A meeting of the Executive Committee of the Albemarle County Fire/EMS Board was held on Monday, March 10, 2014 at 1600 hours in the Fire Rescue Conference Room of the County Office Building, Stagecoach Road, Charlottesville.

The following members were in attendance:
John Oprandy, Albemarle County Fire & Rescue
Preston Gentry, Crozet Volunteer Fire Department
Danny Tawney, Seminole Trail Volunteer Fire Department
Kostas Alibertis, Western Albemarle Rescue Squad

Others in Attendance:
David Puckett, Albemarle County Fire & Rescue
Tom LaBelle, Albemarle County Fire & Rescue
Wendy Roberman, Albemarle County Fire & Rescue
Scott Lambert, Albemarle County Fire & Rescue

1. Call to Order
Chief Eggleston called the meeting to order at 1600 hrs.

a. From the Board: Agenda Additions
No items were added to the agenda.

b. From the Public: Matters not Listed on the Agenda
None were presented, and the meeting proceeded.

2. Consent Agenda
a. February 2014 Minutes

MOTION: Chief Tawney moved to approve the minutes of February 3, 2014. Chief Alibertis seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-1 with Chief Gentry abstaining because he did not attend the meeting.

3. Fire Rescue System Strategic Plan
a. Plan progress – worksessions
Chief Lambert referenced a tracking document he was distributing to them, stating that it is a summary of the approval process up to date and a track-changes copy of the document submitted to the EC at their February meeting. He stated that there were two items filtered back to the Training Committee during the EC review period – one centered around a tagline dealing with ALS release and a discussion of medical
records, but that was stricken from the policy because it was a holdover from their initial submission and would make more sense as an EMS addendum rather than in the policy itself. He said that the only other comments that came back to the Training Committee were conversations as to why there was still a date and time requirement based on a competency-based system, and there was no clear consensus as far as minimum competency so they are trying to develop a hybrid policy in which a minimum of one competency must be demonstrated.

Chief Alibertis asked if “successful candidates should be eligible for release” under 2C should be stricken also, because it doesn’t really tie to anything.

Chief Oprandy asked if it meant that those who successfully complete the assessment process are now eligible for release.

Chief Lambert said that’s correct, and if you go through the first assessment saying that there is a scenario-based assessment conducted – if you’re successful, you’re eligible for release; if you’re unsuccessful at a singular station, you can retest the same day as the assessment, but if you’re unsuccessful at multiple stations you have to set up a new day for tests.

Chief Alibertis noted that with that clarification, it does tie to the item above it. He also said that making ALS a sub-policy seems to imply that the policy is a sub-part of what’s above it; if something is a subsection, then the overarching policy applies to it and it should be a separate policy.

Chief Lambert said that the concern at the training level was that it might open them up to having a policy for every competency, and there would be the question as to whether specialty items like “driving” would fall under medical or non-medical. He said that the intent with this was to have an overarching policy that covered more categorical items for release – a minimum number of calls, a minimum number of competencies – with certain competencies addressed by an addendum.

Chief Oprandy suggested that they keep that in mind moving forward and evaluate whether it makes sense.

Chief Alibertis said that his final concern was with the 28-day release policy, as he isn’t certain that it makes a trainee any more or less competent and some may run numerous calls in less time while others may not have that opportunity. He stated that he does understand the intent, but it doesn’t assign a number of shifts, it assigns a number of days.

Chief Lambert said the training officers were purposefully trying not to assign a fixed number of shifts and wanted to allow individual stations to have that kind of autonomy, with Station 8 for example running a minimum of five 12-hour shifts in 28 days, whereas some stations don’t have a dedicated shift at all. He stated that with Crozet, on the
other hand, they run six 6-hour shifts from 6:00 p.m. to midnight, so until the shift approach is standardized, they need to leave it as generic as possible for the stations.

Chief Gentry said that if a trainee gets through the 28 days and he isn’t comfortable with that individual, they still won’t get released.

Chief Alibertis said you can have a higher level, you just can’t have a lesser level.

Chief Tawney said he wanted to make sure this wasn’t something that a firefighter could use to be released, by pointing to the policy.

Chief LaBelle said they would still have to test out.

Chief Lambert said that most of the concern up to now has been that this is too lengthy of a process, so this is a reversal.

Chief Tawney said that the idea has been not to have a timeframe at all.

Chief Puckett stated that at their captain level they require them to be recommended for an assessment, so even if they’ve done all their skills, if the captain says they’re not ready for assessment, they don’t move forward.

Chief Alibertis said that they could include a clause in the policy that says the individual’s assessment is dependent on each station’s assessment.

Chief Gentry stated that he has a person now who has been to multiple schools and passed Firefighter I, but he didn’t feel confident that she could handle the job even though she had passed the assessment.

Chief Oprandy asked how she would do in this process, and whether she would do well enough to pass everything.

Chief Gentry said that in every interior attack she has made, something has gone wrong with the equipment, and he had a conversation with the candidate and her mother.

Chief Oprandy stated that this is a concern because if the individual could get through all of the benchmarks and pass them, and the only thing that kept that individual from being released is a chief’s statement, “I’m not comfortable,” then it might set up a problem.

Chief LaBelle said that they have that now – it’s even worse – because it’s just gut feeling and opinion, without the hoops to jump through. He stated that if someone wants to take you to task, they don’t even have the 28 days and the check-off list on the fire side.
Chief Alibertis suggested that they add a statement that “final release is dependent on the station” as part of all of the other requirements, because they would be qualifying what should occur and then a final release.

Ms. Roberman asked if he wanted it to be at the discretion of the chief.

Chief Alibertis said that it should be “the station policy and/or its operating authorities.”

Chief Oprandy said that’s always the chief.

Chief Alibertis said that they have a training committee, and operations committee, and a chief; and if it’s ALS, it goes to the medical director. He said that it could state that it’s station dependent – i.e. the station has final authority.

Chief Lambert stated that from a training perspective, what they’re trying to prevent is a person who comes in and runs a really busy night and completes their task; the Training Committee felt there should be an incumbency period that’s long enough to have a depth of call volume.

Chief Alibertis said that they are never going to have every competency present in one single night – such as throwing a ladder, throwing a hose, using self-contained breathing apparatus, etc.

Chief Oprandy stated that it seems there are two different issues present – the time factor, and whether to include something that requires the discretion of the operating officer or chief. He said that there have been many opportunities for members to weigh in on this – including the 28 days and 10 calls – and perhaps they should take a straw poll now to see if this can move forward without resolving this one issue.

Chief Puckett said that the station requirements can be above and beyond whatever is in this policy.

Chief Gentry commented that he just didn’t want a discrimination lawsuit filed against him because there was nothing in the policy that said the chief had the final say.

Chief LaBelle said that there is an issue now with a candidate at Station 15, and have one individual who’s having a really difficult time – although he thinks he’ll get through it.

Chief Alibertis suggested that the statement be included that “final authority is dependent on the local governance,” as it would empower stations to do what they’re already doing now.

Chief Tawney said that the new policy essentially states that if they’re not doing at least this minimum, stations need to increase their minimum. He stated that the only downside is if the stations don’t have anything specific in their station, it could come back that the candidate has done everything because the station didn’t have any other
requirements. He said that his station has a formal step in the training that requires recommendation, and that is delegated down to an officer.

Chief Lambert said that currently the recommendation can’t be submitted prior to 28 days or 10 calls, and some people might get that earlier with some getting it later, and either meets what the Training Committee is looking for.

Chief Aliberti said that their EMS policies are ultimately dependent on the station.

Chief Oprandy said that it sounds like they are ready to move this forward, with the addition of a line that says “final release based on successful release of process as outlined with this policy,” and whatever requirements are at the local level with that authority. He asked for clarification of what their options were at this point.

Ms. Roberman clarified that their three choices were to approve it as is, approve it with a recommended change, or not approve it.

Chief Oprandy stated that they would be approving it with the recommended change.

Ms. Roberman said that the motion would be to approve the policy as presented, with the addition of a statement that would require station-level release.

Chief Oprandy stated that they would wordsmith something and have it sent around to the Executive Committee in time for the next FEMS Board meeting.

Chief Lambert said that as long as it’s ready 7 days ahead of FEMS Board, that’s fine.

MOTION: Chief Tawney moved to approve the policy as presented, with the addition of a statement that would require station-level release. Chief Gentry seconded the motion, which passed 3-0-1, with Chief Aliberti abstaining.

Ms. Roberman said that it would go to the FEMS Board in March, with Chief Lambert including some recommended language for the addition regarding station-level approval. She stated that the meeting is on March 26, so the packet would need to go out by the current week.

4. Unfinished Business

a. FEMSB Work Plan Items/Policy - for Discussion
There were no work plan items for discussion.

b. FEMSB Work Plan Items/Policy - for Decision
There were no work plan items for decision.

c. Ivy Station Recruitment and Retention Plan – update
Chief LaBelle stated that there was no update from the previous month.

d. Automatic Aid Agreement with Charlottesville – update
Chief Oprandy stated that there was no update from the previous month.

5. New Business
a. Task tracking document for mediation goals and objectives
Chief LaBelle stated that he had started the process and created the Excel worksheet, but it was taking longer than he’d expected because the mediation commentary isn’t necessarily connected to the tasks and goals. He said that he is down to goal three, but would have it completed for the next meeting.

b. Facial hair policy
Chief LaBelle said that he would be going out and meeting with stations regarding the facial hair policy, and while some stations were doing a good job adhering to the policy, others were having a much more difficult time with it. He stated that he would move forward with helping members understand it’s a health and safety issue.

Chief Gentry said that some members of his station had heard that Chief Eggleston was instructing career people not to go in on an incident if they felt the volunteer had too much facial hair. He stated that he had two people at his station who had facial hair issues; one of them shaved and the other moved to Fluvanna. He said that he agrees with the health and safety aspects of it, but many volunteers don’t understand why they have to deal with it since they are unpaid.

Chief LaBelle stated that they needed to create some ownership among all station members.

Chief Gentry said that when the policy was initially adopted, the stations were told that everyone would be fit-tested to see if they needed small, medium or large masks – but that has never been done. He stated that when he mentions facial hair now, it’s thrown back at him that they haven’t done fit-testing.

Chief Puckett said that ACFR has sent out emails offering to come out and do fit-testing, but only one or two stations have taken advantage of it.

Chief LaBelle stated that his goal is to get out to each station so he can come back with a document for the group that identifies the things that need to be addressed so that the whole membership can deal with it and station chiefs never have to bring it up again.
Chief Puckett said that they have some new fit-testing equipment that is much nicer, and Captain Burkett would be sending an email out to all departments offering to come out to the stations and do the testing.

Chief Alibertis asked if they had ever changed the RFP for the physician doing the physicals.

Chief Puckett said that they are still with the same provider, and Human Resources is in the process of drafting a new RFP – but it is still in review and has not yet been issued.

c. After Action Review Policy
Chief Oprandy said that this came up at the last FEMS Board meeting as to whether changes are in order for the policy, and they suggested having the EC discuss it.

Chief Gentry said that his understanding is that if there were multiple agencies involved, they would have to have an after-action review.

Chief Lambert stated that there’s a unit-level review, which is kind of a tail-board review; an informal station-level review, which has no documentation of lessons learned but is more of a loose structure; and a system-level review, which is done for basically any significant incident. He stated that they have wrestled for quite some time as to what the definition of “significant incident” was, but it calls for a more formalized, system-level review that would be coordinated by a training committee or designee – with a formalized after-action report produced and disseminated that would key findings for potential policy recommendations. Since the creation of the policy, he said, he just now has conducted the second one ever for a significant incident, the triple-fatality fire.

Chief Gentry said that there should be a system-wide review if there is death, either civilian or firefighter, a high-dollar loss, or injury.

Chief Lambert stated that he was involved in the initial team that made the policy, and the question arose as to how far it should expand if there is something like a motor vehicle accident that results in a death, or if it should just be fire-based. He said that the policy is written for significant incident, rather than a structure fire.

Chief Gentry said that anything requiring a debriefing or crisis intervention should probably have a system-wide review.
Chief Alibertis said that there could be an incident where you just have to pull someone out of a car.

Chief Lambert stated that they left it intentionally generic so that “significant incident” could be at the discretion of the incident command chief, but often there aren’t that many situations that would rise to the level of significant incident.

Chief Tawney suggested that they take some time to review the policy and come back to the next meeting with input.

Ms. Roberman said that the agenda she distributed had a link to the policy.

Chief Alibertis suggested that they have it available at the meetings so that they can see it while they’re discussing it.

d. Other Matters
Chief Tawney said that Engine 82 seemed to be self-dispatching during the day to ambulance-level calls that are a delayed response, and asked if there was a policy whereby they should just mark up and take the call.

Chief Puckett stated that the only change is that there has been an interest in not automatically rolling EMS calls because the ambulance may not be that far away, so ECC has been asking him when the delay in rescue is – because their delay in rescue has been “tone/fire.” He said that he told him if they can advise the units of what the call is and let them make the decision and mark up and go versus having ECC try to make the decision.

Chief Tawney said that one of his concerns is that it was Seminole Trail’s engine and he wasn’t asked about it – and that affects his fire coverage. He said that he also has concerns about doing something different during the day than at night, which might set them up for some criticism because if at night Medic 8 is on a call and Medic 12 gets toned to go to a nursing home, etc., if the engine is not due then it’s not being toned, and at night they’re not listening to the radio.

Chief Puckett said that in that situation, ECC should give Medic 12 the information, and then Medic 12 can decide whether to put fire on it or not. He acknowledged that there is a decision at each point, and they could be different.
Chief Tawney said that more and more it seems that Seminole Trail is operating like Ivy or Station 12 – and they’re not really Seminole Trail Fire and Rescue anymore doing first response. He stated that it concerns him that there’s already an excessive amount of EMS calls, because he can’t get any traction with getting them off the cards that they’ve been talking about for a year – and now they’re adding even more calls that are potentially ambulance-level calls, which destroys the fire protection capability with Seminole Trail’s first due. Chief Tawney said that if they want to do that as a system and give him six firefighters so they have two engines staffed during the day, they should discuss that, but the way it is now there are a lot of inconsistencies in the system.

Chief Puckett said that he couldn’t disagree with that, because it all boils down to a decision being made at some point and he didn’t know what the answer was. He stated that CAD can’t pick through this and program the response, because the circumstance could be that Medic 12 would be coming down for an ambulance call, delay in rescue on 29 North and Scottsville would have to respond to that. Chief Puckett said that CAD can’t distinguish between those two at some point, so somewhere along the way someone must make a decision.

Chief Tawney said that the reason Seminole starting running medical calls is that every call in their first due was a delayed response because they came from McIntire.

Chief Puckett stated that he had sent something out about three trauma-level calls they were going to drop engines off of to alleviate some of that, but he hasn’t gotten much traction with that at ECC – and they may feel that it’s another inconsistency in the system. He asked if it was an issue primarily at night, because during the day they should be getting canceled on those calls anyway.

Chief Tawney said only if there’s three people on the ambulance during the day are they getting canceled on those calls, and if Medic 8 is gone they’re not getting canceled because technically it’s a delay in response. He stated that the net gain would be minimal in terms of the number of calls getting reduced off that engine, and it concerns him that they’ve asked for a second crew for the tower but have never gotten it – while the demand for that engine continues to increase.

Chief Oprandy asked how they would like to proceed with this issue.

Chief Puckett stated that they’ve looked at this on a surface level before, but maybe they should look at some of the engines before and after HC, what the volume looks like for those getting placed in service and what the demand is. He said that one of the
things they were going for was improved reliability – how many calls in Station 8’s
district was Engine 82 actually handling – and in looking at it previously, the reliability
had actually increased quite a bit. Chief Puckett said that there could be some things
they aren’t factoring in, and they should look at it further.

Chief Tawney said that he recalled there were going to be six career staff assigned to
Seminole, but that is just not the case. He stated that they are running that engine and
those people to death, unnecessarily, and he believes they are “ECC over-dispatched,”
getting sent everywhere for everything under the sun. Chief Tawney said that the
number of EMS calls must be a record, as it is “pretty over the top.”

Chief Oprandy said that they aren’t doing anything different than other departments that
are running EMS, and asked what the next logical step is.

Chief Puckett suggested that they run some numbers and sit down with Chief Tawney
to go through it, and said that he has asked ECC to start a full protocol review for calls –
but until they get a new CAD system, they’re going to have to choose whether they run
it or not. “There’s no gray area.”

Chief Tawney commented that even the calls they’ve said they’re not going to run,
they’re still being toned on.

Chief Puckett said that he’d been meeting with ECC regularly to address that, and there
are just two are three items on the list that haven’t been addressed yet, and that’s one
of them.

Chief Oprandy suggested that they move forward as staff on a next step, then get with
Chief Tawney on the issue and report back at the next EC meeting as to what they’ve
found out.

Chief Puckett asked if this should be brought through the Executive Committee, or just
handle it at the staff level.

Chief Alibertis asked if it would be helpful to bring it back to the full FEMS Board
meeting.

Chief Oprandy said that could be the next direction, and they would have to find that out
after the discussions between Chief Tawney and staff.
Chief Alibertis reported that there had been an ECC mistake recently in which they put everyone on modified response, because [VC] called in and said the county units were on modified response.

Chief Tawney said that it’s a big county, and the conditions are not the same across the entire county.

Chief Lambert presented the recommended language to be added to the release policy as 5, above bullet point F: “Final approval for progression to the assessment phase is at the discretion of the training officer,” with “training officer” interchangeable per station with “chief officer,” “agency,” or “designee.” He said that would be an addition under policy section 1E, and he would make that change on the tracked document to be distributed.

6. Next Meeting
The next Executive Committee will be held on April 7, 2014 at 1600 hrs in the ACFR Conference Room.

7. Adjournment
MOTION: Chief Tawney moved to adjourn the meeting. Chief Alibertis seconded the motion, which passed unanimously (4-0).

The meeting adjourned at 1655 hrs.
ALBEMARLE COUNTY FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES BOARD

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

ATTENDANCE LOG

Date:  Monday, 10 March 2014

VOTING MEMBERS (OR DESIGNATES)

Chief L. Dayton Haugh (CARS):

Chief Preston Gentry (Crozet):

Chief Danny Tawney (Seminole Fire):

Chief Kostas Alibertis (WARS):

Dan Eggleston (Albemarle County):

GUESTS & OTHERS

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<th>Guest/Other</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wendy Puchta</td>
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<td>David Puckett</td>
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<td>Scott Lambourt</td>
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<td>Tom LaBelle</td>
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AGENDA TITLE/ISSUE: Consent Agenda
AGENDA DATE: March 10, 2014

MOTION: To approve as written
MOTION MADE BY: Danny Tawney
SECONDED BY: Kostas Alibertis

SUBSEQUENT MOTIONS/AMENDMENTS:
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I hereby attest that the foregoing is true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Wendy Robinson
Clerk
March 10, 2014

Date
**ALBEMARLE COUNTY FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES BOARD**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**ACTION RECORD**

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<th>AGENDA TITLE/ISSUE:</th>
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<td>To approve with a recommended change of adding line added indicating &quot;station level approval&quot;.</td>
<td>Danny Tawney</td>
<td>Preston Gentry</td>
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_Wendy Redman_  
Clerk  
March 10, 2014  
Date