

# **Southeastern Arizona Emergency Medical Services (SAEMS) Council**

## **Meeting Minutes**

Meeting Date: January 20, 2026

Location: Virtual/Zoom

Time: 1000

### **1. Call to Order and Administrative Business:**

The meeting was called to order by the Chair. A roll call of voting members was conducted, and quorum was established. The Council acknowledged several member absences due to illness and recent resignations. Vacancies in key positions were formally recognized, and the need for nominations and succession planning was discussed.

The consent agenda was presented, including prior meeting minutes dated October 21. Members were asked to review for accuracy and completeness. No amendments were raised, and the minutes were approved.

### **2. Financial Report and Fiduciary Oversight:**

A comprehensive financial report was presented, reflecting total assets including checking and savings account balances.

Discussion focused on optimizing financial stewardship and maximizing returns on idle funds. Council members evaluated the opportunity cost associated with maintaining a high balance in non-interest-bearing accounts. Strategies considered included certificates of deposit and high-yield savings instruments.

#### **Action Taken:**

A motion was passed to establish a designated reserve fund of \$175,000, aligned with fiscal sustainability principles and risk mitigation. The Council agreed to further evaluate transferring a portion of funds into higher-yield financial vehicles, pending expert consultation.

Further discussion refined the Council's financial strategy:

- Affirmation of the \$175,000 reserve threshold
- Consideration of transferring up to \$250,000 into interest-bearing accounts
- Emphasis on balancing liquidity with yield optimization

#### **Next Step:**

Sara will collaborate with financial professionals to evaluate options, including account structures, accessibility, and interest rates, and will report recommendations to the Council.

### **3. Finance and Program Operations Update:**

The financial report was approved unanimously.

Key updates provided:

- Ongoing contract and CER submission activities
- Personnel changes within the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS)
- Continued development of the Regional EMS Plan
- Website modernization efforts, with legacy site decommission scheduled for January 31

Council members were requested to assist with the transfer and organization of historical documents to ensure continuity and compliance.

#### **4. Programmatic and Sub-Regional Reports:**

Sub-regional updates provided:

- Cochise County noted leadership vacancies. Graham/Greenlee reported recent activity.

Trauma and Clinical Protocols

- Review and dissemination of updated trauma protocols
- Introduction of a new Regional Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) Triage Protocol, including revised communication procedures

#### **5. Healthcare System and Public Safety Updates:**

Key updates provided:

- Leadership transitions among Base Hospital Managers, with upcoming elections planned
- Aviation safety concerns, including increased laser strike incidents
- Implementation of safety equipment such as gurney risers to enhance patient transfer safety
- Updates from ADHS, including:
  - Launch of a new trauma registry system
  - Modifications to EMT certification processes
  - Legislative updates impacting EMS operations

#### **6. EMS Programs and Quality Initiatives**

Key updates provided:

- EMCT of the Year nominations (deadline to BEMTS: March 17)
- Narcan leave-behind program implementation
- EMS for Children program leadership transition
- Pediatric-focused initiatives, including:
  - Children and Youth with Special Healthcare Needs training
  - Making Arizona Ready for Kids program

Members were encouraged to present EMS Quality Improvement initiatives at future meetings.

#### **7. Governance and Leadership:**

Key Updates:

- Biennial Election: Election of Chief VanAlstine as Vice-Chair/vote of council
- Open call for nominations for open representative positions.
- Committee-specific elections scheduled, including:
  - Base Hospital Managers
  - Air Medical Committee
  
- The updated master meeting schedule (Version 2) was distributed for review and adoption.

#### **8. Announcements:**

- New personnel introductions were made.
- The Southwest Regional Trauma Conference will be held July 29–31 at La Paloma.
- Announcement of new Banner University Medical Center Pediatric Emergency Department. Directions provided for EMS arrivals.

#### **9. Additional Action Items:**

- Nominate replacements for vacant council and leadership positions (open/published)
- Consult financial experts regarding high-yield accounts (begin)
- Distribute and submit EMCT nominations by March 17 (advised/information distributed)
- Share EMS offload plan with facilities (general/in chat for reference)
- Encouraged to submit EMS QI presentations (open)
- Encouraged to submit Kramer Scholarships (open)

#### **10. Adjournment**

Adjourned by Dr. Gaither. Next meeting scheduled for: April 21, 2026, per previously published annual meeting calendar.