



Kitsap County EMS

Board of Directors Meeting

Date: September 8, 2026

Time: 9:09 AM

Location: Virtual (Microsoft Teams)

Status: Meeting opened with a quorum

1. Call to Order

Chair Jim Gillard called the September 8, 2026, Kitsap County EMS Council Board of Directors meeting to order. A quorum was not present at the beginning of the meeting. The Board proceeded with reports and discussion, and took no action requiring a vote until a quorum was established. Chief McGanney joined the meeting later, establishing a quorum.

2. Announcements

None

3. Approval of minutes

A quorum was not present to approve the minutes

4. Financial Update

Danielle Mackelwich provided the financial update. Reported balances were approximately \$17,000 in checking, \$469,000 in savings, and approximately \$63,000 in the money market account. Operating expenditures were approximately 63% of the operating budget.

Chair Gillard noted that the savings balance will be an important consideration in developing the 2027 budget.

5. Staff Reports

Medical Program Director Report – Dr. Joe Hoffman

Dr. Joe Hoffman reported on the third-quarter Medical Program Director meeting and regional EMS coordination.



- Prehospital whole-blood access was discussed, including potential distribution of blood products to more remote areas of the Olympic Peninsula.
- Dr. Hoffman is continuing discussions with Bloodworks Northwest and regional medical directors regarding a potential system for distribution, use, and return of appropriately stored unused blood products.
- Regional medical directors are working toward a standardized EMT protocol examination across the Olympic Peninsula to support consistent protocol testing for personnel who work across county lines.

Administrative Report – Danielle Mackelwich

Administrative updates included:

Danielle Mackelwich reported that, in addition to routine financial and administrative duties, significant time was spent resolving Washington State sales tax requirements for Council training activities. After multiple inquiries, webinars, and requests for formal tax guidance, the Council received a ruling that, under the applicable circumstances, qualifying live presentations are exempt from sales tax. The Council will continue to charge its normal base fees.

The Council previously paid approximately \$10,600 in sales tax on cadaver lab and EMT course activities. That amount was not included in the current budget and must be accounted for. Additional clarification regarding B&O tax remains pending.

Training Coordinator Report– Dr. Hoffman reported for Tamarah

Training updates included:

Dr. Hoffman reported that the EMS evaluator course was scheduled for later in the week, with certificates being prepared.

As of the weekend, eight paramedics and 44 EMTs had not completed training during the current quarter. The office sent notices to the respective Medical Officers for follow-up. The team will discuss training needs for the 2027 budget cycle with the Medical Officers, including ventilation and other potential courses.

6. Agency and Partner Updates

St. Michael Medical Center – Emma Kasemeier

Emma Kasemeier, SMMC Emergency Department Director, reported that the EMS triage nurse pilot program launched the previous Tuesday and has received positive feedback. Staffing and resource allocation remain challenging, although the triage nurse assignment has been staffed on all but one day. Staffing is improving as additional hires are onboarded. The hospital is also developing an Epic-based process to better track EMS wall times and provide more proactive information on EMS turnaround times. The department also reported a recent short-duration lockdown following the arrival of a gunshot-wound patient. Law enforcement assisted, and the situation was resolved without further incident.



Virginia Mason Franciscan Freestanding Emergency Departments- MultiCare Freestanding Emergency Department

Life Flight-Lora York

Lora York reported completion of landing zone training with South Kitsap and upcoming training with Poulsbo, with additional coordination anticipated. She reminded agencies to activate early during the upcoming fog season and noted that fixed-wing transport to Bremerton remains an option when appropriate.

Airlift Northwest-Vanessa Palensky

Vanessa Palensky reported a busy upcoming schedule of community events, including open houses, safety fairs, and wellness fairs. A pediatric seminar is scheduled for October 7 at the Olympia base. The event is free and intended for EMS and hospital clinical personnel.

Public Health-Dr. Herbie Duber

No Public Health representative was present. Chair Gillard reported that a Child Fatality Review Committee meeting is scheduled for later in the week, with an update expected at the next Council meeting. The Chair also noted concerns regarding reductions in state funding for the program.

Kitsap County Sheriff's Office-Kenneth Dickinson

Kenneth Dickinson reported that the Sheriff's Office recently passed its accreditation inspection and is moving forward as an accredited agency. The office is also working through budget matters and implementation of House Bill 2015.

Kitsap 911

Olympic Ambulance-Jack Reynolds

Jack Reynolds reported that Olympic Ambulance plans to transition personnel to 12-hour shifts beginning in November, moving away from the current 24-hour shift model to better align resources with periods of higher demand. Olympic Ambulance is also working with regional partners on a potential blood-product transport system and has offered assistance transporting products to and from hospitals as needed. Staff are preparing for the anticipated opening of crisis triage services and are receiving training on documentation and alternative destinations.

Fire & Regional Updates



SKFR-Chief Jeff Faucett

Chief Jeff Faucett reported on a recent demonstration of a commercial first-responder drone program. The drones can provide rapid incident awareness, carry payloads such as flotation devices and AEDs, and use high-resolution and infrared cameras. The Board discussed the potential for countywide deployment, including multiple drones, significant annual funding, personnel, and operational considerations. Fire agencies will continue evaluating options.

Discussion/ Action Items v

A. Protocol Adoption and Implementation Update

Dr. Hoffman reported that the Northwest Region base protocols are complete, with county-specific versions incorporating County Operating Procedures (COPs) and policies. The behavioral health policy is the final COP needed for the Kitsap protocol insert.

Protocol testing is being developed for each certification level, including separate tests for personnel already protocol-tested in the region and a more comprehensive examination for personnel new to the Northwest Region.

B. ITA Transport Meeting-Dr. Hoffman

Dr. Hoffman reviewed the current behavioral health policy revision. The revision adds definitions of decision-making capacity and family-initiated treatment and clarifies behavioral health patient categories based on decision-making capacity and on-scene circumstances.

The Board discussed the distinction between patients with decision-making capacity who voluntarily request assistance or transport and patients with diminished capacity or circumstances requiring consideration of restraint or involuntary care. The policy reflects the least-restrictive approach and clarifies EMS responsibilities. The Board discussed whether to adopt the policy immediately or defer action until it could further discuss the policy with law enforcement, Kitsap mental health partners, and Medical Officers. The Board agreed to table the policy for further review. Dr. Hoffman will continue discussions with the Medical Officers and at the upcoming collaborative meeting regarding involuntary care. The Kitsap-specific protocols will not be released until this work is complete.

Chief Kenneth Dickinson requested a copy of the policy for review. Dr. Hoffman agreed to provide it.

C. 2027 Budget Process-Chair Jim Gillard

Chair Gillard reported that the 2027 budget is being developed and that a draft was not yet ready for presentation. The intent is to avoid a significant overall budget increase. Current assumptions include about a 4% increase in



personnel costs, while training and administrative budgets are expected to remain relatively stable. The existing revenue formula will be maintained, with adjustments for call volume and personnel.

Chair Gillard will coordinate budget review meetings with Chief Hurguy, Danielle Mackelwich, and Tamarah. The goal is to finalize a draft during September and provide it to the Board approximately one week before the next meeting, so Board members have time to review it and consider adoption at the next meeting.

7. Good of the Order

7. Adjournment at 9:34 AM

The next meeting will be held on October 13, 2026

Respectfully submitted,

Danielle Mackelwich
Administrative Coordinator
Kitsap County EMS Council

Attendees:

Chief Jim Gillard-PFD
Dr. Hoffman-MPD
Danielle Mackelwich-KCEMS
Guy Earle-KCHD
Lora York-LifeFlight
Josh Herguy-KCEMS Treasurer
Chief Lagrandeur-NKFR
Brandon Myers-KCSO
Kenneth Dickinsin-KCSO
EMMA Kasemeier-SMMC
Vanessa Palensky-Airlift
Jack Reynolds-Olympic Ambulance
Chief Jeff Faucett-SKFR
Chief Pat McGanney-BFD