

Northwoods Emergency Medical Services District

Special Board Meeting

Wednesday, August 6, 2025, 8:30 AM

Presque Isle Community Center

A quorum of Town Board members from each of the four member Towns may be present at this meeting. No official Town Board action will be taken by these members during their attendance at this meeting.

1. The Meeting was called to order by Phil Harris at 8:30 am and he verified that the Agenda had been posted appropriately. Those in attendance were:
 - Board: Phil Harris, John Hanson, Steve Herzberg, and Daniell Wahlgren
 - EMS Command Staff: Chief Jason Joling
 - Others in the audience and online: Cathy Logan-Weber; Corky Curtis; Al Eschenbauch; Mike Fraley; and Julie SchimmelmanMotion by John Hanson, second by Steve Herzberg to approve the Agenda as posted. Voice vote: All ayes, motion carried.
2. Motion by Steve Herzberg, second by John Hanson to approve the Minutes from the Board meeting on 4/29/25. Voice vote: All ayes, motion carried.
3. Report from the President:
 - a. Phil Harris expressed appreciation and compliments to the Chief and Deputy Chief, as well as the staff crews about how well they are doing. The “out-the-door” time is amazing and he hears stories positive feedback from the citizens about how the EMS services are saving lives. The compassion and care of the staff is fantastic, along with the support from the taxpayers, the Town Boards, and many other people that have worked to bring the concept of the EMS District to fruition.
 - b. He feels that the Budget is solvent for this year, and additional discussions will continue on that later.
4. Report from the Chief:
 - a. Jason Joling stated that he sent out the monthly report yesterday, which included some of the following numbers and statistics:
 - i. 244 incidents to the end of July (249 through August 1st).
 - ii. All calls have had a Paramedic on the call.
 - iii. Turn out time (time from the page to the time the ambulance is en route) is 1.26 minutes.
 - iv. Response to the scene is just under 14 minutes.
 - v. Of the 44 responses in July, 30 were billed for reimbursement / payment.
 - vi. Items not billed include: those who need assistance being lifted off the floor; law enforcement calls for a patient evaluation, patient refusals, etc.
 - vii. About 70% of the calls were billed at the ALS level.
 - viii. Mutual Aid was provided to other ambulance services two times.

- b. Mike Fraley (part-time Paramedic) helped to secure a grant to assist with the purchase of a pediatric restraint system for the ambulance.
- c. CPR training and other staff training continues. An application was submitted to the State EMS Office, to become a licensed EMS Training Center.
- d. They have added a few more PRN staff to the Roster.
- e. The Service received a Thank you card from one of their patients.
- f. Cathy asked for clarification on the upcoming EMS class. Jason clarified that it would be an “initial” class for the Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) level.

5. Report from the Operations Liaison:

- a. Steve Herzberg stated that he is in constant contact with the Chief / Deputy Chief, regarding the daily operations of the District.
- b. Steve reiterated how he is also very proud of the accomplishments of the District, since its inception, to include:
 - i. The District has an outstanding workforce, with highly qualified individuals.
 - ii. The culture is very positive and stable, and the staff like their jobs.
 - iii. Very good response times from the time of the page to arrival at the scene.
- c. Steve stated that he is reviewing protocols and treatment plans, as well as reimbursements from the various payors—and how National trends may affect the billing / income.
- d. Steve also mentioned the unseen work being performed by the Chief and Deputy Chief.

6. Report from the Treasurer:

- a. John Hanson stated that an accounting firm has been contacted, and they have agreed to offer assistance to the Leadership class. They should be able to assist with the Quickbooks software programing and can assist with quarterly and annual reporting.
- b. Steve asked about the current amount of funds in the bank account, and when the next payments from the Towns were due. Phil responded that the Bylaws state that the Town payments are due August 31st.

7. New Business:

- a. Payment for First Responder stipends. Chief Joling calculated that the current total due to the Towns (collectively) is \$6,510. The process is that the District should send each Town the amount that has been calculated, and then the Town should use the payment to fund the First Responders that participated in the emergency call.

Motion by Steve Herzberg, second by John Hanson to issue the stipend checks to the individual Towns—with the clarification that the one check should go to the Manitowish Waters Fire Department, instead of to the Town of Manitowish Waters. Voice vote: All ayes, motion carried.

Motion by Phil Harris, second by Steve Herzberg that in the future, the stipend checks should go out to the Towns within 14 days of the end of each quarter. Voice vote: All ayes, motion carried.

- b. Discussion occurred regarding the mileage payments for the Ambulance Lease agreements. A total of \$42,646.00 in payments are due to the Towns for the use of the Ambulances. Phil Harris reviewed the agreement of the Board to pay for the use of the Ambulance at a rate of \$12.00 per loaded mile. Phil read off the amounts that are currently due to each of the towns. John Hanson brought up the following items:
 - i. Consider an option to wait until the end of the year to make the payment.
 - ii. Should the titles of the vehicles being used by the District, be transferred to the District name?

Additional discussion occurred regarding the intent of the District to purchase their own ambulances at some point in the future. At least two vehicles would be needed—with the understanding that the current Town ambulances could still potentially be utilized when there are 3 or 4 emergency calls occurring at the same time. It was noted that a new ambulance with a power cot currently costs around \$375,000.

Motion by Steve Herzberg, second by Daniell Wahlgren to pay the amounts that are due to each of the individual Towns. Voice vote: All ayes, motion carried.

Motion by Steve Herzberg, second by John Hanson that in the future, the stipend checks should go out to the Towns within 14 days of the end of each quarter. Voice vote: All ayes, motion carried.

- 8. Discussion on the Insurance coverage for the Ambulances. Phil shared that the Towns are currently insuring the ambulances, however, the intent was that the District insure the vehicles. There are a number of items to be considered, such as current value, replacement value, and who is listed in the policy. Steve Herzberg asked if the District could obtain the current policies that the Towns have for the ambulance, in order to determine their values. It was also suggested that the names of the paid staff and the volunteer staff be given to each of the Towns, so that they could be added as an additional insured.
- 9. Steve Herzberg stated that the Grant Committee will be meeting today, after this current meeting. It was noted that the Grant Committee would be a public meeting, so an agenda would need to be noticed, in order to be compliant. Since the topic was on the NEMSD Board agenda, the decision was made to discuss the topic now. Steve wanted to clarify that the smaller grants to be obtained would not need to go through the Committee, but they could be reviewed by Steve and the Chief / Deputy Chief. Any larger Grant that would expand or change the operations or direction of the District would need to go to the Committee to be vetted, and then sent to the Board for review and approval. John Hanson gave an update of the grants that had been applied for. He also stated that he was in contact with a person that recently moved to the area, that has experience in grant writing that may be interested in assisting the District. Additional discussion and questions from the audience occurred as to ideas for the approval process of vetting and applying for grants.
- 10. Motion by Steve Herzberg, second by Phil Harris that “Grants which are consistent with, and enhance the operations already approved by the NEMSD Board will be vetted by the Operations

Liaison, and if appropriate to the current scope operations will be approved to apply for. Grants that affect, change, or expand the current mission will be vetted by the Grants Committee, and when appropriate will be sent to the Board for discussion and a vote.” Voice vote: All ayes, motion carried.

11. Phil Harris read Article 8: Expenditures and Budget from the current NEMSD Bylaws, in which he made several points:

- a. There should be two equal payments throughout the year, made from the Towns to NEMSD, based upon the budget that was ratified by the Board.
- b. The first payment from each Town was already made in February, 2025.
- c. The second payment is coming due, and will need to be paid by August 31st.

Motion by Steve Herzberg, second by Daniell Wahlgren for the NEMSD President to send a letter to the Towns reminding them of the obligation to pay the second equal/half payment to Northwoods EMS District by August 31, 2025. Discussion occurred on the need for a motion to remind the Towns to make the second payment, since it has already been approved in last year’s Budget process. Consensus was that a vote should take place. Voice vote: All ayes, motion carried.

12. Discussion of possible station location sites. The committee is currently made up of the four Town representatives to the Board, plus a clarification that Jim Galloway, Corky Curtis, and Chief Joling will also be on that committee. The meetings will be public, and anyone that is interested is welcome to attend the future meetings. Different property locations were mentioned during the discussion, and all of the options will be brought to the Committee for their review.

13. 2026 Budget discussion. The Budget committee is made up of the four NEMSD Board members, plus the Chief. Other individuals may be invited to assist with the budget process as needed, but they would not vote as a committee member. John Hanson read through the current budget policy that was adopted by the Board at a previous meeting. It was acknowledged that the individual board members have been working with Chief Joling during this time period on the Budget, though an official committee meeting did not occur by the August 1st date mentioned in the policy. A number of ideas were discussed, as to the process of working on the proposed 2026 Budget. It was decided that there will be a Special Board meeting scheduled for next Tuesday, August 12, 2025 at 8:30 am, to discuss the 2026 Budget.

14. A final word was given that people are looking at the success of NEMSD, and are asking questions about the implementation and operations of the District Ambulance—so that those agencies / entities can implement some of the same processes and procedures in their area(s).

15. The Board meeting was then adjourned by the President at 10:00 am.