Minutes of the Annual
Joint Municipal Meeting of
Fitch-Rona EMS District - Draft
Thursday, October 16th, 2025

Attendance:

EMS Commission: James Roberts, Stephen Fusco, Supervisor David Lonsdorf, Alder Patrick Lytle, Sue Luginbuhl.

Fitch-Rona EMS District: Chief Patrick Anderson, Deputy Chief Jeff Dostalek, Deputy Chief Devon Anders, Office Manager Michelle Wachter

City of Fitchburg: Mayor Julia Arata-Fratta, Alder Bill Jetzer, Alder Gabriella Gerhardt, Alder Dave Herbst

City of Verona: Mayor Luke Diaz

Town of Verona:

Others present: Scott Yarbrough, Fitchburg FacTV,

Call to Order:
The meeting was called to order by EMS Commission Member – Chair Pro Tem, James Roberts, at 7:00 PM.

Public Comments: None

Welcome and Introductions: James Roberts welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the annual meeting, and introductions of commission members and attendees made.

Review and Approval of October 10, 2024 Minutes: A notice of correction made by commission member Lytle that the previous minutes had a misspelling of a name, Brandon Braithwaite, from the previous minutes. Motion by Luginbuhl to approve the minutes with the correction of the name. Second by Commission Member Lonsdorf. *Motion carried.*

Length of Service Recognition:
Chief Anderson recognized several paramedics for their length of service with the district and as noted on the Chief's report provided to the commission. Most notably Greg Bailey with 15 years.

Chief's Report: Chief Anderson welcomed and thanked everyone for attending. The Chief then went through the details of the report he provided to attendees. He provided an overview of the district size/area served, number of employees, vehicles, and the general cost per capita to operate, which is $41.26 per person within the district, which is down from last year. He noted that the district covers 71 square miles and actually increased in population by 13% last year.

The Chief showed the call volume chart and the district is currently running 8.3% higher in call volume than last year. He projected that the district will have around 5600 calls for 2025. He went on to show a pie chart outlining where in the district the calls reside with the City of Fitchburg continuing to be where the majority of calls are occurring. This was followed up by a heat map that shows the areas where most of the calls come from. This information is extremely helpful when developing budget projections and the need and location for future staff and ambulances. This information also assisted the municipalities with updating the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA). The Chief went on to discuss fractile times for calls and noted that when an ambulance leaves on a call and until the time they return and are back in service is about 1 hour. He noted the calls by hour of the date and indicated that this information helped support the conversation and initial budget action to move towards a Peak Time ambulance. He noted that Station 2 in Fitchburg is still the busiest station. When discussing mutual aid, he noted that there have been 44 times already in 2025 where all of the district trucks/ambulances were out on calls, and another local municipality had to cover calls for the district. There were 45 assists for all of 2024.

He explained the accounts receivable aging report along with the rest of the financial data. This included the business checking, savings, certificates of deposit and WISC Funds. The Chief noted that Epic grant funds were used to purchase 2 fully equipped EBikes and an inflatable shelter, which gets responders out of the elements when assisting firefighters. He also explained FAP funding this year and the ability to use those funds for an Oxygen Generator. He explained the self-sufficiency of the unit and the large savings over time for staff and expenses.

Chief Anderson continued with his wish list for future improvements including: Point of Care Lab Testing, Oxygen Cylinder Lifts, Prehospital Blood, Respiratory Fit Testers and dash Cameras. He then turned the presentation over to Deputy Chiefs Dostalek and Anders.

Deputy Chief Dostalek discussed the paramedic outreach program. This includes facility outreach (senior housing and nursing homes) and Falls Prevention outreach. He noted that Wisconsin leads the nation in falls-related deaths.

Deputy Chief Anders discussed his role and the training provided to staff, along with training on tools used in the field. He provided a list of training topics and staff hours needed for current and ongoing training.

2026 Budget Presentation (Operational and CIP):

The Chief discussed ambulance purchases noting that purchases are 3 years out so the district has had to order them in advance over the past several years. He noted that it costs $339,000 for the truck only and another $115,000 to fully stock an ambulance. The district keeps the ambulances for 12 years (8 years as a frontline truck and 4 years as backup) and noted that the expectation is that there will be four trucks on the streets next year with the peak time ambulance being in service two days a week.

The Chief noted the two support vehicles that are used for several reasons including: responding to calls, transporting and picking up supplies, and attending municipal, hospital and county meetings. The next replacement for a support vehicle will be in 2030.

The Chief discussed the fee schedule and noted that the district doesn't charge for supplies, as it is figured into the base rate. The Chief also noted that there is 100% cost recovery on any sort of contracted standbys.

The Chief explained the revenue projections and how run revenue is estimated. The Chief also noted that while a patient invoice will be $1565, Medicaid will only pay around $360 so the cost recovery is different for those patients. Run revenue is based on several factors: true collections, mileage supplies, average write-offs, number of calls and the historical average amount received per call.

He went through line items on the budget and explained that the majority of the budget increase, as usual, is wages and benefits. He also explained scheduled and unscheduled overtime for paramedic staff. He then explained operational expense variances from 2025 to 2026, noting that costs have been increasing for disposable medical supplies, uniforms, preventative maintenance programs, and equipment replacement. He noted that some of those items are coming in with designated tariff charges as well. The Chief also explained the Post Retirement Healthcare Fund.

Chief Anderson explained that the budget apportionments between municipalities were previously based entirely on Equalized Valuation. He noted that last year the split was 56.1% City of Fitchburg, 38.7% City of Verona, and 5.2% Town of Verona. With the rewriting of the Intergovernmental Agreement for 2026, the apportionments change to 63.7% City of Fitchburg, 32.2% City of Verona, and 4.1% Town of Verona. The Chief also provided a chart showing the apportionments and provided information that revenue from patient billings covers 50% of the overall costs.

Chief Anderson explained reserve funding, tax levy exemption, and the local limit criteria. He noted IGA references a reserve amount of 15%-25%. Based on the 2024 audit, the unassigned balance was 40%. Through discussions with the municipality's finance directors, a common thought was to raise the unassigned fund balance to 35%. The commission passed Resolution 2025-03 to move some funds to the post-retirement healthcare fund and maintain a cash reserve of 35%.

When further discussing the local levy limit for the 2026 budget, it allows for an increase in hours for the LTE pool to provide a peak-time ambulance for two days a week starting in 2026. It also provides additional funds to be allocated to the post-retirement healthcare funds.

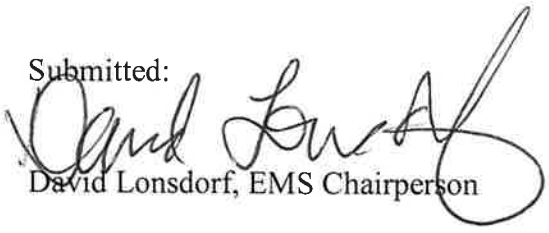
The Chief noted that the overall budget increase for 2026 is 4.69%.

The Chief was asked about everything happening with the federal government, was there concern with the funding for the district. The Chief shared that Medicare billing was currently on hold and noted that he thought there may be a change in hardship requests due to the impact of changes on patients. ~~The unassigned fund~~

Other Business:
None

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Lonsdorf, Fusco second. *Motion carried.* The Joint Municipal Meeting was adjourned at 8:31 P.M.

Submitted:



David Lonsdorf, EMS Chairperson