

E Beadle
E Berning
E/P Bersbach
E Gerlich
E McCartney
E Miller
E Petitgout
E Rigdon
E Splinter
E/P EMS Coordinator
E = electronic
P = paper

GALENA AREA EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE DISTRICT
Board of Directors' Meeting
217 Summit Street, Galena IL 61036



Wednesday, January 28, 2026

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER President Ben Petitgout called to order the regular meeting of the Galena Area Emergency Medical Service District Board of Directors at 6:31 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Board members present: Randy Beadle, Vice President; Tony Berning; Claire Bersbach, Secretary; Susan Miller; Ben Petitgout, President; Jim Rigdon, Treasurer; and Jan Splinter.

Absent: Austin Gerlich and Renee McCartney. A quorum was established.

EMS staff present: Gabe King, EMS Coordinator; Aishah Abdul-Aziz, Administrative Manager; and Christian Gronewold, Special Service Manager.

EMS Association representative: Shelley Finley

EMS personnel present: William L. Bingham

Others present: None.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by President Petitgout.

AGENDA ITEM I. CONSENT AGENDA

Rigdon moved, Splinter seconded, to approve the Consent Agenda consisting of **approve Minutes of the December 18, 2025**, Board of Directors' meeting; review bills, Financial Statements, and Board Officers' Reports. Approve **Proposed Policy Revisions:** FIN – Reimbursement – Expenses; and Forms: Personal Reimbursement Request (Mileage and Hourly Wage) and Business-Related Reimbursement Request (Mileage).

President's Report – Ben Petitgout

1. Received **Audit and Form 990** from Benning Group. Documents were electronically signed and eFiled.
2. Received **washer and dryer** from Dubuque Appliance. Installation completed.
3. Provided a \$100.00 **penalty check** (late filing by our Auditors) plus \$15.00 annual fee to the Office of the Attorney General State of Illinois regarding "Notice of Cancellation of GALENA AREA EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE DISTRICT as a registrant under The Charitable Trust Act and the Solicitation For Charity Act for the fiscal year ending April 30, 2025." Auditors will deduct the \$100.00 late filing penalty from our Invoice.
4. Reviewed the rewrite to the **Inter-facility Transfer & Transport Agreement** that we received from Midwest Medical Center (MMC). Final draft submitted to MMC on 01-23-2026.
5. Provided memorandum to Administrative Manager, Aishah Abdul-Aziz, regarding **Compensation to Board** members for 2025.
6. Withdrew from District's checking account, two (2) \$50.00 **Service Award checks:** 10 years for Christian Gronewold; 5 years for Lindsey Peyton.

AGENDA ITEM I. CONSENT AGENDA – continued:**President's Report** – Ben Petitgout – continued:

7. **Attended January's EMS meeting.** The presenter was Tim Moen of Professional Billing Service. The main points were the "must have" information on Patient Care Reports (PCRs) in order to be properly billed through Medicare/Medicaid.
8. **Met with department managers** to discuss our growth into 2026.

Fleet Manager

- Need to look at replacing some of our older Stryker equipment (see Asset List).

Communication and Technology Manager

- Radios, Laptops, iPads, PCs, Cell Phones: to include dates purchased.
- IT Support: will be switching vendors shortly.
- Website Update: will be looking at gutting current website and building all new.

Administration

- Begin Budget talks after February 1; need everyone's Wish List.
- Add second dedicated phone line to be used for patient transfers.
- All / any **reports need to be forwarded to Board President the Friday** prior to the monthly Board meeting.
- Will need to review current pay scale to focus on EMTs and higher to coincide with Patient Transfers.

Treasurer's Report – Jim Rigdon

Board members were provided with Account Balances, Financial Statements, and Investment Reports prior to the meeting.

Secretary's Report – Claire Bersbach

1. Emailed State and Federal W4s to Board member per request.
2. **Sustainability Reports**
Emailed two (2) "Sustainability" reports to Board member per request.
3. **Galena Territory Association / Civic Affairs Commission**
 - Provided secretarial support to Board President for **letters** to GTA's Civic Affairs Commission Chairperson and to a Commission member.
 - Provided Board President with 01-07-2026 GTA/CAC meeting Agenda and November meeting Minutes.
4. **Public Notice** submitted to Galena Gazette January 7, 2026, for publication in the 01-14-2026 edition regarding **changes to Board Meeting dates** (January, February, March, April, and May).
 - Clipped the published Public Notice from the Galena Gazette.
5. **POLICY: FIN Reimbursement – Expenses**
 - **Minor edit** to Policy (omit 2.2.2 Effective 2024 05 01).
 - Conforming edits to Forms:
 - A. Personal Reimbursement Request (Mileage and Hours); and
 - B. Business-Related Reimbursement Request (Mileage)
6. **POLICY: ADM Social Media**
 - Worked on draft provided by Board President Petitgout to **update Social Media Policy**.
 - Met with Board member, Susan Miller; reviewed proposed draft.

AGENDA ITEM I. CONSENT AGENDA – continued:**Secretary's Report** – Claire Bersbach – continued:

6. **POLICY: ADM Social Media** – continued:
 - Provided proposed draft to Board President Petitgout for review prior to distribution to the Board.
 - Updated Policy Manual Table of Contents.
7. **Reviewed Additions and Provided President Petitgout With Suggested Edits**
 - Inter-facility Transfer & Transport Agreement between Midwest Medical Center and Galena Area Emergency Medical Service District.
8. **Correspondence – Thank You Letters**
 - \$ 50.00 donation – Provided Secretarial Support (President Petitgout)
 - \$ 80.00 donation – Provided Secretarial Support (President Petitgout)
 - \$ 25.00 donation – Provided Secretarial Support (EMS Coordinator King)
 - \$100.00 donation – Provided Secretarial Support (EMS Coordinator King)Motion carried.

AGENDA ITEM II. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None.**AGENDA ITEM III. REPORTS**1. **EMS Coordinator** – Gabe King

01-06 – Monthly training: **Billing and Documentation Training** by PBS (Professional Billing Services); then Protocol updates by Swedes (UWHealth/SwedishAmerican).

01-07 – **Staff meeting** with President Petitgout.

01-08 – **5K Stair Challenge meeting** at Galena Police Department (GPD).

01-08 – University of Illinois Medical School **Stop the Bleed Program meeting**.

01-19 – Taught Galena Fire Department (GFD) **CPR refresher**.

01-20 – Jo Daviess **Hazard Mitigation Planning Meeting** in Elizabeth.

01-24 – Taught public **Heart Saver CPR** class at the station.

01-26 – Instructed Scales Mound Middle School Health Sciences class **Stop the Bleed**.

01-28 – **IDPH Inspection 1-A17**.

This fall Galena Area EMS will be collaborating with a University of Illinois Medical School and Medical School student on a project focusing on our past, current, and future **Stop the Bleed** classes. The project will emphasize the **collaboration** between GAEMSD and Galena, River Ridge, and Scales Mound Schools, while also exploring more opportunities for public outreach.

King has been invited by Dr. Kehoe to **attend the monthly Emergency Room (ER) physicians' meetings**. This is an important step in continuing collaboration and strengthening our working relationship with Midwest Medical Center ER.

We are continuing our **contract discussions with Midwest Medical Center**. The contract from Dr. Kehoe was received on Thursday, January 22. (Ref: Inter-Facility Transfer and Transport Agreement)

EMT currently taking **Paramedic class** is continuing to excel. Along with classwork, he has begun clinicals with Dubuque Fire Department, Mercy Dubuque ER, and Elizabeth Community Ambulance Service. He has had several interesting patient contacts and even delivered a baby in a parking lot two weeks ago.

AGENDA ITEM III. REPORTS – continued:1. **EMS Coordinator** – Gabe King – continued:

The Swedes **EMT class** started January 8. GAEMSD sponsored seven (7) students.

The **Alternate Rural Staffing Waiver has been submitted** to Swedes and IDPH; we are awaiting their approval.

Total Calls for Service as of Friday, January 23:

Calendar YTD = 40

2025 Total = 836

December 2025 = 86

King also provided the Board with **Incident Analysis and Coverage Analysis** information for the month.

2. **Administrative Manager** – Aishah Abdul-Aziz

Donations: \$100.00 and \$50.00

Transfers:

Requesting transfer of \$590.82 from EMS Account 4553 to District account 5915. Brighter Christmas Secret Family shopping (credit card used 12-22-2025).

Requesting transfer of \$37.85 from EMS Account 4553 to District account 5915. Brighter Christmas Secret Family shopping (credit card used 12-22-2025).

Requesting transfer of \$102.26 from EMS Account 4553 to District account 5915. Purchase of tumblers for **EMS holiday gift from Association** (credit card used 12-08-2025).

On January 13 asked President Petitgout to make a transfer from the Special Account to the District account. These are **disbursements of checks for Grant recipients** from the 911 5K Stair Challenge proceeds. the 5K Stair Challenge committee met to review applications and **approved the requests from the organizations below:**

\$1,600.00 Apple River Fire Protection District \$2,000.00 Galena Police Department

\$ 800.00 East Dubuque Fire Department \$2,000.00 Warren Area Ambulance Service

\$ 800.00 Jo Daviess County Sheriff's Mounted Patrol

3. **EMS Association Report** – Shelley Finley

Finley provided information during the discussion of New Business items # 3 and 4.

4. **Committee Reports**A. **Five-Year Planning Committee** – Chairperson Susan Miller

Petitgout is stepping back from Chairing the Committee and has appointed Susan Miller to the position.

B. **Scholarship Committee** – Chairperson Renee McCartney (absent)

Petitgout reported that McCartney will continue to Chair the Scholarship Committee. Berning has agreed to continue on the Committee. Gerlich will be asked to continue.

C. **Appoint Budget Committee**

Petitgout will Chair the Committee. Work will begin in February. Also on the Committee: Board members Rigdon and Miller as well as Gabe King, EMS Coordinator and Aishah Abdul-Aziz, Administrative Manager

AGENDA ITEM IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Bersbach moved; Rigdon seconded provide an increase to the Flat Benefit Package provided for the EMS Coordinator in the amount of \$666.48 per month effective January 1, 2026.

Motion carried.

AGENDA ITEM V. NEW BUSINESS

1. Miller moved; Berning seconded to approve **Policy: Administrative Social Media** as provided to Board members prior to the meeting. Expands on current Policy. See also Standard Operating Guidelines Social Media Policy (ref: Region 1).

A new Facebook account will be created; the previous Facebook account will redirect users to the new account.

Petitgout expressed appreciation to Fallon Doyle who provided much of the framework for the revised Policy and advised she would be attending the February EMS meeting to provide information to our personnel.

Motion carried.

2. Bersbach moved; Berning seconded to approve **Agreement: GAEMSD and The City of East Dubuque Fire Department EMS** as provided to Board members prior to the meeting. Formalizes the working relationship we have with The City of East Dubuque Fire Department EMS and outlines the agreed-upon billing procedures.

Motion carried.

3. Petitgout moved; Berning seconded to approve **2026 Galena 5K Stair Challenge** to be held September 12. The District will be providing "seed money" for the event; Board approval was requested. Shelley Finley will again Chair the event.

Motion carried.

4. Rigdon moved; Splinter seconded to approve **2025 Galena 5K Stair Challenge Grant Awards** in the amounts listed shown in the scanned Board pack provided prior to the meeting.

Finley advised letters were sent to all Jo Daviess County EMS agencies, Fire Departments, Police, and Sheriff's Departments. Eight (8) requests were received.

The event also needs "start up" money to secure certain vendors and services well ahead of time.

The Board thanked Finley for her hard work on the very successful 2025 event.

Motion carried.

5. Rigdon moved; Berning seconded to open "**Community Outreach**" account for funds dedicated to 5K Stair Challenge and Stop the Bleed for accounting purposes; add line item to budget.

Motion carried.

6. Bersbach moved; Splinter seconded to increase **Mileage Reimbursement to 73 cents per mile** for business-related travel, effective January 1, 2026. IRS notice was provided to Board members prior to the meeting.

Revisions to Reimbursement Request Forms were approved in the Consent Agenda.

Motion carried.

7. Petitgout moved; Miller seconded to **review and accept the FY2024-2025 Audit Report** and the 2025 Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax **Form 990** completed by Benning Group LLC, as presented. Board members were provided with the Audit prior to the meeting; Form 990 will be provided on request.

Motion carried.

AGENDA ITEM V. NEW BUSINESS – continued:

8. Petitgout moved; Rigdon seconded to approve **Inter-facility Transfer and Transport Agreement Between Midwest Medical Center and Galena Area EMS District**. Board members were provided with the Agreement prior to the meeting.

There were minor questions about billing procedures. Petitgout also advised that a dedicated phone line will be installed for calls from Midwest Medical Center regarding Transfer and Transport services.

Motion carried.

AGENDA ITEM VI. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Bersbach commented on the Audit report which showed the amount of interest earned on our investments.

Rigdon said we are advancing and preparing for the future, looking ahead at what we can do for the community, and is proud of our people.

Petitgout said our improvements (financial and community) are a group effort and reflect the work of the entire Board.

AGENDA ITEM VII. ADJOURNMENT

Berning moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Petitgout. Motion carried.

President Petitgout **adjourned the meeting at 7:18 p.m.** until the Galena Area EMS District Board of Directors' meeting scheduled for **Wednesday, February 25, 2026, 6:30 p.m.**, at the Galena Area EMS District Board Room, 217 Summit Street, in Galena, Illinois.