

**PASQUOTANK COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA  
JULY 9, 2019**

The Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners met today in a special joint meeting with the Camden County Board of Commissioners on Tuesday, July 9, 2019 in the Community Room at the Pasquotank County Public Safety Building.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jeff Dixon, Chairman  
Lloyd E. Griffin, III, Vice-Chairman  
Cecil Perry  
Frankie Meads  
Charles H. Jordan  
Sean Lavin  
Barry Overman

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Sparty Hammett, County Manager  
Lynn Scott, Clerk to the Board  
R. Michael Cox, County Manager

Also present were members of the Camden County Board of Commissioners, and the Camden County Manager and Clerk. Following a welcome from County Manager Hammett, the meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Chairman Jeff Dixon.

**1. PRESENTATION BY MIKE MILAS, MISSION CRITICAL PARTNERS ON PASQUOTANK-CAMDEN EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES ASSESSMENT AND STRATEGIC PLAN:**

Manager Hammett explained that Mission Critical Partners, LLC (MCP) was hired by Pasquotank/Camden Emergency Medical Services to assess the organization and formulate a report for the agency that encompasses its overall operations and governance structure.

Mr. Mike Milas, Project Manager of Mission Critical Partners provided a PowerPoint presentation on the findings and recommendations of their recently completed Assessment and Strategic Plan.

Mr. Milas stated that the agency started with paid coverage during the day and volunteer coverage in the evening provided by the Pasquotank Rescue Squad. In 1983, an EMS station was constructed on the property of Albemarle Hospital to serve as the main station for PCEMS. Over the year's additions were added to the station to sustain the growth of the agency. Thus, for many years this facility met the needs of the counties. However, as growth and call volume increased, substations were necessary to meet space needs and to lower average response times. Today, PCEMS has four stations with an annual budget of more than \$4.5 million. Additionally, a 110-person staff provides valuable services to the entire region. The number of emergency responses are at an all-time high and predicted to increase over time, thus bringing challenges in maintaining adequate staffing and facilities, as well as collection of billing.

Mr. Milas said MCP found that PCEMS has a well-formulated and systematic process. Staff are offered benefits including health insurance, however, the pay structure at PCEMS, while good, is not high enough to retain employees and, subsequently, the agency occasionally will lose staff to competing agencies in nearby counties. This frequent turnover hinders a cohesive team like PCEMS and impacts the organization financially through increased recruitment and training costs. Staffing shortages also can lead to extra overtime costs and thinner staffing plans, which can impact response times and staff morale, ultimately leading to more turnover.

PCEMS has top-notch response vehicles and equipment. Replacement or re-chassis is based on years of service or mileage, and management has a written plan for those targets. Some PCEMS facilities are at or over capacity, in dire need of repair, or in some cases not conducive to EMS operations.

Key recommendations included:

- Initiation of planning to replace Stations 50 and 4 as a means of addressing a variety of deficiencies with each of these facilities
- Consideration of a re-composition of the PCEMS board of directors to better align with call volume and funding and to include representatives from PCEMS
- Consideration of a 24 hour a day, 7 days a week (24 x 7) staffing model for Station 14 to reduce response times in that portion of the service delivery area
- Consideration of becoming Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services (CAAC) accredited as a means of further enhancing service delivery, organizational alignment with industry best practices, and commitment to quality and community
- Consideration of hiring an operations manager for oversight of day-to-day operations and supervisor mentoring
- Conduct criminal background checks annually at an employee's anniversary date
- Review PCEMS salaries and benefits to ensure competitiveness with surrounding agencies
- Consider changes to the financial collection agency that is contracted currently
- Consider memberships to generate funds
- Accept credit cards as payment and do not charge a fee for use
- Renegotiate the contract with Camden County

In conclusion, Mr. Milas noted that PCEMS is a well-run, well-managed organization. He said it is apparent to MCP reviewers that PCEMS management, with the leadership of its director and deputy director, has adopted a "good-to-great" mentality and is focused on delivering outstanding service to the community that the agency serves. Without question, there are continued challenges to be faced and hurdles that must be cleared but, when considering PCEMS' solid organizational foundation, MCP believes that the agency is positioned to continue to excel as a premier EMS provider.

However, he said MCP also believes that PCEMS facility issues, namely Stations 4 and 50, must be addressed soon. While everyone realizes that this will require a considerable amount of planning and funding, it needs to be done. Conditions at both stations are starting to impact employee morale and retention. Employees working in the EMS field need a facility that is conducive to their well-being. Currently, the two stations mentioned fall short of that.

The other key issue is lack of a 24 x 7 staffing model for Station 14. Moving to a 24 x 7 model at all stations would improve the consistency and predictability of response times and would better equalize and standardize service provision levels across the entire PCEMS service area.

He said PCEMS's most important asset is its staff. It is also its greatest strength moving forward. MCP's meetings with management staff and EMS providers found all to be dedicated, capable, and driven to ensure PCEMS's future success. The director and deputy director are highly motivated and knowledgeable, and the provider staff that MCP interviewed were just as knowledgeable. The citizens served by PCEMS are fortunate to be served by a dedicated and professional EMS staff.

Chairman Dixon asked if the Board had any questions for Mr. Milas. There being no questions;

Motion was made by Frankie Meads, seconded by Charles Jordan to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 7:13 PM.

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CHAIRMAN

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CLERK TO THE BOARD