

**PINELLAS COUNTY
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**MEETING MINUTES
December 16, 2022**

The Pinellas County Emergency Medical Services Advisory Council met in Conference Room 130 at the EMS & Fire Administration, 12490 Ulmerton Road, Largo, FL 33774 at 10:00 A.M. on this date with the following members present:

Commissioner Julie Peluso, Independent Fire District Elected Official – Chair
Jorge Mercado, Citizen Representative (District 7) – Vice-Chair
Richard Schomp, Sunstar Paramedics - Secretary
Tina Ambrose, Citizen Representative (District 4)
Becca Tieder, Citizen Representative (District 5)
Mayor Woody Brown, Mayors' Council (Largo)
Mayor Dave Gattis, Mayors' Council (Belleair Beach)
Mayor Dan Saracki, Mayors' Council (Oldsmar)
Mayor Sandra Bradbury, Mayors' Council (Pinellas Park)
Gayle Guidash, Pinellas County Health Department
Chief Scott Young, Pinellas County Fire Chiefs' Association (Alternate)
Dr. Anthony Ottaviani, Pinellas County Osteopathic Medical Society
Jo Dee Nicosia, National Alliance on Mental Illness
Dr. Eric Carver, St. Petersburg College
Chief Anthony Tedesco, City of Clearwater Fire Chief (Alternate)
Chief Terry Tokarz, EMS Coordinator
Chief Ian Womack, City of St. Petersburg Fire Chief
Capt. Michael Leiner, Pinellas County Sheriff's Office

Absent:

Nancy Hopkins, Emergency Nurses' Association West Coast Florida Chapter
Karen Mullins, Citizen Representative (District 1)
Larri Gerson, Citizen Representative (District 2)
Jeri Reed, Citizen Representative (District 3)
Ty Dougherty, Citizen Representative (District 6)

Staff Present:

Cody Ward, County Attorney's Office
Dr. Angus Jameson, Medical Director
Dr. Donna Dooley, Associate Medical Director
Dr. Andrew Kropp, Associate Medical Director
Dr. Andrew Smith, Associate Medical Director
James Fogarty, Bureau Director, Safety and Emergency Services
Jodie Sechler, Financial Services
Pam Bell, Financial Services
Craig Hare, Director, EMS & Fire Administration
Greg Woodrum, EMS & Fire Administration
Matt Caravona, EMS & Fire Administration
Mark Eggers, EMS & Fire Administration
Chris Jordan, EMS & Fire Administration

Also Present:

Chaplain Will Murphy, Largo Fire Rescue
Jeremy Tinter, Sunstar Paramedics (Alternate)
Jazmin Soloman, Sunstar Paramedics
Doug Zimmerman, EMS Coordinator (Alternate)
Chief Thomas Kras, City of St. Petersburg Fire Chief (Alternate)
Kelly Cisarik, Citizen

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Commissioner Julie Peluso called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M. Roll call was taken, and Greg Woodrum confirmed that a quorum was met. There were 18 voting members in attendance.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

INVOCATION

Invocation by Chaplain Will Murphy, Largo Fire Rescue. Later in the meeting, Chaplain Murphy shared information about the recent passing of Leroy Funderburk, Sunstar Shift Commander, and asked for a moment of silence in his honor.

MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 16, 2022 MEETING - APPROVED

Upon presentation by Commissioner Peluso, a motion was made by Jorge Mercado, seconded by Mayor Woody Brown and approved unanimously, that the minutes of the September 16, 2022 meeting be approved.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Commissioner Peluso called for citizens wishing to be heard, and Kelly Cisarek provided commentary on revisions to the State Fire Code.

EMSAC BYLAWS SECTION 3.1 MEMBERSHIP CHANGE - APPROVED

Craig Hare provided an overview of the proposed bylaws membership change by removing the Pinellas County Medical Association and adding a mental health professional or similar representative.

Following discussion, a motion was made by Becca Tieder, seconded by Dr. Anthony Ottaviani and approved unanimously, that the EMSAC Bylaws Section 3.1 Membership language change to include "a mental health professional or similar representative" be approved.

Upon request by Craig Hare, Commissioner Peluso deviated from the agenda and indicated that Jodie Sechler and Pam Bell will present the Ambulance Billing Compliance Update at this time.

AMBULANCE BILLING COMPLIANCE UPDATE

Jodie Sechler, Financial Services Director, and Pam Bell, Regulatory Compliance Manager, referred to a PowerPoint titled *EMS Financial Services Overview* and presented information on the following topics:

- Ambulance Billing Revenues: Ambulance Program Revenues, Revenue Increase Drivers.
- EMS Ad Valorem Revenues: First Responder Program Revenues, Revenue Increase Drivers, Active Financial Management.
- EMS Ad Valorem Revenues: EMS Millage Rate History – 20 Years.
- EMS System Enhancements: Continual System Assessment.
- FY23 EMS Fund Budget: Ambulance Contract, First Responder Contracts, Program Support Costs.
- Ambulance Billing Initiatives: Outsourcing.

- Strategically Refocusing Resources: Implementation, Process Improvements.
- Ambulance Billing Challenges: Prior Authorization, Ambulance Service Misconceptions, Reduction in Reimbursement, Regulatory Impacts, No Surprises Act.
- Patient Satisfaction Surveys.

Jim Fogarty and Craig Hare expressed thanks to Ms. Sechler, Ms. Bell, and their team for their work behind the scenes. Ms. Sechler shared information on staff promotions.

BLS AMBULANCE UTILIZATION REVIEW

Craig Hare presented an update regarding the effectiveness of BLS Ambulance Utilization for 9-1-1 calls and provided statistical information regarding quality of customer satisfaction rates, call and transport volumes, Fire Department (FD) ride-ins, and staffing. Discussion ensued relating to the BLS Ambulance Utilization Review process for priority calls during peak periods, ambulance deployment, and hospital bed delays.

EMS DIRECTOR REPORT

Craig Hare presented an EMS operations report and briefed the members on the following topics:

- System Operations
 - Hexagon CAD project is making good progress, and server data population is underway, noting completion remains 18 to 24 months away. PRIME (Pinellas Regional Information Management Enterprise) Board is handling the Public Safety information systems upgrade, and membership includes Safety & Emergency Services, countywide Fire Rescue, local law enforcement agencies, and the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office. ImageTrend Implementation Team is working to have the system go-live by mid-2023. Plans for power user training after the first of the year. Discussed technical capabilities of the new CAD system.
 - Philips Tempus Pro monitors remain on a shipping hold. Waiting on FDA response. Discussed related global supply chain issues.
 - ALS medic and rescue units have been approved, and improvements are underway.
 - A new drone vendor was selected, Skydio, to replace existing in-service Public Safety drones due to a state mandate. Agreement to be signed soon.
 - Provided an update on Pinellas Suncoast Truck 28 funding.
- Wellness and Fitness Leadership Committee
 - Chief Richard Ganci, St. Petersburg Fire Rescue, is the committee chairman. The governor has awarded state grant funds to improve peer support across the state. Committee is meeting regularly, working on continuing education and resource availability, and has been expanded to include all involved chaplains and some retired chief chaplains.

MEDICAL DIRECTOR REPORT

Dr. Angus Jameson presented the Medical Director's Report and briefed the members on the following topics:

- Clinical Operations
 - Related that December 2022 marks 10 years since his return to Pinellas County as its Medical Director, noting that the County benchmarks high against nationwide systems, continues to provide excellent care to its citizens and visitors, and is moving forward with adopting the latest advances in medicine and public safety.
 - Shared information pertaining to staffing tragedies that are motivating factors to revitalize efforts to promote resiliency among First Responders.
 - Provided statistical information related to hospital offload operations and COVID/RSV/Flu caseloads.

- Continuing system support for EMT and paramedic training and certifications.
- EMS Academy implementation of a new immersion training group.
- Personnel
 - Congratulated Dr. Andrew Kropp on passing the written Emergency Medicine Boards, noting that Dr. Kropp graduates at the end of June.
 - Matched a local candidate, Dr. Ken Dumas, Chief Resident at Tampa General Hospital, for the next year's EMS Fellow.
 - Welcomed Dr. Michael Lozano to the team as an Associate Medical Director to assist with data management, healthcare informatics, and research.
 - Hired a part-time biostatistician through USF to bolster research operations.
 - Announced the hiring of Shelly Childers as his Executive Assistant.
- Programs
 - Multiple publications recently accepted by major journals and presentations in many conferences and academic assemblies. Leveraging resources to focus on improving First Responder mental health and preventing/mitigating PTSD and Cumulative Stress Disorder.
- Protocols
 - Refreshed Medical Operations Manuals to go live on January 4, 2023, noting new clinical additions recently approved by the Medical Control Board. Special thanks to David Hudak, EMS Protocol and Equipment Coordinator, for his hard work.
 - Launched the Pinellas County Office of the Medical Director website, <https://pcemsomd.com/>, a one-stop repository for all system stakeholders.
- Projects
 - Leave Behind Narcan program to go live the first week of January 2023. Narcan will be available in ambulances and fire stations in the County for handout with training information and resources.
 - Discussed the Auster Environment CPR project and the implementation of a Cardiac Arrest Improvement pilot to study the use of a LUCAS device, an automatic CPR instrument, in situations where effective compressions are difficult to perform.

FIRE CHIEFS' REPORT

Chief Scott Young related that Fire Operations were covered earlier, and there is no additional information to present at this time.

SUNSTAR REPORT

Richard Schomp provided statistical information regarding transport volume and discussed hospital offloads and progress with employee retention/recruitment.

AFFILIATES & STAKEHOLDERS

Becca Tieder presented an overview of the Juvenile Welfare Board's Sleep Baby Safely Campaign to prevent baby deaths due to unsafe sleep practices and provided background and statistical information regarding babies dying from unsafe sleep. Ms. Tieder discussed various efforts of the Juvenile Welfare Board and thanked all EMS partners. Materials were distributed.

Jo Dee Nicosia reported that NAMI (National Alliance for Mental Illness) International has awarded a \$35,000 grant to Pinellas County NAMI to help support frontline wellness with its Peer Initiative and is working with Chief Ganci and the Wellness and Fitness Leadership Committee to rework curriculum for peer supporters for people who have experienced stress-related traumas and hopes to train more Fire personnel to offer additional First Responder support. Materials were distributed. Ms. Nicosia addressed suicide concerns in the community, and the Juvenile Welfare Board's (JWB) Growing Hope Initiative, a children's mental health initiative, and NAMI's efforts to help combat suicide.

OPEN FORUM

- Members congratulated Greg Woodrum on his upcoming retirement from Pinellas County after 18 years of dedicated service and wished him well in future endeavors.
- Craig Hare, Dr. Angus Jameson, and Richard Schomp shared information regarding the life and dedicated service of the late Sunstar Shift Commander Leroy Funderburk and provided details related to the memorial services.

2023 MEETING SCHEDULE

The EMS Advisory Council is scheduled to meet on March 17 (Elections), June 16, September 22, and December 22, 2023.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for March 17, 2023, format to be determined.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Mercado, seconded by Dr. Carver and carried unanimously, Commissioner Peluso adjourned the meeting at 11:35 A.M.

*Audio and any correspondence received for this meeting is on file at the
Pinellas County EMS & Fire Administration.*

**PINELLAS COUNTY
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**MEETING MINUTES
September 16, 2022**

The Pinellas County Emergency Medical Services Advisory Council met using the Zoom online meeting platform and in person at 10:00 A.M. on this date with the following members present:

Commissioner Julie Peluso, Independent Fire District Elected Official – Chair
Jorge Mercado, Citizen Representative (District 7) – Vice-Chair
Richard Schomp, Sunstar Paramedics - Secretary
Jeri Reed, Citizen Representative (District 3)
Tina Ambrose, Citizen Representative (District 4)
Ty Dougherty, Citizen Representative (District 6)
Nancy Hopkins, Emergency Nurses' Association West Coast Florida Chapter
Chief Chad Pittman, Pinellas County Fire Chiefs' Association
Gayle Guidash, Pinellas County Health Department
Dr. Eric Carver, St. Petersburg College
Mayor Woody Brown, Mayors' Council (Largo)
Chief Anthony Tedesco, Clearwater Fire Department (Alternate)
Chief Terry Tokarz, Largo Fire Rescue
Chief Ian Womack, St. Petersburg Fire & Rescue
Capt. Michael Leiner, Pinellas County Sheriff's Office

Absent:

Karen Mullins, Citizen Representative (District 1)
Larri Gerson, Citizen Representative (District 2)
Becca Tieder, Citizen Representative (District 5)
Mayor Dave Gattis, Mayors' Council (Belleair Beach)
Mayor Dan Saracki, Mayors' Council (Oldsmar)
Mayor Sandra Bradbury, Mayors' Council (Pinellas Park)
Dr. Anthony Ottaviani, Pinellas County Osteopathic Medical Society
Jo Dee Nicosia, National Alliance on Mental Illness
Denise Whitfield, National Alliance on Mental Illness (Alternate)

Staff Present:

Jason Ester, County Attorney's Office
Cody Ward, County Attorney's Office
Dr. Angus Jameson, Medical Director
Dr. Donna Dooley, Associate Medical Director
Dr. Andrew Kropp, Associate Medical Director
James Fogarty, Bureau Director, Safety and Emergency Services
Craig Hare, Director, EMS & Fire Administration
Greg Woodrum, EMS & Fire Administration
Lynn Abbott, EMS & Fire Administration
Matt Caravona, EMS & Fire Administration
Mark Eggers, EMS & Fire Administration
Michelle Slawinski, EMS & Fire Administration

Also Present:

Commissioner Kevin Kenney, Independent Fire District Elected Official (Alternate)

Fire Chaplain Rev. Milton Smith, All First Responders Matter, LLC
Jeremy Tinter, Sunstar Paramedics (Alternate)
Jazmin Soloman, Sunstar Paramedics
Chief Richard Graham, Lealman Fire Rescue
Chief Scott Sanford, Palm Harbor Fire Rescue
Doug Zimmerman, Palm Harbor Fire Rescue (Alternate)
Chief Andrew Hughes, Pinellas Park Fire Department
Chief David Mixson, South Pasadena Fire Rescue
Chief Thomas Kras, St. Petersburg Fire & Rescue (Alternate)
Jessica Kushner, National Alliance on Mental Illness
Bill Howell, Student/Citizen
Kelly Cisarik, Citizen

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Commissioner Julie Peluso called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M. Roll call was taken, and Greg Woodrum confirmed that a quorum was met. There were 15 voting members in attendance.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

INVOCATION

Invocation by Fire Chaplain Ret. Lt. Milton Smith, All First Responders Matter, LLC, formerly with Palm Harbor Fire Rescue.

MINUTES OF THE MARCH 18, 2022 MEETING - APPROVED

Upon presentation by Commissioner Peluso, a motion was made by Mayor Woody Brown, seconded by Gayle Guidash and approved unanimously, that the minutes of the June 17, 2022 meeting be approved.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Commissioner Peluso called for citizens wishing to be heard, and Kelly Cisarek discussed safety concerns regarding the use of BLS ambulances for cardiac event emergency transports.

PROPOSED BYLAWS CHANGE: EMSAC SECTION 3.1 MEMBERSHIP

Craig Hare provided an overview of the proposed bylaws change regarding membership by removing the Pinellas County Medical Association and adding a mental health professional or similar representative. Following discussion, Mr. Hare to present a draft document to the EMS Advisory Council for vote at the December 16, 2022 EMSAC meeting, to be publicly noticed.

BLS AMBULANCE UTILIZATION REVIEW

Craig Hare provided an overview of the BLS Ambulance Utilization Review process and discussed First Responder ride-ins and equipment utilization. Richard Schomp, with input by Jim Fogarty, Dr. Jameson, and Ty Dougherty, discussed the 911 call dispatch/BLS transport processes, call volume, staffing, and ambulance deployment.

EMS DIRECTOR REPORT

Craig Hare presented an EMS operations report and briefed the members on the following topics:

- EMSAC Membership
 - Welcomed Ty Dougherty and Tina Ambrose as new Citizen Representatives.
 - Cody Ward is the new Assistant County Attorney for EMSAC, replacing ACA Brendan

Mackesey, who has left employment with Pinellas County.

- Budget

- Budget process is wrapping up. First Responder budgets are up about 7 percent.
- Proposed budget is fully funded, has had first reading by the BCC, and allowed a partial rollback on the millage rate while still maintaining strong reserves.
- Ambulance Budget fully funded since year two of the wage plan. Local fire departments are starting to have wage increase discussions regarding their labor agreements.

- Medical Director Contract

- Congratulations to Dr. Jameson on his new 5-year agreement. Program improvements include moving to 2.5 FTEs for physicians, adding a Chief Medical Officer, Associate EMS Medical Director. Drs. Smith and Dooley to remain part-time, to handle increased support for Special Operations training, field observations, and Quality Assurance.

- System Operations

- Sunstar transport volume up 7 percent, looking to increase the number of drivers.
- Provided an overview of agency enhancements and various capital projects with allocated American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and Penny for Pinellas funding.
- Training/college funding utilization, up \$4.5 million, to increase useful life of training facilities.
- Working on an amendment to the Hazmat agreement for improvements. Sent a class of 25 to Florida State Fire College.
- On final approach to agreement with ImageTrend to replace records system and legacy applications with new patient care and fire reporting system, needs to go to the BCC for signature.
- PRIME (Pinellas Regional Information Management Enterprise) Board Operational Committee is up and running. Membership is comprised of Jim Fogarty, Craig Hare, and Chiefs Schlatterer and Hughes. Interlocal agreement signed by collective system, all police/fire agencies, Sunstar and 911, 18 to 24 months away. Cloud-based CAD with backup, new codes written. Hexagon and ImageTrend are vendors.
- Fire Chiefs and Sunstar expressed support for plans to go to the national standards for emergency medical and fire dispatch protocols.
- ImageTrend design phase scheduled for this fall, and deployment scheduled for early 2023. Once agreement is signed, deployment team to be assigned. Noted systemwide participation in various configuration committees.

- Philips Monitor Implementation

- Shipping delays due to supply chain issues.
- Training is complete.
- 50 monitors received so far, working with EMS Chiefs on deployment.

- Staffing

- Chris Jordan has been hired as the new Quality Assurance Coordinator.
- Sandy Brooking has retired, and John Murphy has moved to the Special Operations Coordinator position handling Water Rescue, Hazmat, and Tech Rescue Teams.
- Craig Queen has transitioned to Credentialing Coordinator and will assist Matt Caravona, EMS Training Coordinator, and Mark Eggers, EMS Academy Coordinator.
- Michelle Slawinski has joined staff as the new EMS Data Analyst and will work on analyzing Growth Management program data sets. Noted plans to conduct full demographic, community needs, and system assessments to improve the complex case management process, with the help of Pinellas County Human Services and the local Florida Department of Health.

- Air Medical

- All Children's Hospital Lifeline helicopter program has ceased operation for 9-1-1 earlier this week. Backup air transport resources are Bayflite 3 out of St. Joseph's, MedTrans in Brooksville, and Tampa General's AeroMed, noting that the dispatch process will

remain the same.

MEDICAL DIRECTOR REPORT

Dr. Angus Jameson provided the following new and updated information:

- Continued optimism on the system's recovery phase on the County's return to near normal operations. Hospital offload delays have been reduced, and staffing impacts have stabilized. Discussed call trend shifts from sick calls to more psychiatric- and substance-related patient types.
- Welcomed Dr. Andrew Kropp as the new EMS Fellow.
- Working to recruit an additional Associate Medical Director to keep up with system growth.
- In the early stages of partnering with the USF School of Public Health to bring in more students and faculty to work on projects, analysis, and improvements for the system.
- Continuing to manage system medication shortages. Thanked County and Sunstar staff for their excellent work in reenergizing stocks of pain medicine.
- Moving forward with the new cardiac monitor replacement program and a refreshment of the Medical Operations Manual, including the Administrative, Critical Care, Hazmat, Tech Rescue, Tactical, and Operational Medicine books. Updated protocols to be presented at the next Medical Control Board meeting.
- Discussed the Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse Program (COSSAP) that allows paramedics to refer opioid use disorder patients, with their consent, to local treatment centers.
- Provided information regarding the Leave Behind Narcan program that would allow paramedics, who are treating an opioid use disorder or overdose patient, to leave a nasal Narcan spray with the patient or a family member for emergency rescue.
- Reported positive feedback of the BLS Ambulance to 9-1-1 program from members of the Nurse Managers/STEMI/Stroke Workgroup, noting that the group held its quarterly meeting last week.

FIRE CHIEFS' REPORT

Chief Chad Pittman related that the Fire Chiefs had no news to report.

SUNSTAR REPORT

Richard Schomp provided statistical information regarding the last six months of transport volume and discussed progress with employee retention/recruitment, hospital drop-off times, and positive patient satisfaction rates.

AFFILIATES & STAKEHOLDERS

Gayle Guidash presented updated statistical information pertaining to the recent outbreak of the monkeypox virus and discussed current caseload, ongoing monitoring activities, and vaccine support. She provided a brief overview of the Leave Behind Narcan program, adding that DOH-Pinellas is working to distribute Narcan to the community in the near future.

OPEN FORUM

- Chief Tony Tedesco indicated that he attended the State EMS Advisory Council meeting earlier this week and provided an overview of the meeting topics. He related that the group is looking for increased Fire Department representation and citizen volunteers to sit on its Council, noting that meetings are quarterly. The next meeting is scheduled for January 18-20, 2023. Craig Hare will provide information to members who are interested in serving.
- Jim Fogarty noted that 20 years ago the Medical Direction contract comprised approximately 2 percent of the EMS budget, and the Medical Director's contract now represents less than nine-

tenths of 1 percent of the current EMS system budget, commending Craig Hare for his financial stewardship.

- Mr. Fogarty recognized Richard Schomp and his Sunstar team and Jodie Sechler and her Ambulance Billing and Financial Services teams for their cooperative effort working behind the scenes to process ambulance bills in order to collect about \$65 million in revenue, exceeding estimated projections by \$10 million. He shared that the net collection rate is somewhere in the neighborhood of the 68 to 70 percent range.
- Jessica Kushner introduced herself and spoke about NAMI's purpose, noting that it is similar to a support group for education and training.
- Chaplain Milton Smith provided insight regarding his community work, training/education, and work history, and presented information about his mental health program, All First Responders Matter, LLC., locations served, financial support for the 503c organization, and sponsorship donations. See link, www.allfirstrespondersmatter.org.
- Craig Hare noted that over 1,000 paramedics just completed Emergency Pediatric Care training.
- The Medical Director's agreement includes a searchable website for the Medical Operations Manuals (MOMs) and protocols with fully searchable hyperlinks to help support the field.
- The 2023 draft protocols drafted by Dr. Jameson to be presented for approval to the Medical Control Board at its meeting on September 29.
- Capt. Michael Leiner spoke about a recent emergency involving his child and praised Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital and EMS staff for their fantastic work, noting that it turned out to be a positive experience.
- Craig Hare related that the Medical Control Board is seeking to add pediatrician representation to its membership.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for December 16, 2022, format to be determined.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Mercado, seconded by Dr. Carver and carried unanimously, Commissioner Peluso adjourned the meeting at 11:25 A.M.

Audio and any correspondence received for this meeting is on file at the Pinellas County EMS & Fire Administration.



EMS Financial Services Overview

Safety & Emergency Services – Financial Services Division

- Jodie Sechler, Division Director, Financial Services
- Pam Bell, Regulatory Compliance Manager

Ambulance Billing Revenues

Ambulance Program Revenues

FY21 - \$65.3M

FY22 - \$77.0M



**Increase of
\$11.7M, or 17.9%**

Revenue Increase Drivers

- **Veteran's Administration - \$3.5M**
- **Medicaid PEMT - \$3.5M**
- **Process Improvements - \$2.0M**
- **Facilities / Private Pay - \$1.6M**
- **Motor Vehicle Accident Pilot Program - \$1.1M**

EMS Ad Valorem Revenues

First Responder Program Revenues

FY21 - \$74.9M

FY22 - \$84.1M



**Increase of
\$9.2M, or 12.3%**

Revenue Increase Drivers

- **Increased Property Values**

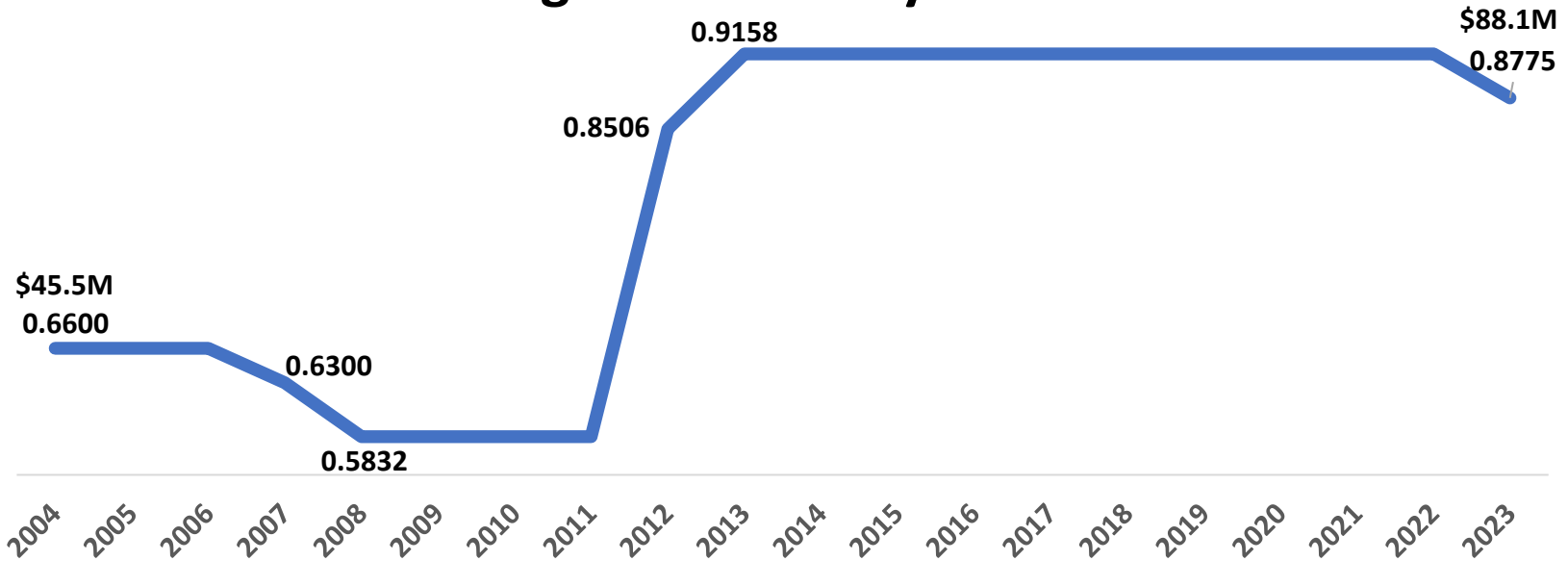
Active Financial Management

- **Millage rates adjustments are made as necessary**

EMS Ad Valorem Revenues



EMS Millage Rate History – 20 Years



EMS System Enhancements



Continual System Assessment

- **Right-Size the system based on data**
 - **Authority Funded Paramedic Seats (24/7 positions on apparatus)**
 - **84 to 106 seats over last 20 years**
- **Recent System Enhancements Examples**
 - **FY21 - R17, R24, EMS Coordinator for Largo & Pinellas Park**
 - **FY22 - S38, E65**
 - **FY23 - R60, ME41, T28, R13**

FY23 EMS Fund Budget



FY23 Budget - \$160.4M

- **Ambulance Contract - \$65.2M**
- **First Responder Contracts - \$68.3M**
- **Program Support Costs - \$26.9M**
 - **Includes: Medical Direction Services, Continuing Medical Education, Radio System Maintenance, Ambulance Billing Operations, Intergovernmental Services, Property Appraiser & Tax Collector Fees**

Ambulance Billing Initiatives



Outsourcing

- **Initial Billing Process**
- **Call Center**
- **Legal Functions (No cost)**
- **Specialized Billing Areas**

Strategically Refocusing Resources



Implementation

- **Assignment of Account Representatives**
- **Assignment of Project Managers**
 - **Veterans Administration (VA) Payment Backlog**
 - **Longstanding issue of claims backlog that has been reduced, generating approximately \$3.5M in revenue in FY22.**
 - **Commercial HMO Plan Discounting / Non-Compliance FS 641.513**
 - **Initiate processes, including legal steps to address HMO plans that typically discount Sunstar retail rates**

Strategically Refocusing Resources (cont'd)



Process improvements

- **Increasing technology use**
 - Expanding Electronic Claims Submission
 - Expanding the Initiation of ACH Payments/Remittances
- **Creation of Compliance Section**
 - Enhancing & Centralizing documented Policies & Procedures
 - Continual training and education
 - Internal Audit
- **Blurring Sectional Lines**
 - Eliminating silos to create a cross-functional work environment

Ambulance Billing Challenges



Prior Authorization

- The requirement of prior authorizations for non-emergency transportation continues to trend with Medicare Part C Plans and commercial insurances. The requirement is incongruous with the nature of ambulance transport operations.

Ambulance Service Misconceptions

- EMS Millage (Property Tax)
- Hurricane Evacuations

Ambulance Billing Challenges

Reduction in Reimbursement

- FY11 - Medicare Mileage Reimbursement changed from rounding up to nearest mile to reimbursing based on Fractional Mileage
- FY13 - Medicare implemented a 10% reduction to Basic Life Support Non-Emergency (BLS NE) Dialysis transports (to and from a Dialysis facility)
- FY19 - 10/1/2018 Medicare implemented further reductions for BLS NE Dialysis by 10% to 23%

Regulatory Impacts

- 60 day overpayment rule
- Recovery Audit Contractors
- Repetitive Scheduled Non-Emergent Ambulance Transport (RSNAT)

Ambulance Billing Challenges



No Surprises Act (NSA)

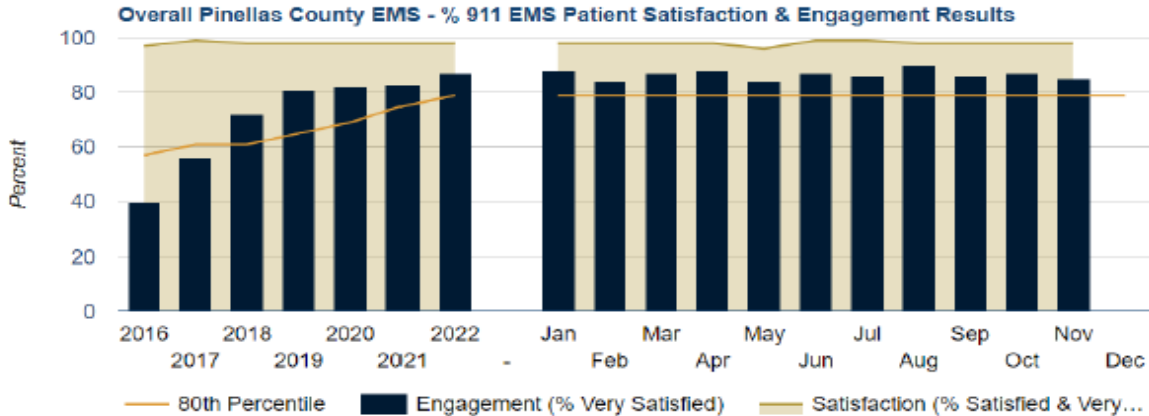
- **Industry game changer**
 - Anticipated negative effects to Ambulance Revenues
- **Ground-ambulance is currently excluded from NSA**
 - Advisory Committee has been identified and is the initial step to expanding the NSA to transportation.
 - Late January 2023. Recommendations due within 180 days (July 2023)
- **NSA will essentially limit your reimbursable fee**
 - HMO vs. PPO / Current vs. NSA
 - Costly and labor demanding claim mediation process

Patient Satisfaction Surveys



Baldrige – Patient Satisfaction Surveys:

- ❖ 2022 YTD: There were 3,289 Customer Satisfaction Surveys completed (as of 12.14.22).
- ❖ Overall YTD Engagement/Top Box – % represents customers who selected “Very Satisfied” = 87.01
- ❖ **Overall YTD Satisfaction** – % represents customers who selected “Very Satisfied” or “Satisfied” = **98.53**
 - November 2022 – “Very Satisfied” Score was 85 and a “Very Satisfied” or “Satisfied” Score of 98.
 - Gold bar = 80th Percentile.



Questions or Comments

