



AMHERST COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES COUNCIL

119 Taylor Street
Amherst, Virginia 24521

(434) 946-9307

EMERGENCY DIAL 911

January 8, 2025

MEETING MINUTES

Location: County Administration Building @ 1800

IN ATTENDANCE:

Council Members:

Amherst Fire Department
Monelison Fire Department
Pedlar Fire Department
Amherst County Fire/EMS
Amherst County Sheriff Department
Amherst County Board of Supervisors

Steve Drummond, 1st Assistant Chief, ESC Chair
Joey Malott, Chief
George Napier, Chief
Bradley Beam, Chief
Jimmy Ayers, Sheriff
Chris Adams

Non-Voting County Members:

Amherst County Fire/EMS
Amherst County 911 Communications

Jarred Scott, Deputy Chief/Fire Marshal
Brooke Coleman, Division Manager

Public Attendees:

Mike Alger – Assistant Chief, Pedlar Fire Department
Lee Day – Pedlar Fire Department
Shannon Daniel – Captain, Monelison Fire Department
Major J.E. Begley – Amherst County Sheriff Department

- I. The meeting was called to order by Chair, Steve Drummond.
- II. The invocation and Pledge of Allegiance was led by Jimmy Ayers .
- III. Approval of Minutes:

Approval of December 18, 2024 Meeting Minutes

The minutes were presented for the December 18, 2024 meeting for approval. Motion to approve minutes was made by Steve Drummond and seconded by Joey Malott. Motion carried.

IV. Old Business

SOG Approval

Eight (8) Formatted Draft SOG's were attached to the meeting attendees packet. Chief Beam asked if members wanted to do a "Blanket Approval" of all. Chief Joey Malott made a motion to "Blank Approve" the SOG's. Chief Drummond seconded motion. Motion carried.

Discussion on the floor regarding Radio Use. Amherst Fire Chief had no change to radio procedure. Chief Malott said there is a need to know who is responding to the call. Chef Beam stated that Amherst Fire marks up on quiet channel, MFD marks up on OPS channel. Chief Napier stated he preferred no monitoring on the OPS channel. Mrs. Coleman, 911 Communications Manager stated if POV (private owner vehicle) response on OPS channel makes it hard to distinguish who is responding to the call. Can be too much radio traffic and become congested. Radio Usage for Structure Fire should be kept to a minimum. Apparatus should call 911 specifically and wait for Dispatch to acknowledge. Chief Malott stated "Mark-Up – "Shut-Up". It was suggested by Chief Beam that a probationary member markup with a ""P" in front of their department member ID#. Chief Mallot mentioned that Dispatch does not monitor the "Quiet Channel" and it is an accountability thing. The Radio Use SOG was tabled until next meeting for future discussion to allow meeting attendees to further discuss and try procedure for next few weeks with their department.

Command Board/ICS

It was agreed upon that the Command Board/ICS needs to be simple and uniform across the county. Discussion about Passport Tags and information entered on tags. They will be Velcro backed. Chef Beam suggested that McBride Sign Company would create Board/Sticker overlay and the stickers.

For those who have already purchased their boards, Chief Beam said that they would need to provide the sizes of their boards so Sticker Overlays could be ordered. He asked that each department member go back to their departments to discuss and bring back input to next meeting so stickers can be ordered.

Honor Guard

Chief Beam asked Chief Napier if there was a Pedlar Fire member interested in the Honor Guard. Chief Napier said that Captain Lisa Tomlin was interested. There now is a representative from each department voicing interest. Chief Beam stated that he would arrange a meeting for a kick-off/formation meeting.

Mutual Aid/Automatic Aid

Last month it was discussed to change EMS Response to Mutual- Aid from Automatic-Aid. Everyone was in agreement to that. Amherst Fire asked to remove Gladstone from Fire/Mutual Aid. Chief Malott said to keep Big Island on Automatic Aid.

Chef Beam asked if Big Island automatically calls Boonsboro for all Brush Fire. Chief Malott said it depended. If the call goes to Big Island first then they in turn call Boonsboro. Chief Beam asked if this practice could be changed.

In order to have standard SOG's, there needs to be the least amount of other departments called into Amherst

County if possible. It would be best to only have the current Automatic Aid department, unless of course for Structure Fires.

Mr. Lee Day told about personal calls being made to various department members regarding incident calls. Therefore, multiple departments show up to the call.

V. New Business

ESC Chair Selection

Motion made by Joey Malott to keep the Chair the same for year 2025. Seconded by George Napier. Motion carried. Steve Drummond will continue to be the Chair of the Emergency Services Council for year 2025.

CAD Updates

ACFE has asked for funding for a CAD replacement in FY26. Chief Beam stated that the CAD was submitted for the July 2025 to be budgeted for the 1st year. Eventually hoping to have CAD APP on phones.

VI. Matters From The Floor

Chief Beam brought up having the Banquet on Saturday, January 11th, rain or shine, snow or sleet.

Jarred Scott updated the progress of the newly selected Fire Inspectors. They are continually updating information with the Dispatch Center regarding Commercial Building Information, Knox Boxes, testing Knox Box Keys. The inspectors will obtain pertinent contact information, and update such with Dispatch. Jarred is in the process of compiling notebooks for each station. Passed around a sample of the form being used. Will do 1 page pre-plan and come by station monthly to add to notebook. Will also have CRG maps that schools completed.

Brooke brought up what qualifies for Commercial Building, High Hazard, Population, Propane Tanks will be updated with this new procedure.

Chief Malott posed question about status of the Central Virginia Training School. Chris Adams, BOS representative stated that status is still in limbo. The County is trying to promote interest and had two entities showing interest at first but no further commitment. The County Administrator has not made update to the BOS since November 2024.

Mr. Adams also gave update on the ongoing developments in Madison Heights. The 1st Phase for development in Phelps Road area shows 90 townhomes. VDOT has changed access from Phelps Road to Commerce. The 2nd Phase is for 250 apartments and will also be off of Commerce with an emergency gate located off Phelps Road.

It was also noted that the Big Lots Retail Store had filed Chapter 11 but is being bought out by another retail company. Therefore there will not be available retail space opening up on Seminole Plaza.

Chief Beam gave insight about new Commercial Building at the Amelon Industrial Center. Ceiling is 36 foot high and currently has dirt/gravel floor. Chief Beam offered to arrange a site visit for anyone interested.

Major Begley inquired about Sheriff Department receiving access credentials to the Town Center Development. The owner is currently having key pads installed per Jarred Scott. The Sheriff Department recently had cause to respond to the Town Center Development.

Major Begley inquired as to the possibility of holding a "Joint Summit" when the children are out of school for the summer to hold an "Active Shooter" summit. He suggested that outside sources be sought out who have had Active Shooter Practice.

Chief Beam informed the members that Amherst County Fire & EMS has received state certification for an NAEMT Training Site, Chief Beam is a certified instructor and Paramedic/FF Kenny Malloch is also a certified instructor. He hopes to have more instructors certified in the near future. Amherst County Fire & EMS now has Ballistic Vests on all Medic Units.

Discussion was held regarding the format and/or restructuring of the Emergency Services Council. The Council is currently made of three (3) volunteer fire departments, sheriff department and ac fire & EMS. Talking points brought into the conversation included:

- Possible addition of county citizen(s)
- Future Goals of the Council
- Update Ordinance(s)
- Meeting Frequency (for the past year have been meeting monthly to revise SOGs) prior to this, met quarterly
- Is the Council needed

Possible suggestions made included:

- Having a 2 member representation from each department
- Issuing invitation to the Town of Amherst to at least include the Chief of Police

Sheriff Ayers stated how appreciative all should be of the Volunteers and their spirit. They are an asset to the community.

VII. Motion to Adjourn:

Motion to adjourn was made by Steve Drummond. The motion was seconded by Joey Malott. Motion carried. The next Emergency Services Council meeting was agreed to be held on Wednesday, February 12, 2025.