

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

GALENA AREA EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE DISTRICT
Board of Directors' Meeting
217 Summit Street, Galena IL 61036
Thursday, January 23, 2025
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; Austin Gerlich; Renee McCartney; Ben Petitgout, President; Jim Rigdon, Treasurer; Jan Splinter; and Linda Winter.

Absent: None. A quorum was established.

EMS staff present: William L. Bingham, EMS Coordinator; Gabe King, Operations Manager; Aishah Abdul-Aziz, Administrative Manager; Christian Gronewold, Special Service Manager; and Chris Garza, Communication and Technology Manager.

EMS Association representative present: None

EMS personnel present: None.

Others present: None.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by President Petitgout.

AGENDA ITEM I. CONSENT AGENDA

Tony Berning moved; Randy Beadle seconded, to approve the Consent Agenda, consisting of **approve Minutes** from the **December 19, 2024**, Board of Directors' meeting; and review **Financial Statements**, bills paid, **estimated January bills** to be paid of \$4,686.86; VISA of \$4,512.47, and known Auto-Pay of \$857.94.

President's Report – Ben Petitgout

- Sent follow-up email to **Naperville FD** inquiring about our ability to **participate in Illinois' GEMT program**. They are awaiting a response from Illinois Healthcare and Family Services.
- **Transferred LPL investment** that matured December 27, 2024, (\$161,000.00 principle + \$6,311.02 interest) to District checking account.
- **New smoke and heat detectors** were installed by Paulson Electric.
- Received 2023 / 2024 **audit report** from Benning Group. See **NEW BUSINESS** on Agenda.
- Mailed Tax Return (**IL Form 990**) to IL Department of Revenue. They received it December 29, 2024.
- Received draft of notes from our meeting with **Galena Territory Civic Affairs Commission** representative, Jim Considine, that took place on November 20, 2024.
- Made reservations for five (5) members of GAEMSD to attend the February 17 "**Lunch with Leaders**" event at the Galena Elementary Middle School.

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

- Met with members of Illinois Bank & Trust to **review our investment portfolio**.
 - **Transferred \$145,000.00** from the District's checking account to our existing Money Market account, giving the District a balance of \$245,000.00 in this account.
- Update from Arrow Digital on **iPads**: Apple mistook emsboard@outlook.com as a scam email address. After connecting with Apple's tech support, the issue was resolved. Awaiting confirmation email from Apple to complete the setup.
- A second meeting with members of Midwest Medical Center and GAEMSD was held Tuesday, January 21, to **continue discussions on Interfacility Patient Transfers**.
- Attended GAEMSD **Scholarship Committee** meeting Thursday, January 16.

Treasurer's Report – Jim Rigdon

- GAEMSD Available Account Balances as of 1-17-2025:
 \$ 506,905.58 District Total All Accounts at Illinois Bank & Trust
 \$ 13,897.06 EMS Association Savings Account
- Financial Statements for the period ended 12-31-2024 have been provided to Board members.
- Status of Investments:

Illinois Bank & Trust / GAEMSD

LPL Financial Certificate of Deposit				
Investment	Interest Rate	Period	Maturity	Est. Earned
\$ 250,000.00	5.25%	9 months	03-21-2025	\$ 9,843.75
\$ 214,000.00	4.95%	18 months	10-08-2025	\$ 15,889.95
Money Market				
\$ 245,000.00	5.15% (Subject to Change)	Non-Expiring	Compounded Monthly	

First Community Bank of Galena / GAEMSD

Investment	Interest Rate	Period	Maturity	Est. Earned
\$ 100,000.00	4.44%	7 months	04-30-2025	\$ 2,590.00

Illinois Bank & Trust / EMS Association

Investment	Interest Rate	Period	Maturity	Est. Earned
\$ 12,000.00	4.30%	9 months	08-13-2025	\$ 387.00

Secretary's Report – Claire Bersbach

- Set up electronic files for 2025.
- Continued to set up electronic files to transfer documents to iPad folders.
- Set up two-pocket folders and provided printed copies of information for the Scholarship Committee.
 - Attended the January 9 and January 16 Committee meeting to provide secretarial support.
- Worked with Board President on Policy: Scholarship.
- Worked with Board President on Policy: Compensation – Board Members.
 - Copied relevant tax-reporting forms for Board Members.

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

- Sent a sympathy card to Stephanie Soppe and family.
- Attended EMS New Member Orientation January 11.

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

Motion carried.

AGENDA ITEM II. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None.**AGENDA ITEM III. REPORTS****1. EMS Coordinator** – William Bingham

Operations Manager, Gabe King provided this report:

January 7th Galena Area EMS Association held their monthly meeting and training. Chris Garza is the new Association President. Trent Bass with UWHealth EMS held a training on **updated Standard Medical Orders (SMOs)**.

Highlights: BLS units are now allowed to carry liquid over-the-counter Tylenol and guidelines for administering oral Nitro tablets have changed (re: B/P Guidelines, etc.).

Christian Gronewold and Gabe King taught a **Stop the Bleed class** for the Regional Education in-service day held at River Ridge High School on January 6th. Eight (8) student/teachers took the class. Elizabeth Community Ambulance Service (ECAS) assisted.

Gronewold and King are working with Galena Police Department, Galena Unit School District, and the Chamber of Commerce to provide Stop the Bleed training to all school staff and have Stop the Bleed kits available in all occupied rooms in each school. The project is still in its infancy; the Board will be updated as the project progresses.

January 12 at 4:07 p.m. Galena Area EMS was dispatched to 957 James Street for a **reported gas leak**. Galena Fire Department reported elevated CO levels in the building. The building was evacuated and ten (10) residents were evaluated for CO exposure. No one was transported. A Jo Daviess County Transit Bus was requested for resident accountability and warmth. EMS worked with Emergency Management to secure housing for the night for those residents that needed it. The residents were housed at Stoney Creek. This marks the fourth mass-casualty incident in four (4) months.

An **after-action debriefing** from the James Street incident was conducted with Emergency Management on Friday, January 17th, with Mike Willis, Jo Daviess County Emergency Manager.

A new Operations **Policy** has been drafted that **mandates each member be on-call a minimum of 12 hours per month**. This will be evaluated every three (3) months. Action will be taken up to and including termination for those members not meeting the Policy standard. King has been in contact with members who have not met this standard and emphasized the importance of meeting this Policy standard and why it was created.

King met with Dr. Kehoe on January 16th to **continue discussions with Midwest Medical Center on the topic of hiring Paramedics**. They are very eager to get this project up and running.

A follow-up meeting with Dr. Kehoe, Heather Swanson (UWHealth), Board President Ben Petitgout, Treasurer Jim Rigdon, King, and Richard Robinson was held January 21st at Midwest Medical Center. Continued discussion about GAEMSD/Midwest Paramedic Program. There is a zoom meeting scheduled 10:30 a.m., Monday, January 27, with IDPH.

AGENDA ITEM III. REPORTS – continued:**1. EMS Coordinator** – William Bingham – per Operations Manager, Gabe King, continued:

On January 13 Trevor Richmond with McQueen Emergency Services held the **second PPE gear fitting. The first order will be placed before February 1.**

Special Service Manager, Christian Gronewold, will provide an update on Community Outreach (CPR and Stop the Bleed) and projects for 2024.

In **December** 2024, Galena Area EMS responded to **78 Calls** for service.

Galena Area EMS responded to 869 incidents for calendar year 2024. This is a new record for Call volume. January 1, 2025, to date is 45 Calls for service.

2. Administrative Manager – Aishah Abdul-Aziz

Aishah thanked the Board for the condolence card she received during the passing of her mother in December. Aishah also extended a thank you to Board President Petitgout for his compassion and for allowing her time away to spend with her family and to grieve.

December donations

District Account: \$ 150.00 Jo Carroll Energy

\$ 150.00 Donna Wilmarth

\$ 50.00 Galena United Women in Faith

EMS Association: \$ 200.00 Christine Wasson in memory of Maggie Wasson Pratt

\$1,000.00 Ann Schoenhard Trust in memory of husband, Carl, and daughter Erin

\$ 500.00 Connie Wienen

We received donations last week, which will be deposited next week.

District Account: \$2,500.00 Year-end donation from Jo Daviess Mutual Insurance Company

EMS Association: \$ 300.00 Karen Marsden for taking great care of her husband

\$ 30.00 Billie Nolan in memory of Kathy Randecker

3. Special Service Manager – Christian Gronewold

Gronewold provided the Board with a report detailing 37 Events for which GAEMS provided **Standby coverage** for the period January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024.

Also provided was a report showing the **breakdown of classes conducted** in 2024, the lead instructors; total number of participants; and the various agencies, departments, and businesses involved. There were **225 participants overall**: 40 for CPR and First Aid (Kids/Scouts); 120 CPR; and 65 Stop the Bleed.

That report also included a **list of goals for 2025**. Gronewold would like to gain additional CPR instructors and commented he is in the early stages of working with Galena Police Department; the Chamber of Commerce; and school faculty and staff to present to the schools.

See the Reports following these Minutes.

4. EMS Association Report – Chris Garza, President, EMS Association

Garza advised that the EMS Association will **meet every quarter** instead of monthly (January, April, July, and October). On the months when the Association is not having a meeting, hands-on training will be provided prior to training conducted by UWHealth (Swedes). Monthly CEU training is still from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM III. REPORTS – continued:4. **EMS Association Report** – Chris Garza, President, EMS Association – continued:

The Association discussed a **possible summer picnic**.

Garza commented on IT updates and **updates to the website**.

5. **Committee – Scholarship** – Renee McCartney, Chair

McCartney commented that the Committee met January 9th and 16th, developed a Policy and an Application form for the Board's consideration. The Board will be considering approving the Scholarship Program Policy under New Business later in the meeting.

AGENDA ITEM IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None.**AGENDA ITEM V. NEW BUSINESS**

1. Bersbach moved; Winter seconded to **revise By-Laws Article IV, Section 7. Compensation**. Board members were provided with a copy of the proposed revision. The first and second paragraphs are unchanged. The third paragraph is revised **from** "Salaries and meeting allowances will be paid at Fiscal Year End" **to** "Salaries and meeting allowances will be for the period January 1 through December 31 and will be paid after the last day of the calendar year."

Motion carried.

2. Gerlich moved; Berning seconded to **approve Policy: FINANCIAL – Compensation – Board members, effective January 1, 2025**. Board members were provided with a copy of the proposed Policy. At the November 26, 2024, Board of Directors' meeting, the Board approved paying a meeting allowance to Directors for each meeting attended as well as an annual salary to the Board President and the Board Secretary.

Motion carried.

3. Splinter moved; Rigdon seconded to **approve Policy: FINANCIAL – Scholarship Program**. Board members were provided with a copy of the proposed Policy and the Application form. The Scholarship Committee determined the criteria for the Policy and for the Procedures to be followed. The amount recommended by the Committee would be \$1,000.00 each for two (2) Scholarships.

No tax money will be used to fund this program. Interest earned from investments will be used to establish the Scholarship Fund. The Budget Committee will discuss setting up a separate line item to keep those funds segregated from other funds.

Motion carried.

4. Winter moved; Petitgout seconded to **Review and Accept the FY2024 Audit Report and the 2024 Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax Form 990 Completed by Benning Group LLC, as presented**. Board members were provided with a copy of the Audit for FY2024 (which also included the reported information from FY2023 for comparison), as well as Form 990.

Motion carried.

5. Bersbach moved; Gerlich seconded to **Increase Mileage Reimbursement Effective January 1, 2025**. Board members were provided with information related to an **increase in the IRS mileage rate for 2025**. The optional standard mileage rate for business purposes is increased **to 70 cents per mile** retroactive to January 1, 2025.

AGENDA ITEM V. NEW BUSINESS – continued:**5. Increase Mileage Reimbursement** – continued:

GAEMSD currently reimburses mileage at 67 cents per mile and would increase that to 70 cents per mile for personal vehicles used for GAEMSD business-related travel as reflected on the Personal Reimbursement Request Form and the Business-Related Expenses Reimbursement Request Form.

Board Secretary Bersbach will provide the updated forms to the EMS Coordinator, Operations Manager, Administrative Assistant, Special Service Manager, and for the Guiding Documents binder.

Motion carried.

6. McCartney moved; Rigdon seconded to accept the resignation of EMS Coordinator, William L. Bingham.

Bingham thanked the Board for its support during his service as EMS Coordinator; commented the organization has accomplished great things; improved the membership; and, it is time to pass the baton. Bingham is grateful for Gabe King's leadership going forward, feels GAEMS is the best agency in Jo Daviess County, and he will continue to serve, signing up and assisting as needed. He again said "thank you for your assistance and dedication."

Board members thanked Bingham for his service, commenting he (Bingham) was exactly what we needed for things to get better moving forward and that the organization will continue to improve even more.

The Board **accepted with regret** the resignation of EMS Coordinator, William L. Bingham.
Motion carried.

AGENDA ITEM VI. CLOSED SESSION**CALL TO ORDER**

President Petitgout called to order the meeting of the Galena Area EMS District Board of Directors, Thursday, January 23, 2025, at 7:28 p.m. and asked for a motion to enter Closed Session. Bersbach moved; Splinter seconded.

ROLL CALL VOTE

The motion carried by roll call vote. Ayes – Beadle, Berning, Bersbach, Gerlich, McCartney, Petitgout, Rigdon, Splinter, and Winter. Ayes: 9. Nays: 0. Absent: 0.

Motion carried.

ROLL CALL TO RECORD WHO IS PRESENT

Board Secretary Bersbach called the Roll to record attendance:

Present: Randy Beadle, Vice President; Tony Berning; Claire Bersbach, Secretary; Austin Gerlich; Renee McCartney; Ben Petitgout, President; Jim Rigdon, Treasurer; Jan Splinter; and Linda Winter.

Absent: None. A quorum was established.

Others present: None

SUBJECT TO BE DISCUSSED

A. *"The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee of the public body or against legal*

AGENDA ITEM VI. CLOSED SESSION – continued:

counsel for the public body to determine its validity.” Topic of discussion: Appointment, Compensation.

Petitgout advised that the purpose of this Closed Session is to discuss:

1. Appointment to Fill the EMS Coordinator’s Position;
2. Compensation to be Paid to the Appointed EMS Coordinator;
3. Monthly Salary to be Paid to the Fleet Manager; and
4. Monthly Salary to be Paid to the Communication and Technology Manager.

1. Appointment to Fill EMS Coordinator’s Position

Petitgout reviewed the discussion from the December 19, 2024, Closed Session; commented no one else had put in for the position; Gabe King was highly recommended by Bill Bingham; is a great asset to our organization; and has been very involved in the community.

2. Compensation to be paid to the Appointed EMS Coordinator

Petitgout reminded the Board that Bill Bingham previously requested a reduced salary with a commensurate amount added to the Operations Manager’s salary for a combined total of \$4,400.00/month or \$52,800/year. The proposed salary for the Appointed EMS Coordinator is \$53,000.00 per year and a flat rate monetary stipend to cover benefits. The total amount would be \$57,200.00 per year.

The EMS Coordinator and Operations Manager positions would be combined going forward.

Comments included the number of Calls for service our organization is experiencing, Gabe’s community involvement, members know and are comfortable with the proposed EMS Coordinator.

3. Compensation to be Paid to the Fleet Manager

The Fleet Manager is currently paid \$400.00 per month. Petitgout commented that Dennis Harris is doing a great job making sure the ambulances are serviced and licensed and handling all the paperwork associated with that. The responsibilities since Harris took the position have increased with Harris relieving Petitgout of considerable work that is not actually the responsibility of the Board President.

Recommendation is to increase the monthly compensation.

4. Compensation to be Paid to the Communication and Technology Manager

The Communication and Technology Manager is currently paid \$400.00 per month. Chris Garza handles our website, key fobs, pagers, radios, mobile Wi-Fi, cell phones, cardiac monitors, iPads, TVs, and everything IT related. Technology is not going away. The responsibilities since Garza took the position have increased.

Recommendation is to increase the monthly compensation.

Petitgout advised Board members that our Administrative Manager ran the numbers. With the proposed changes in compensation for all salaries, the anticipated expense at the end of this fiscal year is \$483,000.00; we have budgeted \$500,000.00.

There being no further discussion, questions, or comments, Petitgout moved to **leave Closed Session**; Beadle seconded.

ROLL CALL VOTE

The motion carried by roll call vote. Ayes – Berning, Bersbach, Gerlich, McCartney, Petitgout, Rigdon, Splinter, Winter, and Beadle. Ayes: 9. Nays: 0. Absent: 0.

AGENDA ITEM VI. CLOSED SESSION – continued:

The Board left Closed Session at 7:50 p.m.

President Petitgout asked for a motion to return to open session. Moved by Bersbach; seconded by McCartney. Ayes: 9. Nays: 0. Absent: 0.

Motion carried.

AGENDA ITEM VII. POSSIBLE ACTION AS A RESULT OF CLOSED SESSION

1. Bersbach moved; Gerlich seconded to **approve appointment of Gabe King** to fill the EMS Coordinator's position, effective February 1, 2025.

Motion carried.

2. Splinter moved; Berning seconded to approve **compensation to be paid to the appointed EMS Coordinator** in the amount of \$53,000.00 annual salary and \$350.00/month flat benefit package, effective February 1, 2025.

Motion carried.

3. McCartney moved; Winter seconded to approve the **monthly salary** to be paid to the **Fleet Manager** in the amount of \$800.00/month, effective retroactively to January 1, 2025.

Motion carried.

4. Petitgout moved; Berning seconded to approve the **monthly salary** to be paid to the **Communication and Technology Manager** in the amount of \$800.00/month, effective retroactively to January 1, 2025.

Motion carried.

AGENDA ITEM VIII. BOARD MEMBER CONCERNS AND COMMENTS

Board members **thanked Bill Bingham for his service**; thanked McCartney for the work on the Scholarship Program; congratulated Gabe King on his appointment; said thank you all for being such a big part of our community; we appreciate what you do and trust what you do; you've done a good job; we hope this shows we do appreciate what you do; and the Scholarship program is a nice incentive.

Bingham thanked Board members for their comments, adding that he was "proud of this Board."

Rigdon asked if there was any update regarding GTA's Civic Affairs Commission report. Petitgout commented Bersbach asked Considine for an "editable" document but has not received a reply.

Beadle commented on "turn-out gear" referencing the Policy for the amount of required Call time for members per month.

King said there was a 12 month and 6 month survey for 2024. There were a few (4 to 6) who did not get measured for turn-out gear.

Beadle further said Thank You very much, you know where we were, it meant a lot to have the right person at the right time; he is looking forward to working with King.

Petitgout asked McCartney if she will continue as Scholarship Committee Chair; McCartney agreed. Petitgout said he asked Corey Fleege to help review Applications and will get the Application on our website. McCartney will issue a press release to the Galena Gazette and The Flash.

Petitgout advised he plans to appoint the Budget Committee at the next meeting and asked if anyone is interested to let him know.

AGENDA ITEM VIII. BOARD MEMBER CONCERNS AND COMMENTS – continued:

Petitgout will continue to work with Chris Garza, Communication and Technology Manager, regarding the iPads.

Petitgout said it has been a pleasure working with Bill Bingham (since 2019) and welcomed Gabe King.

AGENDA ITEM IX. ADJOURNMENT

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

President Petitgout adjourned the meeting at 8:09 p.m. until the next Galena Area EMS District Board of Directors' meeting **Thursday, February 27, 2025, at 6:30 p.m.**, at the Galena Area EMS District Board Room, 217 Summit Street, in Galena, Illinois.