

Minutes
Georgia Trauma Care Network Commission
Thursday, February 21, 2008

Georgia State Capitol
3rd Floor, Room 341

Members Present	Members Absent
Dr. Dennis Ashley Linda Cole, RN Dr. Leon Haley Ben Hinson Bill Moore Dr. Joe Sam Robinson Kelly Vaughn, RN Kurt Stuenkel Dr. Rhonda Medows Others Present: Dr. Pat O'Neal Renee Morgan	None

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am by Chairman, Dr. Dennis Ashley, in room 341 of the State Capitol. Self introductions were made by all attending, including members of Georgia's EMS community. Dr. Ashley recognized the fact that it was EMS day at the Capitol. There were exhibits by EMS downstairs and several activities planned throughout the day. The committee reintroduced themselves as well.

The first order of business was to approve the resolution of Georgia Trauma Care Network Commission created by Senate Bill 60. It was placed in a readable form so that there is reference material available as decisions are being made concerning the funding allocations. Kelli Vaughn read the resolution. Joe Sam Robinson motioned to approve it. Dr. Rhonda Medows seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Mr. Hinson discussed the Executive Director Search. He stressed the committee is looking for the best candidate for the position, who may not necessarily be the person who has done the job before. He suggested that the Search Committee maintain control of the interviewing and selection of candidates. Mr. Stuenkel questioned whether or not the Master's Degree is a required or preferred qualification. He believes that it is possible to get a highly qualified person

without the required degree. Dr. Haley agreed with this assessment. All members of the committee voted to amend the description to list the degree as a preferred, but not a required qualification. Mr. Moore wanted to know when recruiting will begin. He also wanted to know when funding would be available to fill the position. Dr. O'Neal's office was asked to assist in getting the position graded according to the State's Personnel Administration System. Mr. Hinson indicated that the search committee's task of creating a job description has been completed. Dr. Robinson would like to start the search. Mr. Stuenkel agreed. Dr. Ashley thanked the committee for their hard work and diligence in devising a job description that encompasses the needs of the Trauma System for Georgia. He also recommended that the search committee remain the same for hiring purposes. These members include Dr. Haley, Dr. Medows, Linda Cole, and Ben Hinson. It was agreed that Drs. O'Neal and Robinson would assist as needed.

Mr. Robert Colvin, Chief Executive Officer with Memorial Health (Level One Trauma Center) in Savannah, GA, spoke to the committee about the Savannah response to the sugar refinery explosion. He indicated that it was the most comprehensive response he has ever seen. The initial reports indicated that there were 150 deaths. It was determined that there were 32 critical injuries. Eleven EMS agencies responded, along with the military personnel stationed at Fort Stewart. There were 120 ambulances either in transit or on standby. Nine helicopters assisted in the response. The Still Burn Center in Augusta was an integral part of the response team. The event happened just as the day shift was leaving and the evening shift coming in. All of the staff members present assisted in the stabilization of patients before leaving the hospital. He stated that although this was a tragic event, it was the best example of why a trauma center is so important to the State of Georgia. It was also a great example of human compassion and caring. The first EMS responder was a man by the name of Lt. Gordon. He spent three consecutive days at the site. Mr. Colvin informed the Commission that the hospital lost six million dollars on trauma care last year, yet the response was outstanding. But, it is not sustainable without proper funding. The hospital staff has been reduced by a total of 450 employees over the last 18 months because of budget cuts.

Dr. Ashley thanked Mr. Colvin and the entire response team for their efforts. He states the Trauma Commission is indebted to the response team and greatly appreciative of all of their hard work. He compared this event to the Ohio Bus tragedy that occurred in Atlanta in 2007. That incident also occurred near a Level One Trauma Center (Grady Memorial). The trauma system was critical in stabilizing, transporting, and treating the patients and thereby mitigated the impact of the events. Hopefully, the Trauma Commission can help ensure that all of the citizens of Georgia have access to the same level of trauma care and prevention. Dr. Robinson made a motion to commend the efforts of the response team in writing. It was seconded by Mr. Hinson. He asked Dr. Ashley to write a resolution to approve and send it out to all responding parties.

The status of applying for a statewide consultative visit by the American College of surgeons was raised. Dr. O'Neal stated that a formal letter of application had been sent to the American College of Surgeons (ACS). They acknowledged receipt of the letter. It will be at least a year before the survey is completed. Dr. Ashley asked that the Commission be kept informed of any changes and ways that they can be of assistance.

Dr. Ashley discussed the Trauma Plan Outline and areas of focus. They are:

- Current Trauma Centers
- Emergency Medical Services
- Trauma Physicians
- EMS/Trauma Office
- Executive Director
- Trauma Foundation

Dr. Medows suggested that “current” should be removed from the Trauma Center focus to expand consideration to also include future facilities. Dr. O’Neal inquired as to whether or not rehabilitation centers will be considered. Dr. Ashley stated that the subcommittees could discuss this and come up with an answer. Mr. Hinson stated the he would like the Trauma Commission to stabilize, and also expand Georgia’s Trauma Care system. Dr. Ashley stated that the job of the subcommittees would be to help build a stable system for trauma care in Georgia. Their members would be responsible for bringing back viable recommendations to the Committee for action. Mr. Stuenkel indicated that he thought the purpose of the 53 million dollars was to stabilize, not expand the current Trauma System. Mr. Hinson asked the State Attorney’s General Office to provide clarification. The representative from that Office indicated that he would take the question back to his supervisor for response. Dr. Medows indicated that DHR can provide a copy of the language of the Bill so that a ruling can be issued. Dr. O’Neal agreed.

Dr. Ashley indicated that there would be two subcommittees:

- Readiness Cost
- Uncompensated patient care reimbursement

Dr. Robinson made a motion to create the two committees as named. Ms. Vaughn seconded. The Commission approved it unanimously. The committee members are as follows:

- Readiness Cost
Ms. Cole, Dr. Robinson, Mr. Stuenkel, and Mr. Hinson. Dr. Robinson will serve as chair.
- Uncompensated patient care reimbursement
Dr. Medows, Dr. Haley, and Bill Moore. Dr. Haley will serve as chair.

It was determined that Mr. Hinson would participate on both committees so that EMS representation is present. The Chair is responsible for scheduling meetings, organizing the agenda, etc. Dr. Robinson wanted to know if conference calls are okay. Ms. Morgan stated yes.

It was agreed that the meetings would continue on the third Thursday of each month. Dr. Medows inquired about the current website that the commission uses. She wanted to know if it is possible to post the minutes to the site. Ms. Morgan will check and let everyone know at the next meeting. Dr. O’Neal will also check to see if a link can be created through DHR’s website and to explore other options.

The next meeting will be held in Macon on March 20 at 10:00am, with the location to be determined. The meeting adjourned at 11:45am.

Addendum: Minutes from the Jan 17th meeting were approved via e-mail. (rm)