



Report to CCVESA

November 4, 2024

Chief Michael W. Robinson, Director

Continued Funding issues resolved: At last week's commissioner's open session we presented a request to transfer funds within the DFEMS budget. The net result is that all expenditures for corporation staffing from October 1, 2024, through February 1, 2024, are to be funded at \$450,000. This will be directed through CCVESA, and the Department of Management and Budget will work to build in some form of accountability with an applicable accounting of funds. This was a challenging process on my end with multiple meetings and ultimately there is funding continuity of 24/7 EMS coverage and 50 hr. FADO coverage. Representatives of the three impacted companies along with CCVESA, ESAC and DFEMS were all present to provide support to the unanimous motion of the Commissioners. We will now continue to move forward to meet our staffing goals while maintaining a consistent level of service in the interim.

Church Fire (AAR): On Thursday, October 24, 2024, an After-Action Review (AAR) was held for the Clearview Bible Church fire which occurred in Reese's first due back in August. This was developed and coordinated by Chief 9 Wooden. Chief Wooden did an excellent job in presenting and leading a non-confrontational discussion. There were many valid points made and much constructive interaction among those who were there. DC Supko will be working with you to begin addressing many of the identified issues from this incident. Paramount among them is the need to do an effective and ongoing size up which should lead to a "risk based" approach at a rapidly escalating incident such as this. A determination of effective strategies should lead to focused and appropriate tactical objectives. Thanks to all of those who participated in this valuable exercise. We will be developing a post incident action SOP to guide us for both large and small incidents. Chief Wooden, we sincerely appreciate your efforts in making this a success.

Budget: We are beginning our development of the FY-26 budget and DFEMS requests for capital projects and new personnel have already been submitted. I had a great meeting with DC Joe Dennis of Sykesville who will now be chairing the budget process for CCVESA. I would hope that each company will take an active role in the budget process.

On the DFEMS side, with recommendations from ESAC, we are going to be asking for the upgrade of the 12 ALS car positions to lieutenants. This will require upgrades and no new positions. This will assure supervision for EMS incidents and will reflect the increasing responsibilities for these positions. In addition, this will assist us with enhanced regional supervision of our career personnel. We are also requesting two lieutenants (daywork) to be assigned to the PSTC. They would perform a number of duties including continuing education, compliance training, recruit training, academy status courses, assist with EST and cover as incident safety officers.

We are also going to request of return of the 12 floater positions that were lost in the FY 25 budget, and we are determining how many additional floaters we will need to support the leave needs of 220 field personnel given up to 8 allowed off/shift. These would all be new positions. We are also evaluating the use of a SAFER/AFG grant to assist with funding our initiatives.

Other areas of the budget will be for an increase in the PPE budget to allow DFEMS employees who are also volunteers to have a second set of PPE. We are also looking for some additional funding to establish an ICS command simulation center. We also are going to continue with medic replacements and are requesting 3 units/budget v. the two we currently have. Other vehicles to be requested include additional Tahoes for reserve status, a replacement reserve engine and pick ups for the training lieutenants.

I will await the outcomes of the CCVESA budget process. Again, we have our wants, but it will all be dependent on the budget/revenue outlook. Our operational budget is due in early December.

Staffing: We are currently in the hiring process and successfully tested 10 candidates last week who are now in the physical ability, interview and practical testing phase. Seven new personnel began field assignments this past Thursday as well. We also have three currently in the field being precepted and should be released within a week. We will have 11 additional personnel beginning this Thursday, 11/7, with their two-week training/orientation. Also, five conditional offers are pending. That gives us a total of 36 additional personnel if we are successful with all.

There are currently 12 floater vacancies, and 36 new station vacancies for a total of 48 unfilled positions. Minus our ongoing processes with 36 that would be 12 additional to recruit, select and train. Given our rate of testing/processing this will hopefully provide for staffing of New Windsor next by early January and then based on recruitment, Lineboro and Union Bridge. In order to assure competent applicants, we are spending close to three months on the process which includes a two-week orientation and then precepting for ALS providers and some of the other positions as determined during training.

We are making some changes to hiring which will include:

1. A different form of an entrance test that will measure fewer behavioral elements and with a greater focus on job success. The six-month waiting period currently in place will be waved in favor of taking the new test.
2. A new background review and process that will be performed by HR resources.
3. The removal of the psych evaluation given the new background process.
4. We are also looking at some changes to our hours of work (pay-cycle) that could allow us to hire twice monthly versus the current practice that is constrained due to FLSA rules.

Our goal is to streamline the current process to make hiring more user friendly and frequent.

We began staffing Pleasant Valley on October 10 and that transition seems to be working well. My thanks to President Mike Stewart and Chief Forrest Shaw for their initial and ongoing support to make this a smooth process. As we get closer to staffing the remaining stations, we will be soliciting our personnel for transfer requests and meeting with the leadership of each of

the stations to assure a seamless transition. Again, I don't have an exact time frame, but we will definitely be into the first quarter of 2025.

Fire Prevention week/month: There have been quite a few community events for both fire prevention and Fall related school visits, parades, festivals and other community activities. Our employees have been engaged and are honored to work alongside their assigned company members to promote our system, educate the public and provide good will. Manchester, Mt. Airy and Westminster included us in their recruitment efforts. On Wednesday, the Carroll County Government held an "Employment Expo" at the county office building, and we had some recruitment success at this event. Thanks to Westminster for their assistance with apparatus and logistics.

Incident Reporting: As stated previously the new ESO reporting software is on order. We must now develop the implementation phase to do the training and orientation to ESO/NERIS and we will cut over to the new system by late 2025. There are many volunteers who are also on the group. This will result in a single silo and possibly a single FDID although there are many questions to be answered as we move towards full implementation as well as archived data migration. A meeting was held last week, and Katie(data analyst) is coordinating the implementation.

Vehicles/procurement: We have received the new vehicle (Tahoe) for the Deputy Chief and Chief Zaney has also been issued a Tahoe and will provide additional EMS coverage while on duty. Chief Supko's vehicle is being upfitted and Chief Zaney's is now EMS 100 and provides an additional ALS car during weekday and peak demand times. We now have one of the 2023 Explorers as a reserve officer's vehicle.

We recently visited the Horton Ambulance plant in Grove City, Ohio. We did the final inspection on three units which are currently at FESCO in Howard County for graphics and dealer prep. We will begin delivery to DFEMS of these units that should be going in service in the next two weeks. Two additional units are complete, and we will go out for their final inspection to Horton on November 12-13 with placement in service expected in December. These units will be going to 49, 59, 29, 139, and 127. We have replaced the motor in A-127 consistent to our maintenance policy under the MOU. That has been accomplished and will continue as a ready reserve or as a volunteer staffed unit at the discretion of Sykesville.

On Thursday, 10/31, the commissioner's approved our ordering of a sixth unit which will be a transition from Gamber's now cancelled Road Rescue order. We had an opportunity to transition that over and the spec is similar to our other five units. We hope to take delivery in the early spring/2025 and the ambulance committee of DFEMS will determine its assignment which could possibly be a reserve. Our goal is to upgrade to 3 units each fiscal year v. the current two units.

Our greatest challenge is having enough reserve units available as we will now have 6 Tahoes, 3 Explorers and three reserves in our fleet as well as 9 medic units by early 2025. We have made decisions regarding the upfitters, and we have changed vendors with the OPS 100 car to be completed in several months. Our next challenge is the replacement of the reserve engine which is nearing the end of its life cycle. A new replacement reserve will cost around \$800,000 or greater.

I am in preliminary discussions with fleet and budget on this. This unit will be owned by the county and once approved we are anticipating a 3-4yr. delivery. If approved, we will create a committee to determine the specifics and subsequent specs. This will be at least 1500 GPM with a 1000-gallon tank, and we will follow the new NFPA 1910 standard. We probably need more than just one reserve and will look at justifications in that area?

Volunteer Backgrounds: These are not progressing at the rate we anticipated, and Callie is working to answering some questions as we develop a related SOP that will address some issues. These are still considered essential to assure safety and quality among volunteer membership. The policy will be an initial background check and then we will enroll the members into a data base monitoring program that will provide notifications to DFEMS and then we will push them out to your company. We will have a draft SOP on this at the next ESAC committee.

Training: Chief Brothers has been working with the training committee and the Spring MFRI request is in. Additionally we will be doing some daytime courses and volunteer personnel are welcome to attend. A reminder to all companies to complete the online courses for OSHA compliance by the end of the year. The training committee will report on the specifics.

EMS: We recently had our first site visit by the MIEMSS Executive Director and State Medical Director (Drs. Delbridge and Chizmar) We have been approved by MIEMSS as the authorized pre-hospital program/provider for an additional 5 years. Our thanks to Dave Coe and his group for assisting and providing support. We have been approved for two MIEMSS ALS grants and this will provide some ALS monitor replacements and funding for our Spring ALS Con ED. There is also a mandatory ALS training/testing module for all Carroll ALS providers who wish to continue affiliation and functioning with the system. Our medication vending machines at Taneytown, Winfield and Manchester are now in service along with the machine at CHC. These will allow ALS providers to restock all of their ALS medications and supplies in a decentralized manner. Those dates have been published. Chief Zaney is working on several initiatives including upgrade of all cardiac monitors to the new LP-35's along with some other equipment replacements and additions including transport ventilators, IV infusion pumps, ultrasound and a proposal to carry whole blood for transfusions in the field. These initiatives have been discussed at the recent EMS Committee.

New Initiatives: The **honor guard** held their initial organizational meeting this past week. They will begin practicing and preparing the unit for their first assignment our pinning ceremony on November 21st. The unit will expand over time, and they will be available to serve at any county fire EMS events and ceremonies. They currently have eight members and equipment is being received along with the honor guard uniforms. Membership is open to any interested volunteers with company approval of their participation.

Our other initiative is to form a **Commendations Board**. This group will be a 5-person board with representatives from: ESAC, CCVESA, IAFF, FROPS, and a DFEMS employee. Each of the representative groups has submitted the name of a member to serve on the board. A chair will be elected internally, and this group will develop award types, criteria, and design of both heroic as well as merit awards. An SOP will then be drafted, and the goal will be to begin an

annual awards cycle based on the calendar year. This group will not supplant company level, chamber of commerce or other awards but will standardize DFEMS awards with an independent group to investigate and validate these awards. The board will consist of the following.

1. FROPS: AC Marques Price- Chief 3-1
2. ESAC: Scott Dickson-Citizen representative
3. CCVESA: Captain Todd Tracey- Station 13
4. IAFF/5184: Lt. Michael Karolenko-President
5. DFEMS: FF/EMT Cole Cleckner-Station 1

They will be meeting soon and will determine award categories, criteria, submissions and develop an SOP for the board's operation. They will begin to receive awards submission in early 2025 and these will be based upon incidents and activities from CY-24.

Training Requirements/Position Descriptions: This was recently discussed at the September meeting and is ready to move forward. This will be coordinated through Assistant Chief Brothers and will involve the following work groups:

Officer requirements: lieutenant through Company Chiefs. This would be based on the NFPA 1021 standards and would go into effect on 1/1/2027 which would allow a two-year window for training/upgrading. A premise of this would be that any current/incumbent officers are grandfathered to their current positions. Should a current officer not be reappointed and then seek a position then they would need to meet the new criteria. The FROPS chair has appointed Chief Chad Green- Chief 8 and Assistant Chief Brad Kreimer-Chief 10-1. We are awaiting two names from the training committee as well as a station lieutenant and shift commander.

Position descriptions: To be handled by the officer's group above. Similar to DFEMS employees there would exist a standardized set of position titles with associated training requirements. A grandfathering process would be in place consistent to that of the officer requirements.

Officer deployment/Chain of Command: A review of the current policy and an assessment of titles and related responses. This would include radio titles, response parameters (first due v. beyond) and the use of the current BC and duty officer procedures in an effort to achieve consistency countywide.

This direction to be facilitated by a joint committee of training personnel and at least two FROPS representatives. and DFEMS officer representatives. Chief Supko will oversee the group and recommendations/package would be developed for consideration in April 2025.

SAVE the DATE:

We have had a number of promotions in the field since the summer. This includes paramedics, FF/Paramedics and internal FADOs. The command staff (four chiefs) beginning in November will be coming to stations for a "pinning"/Promotional ceremony for these positions. These will likely occur during the day, and we will notify each company chief as to the details. In addition, on November 21, 2024, at Winter's Mill HS we will have a "pinning" and promotion ceremony

for some 50+ new employees. Also, promotions of the four captains, EMS AC and DC Operations. This is Thursday and an A shift. We have requested your assistance to fill some staffing gaps for about four hours to facilitate this ceremony. DC Supko will provide more details. Also, we have sent out invitations to all companies if you wish to attend.

DC Supko: Has now been on board for the past three months. He has had an opportunity to meet extensively with chief officers and other personnel. It has been my goal for him to transition to the operational functions of the department and he is now moving forward on this with your cooperation.

As is the case with any organizational change, this will lead to greater discussion, some resistance and ultimately into comprehensive policies and processes that will make us safer, consistent and more efficient in the delivery of fire-rescue/EMS/ Special Operations in an integrated, smart and organized manner. It is our objective to focus as a system while retaining company identity and delivering on a common operational platform. It will take each of us doing our part to bring this to fruition. Together we can do great things that will benefit all. This concludes my report for November 2024. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Respectfully submitted,

Chief Michael W. Robinson

MWR/mr

C: Command staff
Shift Commanders.
Callie Williams
CCVESA -officers