



## HUMAN RESOURCES AD HOC COMMITTEE

### STATE BOARD OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL, FIRE AND TRANSPORTATION SERVICES OHIO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

## MEETING MINUTES

May 21, 2019

~FINAL~

**Committee Meeting Date and Location:** Tuesday, May 21, 2019 at the ODPS Shipley Building, Conference Room 1102, 1970 W. Broad Street, Columbus, OH 43223

**Committee Members Present:** Richard Annen, Kent Appelhans, Dr. Thomas Charlton, Ken Crank, Patrick Ferguson, Mark Resanovich, and Chuck Sowerbrower

**Committee Members Absent:** Eric Burns, Deanna Harris, and Rachel Velasquez

**DPS and EMS Staff Members Present:** Mel House, Kris Patalita, and Rob Wagoner

**Public Present:** ~None~

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### **Welcome and Introduction**

The meeting began at 10:00 am. Mr. Resanovich welcomed everyone. He explained how this committee came about through the State Board of Emergency, Fire, and Transportation Services (EMFTS Board). Introductions were made around the room. During the introductions, members described their interest in serving on this committee.

### **Opening Remarks**

Executive Director Melvin House thanked the members of this committee for their service. He discussed the EMFTS Board's strategic plan and how this committee is a pillar of that plan. He further explained what topics this committee is assigned to address in order to get more people into serving in EMS and fire and to keep them safe.

### **Membership and Structure**

Mr. Resanovich provided his perspective on how the goals of this committee can be attained. He described his participation in the Safety, Health & Wellness Committee through the Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association. He further described a research project that was conducted regarding post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) for those in the EMS and fire industry. The data compiled through this project will be presented at the Ohio Fire & Rescue Officer Development

Conference in July. He then commented on how the job affects everyone in some fashion and how the PTSD issue needs to be addressed.

Mr. Resanovich then discussed adding members to this committee as the group develops and grows. He mentioned that there is a lot of work to be accomplished and adding individuals with expertise on certain topics would be beneficial. He suggested breaking down into workgroups in order to complete certain tasks in a timely manner. He asked the group for suggestions regarding additional committee members. There was an open group discussion regarding whom to solicit for their expertise. Dr. Charlton suggested bringing in someone from the Nursing Board or Medical Board who has experience dealing with impaired providers. He further explained his reasoning. Mr. Appelhans advised that he was interested in seeing more school involvement. This would include training programs for EMS and fire. Mr. Ferguson suggested including someone with a mental health background on this committee. Dr. Charlton volunteered to do a cursory search to find someone in the state who has already done research and/or published articles on fatigue, impairment and similar issues.

Mr. Sowerbrower suggested recruiting business culture experts or anthropology experts. He believes that a cultural change within EMS and fire would need to happen to facilitate other changes. Mr. Resanovich asked Mr. Sowerbrower if he would be willing to do some research and reach out to this type of individual. Mr. Sowerbrower advised that he would look into possible resources through Sinclair Community College where he works. Mr. Crank advised that Chief Robinson with the Cincinnati Fire Department started mandating the crews attend debriefings after difficult patient outcomes. There was some group discussion regarding the current culture and some of the roadblocks to changing it. There does appear to be more acceptance to changing some of the culture. Mr. Ferguson advised that members of the Columbus Fire Department are trying to make inroads into changing the culture within the department, especially with new recruits. There was a mention made that prevention, not just treatment, is important.

There was also a discussion about how the military has a similar structure and how someone with a military background could be included. Mr. Resanovich asked if someone would initiate contact with some type of military personnel. Mr. Crank volunteered to contact the Cincinnati Veterans Administration and Dr. Charlton advised he would contact someone in the Dayton area to try to cultivate a connection with Wright Patterson Air Force Base.

Mr. Resanovich encouraged the group to forward any additional suggestions to him or Executive Director House. He believes as some of these topics are addressed, there will be more needs identified.

**ACTION ITEM:** Dr. Charlton will search for a person to assist this committee who has done research and/or published articles regarding fatigue, impaired provider, and similar issues.

**ACTION ITEM:** Mr. Sowerbrower will look for an appropriate person to assist this group with a culture change.

**ACTION ITEM:** Mr. Crank will contact the Cincinnati Veterans Administration and Dr. Charlton will work on establishing a connection to Wright Patterson.

### **Meetings**

Mr. Resanovich asked the group what their ideas were for a good day and time to have this meeting on a monthly basis. Various committee members voiced their opinions and preferences

for the monthly meetings. After a lengthy discussion, there was a consensus to conduct the meetings on the fourth Thursday of the month; with the first such meeting to be held on June 27<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. Mr. Crank advised that he would be on vacation during the June meeting.

**ACTION ITEM: Meetings will be scheduled on the fourth Thursday of every month from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.**

## **Topics**

Mr. Resanovich discussed the topics one by one and requested volunteers from the group to take the lead on each.

### **Staffing Needs:**

Mr. Resanovich explained how the need for staffing is more than just an EMS and fire issue, hospital-based and private ambulance services have issues, too. There was information provided regarding some data that has been gathered regarding this topic. Executive Director House advised that he would provide the data on this topic at a future meeting of this committee. He will also provide an update on what the State has done to improve the high school programs with pass rates and examinations, and other things that are being done to make it easier for individuals to get into this line of work. Mr. Appelhans advised he would take the lead on this topic.

### **Safety/Health:**

Mr. Resanovich described how providers put off taking care of their own personal health and safety concerns. There is also a need to address violence in EMS and fire service. He advised that the EMFTS Board previously conferred with Micah Stoll from the Ohio Peace Officers Training Academy who built a workplace violence program for EMS. This includes deescalating the situation, getting away from the situation, and reducing vulnerability to injury, among other things. Mr. Resanovich further described the course and the benefits of the same. He suggested Mr. Stoll be asked to attend this committee's meetings. Mr. Ferguson advised he would take the lead on safety and health.

### **Vehicle Accidents:**

Mr. Resanovich informed the group of the recent data that was compiled and presented to the Board regarding vehicle accidents. Deputy Director Robert Wagoner explained the results of the findings and the significance. There was some group discussion regarding the report. Dr. Charlton suggested that these findings be presented at the EMS Medical Directors Conference in the fall and advised that he would ask Dr. Paul Zeeb to get in touch with Mr. Wagoner. Mr. Annen advised he would take the lead on vehicle accidents.

### **Recruitment/Retention/Reciprocity:**

Mr. Resanovich defined what these topics entail. He mentioned that he recently visited a fire department in Sleepy Hollow, New York and described the conversation he had with staff there. They discussed how they keep firefighters and attract young people. He further explained that recruitment and retention has been explored some within the Rural EMS subcommittee for which Karen Beavers is the chair. He would like to solicit help from that group since they have already begun working on these elements. He stated that he believes that reciprocity goes along with recruitment and retention. Mr. Resanovich will get with Ms. Beavers regarding this assignment.

**Fatigue:**

Dr. Charlton advised he would work on this topic. This will include examining substance abuse as well as workforce resilience.

**Workforce Resilience:**

Dr. Charlton advised he would work on this topic.

**Quality CE:**

Mr. Resanovich stated that the biggest complaint he hears from certificate holders is about the number of continuing education (CE) hours that are required. He suggested that quality CE is a big problem with such requirements. He believes that quality CE is more important than the quantity received. There was then a lengthy group discussion about the required CE hours and the challenges therein, especially for those who hold multiple certifications. Mr. Resanovich advised that this subject is very important to him and he would take the lead. Mr. Crank volunteered to assist. There was additional group discussion regarding education and budget constraints. Mr. Sowerbrower stated he would help in this endeavor as well. The group also discussed law enforcement's model for training and how a model that is not hour driven could be beneficial.

**Impaired Provider:**

Mr. Resanovich advised that impaired provider issues were discussed during the EMFTS Board's case review regarding discipline. Currently, the only recourse for dealing with an impaired provider is through revoking his/her certification. Executive Director House mentioned that the Board does not have authority over impaired providers and that a statutory change would be required. Dr. Charlton stated he would take the lead on this subject.

**ACTION ITEM:** Mr. Resanovich requested that everyone bring a general plan to the next meeting for their assigned topics.

Mr. Resanovich asked that Ms. Patalita get a contact list out to the group including email addresses and phone numbers.

**ACTION ITEM:** Ms. Patalita to distribute to all committee members a list with contact information.

Mr. Resanovich reported that Executive Director House will be the DEMS liaison for this group. He asked if there was anything else to discuss before adjourning. There was nothing further.

**Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 11:31 a.m.

**Next meeting:**

June 27, 2019 at 9:00 a.m. at the ODPS – conference room 1102.