



Department of Emergency Services
Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes
May 14, 2020

Virtual conference call due to COVID-19 via Go To Meeting

Present on the line:

DES Command Staff:
Director Scott Haas
Assistant Chief Morris
Assistant Chief Morgan
Assistant Chief Alfree
Assistant Chief Wheatley
Assistant Chief Lopez

Staff Support
DESAC Secretary; Rebecca Rombro

Council Members:
Doctor Ciotola, Dept. of Health; Chuck Melson, Consumer;
Chad Angelini, Vol. Ambulance Committee; Sandra Early, Consumer;
John Cvach, Consumer; Mike Ranelli, Consumer; Bill Faust, FEC;
Faye Williams, Consumer

- Executive Director Haas called meeting to order at 6:00pm
- Note that we have a quorum

Motion to approve minutes from previous meeting. All agreed.

Executive Director Haas; thanks council for joining us under these circumstances. The department has been assisting the Department of Health in their Emergency Operations Center as we respond to this global health pandemic.

Department Updates from Divisions

Assistant Chief Morgan; reviewing PowerPoint slides; the FMO has been conducting business inspections and Liquor License inspections but has since halting visiting locations due to the Governor's orders. Assistant Chief Morgan has been acting as the department's Director while Director Haas has staffed the DoH EOC. While in the Acting-Director role Assistant Chief Morgan has been overseeing operations. The division's three

contractual Inspectors have been working reduced schedules and conducting spot-checks on businesses which have remained open, to verify compliance.

Executive Director Haas; reviewing slides; some members of the department have been staffing the Health Department's EOC. We are happy to assist. A Health Emergency was declared right at the beginning of this, QAC was one of the first. MEMA is usually responsible for securing supplies in situations such as this however the EOC has been doing so in this case. We have struggled some to obtain certain items due to the mass needs.

At the May 5 Commissioners' meeting the departments' flat-budgets were approved. The departments might still have the opportunity to present their enhanced-budgets. At this point the county is tracking revenue and will soon determine. The departments were instructed to present a five percent budget reduction worksheet to determine from where funds could be cut if needed. We are told there is no intention to make these cuts at this time.

Assistant Chief Morris; reviewing slides; we have been responsible for assisting with obtaining supplies to distribute. We have been helping with logistics and at the testing site at Chesapeake College. Duties have included communications with allied agencies, businesses and the public, as well as food security.

Outside of the EOC, the division has continued with the county's Nuisance Flood Plan. The completion of this plan was contracted to Smith Planning and is now in for review and approval from MEMA and FEMA. This division is also in the planning process for the county's Active Assailant response plan – currently on hold. Animal Control continues to respond to calls and transport to the shelter. We have since limited public interactions and Animal Control Commission hearings have been held virtually.

Assistant Chief Wheatley; reviewing slides; the EMS division has seen a lot of changes during the State of Emergency. The department has postponed all PTO for all employees. EMS-4 supervisor has been added to the schedule to increase mandatory staffing. Our providers are required to don full PPE when responding to calls. The department continues to update our requirements as MIEMSS and the CDC release updated guidance. Personal Protective Equipment has included N-95s, gowns. The department is now required to wear cloth masks while at the stations or while driving. Decontamination procedures have been established and allotted time has been added for the decon of ambulances after the transport of a PUI. We have been aware of the stressors a situation such as this puts on our employees; there are unknown dangers and constant procedural updates they are required to adhere to.

Where possible, meetings and trainings have been moved to virtual, otherwise have been canceled. The deadline for certain recertifications have been extended. The department has initiated social distancing rules. A number of our providers have needed to remain quarantined at their homes due to suspected exposure to COVID-19.

The department has been able to purchase supplies and equipment through the CARES Act, to date, expenses total greater than \$125,000. The department is also purchasing two ambulances with CARES funds.

Assistant Chief Alfree; reviewing slides; the EOC at DES has been changed into an additional COM workstation as has the Assistant Chief's office. This has allowed our 9-1-1 Communications staff to spread out within the Center and promote distancing. We have been able to make use out of other Assistant Chief's offices while they are assigned to the Health Department. DES Headquarters has been on lockdown; only Command Staff, COM staff and Admin have been permitted to travel past the foyer in an attempt to keep the building free from contamination.

Next Generation 9-1-1 is still a top project for the department. The Emergency Numbers Systems Board continues with the VESTA Command Post project and granted QAC two portable 9-1-1 answering positions. The ENSB is also granting QAC five logins to their Twilio backup system which is cloud-based. Carousel Industries is building a cloud-based backup center for the counties' call centers throughout Maryland. Since the State of Emergency was declared, the Medical Director approved additional COVID-related questions to screen 9-1-1 calls before dispatching our providers to scenes. These additional questions focus on flu-like symptoms or travel, in an effort to increase situational awareness.

Executive Director Haas; reviewing Support Services' slides; the division has a new employee, Christine Hamrick, who began with us in the Systems Technician role. Since Rob Lopez has began with us in the Assistant Chief position the division has begun an infrastructure overhaul, virtualizing physical servers and adding them to our VMWare. Web and DNS filtering have been of focus which blocks malicious websites and harmful or inappropriate content. These projects add security to the DES network ensuring data remains secure. The division has successfully added remote maintenance and monitoring tools which improves operations on multiple levels. Other completed projects include equipment updates, rewiring and consolidation of network racks, installed additional security cameras at EMS stations and towers, and supporting and assisting with the COVID-19 remote workforce migration.

Doctor Ciotola; I would like to acknowledge the support from DES. As of the Governor's decision yesterday the stay-at-home order will be lifted tomorrow at 5:00pm. It remains to be seen where that will leave us. We have followed up on positive tests within 24 hours. Some PPE items have been a struggle to obtain such as sanitizer and testing materials. We plan for the CARES Act ambulances for use as mobile testing sites. The mid-Shore has seen testing challenges and has directed alternative care to Chestertown to dampen the peak and give hospitals time to prepare to ramp up services. We have been seeing hypoxia in patients who are not symptomatic.

A unified testing site was set up at Chesapeake College to help unload Queenstown ER and primary care facilities. The state has been having issues obtaining testing materials.

After tomorrow's lift, QAC will see a soft re-entry; agreements with small businesses to social distance. There have been very few violations thus far.

We have concerns regarding the nursing homes such as Corsica Hills which have proven to be locations highly susceptible to COVID-19.

The state site reports nine deaths throughout the county, data which we are reviewing; why some were listed as QAC. Death certificates list long-term care address.

Good of the Order

Mike Ranelli; I would like to thank Doctor Ciotola and everyone who has been involved. How will all of this effect travel and tourism throughout the summer? Is the county concerned?

Doctor Ciotola; the major concerns are Ocean City openings and the increased numbers that will cause. Churches and group activities are still a concern and dangerous.

Mike Ranelli; keep up the good work, it is much appreciated.

Chad Angelini; thank you from the volunteer side as well.

Motion to adjourn

Meeting adjourn 7:04pm