

Indiana County Municipal Emergency Services Authority
6PM at the Indiana County Emergency Management Agency (EMA)

Monday, August 4, 2025

Members in attendance: Augie Santini, Danny Sacco, John Kravetsky, Sandi Waldenville, Jeff Gromley, Terry Pierce, Jonathan Smith, Commissioner R. Mike Keith

Members absent: Nick Brilhart

Guests in attendance: Tom Stutzman, Sandi Gillette, Rob Walbeck

Consultant Representatives in attendance: Attorney Ben Reid

The Meeting was called to order by Jonathan Smith at 6:00 PM.

A Motion to appoint approve agenda was made by Danny Sacco and seconded by Augie Santini. **Motion** was unanimous. **Motion** carried.

Chairman Jonathan Smith proposed a new "House Rule", when speaking of incidents, experiences, and problems. This board shall refrain from mentioning specific service providers. We as ICMESA endeavor towards unbiased deliberation and recognize the complexity of managing EMS system. Sandi Waldenville questioned " Why do we need this?" Jonathan explained that this will treat our partners with respect as this is a very emotional topic. Augie Santini explained "How do we fix this with out saying where the problem is." Sandi expressed that she doesn't agree with this "House Rule". No motion was made.

A Motion to approve the July 7, 2025, meeting minutes was made by Danny Sacco and seconded by Augie Santini. **Motion** was unanimous. **Motion** carried.

Public Comment

Sandi Gillette stated to the board that she was in attendance for White Township.

Presentation & Discussion

Tom Stutzman, the Indiana County EMA Director, was present at the meeting. Mr. Stutzman introduced himself to the board and gave a brief history of his career in the Emergency Services field. Mr. Stutzman has 45 years of experience in this field. He gave the board a history of the 911 First Response services over the years. He explained that there has been a shift within the EMS provider community over the years. At the onset of the service, most companies were staffed with volunteers or paid by call staff with limited full-time personnel. He explained that over the years that there at times were 20-26 staffed ambulances in Indiana County, they were supported by donations and membership drives. He explained that the demographic nor the population has changed over the years but there has been a major change in the service providers in the area. In the mid-1990s to present, many providers closed due to lack of funds or staffing. At the present time, depending on the time of day, standard availability of EMS in Indiana County is total 12 to 19 staffed response units, when available. Mr. Stutzman explained that in county EMS providers are also tasked with providing mutual aid to outside areas of the county. Stutzman gave a few examples of extended response time in the county to show that all EMS providers across the county need support. In the examples presented, county resources, as limited as they already are, were utilized for call coverage well beyond what should be considered normal response time frames. The downsizing of not only the number of available EMS units but also downgrading of the level of care available has had an impact on patient outcomes. Stutzman expressed that this is a Public Safety Concern! The downsizing of the EMS system is causing this issue. The staff at the 911 Center are the first people taking the hit, answer the questions " How long will it be" " Where are they" and the only answers that can be provided is that " they are dispatched and enroute". He also explained that this is not only

a problem in Indiana County, but also the problem everywhere throughout the country. System readiness is being pushed to the wayside. If there is nothing to send there is no billing. This authority will help to address the Operational readiness. Stutzman explained that the 911 Center tracks all Fire and Police units in the county but has no way to track where any ambulances are. He explained that the Fire Companies and EMS services used to help each other. He explained that a rescue call should be handled by the EMS Services, also that proper PPE is not being used all due to funding. This is not the service providers' fault at all. EMA is doing internal audits for EMS, Non-Emergency and Emergency for each municipality. Stutzman explained that a system needs to be built for Public Safety! In Indiana county there are 824 square miles and at times only two ambulances. Stutzman explained that the 911 Center completes Quality Assurance internally. Danny Sacco questioned Stutzman what the scores of the Quality Assurance, he explained that they are always 100% at the Indiana County EMA. There is always a supervisor in the room and with an ALS call the dispatcher stays on the phone to provide Medical Aid.

Danny Sacco questioned Rob Walbeck "Is Citizens Ambulance willing to provide service to the whole county?" Rob Walbeck stated that it is a staffing issue. Sacco stated that he believes that the ICMESA can help with staffing. He stated that starting early with kids in high school. There are people who want to help many Fire Companies have QRS. Danny Sacco thinks that this needs to go back to the communities. Sandi Gillette stated that the IRP and QRS are very helpful. The only problem with QRS systems is that they have no way to transport a patient. In the 1970's EMS was created for Public Safety not as a business.

Unfinished Business

Attorney Ben Reid explained that Legal Services RFP had been sent to several Indiana County Attorneys, and no one had the ability to add ICMESA to their workload. Attorney Reid is to expand the search to Pittsburgh, Erie and so on. Attorney Kim Houser showed a little interest.

A brief discussion was held regarding the Financial Services RFP and the responses received from the following providers: S & T Bank and First Commonwealth Bank. Treasurer John Kravetsky said that S & T Bank showed concern for Public Safety and had some ideas for Savings and Grant Funding for the future.

A Motion was made to approve S & T Bank as ICMESA's financial institution was made by Danny Sacco and seconded by Terry Pierce. Sandi Waldenville abstained from the vote. **Motion** was unanimous. **Motion** carried.

New Business

Jonathan Smith explained that after the presentation from Tom Stutzman there is more confusion about service providers. Jonathan explained he thinks that meeting with the services providers in the county should be a top priority!

A conversation was held regarding meetings with the EMS service providers and what information needed to be shared. A white board was used to list the following: Goals, People at the Table and the Time Frame.

Goals

1. Availability of Service
2. Who ICMESA is
3. What is the goal of ICMESA
4. Who is willing to participate
5. Needs to reach the mission
6. Input of ICMESA
7. Knowledge of the shared problem
8. Knowledge of the financial challenges

People at the Table

1. Medical Directors
2. Service providers that serve the county
3. First Level Aid Mutual Aid Providers
4. 911 Director

Time Frame

1. Sooner than later
2. Last week of August; suggested date August 28, 2025.

Chairman, Jonathan Smith explained to the board members that it is important for each representative to meet with their districts before the end of August.

The next scheduled meeting will be the workshop meeting held on August 19, 2025, and the business meeting will be held on September 8, 2025. Both meetings will begin at 6:00 pm.

A Motion to adjourn was made at 8:05 pm by Sandi Waldenville and seconded by Nick Brillhart. **Motion** was unanimous. **Motion** carried.

Submitted by:

Jeff Gromley
Secretary