



# Clarke County Fire & EMS Commission

Berryville-Clarke County Government Center, 2nd Floor  
101 Chalmers Court, Berryville, Virginia 22611  
Main Meeting Room

## MINUTES

Thursday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023 6:30pm

Attendees: Van Armacost  
David Weiss  
Tony Roper  
Randy Loker  
Bryan Conrad-arrived at 6:33pm  
Randy Buckley-arrived at 6:36pm

Absent: Diane Harrison

Staff: Wayne Whetsell  
Melanie Radford  
Pam Hess

1. Mr. Armacost called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.
2. Mr. Roper made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was passed with all in favor.
3. Public Comment - None
4. Mr. Roper made a motion to approve the January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023 minutes. The motion was passed with all in favor.
5. Director Update
  - Budget - Mr. Whetsell stated that the public hearing was held this past Monday and the budget should be approved next week. Mr. Roper asked about overall budget numbers and personnel. Mr. Whetsell confirmed that the overall operating budget was down some from last year. He mentioned that the department still had one open full time position but the hiring process was almost complete and that spot will be filled soon for a total of 16 full time employees. The three previous openings were all filled with Medics and hoping this last one will be as well. Mr. Weiss briefly discussed with the group the county budget including a 7% payroll increase, real estate and personal property tax decreases, and mentioned that the only item not approved for Fire-EMS was the request for the Directors new vehicle. There was an estimated 2.1 million in new revenue and it was divided equally between the government side, schools, and the citizens. Mr. Weiss explained that the main reason the BOS was able to do what they did was because of the departments only asking for what was really needed. The SAFER grant that assisted in payroll funding for 5 firefighter EMT/Medic positions has ended and the county has absorbed all costs now.
  - Advisory Group - Mr. Whetsell informed the group that everything is going very well. They voted last meeting for Jessica Smith, a citizen representative, as Chairperson, Chief Lee Coffelt as Cochairman, and Lt. Stephanie Gray as secretary. They have adopted and enforced new SOG's to

include assigning a critical management team. The BOS has been presented with the following to sit on the Lord Fairfax OEMS council; Stephanie Gray, Carolyn Trent, and Bryan Conrad. Mr. Weiss explained that the BOS sends their recommendations but the OEMS council makes the final decisions.

- EOP - Mr. Whetsell indicated that they had a work session this past Monday and are hoping to have it adopted by the end of May. Mr. Weiss complimented Mr. Whetsell on the job he did on the overhaul of the document. It is mandated to be updated every four years, but will be reviewed often for any changes needed as things change or evolve.

#### 6. New Business

- Mr. Whetsell stated that Stryker, the company that has the county's EMS equipment maintenance contract, came out last week and completed all the annual preventative maintenance. All equipment passed and/or were replaced/updated as needed for the next year.
- Mr. Whetsell identified that meetings have been scheduled for the Training and the Recruitment Retention Committees. There are 2-3 representatives from each company on both committees.
- Mr. Whetsell mentioned that the radio system upgrade is moving forward and hopeful the new site at Westwood Road will be ready sometime in May or June, there will be an upgrade at Mt. Weather, and they are having bi weekly meetings with Motorola. Mr. Roper recognized Pam Hess with a job well done for coming out the other night when they had a catastrophic failure with our radio system. It reminded him how hard our folks are working to get the best radio system going. He stated that Clarke was a little less affected than Winchester City and Frederick County by utilizing our back up system.
- Mr. Conrad indicated that Boyce will be having their Gun Bash fundraiser event this Saturday, April 15<sup>th</sup> and as of today they completed an overhaul of their emergency notification system in their buildings.
- Mr. Armacost stated that last week at Enders Pancake Day, they ran out of food by 10am and they have a fundraiser event coming up on April 22<sup>nd</sup> at Bear Chase.
- Mr. Whetsell advised that Blue Ridge applied for an AFG grant for a new ALS chase vehicle and two nights ago they assisted with a large forest fire in Jefferson County along with units from Enders, Loudoun County and Frederick County Maryland.
- An invitation will be extended to the Advisory Group to attend the July meeting and have a discussion on the future of the Fire & EMS Commission. Mr. Whetsell introduced Jessica Smith from the Advisory Group, who was sitting in the audience, to the commission members.

#### 7. Summary of Required Actions - None

8. Mr. Roper made a motion to adjourn at 7:01pm. The motion was passed with all in favor.

All meeting documents will be distributed at meeting. Next meeting will be held on Thursday, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023.