

E Beadle
E Berning
E/P Bersbach
E Gerlich
E McCartney
E Miller
E Petitgout
E Rigdon
E Splinter
E/P EMS Coordinator
E = electronic

GALENA AREA EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE DISTRICT
Board of Directors' Meeting
217 Summit Street, Galena IL 61036
Thursday, June 26, 2025
MINUTES



CALL TO ORDER President Ben Petitgout called to order the regular meeting of the Galena Area Emergency Medical Service District Board of Directors at 6:31 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Board members present: Tony Berning; Claire Bersbach, Secretary; Austin Gerlich; Renee McCartney; Susan Miller; Ben Petitgout, President; Jim Rigdon, Treasurer; and Jan Splinter.

Absent: Randy Beadle, Vice President. A quorum was established.

EMS staff present: Gabe King, EMS Coordinator; and Aishah Abdul-Aziz, Administrative Manager.

EMS Association representative: None.

EMS personnel present: None.

Others present: None.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by President Petitgout.

AGENDA ITEM I. CONSENT AGENDA

McCartney moved, Gerlich seconded, to approve the Consent Agenda consisting of **approve Minutes of the May 22, 2025**, Board of Directors' meeting; review Financial Statements, bills paid, estimated bills to be paid; and Board Officers' Reports.

President's Report – Ben Petitgout

President Petitgout attended the City of Galena's community Open House Wednesday, June 25, and the public hearing at Galena City Hall that followed (ref: Galena's Comprehensive Plan) and addressed concerns in the Plan, as follows:

"The Galena Area Emergency Medical Service District's response area covers 172 square miles.

The City of Galena has 4.62 square miles of incorporated area which accounts for 2.68% of our emergency response area.

From May 1, 2023, through April 30, 2024, the incorporated area of the city accounted for 53.34% of our calls for emergency medical services.

From May 1, 2024, through April 30 of this year, the incorporated area of the city accounted for 60.22% of our calls for emergency medical services."

Referencing Page 60 of the Draft Comprehensive Plan, Petitgout quoted: "The City is responsible for **essential services** like law enforcement, fire protection and public works. There is no mention of Emergency Medical Services. Historically, Emergency Medical Services has not been considered an **"ESSENTIAL SERVICE."**

Petitgout concluded his comments saying "Galena Area EMS District believes in the development and growth of Galena and the surrounding communities. However, emergency medical services needs to be considered an essential service and given the

AGENDA ITEM I. CONSENT AGENDA - continued:**President's Report** – Ben Petitgout - continued:

resources and funding to support the increasing calls and added demand. I would not like to see Galena Country Tourism develop an advertising slogan...Come to Galena, but bring your own ambulance."

Treasurer's Report – Jim Rigdon

Board members were provided with Account Balances, Financial Statements, and Investment Reports prior to the meeting.

Secretary's Report – Claire Bersbach

- Sent **Thank You card** to Willis Computer Solutions for not charging the District for Board Secretary's computer issues (ref: iPad/desktop).
- Provided **website information** to Chris Garza, Communication and Technology Manager, re: Board of Directors FY2025-2026.
- Sent **Thank You** letters re: 5K Stair Challenge to:
 - Bella Cucina - \$500.00 donation;
 - Vinny Vanucchi's - \$100.00 gift card donation; and
 - American Legion Auxiliary Unit 193 - \$500.00 donation.
- Sent **Thank You** letter/cards:
 - East Dubuque Nitrogen - \$74,469.05 donation ambulance equipment;
 - Patient - \$50.00 Thank You EMS, donation; and
 - Connie Wienen - \$1,000.00 Stop the Bleed donation.
- Filed Board President Petitgout's **OMA and FOIA Certifications**.
- Provided Galena Territory contact information to Shelley Finley to promote **5K Challenge**.

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

Motion carried.

AGENDA ITEM III. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None.**AGENDA ITEM IV. REPORTS****1. EMS Coordinator** – Gabe King

EMS Coordinator, Gabe King, reported on activity since the previous meeting:

June 3 - Regular monthly training - Bites, stings, and Environmental Emergencies.

June 10 - Hugs and Heroes community outreach event at Poopsie's.

June 11 - IDPH Region 1 EMS meeting.

June 12 - UWHealth/SwedishAmerican EMS Advisory Council Meeting.

June 12 - 5K Stair Challenge committee meeting at Police Station.

June 17 - Staff meeting with Board President.

June 19 - Received grant from Jo Daviess County Country Fair Charities.

June 26 - Live at the Plaza community outreach with Galena Country Tourism.

King reported that Cindy Blakemore passed NREMT (National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians). Jeremy Lee is still in the process of meeting his patient contact hours.

We received \$3,000.00 in donations for the School Safety Initiative this month (private donation, Casey's, and VFW). Started to purchase supplies in anticipation of training staff and getting kits in classrooms for the start of school.

AGENDA ITEM IV. REPORTS – continued:**1. EMS Coordinator** – Gabe King – continued:

Re: the Midwest Medical Center Paramedic Program: Dr. Kehoe has submitted a budget request; the next meeting with Galena Area EMS will involve billing and operational agreements.

King noted that Heather Swanson, UWHealth/SwedishAmerican EMS Representative, has given two weeks' notice.

King also noted the following Service Anniversaries:

1 year - Juan Dorantes

1 year - Oliver Wall-Penoyer

4 years - Jacob Gilman

6 years - Chris Garza

37 years - Terry Kieffer

Year-to-date (from January 1) Total Incidents = 368. In May 2025, there were 61 incidents with 2 Air Care transports and 2 Mutual Aid requests (Elizabeth and Hazel Green).

June 1 through 25, there were 51 incidents with 54 patient contacts and 1 Air Care transport and 2 Mutual Aid requests (East Dubuque).

For Fiscal Year-to-date there have been 112 incident responses.

King also provided the Board with Coverage Analysis and Incident Analysis information.

2. Administrative Manager – Aishah Abdul-Aziz

Aishah reported that Benning Group LLC has set up July 31 as the site visit for our Annual Audit.

With the merger of Illinois Bank & Trust with UMB Bank, there will be system changes. Aishah is working with the bank to start the process. There will be a change of routing number for our Medicare account so we will need to make some changes on the Medicare website. Aishah will get together with President Petitgout if there are documents that will require signatures.

EMS Coordinator King and Aishah will meet to begin discussing billing and wages for Interfacility Transports as the discussion with Midwest Medical Center is progressing. The next meeting with them will cover billing; we will also have to determine wages for these transports.

We received a check for \$5,000.00 from Jo Daviess County Country Fair Charities. This was a grant submitted to pay for radio and scoop stretcher for the third ambulance. Special Service Manager, Christian Gronewold, represented GAEMS at the check presentation ceremony at the Elks on June 19.

Also received the check for \$74,469.05 from East Dubuque Nitrogen. This was a grant submitted to pay for some of the expenses for the Stryker power cot, stair chair, and LUCAS® compression unit for the new ambulance.

Merkle International sent a donation of \$500.00 which was deposited to the EMS Savings account.

We continue to receive donations for the Stop the Bleed program and the 5K 911 Stair Run.

\$8,040.00 - Stop the Bleed. EMS Coordinator King has started to purchase supplies for the kits. We purchased 140 Chest Seals in the amount of \$1,958.60. More items will be ordered.

AGENDA ITEM IV. REPORTS – continued:

2. **Administrative Manager** – Aishah Abdul-Aziz – continued:

\$9,950.00 - 5K Stair Run. Donations = \$9,150.00; Registration fees = \$800.00. We have a total of 20 people who have signed up for the 5K Run.

3. **EMS Association Report** – Shelley Finley (absent)

Along with other GAEMS personnel, Finley was at the Live at the Plaza outreach with Galena Country Tourism.

AGENDA ITEM V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None.

AGENDA ITEM VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Bersbach moved, Berning seconded to give Board President Petitgout latitude to invest or to deposit into the District's Checking Account the first Property Tax Distribution, paid out in July.

Petitgout advised there were a number of "big bills" coming in the next few months; commented on the amount of interest our checking account earns each month; and recommended the property tax distribution be deposited to the District's checking account rather than tied up in a Certificate of Deposit.

Motion carried.

AGENDA ITEM VII. BOARD MEMBER CONCERNS AND COMMENTS

Miller thanked President Petitgout and Secretary Bersbach for meeting with her and helping "get her up to speed."

Rigdon asked whether the Highway 20 bridge work was going to proceed this year. Petitgout commented they had to re-let the bids.

AGENDA ITEM VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Berning moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Splinter. Motion carried.

President Petitgout **adjourned the meeting at 7:02 p.m.** until the regularly scheduled Galena Area EMS District Board of Directors' meeting **Thursday, July 24, 2025, at 6:30 p.m.**, at the Galena Area EMS District Board Room, 217 Summit Street, in Galena, Illinois.