

DRAFT
Broward Regional EMS Council
EMS Review Committee
February 9, 2023
1:30 p.m.
MINUTES

Call to Order

Chief Bruce Caruso, Acting Chair, called meeting to order at 1:33 pm.
Chief Caruso introduced himself.

Roll Call

Alison Zerbe called roll and quorum established.

Announcements: N/A

Identify Conflicts of Interest

Dr. Randy Katz, Division Chief for Emergency Services, Memorial Healthcare System, Medical Director for City of Hollywood Fire Rescue, and Medical Director for AMR South Regional

Approval of Minutes from November 18, 2021:

MOTION to Accept the minutes of November 18, 2021

Motion made by: Chief Harris Bouchillon

Seconded by: Chief Julie Downey

MOTION passed unanimously

Old Business

None

New Business

Presentation:

Alison Zerbe – Overview of the EMS Review process and Ms. Zerbe sent a link prior to the meeting.

They were going to have four applications, but three were pulled to table. Today they will review 5 Max Transport, LLC.

COPCN – Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity. Broward County has an ordinance Chapter 3½. All the information is there. COPCN is to maintain the quality and integrity of Broward County’s medical transportation system. The EMS Review Committee provides the County administration with recommendations regarding the applications. The ordinance also states that the community needs assessment which must be done and provided; they will go over.

Once they make the recommendation it will go to the County Commission who ultimately makes the decision on whether they will allow a COPCN. At this point, there will be a public hearing where the public can speak about the applicant.

Every ambulance provider must provide their response time every year, including 911 system. They don’t have the 911 included in this because they are only talking about

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Class 3 today.

Ms. Zerbe presented the results from the survey done in 2020. Ten out of sixteen (62%) acute care facilities responded to the survey. It was sent out several times during the year. Fifteen other Broward County healthcare facilities responded which included skilled nursing facilities, assisted living facilities, etc. Fifteen of those responded only contract with one provider. There's nothing in the Broward County ordinance that says they can't contract with more providers. Half of thirteen providers that responded said they only contract with one provider. If they get an unsatisfactory ETA they are not contacting another provider.

A complete Survey presentation is available upon request.

MOTION to table Class 5, Class 2, and Class 3, also known as Cleveland Clinic Advanced Medical Transport.

Motion made by Chief Julie Downey

Seconded by Chief Harris Bouchillon

Motion passed unanimously

Discussion:

Ms. Zerbe said that the above applicant wanted to retract it from this meeting, and they would be in contact with us.

5 Max Transport LLC – Class 3, BLS Transportation COPCN application:

Ms. Zerbe sent out their application and Consumer Protection received all their documents for the review. Consumer Protection are present today to answer any questions. Ms. Zerbe can answer any procedural questions.

Novia Markes, Nurse Practitioner, 5 Max Transport LLC. Said that her reason for starting this company was that her last bedside job was critical coordinator for a hospital. It entailed seeing the person from admission to discharge.

The largest problem getting people out of the hospital was transportation, especially, after 5:00 p.m. and on the weekends. That caused reimbursement problems for the hospital.

Another issue was that most transports were taking more than two hours. Most people only know about one company, even though there are other options. They call and leave a message. She didn't know until she had this position that she could call ahead and book the time. This was an ongoing problem that she wants to address. She also had a report from Medicaid that showed the lack of transportation for Medicaid patients is causing an impact on Broward County's increased demands.

Consumer Protection said this process is for COPCN to identify for their state license and start operations in this business.

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Dr. Katz from the EMS Review Committee said that it was his understanding that they never ran an ambulance company and don't have additional company experience.

Ms. Markes said that she never ran an ambulance company but has direct dealings with them in her prior experience. She said that her medical director, Cornell Corrinesto had been Director of Emergency Medical Transportation at Plantation General. He was FIU instructor for medical. His name is Cornell Corrinesto.

Ms. Markes worked at nighttime. In her experience, if the patient was discharge after 3 p.m. it takes much longer to get transport.

Dr. Katz said that he worked on both sides. You do rely on one private ambulance company. They did ask the ambulance company to give them turnaround times because they have interfacility transports. If you look at the average, it's not really that bad. There's always outliers. Sometimes the vehicles are idle because they don't have EMTs to staff them. There is a national shortage of EMTs/paramedics. He belongs to the National Association of EMS Medical Records. EMS medical records indicated it was even worse than Broward County and happening throughout the country. He wondered if adding more companies and more vehicles is going to make a difference due to the limited number of EMTs. He said that he assumed they were going to address that issue, and asked how do they plan to staff?

Ms. Markes said she has been a nurse for 20 years. She knows they are constantly working to get more EMTs. She's been in contact with Broward College, and they will let her present to and recruit from the graduating class. Her plan was to recruit from schools. She's aware of the shortage but there will be over two million Broward residents by 2024.

Chief Downey asked how many ambulances they will put into service? They are starting with one to two depending on the requirements. When asked about the quality of the patient's experience she said that they were going to train them how to take care of the patients and maintain a relationship with the patient and families. To maintain this they will have a quality assurance team checking pre- and post- trips.

Chief Caruso said he knows 5 Max's medical director is licensed in the state of Florida, but he lives in Las Vegas. Ms. Markes said he also has a home in Florida, and he travels back and forth. Chief Caruso said that ties into the quality. Chief Caruso's been involved in fire rescue for 39 years and EMS Division Chief for Fire Rescue for Dania Beach, and also BSO fire rescue. He is familiar with EMS and protocols. The departments he worked for were looking for hands-on. They needed their medical director for training, protocol changes, and quality improvement. With 5 Max's medical director traveling back and forth, he doesn't know how that quality level will be maintained and how they will have a strong relationship with their medical director.

Ms. Markes responded that they discussed this and initially planned for the medical director to be here monthly to maintain the quality. Then they would see how often he would need to be physically present.

Chief Caruso asked and Ms. Markes answered that her nursing experience was in

DRAFT
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When Chief Downey asked how many ambulances they had Ms. Markes said they physically had two.

Ms. Markes stated this was a new application.

Chief Caruso said he noticed 5 Max's would operate at their Bay Station, but some of their documents had different addresses, i.e. Banking. Most of the times in the past, all of the addresses all matched up. Ms. Markes said that they had other businesses in Broward County and the banking address was different because the physical location was not established.

Ms. Markes was asked if she owned any more healthcare businesses in Broward County. She responded she owned a wellness center in Pembroke Pines.

Chief Downey asked where the ambulances would be stationed, and Ms. Markes responded 2105 Sheridan Street. They would have one phoned and run calls 24/7.

There were not anymore questions or additional statements.

Alison Zerbe said the process for ordinance is EMS Review Committee will make a recommendations whether to accept or deny the application, EMS Council will make a recommendation that will come from Dr. MacDougall to accept or deny, then the County Administrator designee will make a recommendation. They will bring all recommendations to the County Commission and have a public hearing where anyone has an opportunity to speak at the County Commission.

Chief Caruso said that EMS Review Committee was only a recommendation. Alison Zerbe said that the County will take the EMS Council's recommendation into play because EMS Council is the board that provides the recommendations.

At this point, Dr. Katz abstained from making a motion or voting because he has a conflict of interest, that being AMR. They still have a quorum with four EMS Review Committee members.

Chief Downey questioned when they talk about the number of providers, do they know how many units are assigned to each county? She looked at the numbers: Broward County has four, and Miami-Dade has four. They have almost a million more people than Broward County.

Alexander Fernandez wanted to know if the EMS Review Committee makes the recommendation to issue a license, what would be the quality oversight? How do they ensure the quality of the new and existing licensees?

DRAFT
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Joe O'Geen, Consumer Protection, said that each vehicle is inspected twice a year. Chief Caruso asked if there was anything else besides the inspection of the vehicle that their department performs? Is there a continuation of driving records and background check?

Mr. O'Geen said that now that the drivers can be just drivers, they need registration and would be fingerprinted and check backgrounds. They show their registration every two years. Ms. Markes commented their company does this with new hires.

Mr. Fernandez stated he wanted to know more about the care of the patient than just the vehicle. Ms. Markes commented that would be something she would oversee that the patients are taken care of, background checks, and cameras on the ambulance to ensure safety and proper transport of each patient.

Ms. Zerbe said they do have the EMS Review Committee for formal complaints.

Mr. O'Geen said 5 Max Transport has been cited without a license one time in January 2023. Ms. Markes said they don't have anything to operate. Mr. O'Geen said they were cited for advertising without a license. Ms. Markes asked advertising where? Michelle Valverde, Consumer Protection, said advertising on 5 Max's website. To which Ms. Markes stated they don't have a website. Mr. O'Geen said that the website was up, and Ms. Valverde said having a website is advertising. Ms. Markes commented they can call for an ambulance, but they won't get anywhere because it's just a website. Ms. Markes did not know about the citation.

Chief Caruso asked Adam Katz, Broward County Attorney, if the citation would have to be resolved before recommending? Mr. Katz said that if they want to consider it. Is it outstanding or still pending?

Mr. O'Geen said that it already went to a hearing and was finalized. Ms. Markes responded that she never knew about this. Mr. O'Geen said that they were given a notice of warning in August 2022 for the same thing. Raini Jones, Consumer Protection, said she sent it to Ms. Markes' address of her corporation on Sunbiz. Ms. Markes signed for it. Consumer Protection also posted a citation at their office on Sheridan Street. Ms. Markes was not aware of this.

Mr. O'Geen said the citation was actually issued on October 5, 2022 and found valid by a hearing officer on January 10, 2023. Ms. Markes restated that this citation was about their website? Ms. Jones confirmed and said that Michelle Valverde mentioned that Ms. Markes contact her.

Attorney Katz said that if a hearing officer found it valid then that's the final citation, and if that's something that someone wants to take into consideration. He said that in the ordinance you can take into consideration the application, multi-emerging calls in the

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outgoing area, response time of existing EMS providers excluding the Class 4 and Class 5 which the survey excludes, past performance of the applicant, overall need for the service in the area, as well as other information they deemed relevant.

MOTION was made to deny the application of 5 Max Transport LLC when there are violations.

Motion made by Chief Julie Downey

Seconded by Chief Harris Bouchillon

Motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Zerbe said that at this point there will be a public hearing which anyone from the public can speak. If it's approved by County Commission, so be it, and if it's denied by County Commission, per the ordinance, 5 Max could apply for an application a year from the date it was denied.

Ms. Valverde, Consumer Protection, asked with the denial of the application today, will they be able to bring it back to this Committee at some point. Ms. Zerbe stated that it must go through the full process now and be heard by the Commission.

The next EMS Review Committee is scheduled for June 1, at 3:00 p.m. following the EMS Council meeting. If they don't have business they will cancel the meeting.

[Next Meeting Dates](#)

June 1, 2023 at 3:00 p.m.

[Adjourned](#)

2:15 PM