

**Rappahannock/Thomas Jefferson EMS Council Board of Director's
Special Meeting
Rappahannock EMS Council Regional Training and Simulation Center / Zoom
Wednesday May 12,2025 7pm**

Board Members Present:

Jack Atkins, Rappahannock County
Ed Bonham, Caroline County
John Brandrup, At-Large
Joeseph Cardello, Stafford County
Jordan Coleman, Fauquier County *
Patricia Copeland, Stafford County
Mark Crnarich, At-Large
Susan Dietrich, Caroline County *
Kevin Dillard, At-Large
Pat Fitzgerald, Town of Colonial Beach *
David Garvin, King George County *
Chris Lonzo, Spotsylvania County
William Harrington, Spotsylvania County*
Ray Harvey, Orange County
Mike Jones, City of Fredericksburg
Ryland Kendrick, At-Large *
Debra Marinari, At-Large
David Moody, King George County
Nathan Mort, Orange County
Lisa Palmer, Rappahannock County
Jacob Parcell, At-Large
Michael Pearson, Culpeper County *
Joe Williams, Fauquier County
Dr. Tania White, Regional OMD

* denotes online participation

Board Members Excused:

Board Members Absent:

TJEMS Board Members Present:

Billy Hamm, Director
Hal Schafer, TJEMS Vice President*
John Lye, TJEMS President*
Pete Davidson, Director *

Staff Members Present:

Wayne Perry, Regional Director
Lara Traylor, Regional Field Coordinator
Andrea Prokop, Office Manager
Dusty Lynn, TJEMS Staff
Ingris Coronado, TJEMS Staff

Guests Present:

Andrew Slater, NVERS Deputy Director
Greg Woods, OEMS Acting Deputy
Director *

Call to Order - Kevin Dillard, REMS Council President

The meeting was called to order at 7pm. Kevin expressed appreciation to the Council staff and attendees.

Approval of Minutes –

Motion Passed

Minutes from the May 12, 2025 meeting was approved as presented.

Public Comment -

Kevin introduced Andrew Slater, Deputy Executive Director of NVERS. Andrew shared his background in EMS, then gave an overview of NVERS, detailing its history, structure, and key functions as a regional healthcare coalition and emergency response system. (see *attachment*) followed by a Q&A session.

Board Representation and Local Autonomy

- NVERS confirmed that its Board of Directors is evenly divided between local government Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) and health system executives. Board members are nominated by dues-paying members through an established process. While there are no current plans to expand the size of the board, as vacancies arise, leadership from REMS or TJEMS could be considered for appointment—pending board approval and alignment with the designated seat criteria.
- Questions arose on maintaining REMS/TJEMS identity—Slater assured that existing EMS advisory committees would remain intact and retain autonomy over regional program decisions. NVERS staff would help operationalize goals but not dictate priorities. The NVERS BOD would maintain fiduciary responsibility but not approve individual actions of advisory bodies.
- Future representation in Richmond advisory boards would still include REMS/TJEMS roles contingent on OEMS changes/new directives (ie NVERS would not populate those seats with NOVA providers).

Equity for Rural & Volunteer Agencies

- Attendees asked how smaller and rural agencies would be represented. NVERS cited its 2023 rural expansion experience and emphasized open communication through directors and advisory committees.

Financial Contributions and Access

- NVERS operates on a dues model, with EMS Council fees based on locality population (from \$500–\$10,000).
- Additional funds come from the Urban Area Security Initiative and occasional private donations.
- Questions were raised about access to non-VDH grants and potential financial implications of joining NVERS.

Program Continuity & Support

- NVERS confirmed it would want to maintain Virtual Instructor-Led Training (VILT) and other existing programs.
- A physical office presence will be preserved regionally (exact location TBA) with competitive hiring processes for staff to support the region. Both REMS and TJEMS staff would be encouraged to participate in the hiring process.

Governance, Assets, and Legal Structure

- Equipment purchased for REMS/TJEMS regions will remain in those regions.
- Two operational models were presented:
 1. Full merger into NVERS and dissolution of REMS/TJEMS 501(c)(3)s.
 2. Maintain local 501(c)(3) with NVERS acting as regional manager. (Andrew said that NVERS BOD would need to discuss this second option – the BOD is willing to work with REMS/TJEMS on the first option).

After the NVERS presentation, additional discussion occurred related to the proposal and RFP process

- **Lack of RFP Transparency**

As of the meeting date, the Request for Proposals (RFP) had not yet been released, leaving all parties uncertain about expectations, evaluation criteria, and submission requirements. This lack of clarity makes strategic planning difficult and increases the risk of misalignment in proposals.
- **Compressed Timeline and Operational Complexity**

The expected four-week turnaround for the RFP submission raises concerns about feasibility—particularly when navigating multiple simultaneous transitions: the merger of REMS and TJEMS, potential consolidation with NVERS, and coordination

with other councils. Stakeholders expressed concern about being asked to make high-stakes decisions with limited time for due diligence. Additionally, staff would need to be hired in order to complete the RFP as current staffing levels are inadequate to support this project.

- **Potential Competition with NVERS**

A key question was raised: if REMS and TJEMS do not choose to pursue a merger with NVERS, will NVERS submit a competing proposal for the region? The group acknowledged this as a critical unknown that could impact strategic alignment and decision-making.

- **Board Representation and Cultural Fit**

Some attendees noted that NVERS' current Board of Directors is composed of local government and hospital representatives, with no dedicated seats for EMS or fire services. There was concern that without structural changes, EMS voices may not be adequately represented within NVERS' governance model.

- **Geographic and Operational Scale**

Whether as a full partner or simply a contracted management entity, NVERS would be tasked with overseeing an expansive and diverse region if the merger proceeds. Several attendees questioned whether such a large area could be managed effectively, especially given the unique needs of rural and volunteer-based EMS systems.

President's Report:

- Kevin advised that an attorney was contacted who can help with REMS, TJEMS, Lord Fairfax, and CSEMS. The cost will be split, and the estimated expense will start at \$12,000 per council. A motion was made by Mike Jones and seconded by John Brandrup to secure legal counsel for the merger. **The motion passed.**
- **RFP Timeline:** State-issued RFP expected in the **first week of July**, with a **4-week turnaround**.
- **Bylaw Revisions:** A draft structure was introduced proposing 3 representatives per Planning District (PD) and potentially 3 at-large, with chartered committees under an executive-level model. Feedback on the proposed by-laws is requested by the next meeting.
- **Audit Update:** Annual audit of fiscal year 2023 (Bishop Farmer) under review, completion expected by **July 1**.

- **Council Designation Extensions:** Letters from VDH expected by end of June, extending designations through **December 31, 2025**.
- **Board Transitions:** Scott Davis resigned from the BOD. Existing BOD members up for renewal will remain in place during the transition.

New Business

- **Legislative Change (Effective July 1):** All vehicle passengers, including in ambulances, must be buckled unless patient care requires otherwise. Kevin will take the concerns raised about retrofitting older units and liability, options for exemptions or grandfather clauses to legislative representatives.
- **State EMS Awards:** Christina Rauch received the EMS Leadership award, recognized during EMS Night Out at Dominion Raceway.
- **VDH Update:** Greg Woods (Acting Deputy Director of Operations) shared that a new Deputy Director is being recruited. The current reporting quarter ends on **June 30**.
- **Governor's Advisor Board:** Next meeting is August 1, with workgroup sessions July 30/31. Current representation to remain the same while OEMS restructure is ongoing.

Old Business - none

Adjournment – The **meeting** was adjourned at 8:33 PM.

Next Meeting: Scheduled for **Wednesday, July 17, 2025** (possibly sooner if the BODs would like to meet as soon as the RFP is released).