

Meeting of the Talbot County Emergency Services Advisory Board (TCESAB)
10 November 2021

Attendees:

Steve Mroczek - Chairperson

Members:

Shirley Bucci

Wayne Dyott

Jeanne Kuperberg

Brian LeCates

Lois McDonald

Scott Mergenthaler

Richard Smith

Ruth Sullivan

Steve Mroczek opened the meeting at 6PM 10 November . The minutes of the 10 August meeting were approved as prepared.

Brian LeCates provided an update on the Department of Emergency Services.

The Emergency Management Division has continued to support the Health Department needs as the COVID 19 emergency continues to evolve. They are also working with a contractor to update the County's Hazard Mitigation Plan. Individual Stakeholder meetings are underway and feedback is being incorporated. The next step is a large Stakeholder meeting is planned for January 19th at the Community Center. Municipalities are expected to participate. It's planned that they will adopt the plan this Spring prior to County Council adopting it. When those steps are completed it will go to FEMA for their approval in the Fall. Finally they are doing planning for major County events.

The Emergency Medical Services Division has completed implementing the new inventory management system for supplies on vehicles and the supply room. They are beginning to implement fleet management functions of the software that will track all of the maintenance for each vehicle. The Ultrasound project continues. All of the devices have been received and they are planning for introductory training. COVID has complicated this planning. Three of the four new positions for the upcountry unit have been hired. Brian said he anticipates that in the next Fiscal Year the Council will approve an additional 4 to staff the unit 7/24 and at that time this remaining Paramedic can be hired. The Council has approved the order of the two new ambulances in this years budget. Delivery is expected in the Spring.

The Communications Division has begun the migration of the the 911 System to the "Next Generation" system This system is internet based and uses fiber optic cabling. Locating callers will be much more accurate, even identifying the floor of a building the call is coming from. Implementation is expected to be complete in 2nd quarter of the year. Currently one of two vacant positions have been filled.

Brian then discussed the current planning for the FY 23 Budget. In addition to "normal" budget expenses he highlighted two major initiatives.

1. The North County Paramedic Station: A location has been identified and soil testing is underway. Funding for the land acquisition is in this years budget, construction

will be budgeted in next years. Construction is planned to begin in the Fall. In conjunction with building this Station will be the creation of a live backup 911 center. This facility would protect that system from an outage if the Port Street facility could not be occupied. With the exception of Radios, the State of Maryland's Numbers board will pay for most of technology for this capability.

2. 25 Year Retirement Plan: In the area of personnel DES hopes to move forward with a 25 year retirement program. Such a program would be a major boost to recruiting. This year's budget funded a study of the costs of moving DES to the Law Enforcement Officers Pension System (LEOPS). The results of that study will be due just about the time for the Budget's submission. Last year the County moved the Sheriff's Office to this system.

Scott Mergenthaler provided a update from the Sheriff's Office. He told the Board that they had a new deputy starting this month and an addition one beginning the Academy in January. That leaves them with a vacancy in the School Resource Officer Program for St. Michaels High School. The biggest new item anticipated for FY 23 is adding three new officers for the Patrol Division in order to get to three officers per shift. Scott said that pay parity with the surrounding jurisdiction with be a major focus. He said he was aware that the County has gone to an outside firm to do a county wide study looking at this issue.

Debbie Timms was not present to provide a report from Shore Health. The group discussed the current congestion in the hospital due to COVID and staffing shortages.

Steve Mroczek provided an overview of how the seven independent Fire Companies of Talbot County develop their budget submissions for presentation to County Council in conjunction with the Talbot County Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association.

Richard Smith provided a brief overview of bills expected to come before the 2022 General Assembly session that will impact Career and Volunteer Emergency Services.

Old Business : None

New Business:

There was a discussion of the Open Meetings Act. Shirley Bucci said that she had taken the class and would provide a copy of her certificate.

Steve said he would provide a calendar of proposed meeting dates for 2022. Additionally, a copy of the agenda will be sent out with the prior meeting minutes and the meeting announcement for each future meeting.

Next meeting will be in January

