



Plumas County Emergency Medical Care Committee  
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**EMCC Special Meeting Minutes**  
**May 28, 2024 @10:00 AM- 12:00 PM**  
**Plumas County Public Health Conference room or**  
**MS Teams Conference call**



➤ Meeting in session at 1000 hours.

➤ Introductions/Attendance:

In-Person		Virtual	
<u>Name</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Agency</u>
Charles Schrammel	PCPHA	Amy Burkhart	EPHC Ambulance
Sam Blesse	CareFlight Ground	Travis Bowersox	CalFIRE
Joe Waterman	PC Chief's Assoc.	Brady Haynes	Seneca Hospital
Judy Cline	Seneca Hospital	Dee Dee Clark	EPHC
Travis Goings	PC OES	Jesse Keene	CalFIRE/SIFC
Lori Pini	PC OES	Linda McCurdy	EPHC
Tina Venable	PCPHA	Neal Cline	Seneca Hospital
Darren Beatty	PDH	Ron Wilson	Nor-Cal EMS
Mark Satterfield	PCPHA	Shawn McKenzie	Seneca Hospital
Mike Grant	PCSO	Steve Boline	Seneca Hospital
Matt Hillar	SEMSA	Peter Upton	CHP

➤ Roll Call of voting membership to set quorum.

Name	Present
Sam Blesse	Y
Amy Burkhart	Y
Judith Cline	Y
Darren Beatty	Y
Dee Dee Clark	Y



<b>Joe Waterman</b>	Y
<b>Mike Grant</b>	Y
<b>Mark Satterfield</b>	Y

- Approval of agenda for May 28, 2024 (no roll call)
  - Darren Beatty moves to approve, Joe Waterman seconds. No nays or abstentions.
- Public Comment
  - No public comment in person or virtual.
- Almanor Basin EMS – Discussion
  - Possible Action and Voting Item
    - Sam introduced recommendations developed during EMCC sub-committee meetings, these were read and explained by Judy Cline of Seneca District Hospital:

#### EMCC Sub-Committee Findings and Recommendations

#### Charter:

In fall of 2023 following the defeat of Measure A, a parcel tax to the residents of Chester California, and the continued diminished service capability of Chester Fire Department (CFD) Fire/EMS operations, the EMCC was directed by the Plumas County Board of Supervisors to convene a multi-disciplinary and multi-agency sub-committee meeting with the task of addressing the service void left when CFD reduces or eliminates services. The charter of this committee was to explore potential “short term” and “long-term” solutions.

#### Findings:

The sub-committee met five (5) times over the course of 6 months. Discussion encompassed updates from Peninsula Fire Chief related to response numbers and run times including delays associated with response from the Peninsula into the Chester/West Shore response area. Additionally, Seneca used run type/volume during this period to assess whether the financial viability using the cost-based reimbursement option if Seneca Healthcare were to run EMS. Several findings became evident and are chronicled below.

1. The Lake Almanor Basin is in need of two (2) ambulances for EMS response based on geographic coverage, response time and redundancy should one unit be out on an inter-facility transfer (IFT).



2. Based on the aggregate run volume, billing in a “fee for service” model, without the advantage of cost-based reimbursement does not cover the operating costs of two (2) EMS ambulances. Even using the cost-based model that could be attained if Seneca began EMS response services, this reimbursement model does not adequately support multiple EMS units and staff.

3. After the failure of Measures B & C (CPUD Parcel Tax) in May 2024, Chester Fire can no longer provide Fire or EMS response to the communities they serve rendering them out of service for long periods of time, and leaving Peninsula and West Almanor Fire responsible for Fire response and Peninsula Fire solely responsible for EMS response. The spring, summer and fall season in the Lake Almanor basin experience a surge in population 7 to 10 times the year-round population. This factor alone puts Peninsula and West shore mutual aid at risk and severely impacts the resource availability and subsequent response times.

4. Peninsula Fire/EMS, if they were to continue providing service coverage in the Chester response area is in need of an additional fully equipped Advanced Life Support (ALS) Ambulance and Fire suppression apparatus.

5. Peninsula Fire/EMS, if they were to continue providing service coverage in the Chester response area is in need of additional apparatus and crews quarters.

#### **Recommendation of the Plumas County Emergency Medical Care Committee:**

#### **Annexation/Consolidation of Chester Fire Protection District with Peninsula Fire Protection District.**

The most viable option is to push for annexation/consolidation of the Chester Fire Protection District by Peninsula Fire. This action would provide the necessary infrastructure to expand staff and operations for Peninsula Fire into Chester and utilize the existing equipment, apparatus and quarters now currently vacated by CFD. Annexation would carry the current parcel tax of \$442.50 (improved) and \$394.50 (unimproved) levied to the community of Lake Almanor Peninsula to the tax base of Chester thus creating a revenue stream in support of a full-time Fire/EMS operations. While one may believe that Measure B was defeated because of the cost, it may be that the defeat was that the parcel tax of Measure B did not adequately provide for a full-time professional fire service and was devoid of the EMS service all together. With the annexation and subsequent carry forward of the Peninsula Tax, Chester would receive both Fire and EMS services from an already established Fire/EMS District. This option is subject to support of both CPUD and Peninsula Fire Boards of Directors as well as LAFCO procedures and public comment. It is our recommendation that the CPUD and Peninsula Fire Boards draft resolutions to start the LAFCO process of annexation.

#### **Discussion:**



- **Judith:** CPUD is in control of some equipment that would be needed by Peninsula Fire to expand their service area to Chester.
- **Sam:** Almanor Basin has 450 total transports per year, that volume does not support two (2) full-time ambulances with the cost billing model, seasonal fluctuations create staffing and scheduling issues. Measures B and C did not get sufficient votes to pass, current parcel tax could be carried over to Chester region and support FT ambulance if Pen Fire opted for annexation plan. The plan would be subject to community protest which would need 30% of the vote. Chester Fire is currently collecting a 1% per year fee for services which they no longer provide on a 24/7 basis.
- **Joe:** Enloe has an ambulance to send up to Almanor Basin. Waiting on a monitor (Zoll).
- **Judy:** Ambulance is still in Chico pending registration and insurance. Seneca would own the ambulance and lease to Pen Fire for a small fee.
- **Sam:** CPUD owns fire station in Chester that could be transferred to Pen Fire for use and operation. Would provide downtown location for ambulance. If everything went smooth annex could be done in four (4) months according to LAFCO.
- **Judy:** In interim, during summer, Pen Fire would continue to cover region along with West Shore Fire QRV, CareFlight Ground, and SEMSA out of Westwood. Pen Fire has an additional ambulance on order with an expected delivery of December to replace aging equipment currently in use.
- **Sam:** Pen Fire cannot start full time ambulance service until they have revenue to offset costs. Communications for the summer are being worked out, nearest support will be SEMSA out of Westwood. Need for weekend up-staffing over summer.
- **Judy:** There is an open question about end date for the Chester Fire QRV that is currently staffed by a lieutenant. Unknown end date.
- **Sam:** will be attending 5/28/2024 CPUD meeting to learn more about timeline. The current changes to the system are related to chief changes and looking at the big picture, among other things.
- **Shawn:** Pen Fire board, questions about money owed by Chester Fire (\$1.2 million) how that gets resolved. Mitigation strategy from LAFCO.
- **Ron:** From a regulatory standpoint: support from NorCal EMS to make this happen. Is there adequate staffing to support out-of-county fire response and still run services locally.
- **Sam:** Pen Fire has been doing dual duty for decades, would up-staff as needed, this is from Chief Gray at Pen Fire even though he is not able to be here.
- **Joe:** The primary focus would be local services, followed by out-of-county requests.
- **Lori:** how does the tax situation work to support this?
- **Sam:** collected taxes would be allocated to Pen Fire in place of Chester Fire. There has been a discussion of fee waivers to expedite parts of the process because this is a public safety situation.



- **Judy:** is there a possibility of asking Chester Fire to run their QRV around weekends until their service officially ends, currently they are running Monday to Thursday and not during the busiest times.
- **Joe:** that will require clarification of staffing and the timeline for termination of services and layoffs.
- **Sam:** If there are no more questions can we have a motion to accept recommendations for presentation to the respective boards? This is the best option going forward.
  - Dr. Satterfield motions to accept recommendations, Chief Waterman seconds. Roll Call of voting members: all yeas, no nays, no abstentions.
- **Sam:** reminder that the next meeting of the EMCC is July 3.

**Next Meeting, Wednesday July 3, 2024: 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM**

Adjourn – 1104 hrs