

**MEDINA COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY  
EXECUTIVE BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
April 26, 2023**

Members Present

Carl Deforest  
Aaron Harrison  
Matt Hiscock  
Kevin Ross

Conrad Sarnowski  
Colleen Swedyk  
Larry Walters  
Marty Warchola

Personnel

Christina Fozio  
Chuck Stiver  
Matt Sturgeon

Guests

Mike Lyons  
Tom Condosta  
Sara Crawford  
Steve Hambley

Chairman Conrad Sarnowski called the meeting to order at 8:32 AM.

Carl Deforest motioned to approve the meeting minutes from March 22, 2023 as presented, seconded by Matt Hiscock, and approved by all with none abstaining.

Carl Deforest motioned to approve the monthly bills as Resolution 2023-009, seconded by Matt Hiscock, and approved by all with none abstaining.

Matt Sturgeon presented Resolution 2023-010 Appropriation Increase, increasing the amount budgeted for hazmat team member physicals, which vary in cost based on age and other individual circumstances. This increase will cover our outstanding invoices only. Carl Deforest motioned to approve Resolution 2023-011 as presented, seconded by Colleen Swedyk, and approved by all with no abstentions.

Chuck Stiver described that the All-Hazards Advisory Committee recommended purchasing equipment training for \$950.00 for the new photoionization detector. Resolution 2023-011 transfers \$950.00 from the hazmat equipment account to hazmat training. Carl Deforest motioned to approve Resolution 2023-011, seconded by Colleen Swedyk, and approved by all.

Chuck Stiver presented an All-Hazards Team Lead Responsibilities Standard Operating Guideline. Mr. Stiver described that this serves as a foundation for All-Hazards Team Leads, establishing expectations. It complements the SOG for Team Membership and the team organizational chart. Chuck developed the SOG in cooperation with the AHAC and the team leads. Commissioner Harrison motioned to approve SOG 23-001 Team Lead Responsibilities, seconded by Marty Warchola, and approved by all.

Christina Fozio reported that our Emergency Operations Plan is due for a review by Ohio EMA this year and we have been in communication with Ohio EMA Planning Branch for that.

EMA hosted the Medina County Township Trustees Association meeting on April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

Ms. Fozio attended the Ohio Emergency Managers Association NE Sector meeting last Friday at the National Weather Service office in Brooklyn Heights, OH.

EMA has a Spill Response & Tactics training course scheduled at Medina FD Station #1 beginning this Saturday. We will also have air monitoring training later in the year and we hosted a tox-med class earlier this year, all funded by the Hazardous Materials Emergency Planning Grant.

The annual MARCS key agreement has been signed and submitted to the State.

Mike Lyons presented a draft of the Amended Agreement to Establish the Medina County Office of Emergency Management Agency & Homeland Security marked v.9.4 4-25-2023.

Mr. Lyons began by describing the updated paragraph 3 of the agreement. Its purpose is to put into play an annual meeting of the advisory group to select the Executive Committee members. It's the Commissioners duty to call that meeting annually.

Mr. Lyons described the updated paragraph 4. The paragraph describes the makeup for the seven statutory members of the committee, which has not been changed since the last meeting. The most substantive revision is the makeup of the five additional committee members including: "1) the Board of Commissioners of Medina County may at its own option appoint an additional person to the executive committee, who may be either a second Medina County Commissioner or a nonelected representative, 2) a representative or designee of the villages nominated by the majority of the Chief Executives of the villages in Medina County to represent the villages in Medina County, 3) the Medina County Sheriff, and 4) the executive committee may at its option appoint up to two additional individuals to the executive committee, who may be either elected or non-elected individuals." With this revision, the Commissioners will select one additional person instead of two, the villages may select a representative, the Medina County Sheriff is added, and the executive committee may add up to two additional representatives. Paragraph 4 also adds term limits for members and calls for the creation of an official roster to clarify membership.

Mr. Warchola asked if we should allow for a Medina County Sheriff or designee. Aaron Harrison explained that Sheriff Grice has expressed an interest in serving, and they would have appointed him sooner, except that the current language specifies "non-elected". He explained that the new language gets us away from the presence of designees or alternates.

Matt Hiscock reflected that it was discussed to have a chief law enforcement officer. If our purpose is to have a law enforcement officer, shouldn't we allow for the Sheriff or chief law enforcement officer? Colleen Swedyk raised that the Sheriff is a countywide elected official.

Mr. Hiscock asked if it's important for elected officials to serve on the executive committee. Mr. Lyons said we have latitude with the additional members. The seven statutory members are required to be elected except for the one non-elected, so the statute encourages elected officials. Mr. Hiscock said that the statute doesn't mention elected officials. Mr. Lyons and Mr.

Hiscock briefly discussed that the statute mentions Chief Executive Officials, which is not necessarily that same as elected. Brunswick's City Manager is the only example in which the CEO is non-elected.

Commissioner Hambley shared that among the EMA's throughout the State, many times the Sheriff is a member of the Executive Committee. He believes it's important for a law enforcement official to be on the Executive Committee. Commissioner Hambley expanded that he's personally agnostic as to whether it's the Sheriff or a designee. Commissioner Hambley offered adding the option for a law enforcement designee may help to alleviate some of the concerns among the cities' legislative bodies. Commissioner Swedyk thinks it's cleaner to leave it as the Sheriff. Mr. Hiscock clarified that his focus is on why the law enforcement representative has to be the Sheriff. Mr. Hiscock discussed that the Sheriff's Office budget is approved by the Commissioners. Commissioner Swedyk believes that it is fair for each of the cities to get one vote. Commissioner Hambley reinforced that the Sheriff is independently elected, has independent authority, and he is separate from the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Hambley's preference is we have the option for the Sheriff if they want to be on the committee. Commissioner Harrison believes it's relevant that the Sheriff is elected and has countywide authority, which is why he prefers the Sheriff. Mr. Hiscock believes that there are many law enforcement officers who can serve in this role and function well for the executive committee as a whole.

Mr. Hiscock expressed consternation by Commissioner Hambley's recent Board of Commissioners meeting dialogue in which he said the committee members should be people with the ability to sign checks. Commissioner Hambley explained the description as a broad characterization of individuals making financial decisions and having a significant role in making resource commitments. Mr. Hiscock expanded that in statutory cities the Director of Public Safety and the Director of Public Service approve the checks as well as the mayor's expenses. To indicate that the Director of Public Safety and the Director of Public Service isn't the right authority because they don't sign checks fails to understand the composition of statutory cities. The appointing authorities hire, fire, and approve aspects of almost every financial transaction in the city. Mr. Hiscock brought all of those same responsibilities to this Board over the past fourteen years. If we are going to entertain designees in other areas of the composition of the Board then why not entertain designees in the original five, understanding the statutory provision? Mr. Hiscock commented that he likes what this revision does in giving the villages representation. Commissioner Swedyk said that Mr. Hiscock was on her mind in considering the two additional members appointed by the Executive Committee.

Commissioner Harrison shared that he believes the operations of the Executive Committee should be more administrative such as paying bills. With the emphasis the statute places on chief executives, he gets uncomfortable with the Executive Committee making too many tactical decisions. They need to be more strategy focused. He explained that the language to

paragraph 8 references what could be referred to as a sub-committee, which would be tactically inclined.

Mr. Hiscock asked if paragraph 8 was the concept of the All-Hazards Advisory Committee. Mr. Lyons said this is to give the Executive Committee explicit authority to do that. Commissioner Hambley discussed that his view of the Executive Committee, by the way it's designed, is meant to be policy and to bring in the resources of the constituent communities. The reason the CEO's are in there is because they have that executive authority. They can speak with not only legal authority but with political authority. We look to CEOs to be able to provide policy guidance as well as political support for initiatives. He described the nature of this as meant to be collaborative. Not only bringing in resources, but convincing other people to come in and collaborate to work together.

Commissioner Hambley discussed that adding and designating additional members creates a dynamic of having even representation. That is why the latitude of who makes those determinates is very important as part of the advisory group. Commissioner Hambley said if we are going to make those decisions, do we allow up to more than just the five without disturbing the equity of the statutory seven, and he also raised the issue of meeting a quorum with more members. Commissioner Harrison, to the extent that the language has to comply with the statute, gets worried if it becomes a fifteen-person board. Commissioner Harrison said he wants the meetings to be important to every member. If mayors are filling the statutory roles, but we've got other people representing the cities' interest, maybe we won't see the mayors coming to the Executive Committee meetings. In a model where committee meetings happen less frequently, he thinks it is important that everyone is in attendance. Commissioner Harrison discussed that he spoke with Mr. Lyons to come up with a solution for bill paying in which a sub-committee meets more frequently and the Executive Committee meets less frequently.

Commissioner Hambley said we presently have an even number of twelve. He suggested considering adding another additional member for the Executive Committee to select to make the number uneven without making the committee too large to meet the quorum.

Mr. Lyons suggested revising the text to allow the Sheriff to appoint a law enforcement officer including himself. That would give the Sheriff flexibility to appoint himself or another person. He will also revise the additional membership to six with three members appointed by the Executive Committee.

Mr. Lyons read the draft paragraph 8 which defines the Executive Committee's authority to adopt operational rules. Mr. Hiscock asked if the AHAC would be included under this provision? Mr. Lyons explained that it discusses the authority to set up a technical advisory committee and the AHAC is just like that. The county did this recently with the Data Board, reducing the number of Data Board meetings and setting up a technical advisory group that meets on a regular basis, and when policy decisions have to be made it goes back to the data board. Mr. Lyons continued that he thinks paragraph 8 is sufficient and it's arguable that the inherent

authority exists already. Matt Hiscock added that it's a good thing that it allows the Executive Committee to give the director the authority to approve bills to a threshold. Mr. Lyons said that an organizational function that this board is going to have to grapple with is the adoption of operational rules. Commissioner Swedyk and Mr. Hiscock discussed that there is guidance on how much individuals should be authorized to spend. Commissioner Harrison added that if the authority rests with the Executive Committee we won't have to make changes to the agreement if there's a need to change operational rules.

Mr. Lyons continued describing paragraph 8. He read the revised text authorizing EMA to enter into agreement with political subdivisions including ones outside of the county. This relates to our concerns in entering into an agreement with Wooster Township for water rescue capabilities.

Mr. Lyons reviewed paragraph 10 in which the Executive Committee shall prepare a budget and a report of activities for each year for the annual advisory groups and political subdivisions.

Paragraph 11 states that Medina County bears costs that are not reimbursed because EMA is a county board by statute. This is a statement added by the Commissioners in recognition of those costs. Commissioner Hambley discussed that EMA has paid indirect costs in the past and then with discussions it was decided for EMA to not pay indirect costs. This statement is so there is no dispute. Mr. Lyons discussed that the Attorney General has given clarification that the county cannot charge in certain instances.

Mr. Lyons describes that he will make the changes discussed and the Commissioners will distribute it to the subdivisions. Mr. Warchola asked if there was still a plan for the Commissioners to go out to the subdivision meetings. He thinks it's best for the County Commissioners and Ms. Fozio to go to all the meetings to show a united front. Commissioner Harrison discussed that he doesn't want the subdivisions to wait to act on the agreement for a date that works. He thinks a combination approach will work well.

**Marty Warchola motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:35 AM, seconded by Carl Deforest, and approved by all.**