

MINUTES OF MARCH 8, 2012 ESB MEETING

Members in Attendance

Ed McLellan, Chair
Bob Browning
Sonny Vincent
Rick Harding
Paul Harmon
Dwayne Stein
Brad Frantz

Guests

Steve Smith, GCPS
Dick Bolt
Wayne Tiemersma, GCES

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Chairman McLellan. Minutes of the November meeting were distributed and reviewed. Bob Browning made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Sonny Vincent. The motion carried unanimously.

Auditing Requirements for Fire/EMS Companies- In light of recent events in surrounding jurisdictions, the ESB fully supports in principle to implement auditing requirements that would ensure compliance with all local, State and Federal financial requirements. A motion was made by Bob Browning to request the County Commissioners to have the Finance Office provide a recommendation by the next ESB meeting, if possible on the appropriate type of audit(s). The motion was seconded by Sonny Vincent and carried unanimously.

FCC Mandate on Narrow Banding- Steve Smith provided information on the upcoming mandate for narrow banding of certain frequencies that will impact the Fire and EMS Service. Garrett County Public Safety has attempted to procure as many portable and mobile radios for the volunteer companies as possible, but it is still incumbent on the individual companies to make sure they are in compliance by the January 1, 2013 deadline. A motion was made by Dwayne Stein to send a letter to individual companies regarding the narrow banding issue. Sonny seconded and motion carried. Garrett County Public Safety will take care of distributing the letter to their distribution list.

Boundary Dispute- The ongoing boundary dispute between Eastern Garrett Fire Department and Good Will Fire Department in Lonaconing (Allegany County) is pending review from the standing committee of the Garrett County Fire and Rescue Association.

LOSAP update- The Commissioners approved the ESB request to maintain the existing point system for the foreseeable future rather than implement the county point system. They would like us to investigate other options to modify the point system in the future.

Letter to MFRI regarding training standards-Brad Frantz will draft a letter for the Commissioners and Chairman McLellan to review. The Commissioners will then send a finalized letter to Delegate Beitzel and Senator Edwards for endorsement and action.

Full-scale Exercise-Brad Frantz updated the Board on plans to conduct a full-scale exercise. Due to the G8 Summit being moved to Maryland, the exercise date has been pushed back to September 8, 2012. The exercise will involve a hazardous materials accident scenario involving an aircraft and will be staged at the Garrett County Airport. The exercise will test various functions of the newly adopted Hazardous Materials Plan.

Wayne Tiemersma gave the Quality Assurance report and indicated there were very few Q/A issues since the last report. There is an on-going concern regarding helicopter response including proper staging at a landing zone. There is a need for additional EVOC training.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 24, 2012 at 4:00 p.m. in the Commissioner's Meeting Room. With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Delegate Beitzel, Senator Edwards

(Heading)

Dear _____,

As you are aware, the Garrett County Emergency Services Board (ESB) acts on behalf of the Garrett County Commissioners to provide oversight and recommendations regarding Emergency Services entities in Garrett County.

The Board has informed us of an issue that we believe needs to be rectified, but will require your involvement as it pertains to an agency that receives State funding and is charged with ensuring the training needs of the entire State of Maryland are met, as outlined in their Mission Statement:

MFRI Mission Statement

The **Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute** (MFRI) of the University of Maryland is the state's comprehensive training and education system for emergency services. The Institute plans, researches, develops and delivers quality programs to enhance the ability of emergency service providers to protect life, the environment, and property.

The issue that continually and persistently is brought to the attention of the ESB regarding training requirements is that they are overly restrictive to a rural area that cannot easily draw from our own population or other jurisdictions to meet the MFRI attendance requirements. Numerous classes have been cancelled due to not being able to meet that requirement. In the past six months alone classes including First Responder Basic, Rescue Tech. Site Operations, Paramedic Refresher and EMT-B have been cancelled.

The net result is that the providers who were signed up and would have taken the course ultimately do not receive the training, which lowers the number of trained personnel in a jurisdiction that already faces many challenges in providing these types of resources.

MFRI's response in the past has been that students can attend classes in neighboring jurisdictions, but this is not practical for a number of reasons including weather, travel

expense and time commitment; adding two hours of travel time and expense to every class is not a viable option.

A policy that requires an area the size, geographic location and population of Garrett County to meet the same criteria as the metropolitan area is untenable. It is the opinion of the Garrett County Commissioners, the Emergency Services Board and the member companies of the Garrett County Fire and Rescue Association that immediate changes are needed to address this issue, such as prorating the attendance requirements based on population.

The Board of Garrett County Commissioners respectfully requests your support and assistance in correcting and modifying this policy. Otherwise, MFRI cannot meet its Mission Statement of providing comprehensive training and education to the ENTIRE State of Maryland.

GEORGE C. EDWARDS
1st Legislative District
Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties
—
Budget and Taxation Committee

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The Senate of Maryland
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 28, 2012

Mr. Steven T. Edwards
Director
Maryland Fire & Rescue Institute
University of Maryland
4500 Paint Branch Parkway
College Park, MD 20742

Dear Mr. Edwards:

Enclosed is a copy of a letter we received from the Garrett County Commissioners. The letter is self-explanatory.

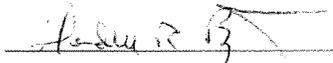
The main concern is the scheduling of classes and how this plays negatively on the rural parts of the state and particularly, Garrett and Allegany Counties. This is a serious concern and we are asking you to look into it and work to make more classes available in these areas. Without access to the classes some fire and rescue personnel cannot or will not participate because they cannot get to the training.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this very important matter and we look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,



Senator George C. Edwards
Garrett County, District 1



Delegate Wendell R. Beitzel
Garrett County, District 1A

cc: Garrett County Commissioners



UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND

MARYLAND FIRE AND RESCUE INSTITUTE

College Park, Maryland 20742-6811
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April 10, 2012

Senator George C. Edwards
James Senate Office Building
11 Baden Street, Room 322
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Delegate Wendell R. Beitzel
Lowe House Office Building
6 Bladen Street, Room 410 B
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Senator Edwards and Delegate Beitzel,

Thank you for the correspondence regarding Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute (MFRI) emergency services training classes in Garrett County. The goal of MFRI is to provide training to as many students as possible within the budgetary constraints that we are faced with. In Fiscal Year 2011, MFRI conducted 1,630 courses and trained 34,061 students on a statewide basis. The MFRI has several regional training centers and our Western Maryland Regional Training Center in Cresaptown coordinates the MFRI activities in Allegany, Garrett, and Washington County.

I understand the concerns of the Garrett County Commissioners and the Garrett County Emergency Services Board, although I have received no communication from them regarding this issue. My preference would be that these issues are communicated in a manner that allows for a prompt discussion and understanding and as always MFRI representatives are available to meet with them as necessary.

As I am sure you understand, any training and educational institution has to have guidelines that allows for the maximum number of students to receive courses over a period of time. The goal of MFRI is to have 30 students per class session at the start of the class. Most of our classes begin with 25-30 students and over time, students for various academic and personal reasons may drop out of the class at various points. In an effort to accommodate, smaller jurisdictions we have a 15 student minimum at the class start and hope to finish the class with at least 10 students.

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Senator Edwards and Delegate Beitzel

Garrett County Commissioners Letter Request for Additional Classes

Even though our minimum at the class start is 15 students, on request rural jurisdictions have routinely been approved to begin with 12 students. This accommodation has been made for numerous classes in rural areas in the past. In addition, the jurisdiction, if it encounters an unusual situation may request to start a class with less than 12 students. The jurisdiction has to make a request and provide a reason and it will be approved on a case-by-case basis. To my knowledge, MFRI has received no requests from Garrett County for the less than the required student minimum. Our records indicate this fiscal year that four classes in Garrett County have failed to start, two with 10 students, one with 6 students, and one with 3 students. Please be advised of our classes include group activities and safety procedures that require a minimum number of students to be successfully accomplished.

MFRI does not select the emergency services classes that the jurisdiction may want to have delivered. In this case, Garrett County advises MFRI as to what classes they request for the fiscal year and we advertise both locally and online for students to attend. Garrett County has a responsibility to also recruit students and to select classes that have the maximum opportunity to start with the minimum number of students. MFRI provides the instructors, class materials and equipment, textbooks, etc. to the local jurisdiction at no cost; their only responsibility is to provide a sufficient number of students for the class.

Viewing this issue on a statewide basis means that if we routinely start classes with low numbers of students than other jurisdictions with 25-30 students registered may not receive a class. This is because the operating cost for a class with the exception of textbooks is about the same for an 8 person class or a 15 person class. The MFRI operating budget has not keep pace with inflation and other costs, so our flexibility to make accommodations is unfortunately limited. We have to have a stated class minimum policy in order to efficiently manage such a large number of students each semester.

MFRI is exploring other techniques to delivery classes that include online classes via the internet. We have six online classes at this point and expect to increase this as we can over time. The online classes will allow students to attend classes from their home or office, 24 hours a day. This process works well for some classes, but many of our programs include practical training sessions that have to be completed in person.

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Senator Edwards and Delegate Beitzel
Garrett County Commissioners Letter Request for Additional Classes

In summary, MFRI has made accommodations regarding the minimum number of students for class starts in rural areas and will continue to do so in the future. The jurisdiction does have to request an exception at some point and has to do their part to encourage and promote MFRI training classes in their county. Additionally, the current MFRI Western Maryland Regional Training Coordinator has retired and MFRI has selected Todd Dyche to be the new MFRI Western Maryland Regional Coordinator effective June 10, 2012. Todd is from the fire/EMS service of Garrett County as a member of Grantsville VFD and has served as the President of the Garrett County Fire and Rescue Association. He is well aware of the training issues in Garrett County and I think work very well with them to resolve any issue that may arise in the future.

I hope that this addresses your concerns and I am available to meet with Garrett County officials at their request to further discuss these issues.

Sincerely



Steven T Edwards
Director

cc: James M. Raley, Chairman, The Board of Garrett County Commissioners
Gregan T. Crawford, Commissioner, The Board of Garrett County Commissioners
Robert G. Gatto, Commissioner, The Board of Garrett County Commissioners
Jon Bradley Frantz, Director, Department of Public Safety & Emergency Management
Garrett County Emergency Services Board
Ross A. Stern, Assistant to the President and Director of Legislative and Community Relations
University of Maryland College Park

Brad Frantz

From: Wendy Yoder
Sent: Tuesday, May 22, 2012 5:09 PM
To: Brad Frantz
Subject: Recommendation for Fire Companies and Rescue Squads

Brad,

You telephoned today asking for recommendations regarding auditing the books of the volunteer fire companies and rescue squads.

FULL-BLOWN AUDIT

A Full-Blown Audit is the most detailed report that one could receive but it is also the most costly that I know of. This audit is usually completed by a CPA or Auditing firm and would cover the auditing of not only the General Ledger to include Revenue, Expenditures, etc. but would also include the auditing of all procedures, internal controls, etc. For a full-blown audit, the auditor would provide an independent auditors' report on whether or not the information is fairly stated in all material aspects in relation to the financial statements as a whole, etc.

AGREED UPON PROCEDURES

Agreed Upon Procedures is a report that is also usually completed by a CPA or Auditing Firm but is less expensive than a full-blown audit and could accomplish the desires of the fire company or rescue squad at much less the price. Below is a detailed description of Agreed Upon Procedures.

AGREED UPON PROCEDURES are used when a client retains an external auditor to perform specific tests and procedures and report on the results. Examples might include special reviews of loan portfolio or internal control systems. In performing agreed-upon procedures, the auditor provides no opinion, certification, or assurance that the assertions being made in the financial statements are free from material misstatement. The users of reports based on agreed-upon procedures must draw their own conclusions on the results of the tests reported. For example, an external auditor could be asked to look at a certain number of corporation loan files and document which of the required forms are in the files. The auditor would report on the selection and the results of the procedures performed but would not provide a formal opinion with conclusions drawn from the results of the procedures.

There may be other options that an auditor could offer but these are the two that come to mind.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Thanks,

Wendy