

**Legislation and Planning Committee
Office of EMS
Glen Allen, VA
August 5, 2022
8:30 a.m.**

Members Present:	Members Absent:	OEMS Staff:	Others:
Gary Samuels (Chair)	Jake O’Shea, MD (excused)	Scott Winston	Matt Lawler
Beth Adams (Vice Chair)		Chris Vernovia	Eddie Ferguson
Steven Higgins		Gary Brown	Greg Woods
Gary Dalton		Mohamed Abbamin	Debbie Smith
Ed Rhodes		Daniel Linkins	David Long
Jeff Meyer			
Bryan Rush			
Michael Player			

Topic/Subject	Discussion	Recommendations, Action/Follow-up; Responsible Person
I. Welcome and Introductions	Chair Gary Samuels called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM.	Ed Rhodes motioned to accept proposed agenda for today’s meeting. Beth Adams seconded. Committee unanimously approved proposed agenda.
II. Review and Approval of May 6, 2022 Minutes	OEMS received the transcript of the May 6, 2022 meeting of the Legislative and Planning Committee from County Court Reporters, Inc.	Michael Player motioned to accept draft minutes (transcript) from May 6, 2022 meeting of the L&P Committee. Seconded by Beth Adams. Committee unanimously approved May 6 meeting minutes.
III. OEMS Update – Quarterly Report to EMS Advisory Board (OEMS Staff)	<p>Mr. Scott Winston provided the committee members an update on the following topics:</p> <p>2022 Virginia EMS Symposium is scheduled to take place Nov. 9 – 13 in Norfolk, VA. Registration for Symposium will remain open until Friday, Oct. 7.</p> <p>Mr. Gary Brown reported NREMT Proposed 22-Resolution-13 concerning accreditation requirements for PM training programs was discussed at the NASEMSO Annual meeting in Charleston in June.</p>	

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	<p>The resolution proposed to update eligibility criteria for initial EMS education that would allow educational programs to be approved by state EMS offices.</p> <p>There was some discussion of this issue by the committee. Mr. Jeff Meyer asked if the L&P Committee should put forth an action item to the state EMS Advisory Board indicating that Virginia opposes NREMT Proposed 22-Resolution-13. Mr. Ed Rhodes seconded the proposed motion.</p> <p>EMS Funding Needs Assessment will be conducted by the VCU Performance Management Group. The assessment will be conducted before the end of this year and information and data from the assessment will be reviewed in order to determine how much increase in funding for EMS is needed.</p> <p>Rules and Regulations Committee of the state EMS Advisory Board meets on Wednesday, October 5 at 1 PM to review the Final Draft of Chapter 32 EMS Regulations.</p>	<p>Jeff Meyer motioned the Committee to request the state EMS Advisory Board to oppose NR Proposed 22-Resolution-13. Ed Rhodes seconded the motion. The Committee unanimously approved the motion.</p>
<p>IV. State EMS Plan</p>	<p>The L&P committee approved the final draft of the state EMS Plan on October 16, 2019. The final draft of the state EMS Plan was approved by the full state EMS Advisory Board on Wednesday, Nov. 6, 2019. The plan was presented to the Board of Health (BoH) for review and approval at the June 04, 2020 meeting.</p> <p>The current version (2020-2022) of the State EMS Plan is available for download via the OEMS website at the link below: http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/emergency-medical-services/state-strategic-and-operational-ems-plan/</p> <p>The Committee decided to hold a special called meeting on Friday, Sept. 23 at OEMS to review comments received on the draft state EMS Plan. Any edits approved by the Committee will be presented to the state EMS Advisory Board at their November 18 meeting for approval of the final draft of the 2023-2025 state EMS Plan.</p> <p>The committee discussed the need to regularly report on the progress of the plan to the state EMS Advisory Board. A comparison document to allow a quick reference on the current status of the state EMS Plan should be developed. Updates on accomplishments completed and progress that has been completed to date should be reported by organizations identified as accountable parties with the responsibility to work on the identified objective(s) and action steps.</p> <p>Currently, it is not easy to determine what has and what has not been completed related to the state EMS Plan. Having the ability to report on the status of action steps and objectives is important to be able to track the progress of the plan. A statement regarding updates on the state EMS plan will be included in the introduction for the plan.</p>	

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<p>V. EMS Regulations</p>	<p>Mr. Passmore reported the final draft of Chapter 32 of the EMS Regulations will be presented to the Rules and Regulations Committee at their October 5 meeting. This will give the committee a 90-day final review that they will move to pass the EMS regulations at their January 2023 meeting. Chapter 32 will then become an action item at the February 2023 state EMS Advisory Board. If approved in February by the EMS Advisory Board it will be presented to the Board of Health at their March 2023 meeting.</p>	
<p>VI. EMS as an Essential Service</p>	<p>EMS needs to be recognized as an essential service; the same as police and fire departments. Non-fire based EMS systems could benefit from recognizing EMS as an essential service.</p> <p><u>The goal of legislation to recognize EMS as an "essential service" are:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Ensure a minimum capability across the state. Counties must ensure the availability of a basic level of EMS (minimum standards for EMS personnel). 2) Provide flexibility to organize and finance EMS systems to reflect local circumstances. Counties must be given discretion on how to meet these basic requirements. 3) Provide resources (financial, technical, equipment/supplies, etc.) to support voluntary improvement in the EMS system over time. One aspect should include dedicated funding to support county efforts to meet requirements. <p>Mr. Winston met with Krista Samuels, OAG on July 20 and requested advice for drafting language for a bill to recognize EMS as an essential service. Questions related to the most appropriate section of the Code to amend or perhaps handling the legislation as a section 1 bill (non-codified law). Clarification was requested to distinguish the differences between local governing body, locality, jurisdiction, municipality, etc.</p> <p>Mr. Winston stated it is important to localities to understand they are not obligated to appropriate local revenue or otherwise provide ambulance service if the service can be provided by other means. Recognizing EMS as an essential service will require localities to provide these services or ensure that EMS is maintained throughout the entire locality. Localities can satisfy this requirement by owning and operating their own ambulance(s), entering an agreement with another local government, hospital or other healthcare facility, or recognizing a public, private or non-profit EMS agency as a Designated Emergency Response Agency (DERA) for the locality.</p> <p>There was general agreement that any legislation introduced should be a codified (to amend, repeal or add a code section) bill (probably 15.2, cities, counties, and towns) versus a section 1 bill. The bill</p>	

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	<p>language should clearly identify an entity responsible to ensure the provision of EMS throughout the entire locality.</p> <p>Mr. Gary Dalton stated we have been providing an essential service for a long time. We act like we are essential all the time, and we will continue to act like we are essential. Our selling point is, we deserve the recognition, we deserve to be on a level playing field, and if things change, it may increase our representation on committees that make decisions on where the funding goes.</p> <p>Mr. Steve Higgins stated that recognizing EMS as an essential service will enhance our ability to obtain funding, and when needed, for instance with the pandemic, we will be able to be reimbursed for some costs that currently we are not.</p> <p>Ms. Beth Adams stated, in her opinion, EMS has missed out on money that was available during the last three years due to the pandemic, because EMS is not recognized as an essential service.</p> <p>Mr. Samuels indicated our agencies have missed out on federal and state funding over the last three years because we are not recognized as essential.</p> <p>The committee reviewed the talking points and overview of EMS Essential Service legislation. The committee agreed to distribute and use these statements when talking to others about recognizing EMS as an essential service.</p>	
VII. Unfinished Business	There is no unfinished business.	
VIII. New Business	There is no new business	
IX. Public Comment	Chair Gary Samuels asked if there was any public comment, and there was none.	
X. Next Meeting	The next meeting will be on Friday, November 18, 2022 at 8:30 AM at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Richmond, VA.	
XI. Adjourn	A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The committee approved. Chair Gary Samuels adjourned the meeting at 9:40 am.	Chair Gary Samuels adjourned the meeting at 9:40 am.