

Greene County Ambulance Review Study Meeting No. 7

Minutes Summary

Wednesday, June 11, 2025, 6:00 P.M.

Greene County 911 Center, 25 Volunteer Drive, Cairo, NY

Greene County EMS Evaluation Committee Membership, Ambulance Policy Group, EMT's, Paramedics, Greene County Legislature, Media, Staff, Members of the Public:

Gerard Laird, Davia Montie, George June, Nadine Myrdycz, Mark Evans, Sean Hotaling, Jim DiPerna, Neil Kellegher, Shaun S. Groden, Patrick S. Linger, Matthew Luvera, Harry Lennon, Charles Martinez, Patricia Handel, James Thorington, Greg Davis, Patrick McCulloch, Sean Mahoney, Greg Cross, Thomas Hoyt, Dr. Craig Stanger, Laney Bruck, Michael Bulich, Jay Lucas, Daryl Legg, Sherry B. True, Michael Pirrone, Richard Hanse, Shawn Marriott, Michael Ryan, Roger Gilson, Paul Macko, Patricia McAneny, Pete Kusminsky, Raymond Ward, Debra Bogins, Travis Witbeck, Keith Valentine, Ariel Woolheater, Jennifer Moore-Warren, Brian Tumey, Tami Bone, Kevin Forbes, and Tanya Ernst

Synopsis:

Chairman Linger opened Ambulance Review Study Meeting No. 7 at 6:08 p.m. He then introduced Debra Bogins as the Town of Cairo's next Town Supervisor. Chairman Linger commented that the previous meeting went off-track and that he would like to see this one stay on track.

Mr. McCulloch stated that he believes the uncertainty of the May 14th meeting was necessary for the Town Supervisors to understand that they had failed to present an actual plan to the County, which is why they met twice since then.

Chairman Linger stated that he understood and expressed his desire to keep things moving forward and then turned the meeting over to Mr. Groden.

Mr. Groden briefly reviewed each of the meeting handouts and then stated that Greene County will declare EMS as an essential service at the full board meeting on June 18th. Mr. Groden then turned the meeting over to Patrick McCulloch, Catskill Town Supervisor, who spoke on behalf of the Town Supervisors.

Mr. McCulloch explained that the Town Supervisors met twice following the Ambulance Review Study Meeting. He then reviewed the Town Supervisors Proposal: Greene County EMS Deployment and Management Structure Plan and explained that the first phase for 2026 would begin with Greene County hiring an EMS Coordinator* to establish centralized purchasing, implement a new recruitment system, and assist current municipal and private EMS agencies with integration into the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system. Part of the Proposal included turning Greene EMS, Inc. into a County agency. The flycars would stay the same but would become County owned equipment; the Paramedics would become County employees. Mr. Mahoney explained that the EMS Coordinator* would not become the new boss of Greene EMS Paramedics. The leadership structure as it is now would remain the same for 2026.

Chairman Linger asked Mr. Evans if his Paramedics were part of a union. Mr. Evans responded that they do not have a union.

Legislator Bulich asked Mr. McCulloch if they would keep five flycars in rotation in the 2026 ambulance structure. Mr. McCulloch confirmed that they would.

Mr. Hotaling asked what doing this would change and if the process could be started without acquiring Greene EMS.

Mr. Mahoney explained that the Proposal would create the top tier of the new structure immediately which would establish the Paramedic system, payroll, and operational logistics of running the system. Building the system from the top down would allow the County to phase into EMS operations.

Chairman Linger stated that he doesn't want to hurt anything that is already in place that works which is Greene EMS.

Mr. McCulloch stated that the full system roll out would be in 2027. The County EMS would launch as follows: all EMS operations would be staffed and managed by County employees; areas with the most urgent staffing or response needs (like Greenville) would become pilot zones for County-run EMS deployment. This would inform full rollout and operational refinement. The EMS System deployment structure for 2027 would have one EMT driver and one paramedic in each of the ten ambulances with five in the valley, three on the mountain top, and two floaters. Mobile units would be used for surge coverage, special events, or system gaps. The Director of EMS Operations would manage the entire system and ensure state regulatory compliance, clinical quality, and strategic planning. The program benefits would be system-wide equality with uniform staffing, training, and service levels across municipalities; fiscal relief for Towns where the County assumes EMS operating costs, allowing Towns to reallocate budgets and improve clinical outcomes with 100 percent paramedic-level deployment ensuring that ALS care is available for all calls.

Legislator Luvera stated that not every call to a nursing home needs that level of service.

Chairman Linger stated that's a decision that should be made by the new EMS Coordinator*.

Legislator Lennon stated that all calls don't need a Paramedic. The Paramedic would have to go to the hospital which would tie them up for three hours.

Some audience members expressed concern about having enough Paramedics to staff every ambulance 24 hours a day and 7 days a week.

Mr. Hoyt explained that that's the reason for having a list of employees to call when the system begins to get depleted and that would be part of the system design.

Legislator Bulich stated that a different word should be used instead of "reallocate" because it makes it seem like the Towns will take the money and move it to other parts of their respective budgets. Mr. McCulloch responded that the Town of Catskill would not do that.

Mr. Groden asked if the County would be buying assets or if the Towns will be giving assets over to the County. Bonds and leases would come to the County.

Mr. Hotaling wanted to know the legality of having taxpayers repurchase ambulances and equipment that they had already purchased. Mr. Groden stated that each community would declare surplus which would give it a value. There was a discussion that some Towns would want compensation.

Mr. Evans stated that Greene EMS is exclusively taxpayer funded and that every vehicle and any cash would become Greene County's. He then stated that the reason Greene EMS attracts as many as they do is because of the flycar system. If the County is going to make a commitment to a consolidated system, the very first thing that needs to be done is to hire an EMS Director who can focus on training, purchasing, establishing a standard of care, and writing a plan that can be implemented in 2026 which would become permanent in 2027. Mr. Evans also stated that Greene EMS has a 403B plan that Greene EMS does not contribute to; there are about thirteen participants, and it has a half a million dollars in it. Mr. Evans expressed his belief that most of the full-time employees would be interested in making the transition to a County-run system.

Mr. DiPerna pointed out that the Towns have committed to head in the exact direction that Steve Near outlined on the whiteboard at the first working group meeting. He also expressed that it is positive that the Town Supervisors are in agreement.

Chairman Linger stated that if the County hires Greene EMS employees, the County would need to get a countywide CON in place. A member of the group stated that it would take two weeks to acquire a CON.

A Greenville Rescue Squad employee expressed concern regarding the care of Greenville residents.

Chairman Linger asked what the call volume was for Durham and Greenville to which Mr. Marriott responded that it was just over a thousand. Chairman Linger stated that he believes there would be at least one ambulance in that area. The EMS Coordinator* would decide the allocation of resources.

Greenville Rescue Squad then questioned whether there would be an additional cost to the taxpayers of Greenville and Durham to build or buy another station.

Legislator Davis responded that Greenville doesn't have a station and that the paramedics don't have a station either but are there when needed.

Mr. Mahoney stated that the Town Supervisors also recognize that Ravena Rescue Squad provides a real and valuable service to the Town of New Baltimore and stated that there may still be a contract with them while the transition takes place or in the future.

Mr. Groden then asked for confirmation that the New Baltimore Supervisor was at the meetings which was confirmed.

Chairman Linger stated that the reason for going to this type of a service is to make sure that everybody has the same or better service.

Mr. DiPerna stated that logistics are fairly easy to figure out by creating anchor points for each ambulance in order to maintain a 15-minute response time.

Mr. Groden asked Neal Kellegher to describe the CAD system function.

Mr. Kellegher explained that there are two products that could go into the ambulances. One is a cloud-based Android or IOS system mobility product. The other is Windows and works with a Windows Surface Pro or a RhinoTab. When the rigs are logged into the CAD system, the GPS of that computer is broadcast through the network to the servers at 25 Volunteer Drive. The County knows where the units are at any given time regardless of the platform. Windham, Ashland, and Greene EMS already have the CAD. The CAD would also offer proximity dispatching which means the closest car. Mr. Kellegher stated that Dispatch currently moves ambulances based on call volume at that particular minute and it has nothing to do with GPS or the CAD.

Mr. Groden stated that Greene EMS, Windham, and Ashland are equipped with the CAD system and have purchased the equipment; the County has purchased the software.

Legislator Bulich asked what the price of the CAD system is. An audience member responded that it's \$5,600 per rig.

Mr. Marriott mentioned that the CAD system would provide location data in the event of a dangerous and combative patient.

Mr. Mahoney discussed that when there is a last man standing on the mountain, the Town calls in second crews. The CAD system would allow everybody that has access to the system to see where the problems are in times of high demand.

Mr. Groden discussed the onboarding process for 110 employees which would be very systematic over the course of a number of weeks with each employee getting civil service status; all credentials would be checked, payroll would be set up as well as shifts, cycles, platoons, etc. Once that's all set, the County would pick a date for implementation. There are three unions all represented by the same union organization which would make assimilation easier than if there were three different unions. The majority of employees would end up being unionized. Management positions would be negotiated up front. The transitionary period would take months before going live.

Chairman Linger stated that, due to the length of time to implement a countywide system, he would prefer to have an EMS Coordinator* on staff this year to begin the procurement process portion. He asked if it would be easier to transition if Greene EMS hires an EMS Coordinator* which would be reflected in an amended Greene EMS contract.

Legislator Luvera asked, "Don't we have an EMS Coordinator already in Sean Hotaling?"

Mr. Groden stated that Mr. Hotaling's position is part-time. He then asked about the agenda for July which would include job descriptions. Mr. Mahoney jokingly stated that Mr. Groden could introduce the new County EMS Coordinator*.

Chairman Linger stated that he feels more comfortable after this meeting and believes that it is headed in the right direction. He expressed his appreciation to the Town Supervisors for taking the time to develop a plan.

Attendees also expressed that they felt it was a productive meeting.

The meeting ended at 7:36 p.m.

*The correct terminology is EMS Executive Director