FL Council of EMS Chiefs

Meeting November 17, 2015

Orlando Marriott Lake Mary Hotel

Lake Mary, FL

President Mac Kemp opened the meeting at 9:00 AM.

The minutes of the July 8, 2015 meeting were motioned, seconded and approved.

President Kemp said that there are changes afoot that will change everything we do and in all likelihood in the next 5 years most likely we will not recognize EMS. We need to work closely with hospitals integrating with them for better patient care as well as Community Paramedic programs. There are about 160 or 170 Community Paramedic programs throughout the country now with one common theme, low acuity patients.

President Kemp said there are 4 areas that EMS needs to focus on.

1. All changes in recent years EMS system have been focused on STEMI, stroke and trauma. This is changing and the data is supporting that heart attacks are a small part of what we do, important yes but still a small part. We need to focus on broader issues.
2. Community Paramedicine program is coming. It’s in about 160-170 areas around the country. Their focus is one common theme namely low acuity patients and how best to integrate the various hospitals and social agencies into quality of care for our patients.
3. Performance pay model based on cooperation with other agencies in the EMS field because the reality of pay will impact our ability to render service to our patients.
4. Complex Coordinate Attacks or CCA. He has been working on this since the Columbine and Aurora attacks. During these incidents EMS did what they always do, namely stage, until the coast was clear. We can no longer continue to do business this way. Will this put us in harm’s way? The answer is yes, however federal grants for ballistic armor that in the past was only for police is now available to fire agencies as well. The biggest problem in Aurora was communication. We need to speak the same language about EMS needs and that is starting to happen. EMS also needs to realize that we can no longer stage until the active shooter is apprehended or killed. We need to be in the midst of the action in order to save lives.

President Kemp said in Minneapolis bridge collapse, EMS and police were dealing with hundreds injured and many dead. Fortunately both the local Walmart and Target stores had semi-trailers loaded with water, tables, chairs, etc. that within an hour of the collapse were on scene on either side of the bridge helping the first responders get to and treat the victims. He said that this is one example of integration and cooperation between the business side and EMS.

EMS agencies need to start to plan for active shooter situations. Terrorists’ plans are to overwhelm EMS agencies including the hospitals. We need to plan now for future events.

President Kemp opened the floor for thoughts and suggestions. Jane Bedford spoke about an incident where a student walked into a classroom and shot himself in front of his classmates. Mr. Kemp said that businesses, churches, malls have to think about this kind of thing happening within their confines.

Marian County has started a communications and terminology workout to eliminate confusion in the language. This happened because the police were actually asking for 6 additional ambulances to transport 12 people and it was incorrectly understood by EMS resulting in police transporting in their cars.

On Legislation, President Kemp said that the legislature was gearing up now for bills coming through. He said that for every legislator there is at least 7 lobbyists acting either for or against a particular bill. Now is the time when the bill is in committee to size it up either for or against or just kill it. It is too late when a bill gets to the legislature for vote. He mentioned that there was an ascetic climate in Tallahassee and that the Republicans cannot even get along to redraw their districts.

Several bills are pending. House bill 221 on balanced billing was introduced by the insurance industry. It is only in the house not in the senate. If this bill gets into law it means you may not bill for anything else. The bill includes HMOs and PPOs. He suggests strongly talking to your local legislators. None of this is good for EMS and we need to get involved in the process. This bill has passed in 32 states and the insurance industry tries hard to win their case in ours. House went home early so this bill died. EMS was pulled out of this bill because we are small fish; so basically wanted us to negotiate with insurance providers and they were going to do usual and customary charges. This issue not dead because insurance industry is lobbying hard to get this bill passed. Insurance industry is not going to pay us what we believe we need. HMOs payments were attempted to be added onto the bill. He said that all EMS should call your local representatives and let them hear from you personally.

Jane Bedford made a motion to send a letter from the Chiefs that they are opposed to this bill. The motion was seconded and unanimously passed. It was suggested try to get as many agencies together to increase our opposition to this bill.

Senate Bill 320, House Bill 391 Exempts EMTS & Paramedics and their families’ information from being part of the public record and offers the same protection as police. He is very much in favor of this bill and is looking for it to become law to protect EMS responders from some of the ‘crazies’ out there.

House Bill 345, Senate Bill 456 changes presumptions that cancer is from the job. In the past it was very difficult for firefighters to prove that cancer came from the job they do. This bill is for public agencies only not private.

House Bill 517, Senate 742 licensures of COPCNs process is a local bill related to issuance of COPCN. First it opens up fire control districts, and second changes appeal process to go to judicial e.g. circuit court to decide. He’s opposed to it because first of all it’s a local issue that belongs only in the area it will affect and second do you want a judge who knows nothing about EMS to make decisions for you?

Senate Bill 662 tries to clarify language of the DNROs and he believes that this bill needs to be very, very clear so as not to confuse EMS any further when dealing with DNRO which in many cases involves seconds from the time they arrive on scene. There is another bill #664 with parallel issues.

President Kemp said he has list of legislation and if you don’t want to receive it just let him know and he’ll take you off the list. He thinks knowledge is power and EMS has not had representation at the Legislative table. He said this coming year a lot of legislation will be introduced that will affect EMS. What he sends out in the Legislative update is not just him, it’s also from people in your county. His believes whether your organization is for or against a bill does not matter, it only matters that the information is available to everyone and then you need to let your thoughts be known to legislators. Get involved in process and know that it affect our lives and how we do our jobs.

Old Business – there is no old business

New Business – President Kemp introduced Dr. Peter Pappas of the FL Committee on Trauma who spoke about a seamless system for patients comprised of disaster planning, coordinated cases and working with first responders and hospitals. He represents Region 5 consisting of 9 whole counties namely Lake, Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Brevard, Volusia, Indian River, St. Lucy and Martin. They are in the process of developing a registry between EMSTARS and trauma protocols. EMS is a critical part of this system and needs a voice at the table. He will be speaking at the Council meeting this afternoon.

President Kemp then introduced Alan Skavroneck, President of the Florida Ambulance Association who spoke about managed care for Medicaid patients and the effects of balanced billing on EMS service.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:43 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Noreen Schramm

Secretary