



# Clarke County Fire & EMS Commission

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

## MINUTES

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

Attendees: Van Armacost  
Diane Harrison  
Randy Buckley  
Matt Hoff-Alternate for Boyce  
Tony Roper

Absent: Bryan Conrad  
David Weiss  
Randy Loker

Staff: Chris Boies  
Wayne Whetsell  
Melanie Radford  
Pam Hess

1. Mr. Armacost called the meeting to order at 6:31pm.
2. Mr. Buckley 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 April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023 minutes. The motion was passed with all in favor excluding Ms. Harrison whom abstained.
  - Director Update - Mr. Whetsell updated the group on topics such as staffing at Blue Ridge, adjustments made to the career staff shift assignments, ongoing radio project update, Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), emergency management and mitigation plan, training, recruitment and retention, FY25 budget, fire programs, Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG), Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for radio upgrades, ballistic gear, and active shooter training (ALICE).
  - Advisory Group - Jessica Smith, Chair of the Fire Rescue Advisory Group (FRAG), presented information to the group regarding the progress that has been made since formed, almost a year, such as specific projects, the training committee, the recruitment and retention committee, the SOG process, regional grant submissions, and a system live burn event with Loudoun County. She reported that the FRAG would like to continue on and collaborate directly with the BOS mentioning significant improved communication, cooperation, and inclusivity.

5. New Business

- Discussion on the future of Fire & EMS Commission - Open conversation from the group citing that it appears everything has been going smoothly with the FRAG so far but unsure if it's too soon to have the commission dissolve. The companies of Enders and Blue Ridge both have voted and support the change whereas Boyce's preference remains with the commission. Concerns mentioned were better oversight with the budget, having a larger impact with citizen input specifically with tax payer's money, and the time and efforts the commission has spent to try to help improve the overall system. It was also opined that the commission was not always accomplishing things that the BOS thought they would, therefore a meeting was held with the Chiefs and some of the company members to discuss what they thought would work better for them. The forming of the FRAG was their resolution. Further discussion revealed the group would prefer to continue with the commission for a bit longer reviewing tangible items such as completed SOG's, system performance data, and billing reports to see the progress being made. Ms. Harrison made a motion to continue the commission for another 6 months, meetings to be held in October and December, and reevaluate at that time. The motion passed with all in favor.

6. Summary of Required Actions - None

7. Mr. Roper made a motion to adjourn at 7:06pm. The motion was passed with all in favor.

All meeting documents will be distributed at meeting. Next meeting will be held on Thursday, October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

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Minutes Transcribed by Melanie Radford