EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES COUNTY (EMS) SUB-COMMITTEE

Monday, August 10, 2026 - 9:00 AM

Matthew Stanley, Chairperson
James O'Bryan, Vice-Chairperson

Chairman Stanley called this Emergency Medical Services County (EMS) Sub-committee meeting to order at 9:00 am with the following Supervisors in attendance: Clayton Barber, Chris Clark, Ken Hughes, Tracie McGill, Steve McNally, Clayton Menser, James O'Bryan, Richard Preston, Cathleen Reusser, Matt Stanley, Davina Thurston and Ike Tyler.

Department Heads present: Josh Favro, Judy Garrison and Michael Mascarenas.

Also present: Michael LaVallie and Nate Jones.

STANLEY: Good morning. We'll start with Josh.

FAVRO: Okay we don't have any resolution requests this meeting. We did hire a new per diem, Thomas Noble from Fort Ann. He's worked out fantastic so far.
We are still waiting on documentation from Chesterfield, Schroon Lake, Wilmington and Jay for the EMS funding. Get ahold of Randi for that, she can walk you through.

STANLEY: I brought everything with us today. We just made our third quarter payment.

FAVRO: Perfect.

PRESTON: Josh, for the ALS should that wait until the end of year?

FAVRO: I'm not sure what –

STANLEY: I think the way Mike was talking about doing it is showing it and making sure it's in your budget and obviously our budgets go at the beginning of the year and we're getting that money and planning on that money so it's moving forward as long as we sign up for it and can show the prior year that we've got it it should be.

FAVRO: Yes.

PRESTON: Thank you.

FAVOR: So on the 23rd I sent a funding application to the towns that took the waiver for this year I believe it was Ticonderoga, Willsboro, Essex, who else was there- Etown, Lewis and Newcomb that waiver is to give Mike an idea of what he's going to need for money moving forward with this coming year's budget. I sent that on the 23rd. So I believe September 1st is the deadline for that to get it back to Mike so he has an idea of what the HT's are going to need for funding. I also sent a letter on the same day to the agencies just kindly reminding them we are halfway through the year and if they have staffing changes January 1st. I haven't heard anything back from any of them. I'll send a follow up email as we get closer again.

MASCARENAS: Of course finding board members.

FAVRO: I did not send the funding application to the agencies, just to the supervisors for that first part of the survey.
We're still doing good with dropped calls.

STANLEY: Just going back to the grant claims, claim #3 is in progress. Is it moving forward still? Is it just going back and forth? So, it hasn't stalled?

MASCARENAS: It has not. We've gotten, my office is now dealing with this and we're really close I think to getting the fiscal. We are able to make connections, they are responding regularly the last month or so.

STANLEY: I think having Chris involved has –

MASCARENAS: Has helped a ton so thank you with that because that has helped a ton. We are headed in the right direction we did get one of the payments and now we are working on that final payout.

STANLEY: Sweet.

FAVRO: I'm glad you said that, I did skip over – we have started working on the state's comprehensive county EMS system plan. I do have some documentation I'll give you on your desks in the next meeting. It's just a form if you would kindly fill it out and get it back to us hopefully by Friday we can get that part in with the State they are on a schedule type of deal and they need it back by Sunday so they can have time to do that. As far as EMS that pretty much wraps it up unless you have any questions?

STANLEY: Anybody have any questions about EMS?

O'BRYAN: I noticed Josh, just going back looking at the Medic car responses for the Fly Car looks like mine have really dropped off, they all have pretty much dropped off.

FAVRO: Yes, so we are attempting to put our resources where, we don't have redundant resources so Ticonderoga has ALS and then they are backed up with Lamoille who generally has ALS so we've been kind of focusing on more Moriah type areas where that service lacks but if there was a situation that needs additional resources by all means we are going to respond there.

O'BRYAN: I figured that what you did was reallocated.

MASCARENAS: Mr. O'Bryan just so you are aware the point of the bonus dollars are those towns that can support themselves with ALS is why we spend the bonus dollars the ones that cannot we are trying to push the medic cars in those directions in lieu of the dollars, you get the service that's just how the system works so your town probably will be eligible by the sounds of things being that you're providing that service now.

REUSSER: Is there like a pre shift report that identifies that Essex-Willsboro may not be putting together a crew this evening or this weekend or whatever –

FAVRO: Yes so we use IMS responding for that and the agency will – is supposed to, most of them are pretty good about it will log in and respond and say, Etown-Lewis EMS has ALS today and has two rigs available or we are only BLS today and then the medics are looking at that saying

okay well, obviously we're short over in this area I'm going to hang out over here for a bit to make sure that we're not covering where we need to cover. They are currently split up into zones now which is different we just started so our department has the county split up into four battalions or zones is what we call it and when you have two medics on one will be assigned to say, Zone one and two and the other one is going to be assigned to zone three and four and that way you don't have two medic cars both hanging out in the Town of Keene. Just trying to make it more useful with what we have to work with.

REUSSER: Sounds good.

STANLEY: Any other questions?

BARBER: Yes, so waiting for documentation. Are you saying that we have to give you a cancelled check? What is it that you're looking for? Or is that something from the EMS service?

FAVRO: No and correct me if I'm wrong Mike, the cancelled check would be from the Town to the agency for their service so you're contracting them out, so say you give them $1000 we just need a cancelled check from that for the auditor.

MASCARENAS: So again the funds for this program are meant to be paid to the towns for one of two reasons reducing the burden on your local taxpayers and/or establishing a system where you didn't have one previously so we have eighteen towns in Essex County all that are providing a level of EMS services some have been paying a lot of money for a very long time and have well established budgets for that, some have not. So these dollars are really meant to do one of two things but both providing relief to your local taxpayers recognizing the fact that our EMS system stressed largely by visitors that come here. We have a responsibility to provide the service for our locals but the bottom line is there's an awful lot of visitors coming here that are enhancing what we need to provide in terms of that EMS service which is why we took some of the sales tax proceeds and pushed it there because those dollars are coming from the visitors and it's only fair that those visitors pay for the local service instead of subsidizing it for $36,000 so in a long winded answer to you that's why all the money goes directly to the towns which means the town is responsible for the reimbursement and claiming so if you pay your local EMS $100,000 a year yours is much higher I know that because you've been one of those, you need to show us that you paid it and we're going to reimburse you the total up to $125,000 or it's going to go to the town the town then decides does that money go there or am I using it to offset my district and/or my general fund depending on how you set it up locally that's all up to you. I don't care about any of that.

STANLEY: And you and I had talked about moving forward that we just need to show essentially what we did the prior year, show that it's budgeted for the next year so that.

MASCARENAS: Yes I want to simplify the process for 2027. Once you budget those dollars and have your budgets approved at the local level you've essentially have taxed your people. I think that in our contract we need to make it such so we can get those dollars out more quickly because some of you have quarterly payments, everybody is all over the board in terms of how you're paying that out to your EMS district my goal is to get the money in the hands of the towns quickly enough to be able to do that so administrative item I've got to work with Bill on changing contract language because like I said once you budget it and there's a net cost there, you've taxed your taxpayers that's what that is and good enough for me because they are going to get it in their property tax bill come January so I think that we can make that a little bit easier down the road

and take away some of that administrative burden.

BARBER: Gotcha mine is paid right up front.

MASCARENAS: Yeah, so you should get your money back quick when you're doing that.

MENSER: I am going to be contracting with Ticonderoga for EMS services matter of fact I'm going to talk to Jim today about getting the contract that they are going to need how does that affect us or does it?

MASCARENAS: It does now so every town in Essex County qualifies for funding. You have to provide EMS services some way, shape or form contracting with your neighbor is fine we have a lot of people that do that Schroon, Willsboro, Essex, Elizabethtown, Lewis so we already have a model you were telling me this morning you have seven, your agency contracts with seven other municipalities?

THURSTON: Right for Saranac Lake.

MASCARENAS: For the Saranac Lake district so, but you're only going to get back half of what you spend so if you want to maximize those dollars that you're discussion with Mr. O'Bryan is going to go a little different than what you think but in all reality it is really about everybody being a pair in the system, getting their fair share and then the reward is those funding dollars.

MENSER: I don't want to pad the books shall we say to get extra money that way because we're still paying out more if we do that.

MASCARENAS: It's all about the cost and if you're looking at call volume or you're looking at whatever not my business in how you gentlemen figure it out but there's a cost for a service and what is that cost? Is it being pushed out fairly between everybody who's benefiting from that? You can break it up to a cost per resident, you can go that way you can do whatever.

STANLEY: So just to be clear from the county's perspective they don't care how you get it done, who you contract with if you spend $250,000 you're eligible with ALS, you're available for up to $125,000 worth of reimbursement and the county doesn't matter how you do it as long as it's covered and you can show proof that it is done.

MASCARENAS: Correct.

STANLEY: Anything else on EMS because I want to make sure we have time to start talking about the communications. Alright, moving forward.

FAVRO: Alright I'm going to turn it over to Mike and Nate and he can run through where we are at with the communications side of things here.

LAVALLIE: Thanks Director. So Supervisor Stanley, Supervisor O'Bryan, County Manager Mascarenas asked us to kind of put something together quick to give you a little bit of communication in radio stuff so bear with me, this is the first time we've done this so I tried to put something together on an agenda kind of tried to keep it the same as the flow of the EMS subcommittee agenda so we're not going to get into the weeds, we're not going to get too deep into the weeks but touch on some real quick things and run through this and please if you have

any questions, suggestions or changes or added additions please reach out to us and we'll definitely do that.
No resolutions. Radio system updates – infrastructure & site maintenance that's basically an ongoing process on a weekly, daily basis working with our vendors and we'll get that as we go down through here.
Subscriber radio programming status – that is basically the boots on the ground going to every department. Somebody calls us up and says hey, we've got a new apparatus coming I've got a new portable we need to program that that's this guy behind us here touching that system and getting them ready to go with a new unit and out in the field so that is a busy and I'm not trying to minimize that but that is a busy daily something hey, I'm not hearing anything right on my portable anymore you know that type of thing.

MASCARENAS: How many agencies? How many radios?

LAVALLIE: We'll get into that.

MASCARENAS; Okay to show the extent of that.

LAVALLIE: Yup so I'm going to programing radios as programming needs arise. FCC licensing so we have approximately 36 FCC licenses with different so those come due, we have to renew them it's a short process but we need to stay on top of that so we just actually renewed one of those.
I threw in some stats too like Mike just talked about some system matrix just basically tells you how many communication sites we have. We have 13 that includes our microwave right Nate?

JONES: Yes.

LAVALLIE: System availability we try to keep that 100% we try to keep everything up and going. If we get a trouble code or if we get something that possibly is not working we are right on that, we're working with our vendor, myself and Nate and Todd and the Director we're keeping that going.
Radios programmed so like Mike just talked about and this is just within the last month or two about 250 radios to 100 pagers. So we are dealing with a lot of radios out of there so think of your firetrucks, think of your ambulances, think of your Chiefs with their portables, think of your Chiefs with their pick up trucks, think of their bay stations at their stations, think of okay this person is a board member but I want him to have a portable so just multiply that and that adds up to a lot of programming and a lot of time that Nate is going around touching that and trying to keep everybody up to that.
Preventive maintenance – two sites have been completed JPJ came they've gone through our low band on Wells and Ainger and those are continuing. A couple critical issues that are still going on some system alignment and vote scan again I'm not going to get into the weeds of that but that is still ongoing. I did talk about the renewal process of one and some active infrastructure projects Gore, Belfry we're still waiting on the antennas. We have a contract signed but you guys put that resolution forward and I'm appreciative of that. We are on their schedule to get that accomplished as soon as their schedule allows and the camera system upgrades continues as well, which was discussed in Chapter one previous with Nate and Todd.
Infrastructure maintenance – antennas and installation labor are on order. I just talked about that.
Preventive maintenance is being completed at each communication site for the generators. They come do their annual PM's check over anything, any suggestions so they do that on their schedules.

Maintenance schedule – annual inspection contract executed replacing a previous fix. Break and fix approach so that's what we are trying to do we're trying to get away from that so if an antenna is coming due or a coaxial is coming due instead of coming to you guys and saying, hey look this is broke we want to know that ahead of time so we can budget for that correctly so we're not coming to ask for or get that repaired and plus we don't like to do that.
Site access & security – touched on that a little bit with the camera system upgrades that continues and we do have most of our sites up now right Nate?

JONES: Three at the moment.

LAVALLIE: Okay so that is ongoing and then the repairs and upgrades those are scheduled. Technical project I just want to touch on this real quick I'm not sure if you guys listen to your scanner apps or have a pager at home or a member of a department or something like that this has been a very big ongoing thing where we've tried to really fill in some high band, low band, try to make low band better, try to incorporate everybody you know what I mean so testing continues on the low band and basically what Supervisor Stanley brought up in Chapter one was the possible misstep of single tower usage so we have when they single tower select does everybody remember that? When they page out a department say they are paging out somebody in Jay they have to make sure to select the correct tower they couldn't send it across everybody well, this gentleman behind me with some of our vendors has basically got that to the point where now they all come up and we're able to talk to all of them at the same time. It's not 100% perfect we're still working some kinks out but now, the dispatcher only has to pick one button on this screen and it's talk to ground the whole system so that was kind of a huge thing that that stuck with us with your comment in Chapter one and that takes away anything of oh, they selected the wrong tower or this tower is down or that tower is down so now it brings everybody up so you might be hearing that across your jurisdictions of why do I hear calls now that are being dispatched in Jay when I'm in Ticonderoga or why am I hearing Keene now when I'm in Moriah? That's why that's how that is happening it also give you a little bit of a situational awareness. Me and as a Police officer I like to know what's going on around me so if I'm passing through an area I like to know if I had a CPR call going on and I'm happy to be in Lake Placid and I hear Lake Placid being dispatched or something like that I can assist with that so that situation awareness is king of huge. So again, some of the logistics with that, we're still doing some synchronizing with that correct Nate?

JONES: We are working on right now with our vendor JPJ our new logo vendor is coming up with what equipment would make this permanently correct. Right now there's no timing or synchronization so there will be a response where the auto may be a little let's just say not as good as it should be so we're currently working with the vendor to figure out what components we need to make this work and what that cost from budgeting standpoint.

LAVALLIE: But to emphasize and to emphasize what Mike has mentioned before this has been a lot of inhouse stuff that guy behind me, my boss, myself, Todd a lot of this has been just internally that we basically you folks, your past predecessors, Mike as the County Manager giving us a system and we we're just tweaking it, we're just using what we have to make better for what we have. We haven't been coming back to ask you for millions of dollars or anything like that so kudos to Nate and all those guys for doing that that is obviously ongoing.

STANLEY: Great job. It's great to utilize the aspects that are within a system that is opposed to going out getting redundancy to get the same thing that we can already do.

LAVALLIE: On a day-to-day basis we look at each other, Nate is like this isn't a bad system it just

needs to be –

JONES: There's some wonkiness to it it's a little quirky.

O'BRYAN: Are you guys hearing back from the system? Is the system talking back the crews?

JONES: It's a little laggy in a couple spots so we're trying to work on those as we can. We have a couple departments also looking at contract paging as a supplement so some use IAR as their secondary and some are looking at using contract paging as a secondary just because that's their front brakes.

LAVALLIE: At the end of the day we want to give – every user is different which we've learned. Some users want to hear everything. Some users are like, just give me my phone with a message across it, there's other people who are in the middle where they want to get the dispatch but they don't want to hear like, the fire truck the chief or any of that so we're trying to cover the gamut and like I said there's a lot of different people who prefer different things. We try to give the basics you get the message out and if you want more that's on you type of thing.
Continue down through, ESChat trial we're getting it's 2026 now we're testing like, talking through your phone to the radio and stuff like that so that is ongoing. We're actually demoing something of that nature where we can talk phone to phone or portable to phone or phone to portable and it automatically switches. The one we're testing right now is on Wi-Fi but some of them are on LTE automatically switches with so we don't have RF which is radio frequency if we have cell coverage the radio picks up and talks through the cell coverage to the radio system so it's kind of like a redundancy type thing again the technology is evolving and we're trying to stay up on that. The same with the Motorola LTE we tested one if was off of again, LTE coming in the future is going to be satellite communication too like the Starlink where the portable will get satellite communication so technology is continuing.
Budget & Grant status – capital equipment purchases we don't have anything at this point. State & Federal grants that's our annual SIG grant that's a big grant for us that provides like our maintenance cost for the radio system and our service contract and all that more mobile radios, so that has been submitted and that's a year.
Vendor contracts – VERTIV which is the I UPS agreement that's been executed ongoing coordination with BearCom, communications with JPJ. JPJ is our low band contractor that basically takes care of our low band stuff. Procom is the one that is doing the antennas and power maintenance all that stuff so some of that we didn't have previously so we're trying from the top to the bottom to into the building we are trying to cover the whole gamut so we're not missing a link there.
Vendor updates – Motorola solutions, we're working on our annual radio system maintenance agreement that's been continuing. Motorola request to deploy a Motorola FSO to replace BearCom. We've been relying more on ourselves with diagnosing things before we are dispatching a vendor and that's huge and Mike has been a big assistant with that to be like, hey, can you guys kind of trouble shoot it before you make the phone call and get somebody out and it's worked out really well it's tied us up a little bit and we do a lot of phone tag and hey, let's low level test this first before we have to come in and it's been working out really well with us on that.
ProCom we touched on that already. JPJ again the low band maintenance in the system and then in the new business – future infrastructure planning that's really the big thing with the new business. Review current operation and financial challenges associated with maintaining and advancing the existing communications system while continuing planning efforts for long erm communication system improvements, sustainability and future technology needs. The long of the short of it is we're continuing to keep the system going but we're still conversing of what we

need for the future that's pretty much what that states.

FAVRO: Yeah, what's going to be the most cost effective to the tax payers and at the same time providing what we need to have.

STANLEY: Now I'm not going to take any questions today. Thank you for a great overview. I just want to let everybody know we're transitioning this sub-committee to the communications so it doesn't take time away from the public safety meeting which is next. So think about any questions next meeting will be October right before the public safety committee meeting and thank you so much for your time. We're adjourned.

As there was no further discussion to come before this EMS subcommittee it was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Garrison, Clerk
Board of Supervisors