

# 20220520 Labor Committee Meeting Minutes (draft)

Friday, May 20, 2022 8:30 AM

**Meeting Date:** 5/20/2022 8:30 AM

**Location:** <https://mainestate.zoom.us/j/86377534552>

**Link to Outlook Item:** [click here](#)

**Invitation Message**

**Participants**

## Agenda

1. ~~Call to Order~~ Meeting declared by Joe Kellner

2. Maine EMS Mission Statement

“The mission of Maine EMS is to promote and provide for a comprehensive and effective Emergency Medical Services system to ensure optimum patient care with standards for all providers. All members of this Committee should strive to promote the core values of excellence, support, collaboration, and integrity. In serving on this Committee, we commit to serve the respective providers, communities, and residents of the jurisdictions that we represent.”

3. Attendance

- [Davis, Darren W](#) (Meeting Organizer - Staff - Non/voting)
- [Aiden Koplovsky \(aikoplovsk@gmail.com\)](#)
- [Brian Chamberlin](#)
- [Joe Brichetto \(jbrichetto894@gmail.com\)](#)
- [Joseph Kellner](#)
- [Matthew Quinn \(matthew.quinn141@gmail.com\)](#)
- [Matthew Sholl](#)
- [Rick Petrie](#)
- [Stephen Smith](#)
- [Tim Beals](#)

Do not have a quorum

### Non-Members

Chase Labbe

Christopher Azevedo, *Maine EMS Staff*

Sam Hurley, *Director of Maine EMS*

Katelyn Damon

Melissa Adams, *Maine EMS Staff*

Jason Oko, *Maine EMS Staff*

Polly Wood (Joined at 09:04)

4. Minutes: Minutes from prior meeting not yet completed.

**Note Recording was paused until this point**

5. Public Comment: None

6. Modifications to the Agenda: None

## 7. Old Business

### 1. Office Updates - Director Hurley available for questions

- a. Rick Petrie Can you provide an update on the survey and focus groups that have been lingering out there
  - i. The UMaine team has been provided a copy of the workforce survey this committee undertook. They have found the results interesting and are working to analyze the text responses and based upon the results will fine tune the focus groups.
- b. The waiver process will be available today, Friday May 20, 2022

### 2. Labor Survey

Matthew Quinn to report on survey review

## 8. New Business

Hurley, J Sam: I would actually defer to Darren on that I know that Darren and I met with Dr sword and with Andrea from the University of Maine and I know Darren has been in touch with them, since then. But I know that they were re prioritizing that to put at the top of their pile. Darren do you have an update, I know you sent an email to Andrea recently, so do you have a better update.

Davis, Darren W: They are working to re prioritize their workload, so that they can get to this closer to the front of the things that need to be done. I've also provided them with the results of the surveys that we have conducted as the Labor committee. They thought that would be of interest to them and help them define exactly how they want to proceed with these work groups, whether it's going to be kind of an open thing or if they're going to be targeting specific subsets of our workforce. So they are currently reviewing all of that. I've had a couple communications back and forth answering some questions. I think one of the things that they are trying to do is analyze the textual responses and so that they can quantify that information, which is something that we really don't have the tools to do here at Maine EMS.

Hurley, J Sam: Rick. What we will commit to do is pushing them to get an updated timeline by your next meeting.

Rick Petrie: What are we able to do different. I guess that would be my question. Because we've been asking for an updated timeline for many, many, many months. And at this point I don't know that this will be productive. We've been looking for a timeline, I feel like we're in the middle of a shell game. And it's really unfortunate. For instance I don't know when, Darren when did you meet with them?

Davis, Darren W: It was. I think it was Monday May 9th.

Rick Petrie: Alright, so about 11 or 12 days ago.

Davis, Darren W: Yes.

Rick Petrie: I don't know what we can do different, this is just become an exercise in futility so I guess I'm just putting out there, looking to Sam and Darren and any other members of the committee about is there anything else that we can do to make progress on this critically important issue.

Matthew Quinn: Well don't everybody speak up at once. I share your frustration Rick. You know that this is a issue that's near and dear to my heart and we need to somehow reevaluate, this board or this subcommittee, what we're doing and whether or not we are getting the support that we need, and maybe an updated direction from the board of directors, because we cannot continue to function the way that we are. And one of the ideas, comments I heard from a well-respected provider that I know was the. The and i'm finding it here with the lack of quorums is shifting to maybe a workshop style format. We are continually handcuffed by this ability to not make decisions to take votes because we don't have a quorum yet we still have work that needs to be done, we can't think of it today. Where we're down to nine members and we can't make a decision on how we're going to vote for or come up with a plan to increase membership. We can't make decisions on the path of what the data that we've gotten back and how to do it because we don't have the ability to vote. It is right now, it is futile and I don't know, I was very frustrated. I rewatched the video from the last meeting. Listen to the comments and direction from the leaders of our system and you talk about beat down. I'm it, where there, if Augusta doesn't want to support us I don't know how we move forward.

Davis, Darren W: You know Matt. I certainly understand your frustration, but I'm not sure it's a fair statement to say that Augusta doesn't want to support you, you know we are doing everything that we can to support the decisions and the actions that are decided upon by this committee and, in fact, I would point out that there are more Maine EMS staff members here than there are committee members today.

Matthew Quinn: Darren, I don't hold you or I don't, when I make those statements I'm not saying that it is you personally.

I'm not saying that it is necessarily any employee of Maine EMS personally that is doing that. However, whether it is due to other priorities in Augusta, whether it is due to, mindsets or agendas of leadership that are placing other issues at a higher priority, no matter what regardless, it is not getting done. I don't, like I said I'm not picking on you, personally, I know you are working very hard for Maine EMS, however, if your superiors say work on this today or do this or get this done and we'll get the labor committee meeting minutes out 20 minutes before the meeting starts. We have members who thought that today's meeting was cancelled, things like that. It's still a failure and it's not necessarily you personally I know, just like the rest of the system, you get up to go to work in the morning and you do want to do the best job that you can that you believe you can do. I'm not necessarily suggesting that it's insidious or that it is a lack of effort at all, but it is still not there. There was still the support is not there for what, for whatever reason and that's coming out in that frustration.

Melissa Adams: I may be able to give a positive update.

Joe Kellner: By all means go for it.

Melissa Adams: The board approved the waiver for continuing education to reenter with the provisional two year license and Jason I had an opportunity to work on that application earlier this week, so that should become available later today, I believe. We were just testing the correspondence processes for that, but we should have that available later today.

Joe Kellner: That's excellent. You think that, you know we talked about that communication going out today and we think that's still on the horizon, kind of a closer to EMS week.

Hurley, J Sam: It's in the works.

Joe Kellner: Nice, Nice.

Matthew Quinn: Good to see you guys back in the office, too, I appreciate that.

Melissa Adams: It's been a busy week. Trying to make the rounds, testing different services and then with the strategic planning stuff so we have lots of voicemails if you hear this week that nobody was answering the phone that's somewhat true. But here now and returning those calls.

Matthew Quinn: Also Melissa and, as you know, because I was you know I shared my thoughts I was very glad to see you stop the delta and that you shared that was a nice thing to see, so I do appreciate that. I do want to, I don't want to leave that like what are we going to do, do we, how do we, how do we make a plan here and we've got to have direction, we've got to have honesty. We Either that, or we go to the board at some point either to public comment or whatever, and say hey we're floundering. And I don't know, I mean, I want to fix this as much as anybody and you know, we gotta, we need better direction, I think, at this point as to what specifically what we can do to put them the ship around.

Joe Kellner: I don't think this committee is going to do it. We've gone round and round for two years, I mean. Honestly, I saw this on my agenda this morning for things to do and I don't know we're working toward. You know the I think the waiver was good, we got that done. I think everybody agrees there's a problem. I think the survey information is good, I think it's worth reviewing that the results weren't good, but the information, having the information is good. That provide some insight I don't know what practically this Committee does to change the workforce issue and I've reflected a lot on. I think that we have identified the root causes. You know, we kind of know what they are, if this committee has ideas about policy, you know that's what the board exists for is to implement policy. If this committee has ideas about policy that would improve this, I think that let's work toward, but this committee has no strategic direction anymore. I think Matt's, and Darren as well you know, your insight is meaningful that people aren't attending and people don't attend things they don't see value in. So either we need to turn this around and figure out what we're doing to add value or change the system or do something else with our time. I was very pleased, a week ago today coming out of strategic planning with safe tech at the conversation that occurred there. I think there's positive movement, I think that the blue-ribbon Commission that's been formed has the opportunity to make meaningful change. I don't know what this Committee does, and maybe others have ideas, but I am struggling to see what the future value is. I don't want to sit around the table and complain and rehash the issues I guess. Go ahead Rick.

Rick Petrie: I would agree, I think it's unfortunate that we're at this point, but I would agree that we're spinning our wheels. It's unfortunate that we couldn't have developed a more collaborative relationship to come up with some meaningful recommendations on the single most important issue facing EMS in the State of Maine right now and I, so I would suggest that we go back to the board and say that we're at a standstill and at this point there's probably not a lot of purpose having this committee meet. I would suggest that we release the survey in its entirety to the Board of EMS and to the strategic planning group as well, maybe they can use that as well to formulate some ideas. But yeah, at this

point, I think meeting for the purpose of meeting and complaining about the fact that we're not able to get anything done is probably a better utilization of all of our time. So, and did I miss the announcement for this meeting.

Matthew Quinn: The announcement was sent immediately after the last meeting and we did not get a reminder from that point.

Davis, Darren W: The meeting date was established during the last meeting. Invites were sent after that meeting and a reminder was sent this morning, I believe that 8:00 am.

Rick Petrie: Oh yeah there's, right there 801. So we can't take a vote. But, you know that's my recommendation. Meeting just for the purpose of meeting and spinning our wheels is a waste of our time and in a time when we can ill afford to throw away time, so thank you, Joe.

Melissa Adams: I apologize I can't seem to find it or bring up right now, and maybe somebody else can, but there was a one point, there was like a list of five goals of this committee and it went to the board, and it was approved. Sorry. Before you dissolve can we take a look at that and see if we've checked those things off. I know some of them, you have. Like I don't see that on minutes anymore those five items.

Joe Kellner: Yeah, let me see what I can dig up here. Darren if you have those somewhere, by all means to. I remember going through that process.

Davis, Darren W: Yeah I'm looking for them.

Joe Kellner: While we're on that point and Mel that's great point, we'll move on to Matt and then see if we can dig that up.

Matthew Quinn: If we're actually going to dissolve, we need to have another meeting, we need to impore for the remaining nine members of the board to make that meeting. To do that, I think today would be like the last talking day, so to speak, of what are we going to do today, I agree with you, I don't think we can you know, we obviously can't vote to dissolve today. The other thing is you know I'd love to hear Aiden's take on this. I know he sits in the corner and listens very well. He's a valued Member and then Katelyn as a board member maybe she has some insight into this as well. I would really like to hear what you guys think.

Joe Kellner: Aiden or Katelyn did you have any thoughts or input.

Matthew Quinn: I don't mean to put you guys on the spot, and I just, I value our opinions.

Aiden Koplovsky: I apologize, I am at work today an in the middle of another conversation. Matt do you mind just rephrasing exactly what you're looking for input on.

Matthew Quinn: Just the direction of the board. Where we're going? What has occurred. Do you agree that we are stagnated? Do we have anything that we can bring forward on really I guess just your thoughts and your feelings about where we are and where we're going to move forward.

Aiden Koplovsky: Yeah you know I, I agree with a lot of the frustrations of those who shared and I put a lot of thought into this, as you and I have talked offline. I think that it would be a real shame and disappointment for this group to dissolve and make the recommendation that we can't make any progress forward because I think that's saying that we are devaluing the importance of the issue of our workforce crisis, so I think that maybe we need some recentering and some restructuring of what this committee looks like whether it's finding new membership or members that have the time to devote to coming up with some ideas, as well as kind of coming up with what the mission of this group is and what we can and can't do. As Sam pointed out before it's really hard for us to take ideas and move those ideas forward if they're not refined concepts and refined asks and actions right, we need specific asks that that are actionable and I think that there are some things that we can start to identify and take action on. But I think that this committee kind of need some restructuring and some recentering so that we can find a path to move those forward. If we cannot find the membership to really put some time commitment to this issue, you know I don't think we should waste everybody's time and continue to have meetings, but I would like to at least try, because this is an important problem and I don't want to give up on it.

Joe Kellner: Thanks Aiden, Katelyn?

Katelyn Damon (she/ her): I'm not sure I'm really qualified to say too much, I just have been trying to listen to, as a new board member, understand kind of what the role of the committee is so I'm you know, still learning. But I have appreciated these meetings a lot and all the time and effort that everybody's put into this issue. You know, coming from a very rural area of the state and working with only volunteers, you know we have significant issues, as I know that

everybody else does. So I'm not sure that disbanding is right, and I think Aiden makes some really good points about recentering the committee and coming up with some really concrete ideas of you know, even if it's just a really small thing, like the waiver. I think that added some good momentum to things so that's, I guess, where I stand.

Joe Kellner: Thank you. Sam.

Hurley, J Sam: So I'm trying to look at the participants to see who participated. Joe I think you were the only one at that meeting, but the meeting with the strategic planning meeting with John I think was really good in the beginning, where he engaged everyone to think creatively and I would love to I would love to get this committee to kind of brainstorm just like John requested the group to brainstorm to kind of put out ideas that you know, maybe farfetched and those types of things. I would love to I know it was mentioned by Matt about you know workshoping some of these things, and you know, maybe less committee esque and more focused on what kind of ideas can come up with, and I think this was brought up early in the early in this committee is potentially engaging some other members of our EMS community to see if they're interested, you know I know that we have tried to bring people on to this committee for months, but maybe there are some other people who may be interested in joining that we traditionally didn't think of. So I don't know, I'm not necessarily a big fan of disbanding the committee, but at the same time, I want to make sure the committee has direction and a pathway forward because I don't want it to just sit and kind of fester.

Joe Kellner: So a couple of thoughts on that. I will note that Darren is sharing the five points, five plus list we'll call it. Is I listen to this, I have a thought, a recommendation, perhaps and I wonder if we do a special session if John Beck now would be willing, with this committee and in that session is part one, share the survey results, as we planned to do today. The kind of present the synthesize themes and then give this committee, a chance to share some of the themes from our good discussion over the time we've met with John and then from there, I think what I would suggest is not necessarily disbanding but suspending. We do expect to have a relatively quick turnaround on a strategic plan. The blue ribbon Commission should be meeting starting fairly soon, and I think the value to that is this committee could then reconvene, review the recommendations out of those pieces and then work toward implementation suggestions and a smaller group, I think, right now, you know where we all want to solve the same problem, and I think if we knew how to solve the problem and have that silver bullet we'd do it tomorrow, well this afternoon actually. But I think that you know, I don't think we've been able to either identify a specific issue that we can change that we haven't already addressed or have the influence to be able to do so at the committee level. So anyway, I go back to that idea and I wonder what people think about that, and Sam I'd wonder on your input if John will be willing to do it, but have a special session with safe tech with this committee and then suspend until the report comes out. What are folks thoughts on that?

Hurley, J Sam: I think he would be able to do it.

Rick Petrie: Sounds like a great idea.

Aiden Koplovsky: I would be in favor of it as well.

Matthew Quinn: I would concur.

Joe Kellner: Let's take a peek at the goals that that Darren is a sharing. And Sam if you don't mind taking that as an action item to check in with John and hopefully we can we can schedule that and get engagement and hopefully we get the whole committee here for that, because I think that would be a really important and valuable session. I really appreciate his facilitation style and his openness.

- Step one the blue ribbon Commission check.
- supplemental reimbursement. I'm going to say we have not accomplished that yet.
- A comprehensive recruitment retention campaign funding. That I'm going to say we haven't accomplished.
- EMS representation on the Bureau of Labor workforce Development Committee has that happened this area I feel like there's the EMS representation there, but it could be wrong, Sam do you know.

Hurley, J Sam: We have reached out to Commissioner Sauschuck and he reached out to the governor's office. I'm not sure that there's representation. I don't know exactly who's on that committee to be candid with you. But I know that it was taken to the governor's office because that's where those persons are appointed. And I haven't heard follow up about them, and I can certainly circle back with the commissioner but the day y'all asked me to do that I literally went to the commissioner's office and asked.

Joe Kellner: Okay, so we'll give a half check to that one.

- Forming a subcommittee to work on the needs assessment and cost assessment required by 1258, that is, the financial

health Committee which I would very much welcome more participation in and anybody who would like to chair that committee, I would also welcome that just got to throw that out there subtly.

- The workforce crisis resolution was adopted by the board and was circulated, I believe.

Joe Kellner: So I think we kind of have four out of six. The supplemental reimbursement and funding the development of recruitment and retention campaign. Maybe my glass is half empty, on a foggy Friday morning. I'm not sure this committee is in a position to advocate for that at the moment. I think more from that is going to come out as part of 1258, relating to number two Medicare and MaineCare reimbursement, etc. I think that's a matter of time, but it's certainly a critical piece, as far as funding the development of a comprehensive recruitment and retention campaign ...

Hurley, J Sam: I would love to speak to the recruitment and retention campaign. While this committee may not have you know, a budget to do that, or we have the Maine EMS office is strongly lobbying DHS and you know there is the education supplemental funding, then there's \$7 million right now being pumped into education to recruit people. We have a job, access to a job, or Live and Work in Maine, that we've never had access to before that is going to be used to recruit people nationally. So they paid for a national advertiser to recruit people to the State of Maine. And you can, if you type in EMS, all EMS jobs will show up. We just have to have employers list them. Maine EMS has sent out information about how employers could post jobs on that site. So for national recruitment, we have tried to make headway there you know, while this committee may not have been able to do it because of just the nature of the committee, it's not a fault, it's just the nature of the committee. Maine EMS, has been working on your behalf, and the behalf of the State to do those things, and as far as retention, we think that the waivers will hopefully help with retention. Additionally, the explorer program, Maine EMS found out yesterday, we will be adding a staff member paid for by DHHS to exclusively facilitate the explorer program in the State of Maine, you know as far as recruiting people and getting people involved in EMS. So those are things we are working on your behalf to make sure that we make headway.

Joe Kellner: I think that's a good update. The explorer program I'm really interested to see how that goes. I think that's a great pathway. Does this committee, could this committee add any value Sam helping to at least whiteboard some of the initiatives and how some of the money gets allocated and the function of the recruitment campaign, or do you think that it's kind of a done deal and handled.

Hurley, J Sam: So a lot of that is being handled by DHHS and Maine EMS doesn't really have authority or a hand in it. It's more of its being done for us. But when, if there are things that we do get to decide or have impact in, we certainly could bring that to the committee for input.

Joe Kellner: I think that would be good, and you know we can kind of meet ad hoc. As those things come up. I see we just lost Rick to. I think that we're in an okay place, I think that I really liked the idea, Sam if you can follow up with John and maybe work with Darren and Steve on scheduling a committee meeting and making sure we can have a pretty good showing of this committee. To talk through what we've done. Matt you know I'm putting on the spot here a little bit, but curious, I know you're planning to present on the survey today. Wondering if you'd be willing to take the lead on kind of presenting the themes when we do this with John.

Matthew Quinn: Yeah I'm sorry I couldn't get my stuff to work, Yeah, no, that's all the way okay with me. I will reach out and we can. I'm continuing to work on that. I was putting together a list of a more qualitative statements but.

Joe Kellner: Cool. I think that'd be good, and then you know we can have some good conversation, and then you know from there again we take a pause unless there's anything that comes up ad hoc until the strategic planning report is released, and then we comb it a heavy for action items that sound good to everybody. can't vote on it, but.

Matthew Quinn: Well, that was gonna be my suggestion. We're going good reconvene and try to get a quorum and hit that with an actual vote or we just ended just going to stop them out.

Joe Kellner: If it's the flavor of this committee we don't necessarily have to vote on it, I can mention it to Steve and we can suggest it to the board. You know Steve is the scheduler of meetings as the Chair, so we don't necessarily have to be formal about it, if you guys want to be formal and make sure we get everybody else's input we can do that too, when I any thoughts.

Matthew Quinn: I will defer to the leadership here that looks what is their best decisions. Which. We don't have much to.

Matthew Quinn: Let's reach out to Steve. He's the Chair of the board if Joe if you want to take care of that If he can cause with what we've come up with if he wants to. Maybe Darren can send him the recording of this video so that he can hear the points that have been made, and he can make an informed decision, and I will trust his judgment.

Joe Kellner: Excellent. Yeah I can do that too. All right well at that point, then I would personally selfishly love a bio break

before the board meeting. So I wouldn't mind calling this good unless anybody else has anything to come before the meeting today. We can't vote to adjourn so I guess we're stuck here. Kidding. I wish everybody a great day thanks for the time and the discussion. take care.

9. Action Items and Next Steps
10. Next Meeting Date and Time:
11. Adjourn at

## **Maine EMS Board**

### ***Workforce Development Committee***

#### ***Workforce Plan Ideas***

At the last Maine EMS Board meeting, the Board asked the workforce committee to come to them with a draft plan in relation to the workforce crisis. Below please find the actions we feel are a priority for the Board:

1. ~~Formally request the Legislature create a blue ribbon committee to study the delivery of EMS in Maine. This committee would supplement, not replace the Strategic planning process that the Board will begin in January. This Legislative Committee could tackle the hard issues that would be difficult for the Board to solve alone.~~
2. Request supplemental reimbursement for ambulance services to better cover costs associated with the delivery of EMS. Matching Medicare/MaineCare payments would be a good start. The underlying issue here is that CMS is doing a cost analysis, but those results won't be available until 2026. A certain percentage of the additional money would be allocated for First responder services.
3. Fund the development of a comprehensive recruitment and retention campaign that includes information about how to get involved in EMS as well as education for services on how to attract new EMS providers.
4. Establish EMS representation on the Bureau of labor Workforce development committee.
5. Form a sub-committee to begin developing the rules for a needs assessment process and the cost assessment as required in LD 1258.  
And...
6. Complete the workforce crisis Resolution as adopted by the MEMS Board and send to the Governor, every Legislator, and every major newspaper.