEY: And I know we filled out a form last year, based on how much we spend.

MASCARENAS: Yes

STANLEY: Is that something that's going to be, like I say, the contract to get the money is very short, should there be what the town has paid towards EMS service as part of that contract right there?

WHITNEY: That's basically, it's got a one liner that tells you how much the town funded the EMS agency with, but I believe that's also going to be listed in the contract. That is just a coversheet for us to track the money.

MASCARENAS: And it's not always just the town, again the struggle with this is town, districts, which could be, there are about 3-4 different formats, it's about the same constituency paying for the service. So, some towns directly fund EMS, some have districts, some are protection districts, some are under fire exclusively. So, when you look at all those different things, what we basically said was, how much are your residents paying for this service? Whether it's coming directly out of the town coffers or not is irrelevant. It's coming from them same people in your community and that's where we kind of draw the line, because it's difficult to make everybody play the same when they're so different. So, you'll hear me loosely say town, agency, all those things somethings mean the same, and it's hard, because 18 different people, 18 different rules.

STANLEY: I just want to make sure that we all get in the information that you guys need to be able to pay that money.

MASCARENAS: Yeah, so around September - October, we will come back to you and say what are you spending now and next year's allocation will be based on what you spent in the prior year.

STANLEY: And then it goes back to, not to be punitive, but you're response rate was this, next year is going to be based on this, based on that previous year's.

MASCARENAS: Yeah and if people are working with you in good faith efforts to improve the service to get to those benchmarks, those are all things that we can consider and probably should.

STANLEY: Because I know that's how we work on our contract with the ambulances, based on previous year's call volume, since we share with Blackbrook.

MASCARENAS: Right, right, you have a whole different setup with multiple counties. Steve, has something similar in the south.

BARBER: That would be like the Town of Chesterfield, where we rely on CVPH or we're paying a 3rd party through them for calls. So, again, we don't depend a lot on your guys, but as I said, I don't want any dropped calls in my area either.

MASCARENAS: Right and that was the point of the funding was those towns weren't over relying on using our staffing still had a significant cost. So, to even the playing field and making sure that all of our constituents in every town, regardless if you were using our staffing, received the benefit of the added dollars to support that service was critical. I think that was our goal. Towns that have spent a lot should get a reprieve. Towns that haven't spent a lot, it gives them an incentive to spend a little more to take advantage of the incentive dollars, right and I think so far, so good. Is what I would say.

STANLEY: Well, I think it's a great program, I just want to make sure that we don't shortchange one side or the other or create hard feelings or somebody somewhere in the County, make sure all of our I's are dotted and Ts are crossed.

MASCARENAS: So, we'll get that out, Bill, I think.

TANSEY: Very soon, the contract is drafted, really to push the money to the Towns and let the Towns do what they need to do and if we have pushed it too far, we will know for next year and we will have some data of how this program works and we can adjust the contract for next year if we need to.

MASCARENAS: Right, so any recommendations on that contract, we're all ears.

STANLEY: Awesome.

HUGHES: I am not on the committee, but Mike, you just mentioned the timeline of September/October, I might encourage you to back that up one month to August/September, because that's when Town budgets are really starting to come to play in August. I know

Willsboro/Essex EMS, had our conversation with our people in mid-august, just a preliminary conversation, so I would back it back one month.

MASCARENAS: Yup, that works for me.

REUSSER: I am not on this committee, either, but vested interest, to stabilize workforce in all the different agencies in the county, have we ever looked at what we're paying the different titles? Has there ever been a wage study done, so that we're not experiencing people moving from one agency to the other because they're making \$2 more an hour, but they're driving 100 miles for instance?

MASCARENAS: We have, we originally based our wages off those wages. Where we had some benefit rates there to consider. The hard part is, they're private. So, I don't know how much say we have or control over what E5 pays versus Etown-Lewis versus Newcomb. If I were to look at your highways, you're going to see a big discrepancy between what everybody in the room pays a HEO and that's why you're seeing a certain amount of jumping. So, I know what it is, but I can't control it.

REUSSER: Understood.

MASCARENAS: Short of regionalizing all those services, the wage is going to vary based upon region, what people can afford to pay, revenues coming in, how many calls they are getting which enhances your revenues. Those agencies are a little wealthier and can probably pay a little higher wage.

STANLEY: Anything else on this topic?

FAVRO: One thing, if you don't mind, with the fly cars, when you're looking at the monthly runs for your towns. The fly cars are out patrolling, now it's 24/7, so when you see Schroon Lake, say 5 calls or they ran to 5 calls in January. That doesn't mean that Schroon Lake dropped 5 calls. They are there to help. So, they may go and do a lift assist, or a BLS call or help package the patient and help send them off. So, every time a fly car responds somewhere, we document this response by town. So, I didn't want that to get confused with them completing a crew or your agency dropping that call.

MASCARENAS: Right and the fly cars really are there for that support and to act as a second level of service when their ambulances are not available. So, if an ambulance is on a run, hopefully we've got a fly car coming into that area, if they're not needed, to act as mutual aid, essentially to make sure that we have service.

WHITNEY: And it just happened this last week. We completed a crew for a second call in Willsboro.

HUGHES: Josh, are these dispatched?

FAVRO: These are the numbers that the fly car called into route to a scene or that we dispatched. If they responded, we put them down.

STANLEY: Can we also get, as part of this report, the number of calls by agency? Just so we can see the percentage, essentially, or we can figure out the percentage.

WHITNEY: It's on here, I can transpose over.

STANLEY: And I saw AuSable one, Jay one, is that the Town of AuSable or AuSable Forks going to the Town of Jay?

WHITNEY: I believe it's because of the program that is used and it draws it out of that.

MENSER: I am not on the committee, but we don't have an ambulance service for Crown Point, itself, because several years ago when they changed the regulations, you had to have a doctor that was approving everything that the EMT was doing and we didn't have a doctor and we lost that capability. So, we primarily rely on Ticonderoga and Moriah's ambulance services to take care of Crown Point, and we just call 911 and the dispatcher assigns where it's going to go, which ambulance service is closer or available. So, I don't know if we pay any additional fee as a town for that or if it's all covered by the insurance of the person that gets taken away.

O'BRYAN: We have a contract.

MASCARENAS: There's a lot to talk about there, but I do believe you have a contract with the Town of Ticonderoga for a certain amount. So, if you have that contract with the Town of Ticonderoga, you can then give that contract to me and I can give you back ½ of those dollars or you can increase what you are paying. There's a lot of things that I think you're going to want to consider in terms of that. We can certainly sit down and have that discussion, but yeah, that's a lot.

WOOD: Clayton, we do that with North Hudson, they contract with us and they got some money that way.

BRASSARD: Clayton, I guess we got to get a contract together.

MASCARENAS: Yeah, I don't believe we have gotten a response from Crown Point in terms of what they're spending, I don't know.

MENSER: And because I was not involved in the budget process, last year, at all, I have looked through the budget, but I have been looking at what I considered more important things than ambulance service, but I will definitely be looking at this week.

STANLEY: Any other questions about this topic?

O'BRYAN: Well, I am a hybrid, I think in Ticonderoga. Where we sit on the border, we have not only Crown Point on contract, but we have Putnum, across the county line. Our ambulance, you might find our ambulance in Grandville, responding, because of dropped calls. I see it every month. There aren't a lot of them, last month there was one to Grandville, Fort Ann, different spots in Washington County and they will call us and we will respond, which is, I am trying to get my hands around that to understand. I mean we want to help our neighbors, but in the meantime, we've got to make sure that we're not putting ourselves in a position.

MASCARENAS: Right, especially when your mutual aid to the north is likely Moriah, because Crown Point, doesn't have it. Yeah, that can be a challenge.

O'BRYAN: It is, so that's something we've got to keep our eyes on. We have Hague, we respond to Hague, we've got Washington County, Warren County, Essex County, just by where we sit geographically.

WHITNEY: Training and events; we did a CRP class for BOCES. The EMT basic class in Keene is almost complete. They should be testing out, I think this month. ECH paramedic class started on 01/15 and then there is going to be another EMT original refresher starting the 19th of March at the Public Safety Building.

Recruitment and retention;

HUGHES: Can I ask a question, real quick? What's the possibility of getting an EVOC course scheduled for any new individuals that want to drive?

WHITNEY: I'll look into that.

HUGHES: I am just curious, thank you.

WHITNEY: Recruitment, retention; I already mentioned about the 3 paramedic job interviews, and we have two of our county employees started the paramedic program.

Community outreach; we didn't have anything.

Grant status; Randi or Bill, do you want to?

TANSEY: We're a lot further along than we were in December, but we've got another email, as Matt knows, kind of got my blood pressure up on Friday. But, we're working through it and if I don't get a response, I will let you all know, but we have contact and we don't have the money, yet essentially.

STANLEY: Well, I may reach back out to them, as well, because as you know, dollar signs aren't changing. It's their way they want us to report. Well, when you tell us what it's supposed to be to report and then change what we're supposed to report and the dollars haven't changed, that's on you. Get us our money and then...

MASCARENAS: 20 years I have been dealing with Department of State, at this point, in some capacity and I can tell you that not much has changed in terms of them getting money out in a timely fashion. Their reporting forms are relatively straightforward, if you were to look at them, but the person receiving them seems to have changed their mind and varies over time. So, when it takes so long to get out a payment, you might be dealing with person number three or four at this point, that all has a different way in understanding of how to complete their own forms. The problem is you can't move on until first payments made. So, you've incurred millions of dollars in expenses on the back end, but until that first one's correct, you can't claim the other ones because it all changes the prior and the further you get away from it, the harder it is.

STANLEY: I mean we're closing in on 6-years for a payment from 2020. I'll reach out again.

MASCARENAS: And your contact was a good contact. They were all over it and then again, it just dies and goes away.

WHITNEY: The rest of it is just the stats on the calls, if you have any questions on that and the next meeting is scheduled for March 9th.

STANLEY: Alright, does anybody have any questions?

MENSER: You mentioned CPR training for BOCES, is there any minimum requirements for town employees that are CPR qualified?

WHITNEY: What do you mean the minimum?

MENSER: In other words, do I have to have at least one in ten employees trained in CPR or do I have to have one period or none at all?

MASCARENAS: No, it depends on what you're doing. So, if you're running a youth program, you have to have a certain amount of individuals trained per Department of Health rules and regulations, we typically train them all, but that's the number that has to happen. So, like your summer day camps, those types of things, within your highway, no. Some towns have incentives that will pay town employees stipends that are trained on some level, on an annual basis. It has helped response rates in different towns when, if an highway is an EMT or something a little more significant than CPR trained, they might pay them a little extra, they might allow them to go to calls and those types of things during their normal work day, but again, that various, so no, there's no requirement with the majority of your staff, but it depends on what you're doing.

STANLEY: I think Lewis, actually tried to get a First Responders course, last year. for all their highway guys.

MASCARENAS: You have a handful that are trained.

PIERCE: Right

STANLEY: Jim, was pushing that.
Any other questions? If not, it is 9:25 and we are adjourned.

**AS THERE WAS NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THIS SUBCOMMITTEE, IT
WAS ADJOURNED AT 9:25 AM.**

Respectively Submitted,

Dina Garvey, Deputy Clerk
Board of Supervisors