



**Minutes of the
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES BOARD
Iris Room and Poplar Room,
First Floor 665 Mainstream Drive Nashville, TN 37243
Wednesday, June 17, 2026**

To view a comprehensive recording of the meeting(s), please follow the link below:

June 17, 2026: [Vidcast EMS Board Playlist](#)

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

- The meeting was called to order by Chairman Greg Miller at approximately 0900 AM. The roll was called, finding 11 members present in person, 1 member participating virtually, and 1 member absent. A quorum was declared.

<i>Board Member's Name</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Absent</i>	<i>Board Member's Name</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Absent</i>
Chairman Greg Miller	X		Vice-Chairman Jason Tunstall	X	
Jeffrey Bagwell	X		Dr. Jared McKinney	X	
Tim Bell	X		Shannon Morphis	X	
David Blevins		X	Joyce Noles	X	
Jeanie Diden	X		Stacy Prater	X	
Steve Hamby	X		Chris Wheat	X	
Drew Hooker	X		12 Members Present (11 in person, 1 virtual), 1 Member Absent = Quorum		

Also, present:

Brandon Ward, Director

Hansel "Chip" Cook, Assistant EMS Director

Tory Ferguson, Regulatory Board Administrative Assistant 3

Kertyssa Smalls, Senior Associate Counsel – Office of General Counsel / Board Advisory Attorney

Ellen Gose, Associate Counsel – Office of General Counsel

Timothy Peters, Senior Associate Counsel – Office of General Counsel

Honorable Steve Darnell, Administrative Law Judge, TN Secretary of State – Panel 1

Honorable Carolyn Reed, Administrative Law Judge, TN Secretary of State – Panel 2

- Vice-Chairman Jason Tunstall participated virtually. David Blevins was absent and had sent his regrets.

OGC OPENING STATEMENT

- Ms. Smalls reviewed the requirements of the Tennessee Open Meetings Act for virtual participation. Because Mr. Tunstall was participating electronically, votes on matters in which he participated were required to be conducted by roll call. Mr. Tunstall did not participate in the contested case hearings.

DIVISION OF BOARD PANELS FOR DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

- The Board divided into two panels to hear contested cases simultaneously. A quorum of three members was required for each contested case panel.
- Panel 1 – Iris Room: Administrative Law Judge Steve Darnell; Chairman Greg Miller; Jeffrey Bagwell; Tim Bell; Jeanie Diden; and Drew Hooker.

- Panel 2 – Poplar Room: Administrative Law Judge Carolyn Reed; Steve Hamby serving as panel chair; Chris Wheat; Dr. Jared McKinney; Shannon Morphis; Joyce Noles; and Stacy Prater.

CONTESTED CASES

Panel 1 – James Edward Graves, Paramedic License #35957, Docket #17.34-260942A

- Mr. Graves was present and represented himself. Ellen Gose represented the Tennessee Department of Health. After opening statements, exhibits, witness testimony, testimony from the respondent, questions by Board members, and closing statements, Judge Darnell instructed the panel, and the matter proceeded to deliberation.
- ***Motion by Bagwell, second by Hooker to accept the Findings of Fact as presented; Tim Bell voted no. Motion passed.***
- ***Motion by Bagwell, second by Diden, to accept the Conclusions of Law as presented. Motion passed.***
- ***Motion by Hooker, second by Bagwell, to accept Disciplinary Action as written, revoking the respondent's license. Tim Bell voted no. Motion passed.***
- ***Motion by Hooker, second by Diden, to accept the Policy Statement as written. Motion passed.***
- This concluded the business of Panel 1.

Panel 2 – Shannon Kerwin, Paramedic License #40492, Docket #17.34-254200A

- Ms. Kerwin was present and represented by attorney Hunter Hoskins. Timothy Peters represented the Tennessee Department of Health. The case concerned patient care during January 7, 2024 interfacility transport.
- Shannon Morphis disclosed that she worked for the health system that included the hospital involved in the matter. Ms. Morphis stated the relationship would not affect her ability to fairly hear the case. Neither party objected, and she remained on the panel.
- The panel heard opening statements and testimony, including remote testimony from EMS personnel involved in the transport, and reviewed patient care and medical records. The panel recessed for lunch at approximately 11:45 AM with instructions to return at 12:45 PM and complete the hearing and deliberations.
- ***Motion by Morphis, second by Wheat to accept Findings of Fact as presented; Stacy Prater voted no. Motion Passed.***
- ***Motion by Dr. McKinney, second by Morphis to accept Conclusions of Law as presented. Motion passed.***
- ***Motion by Morphis, second by Noles for Disciplinary Action as written- Revocation. Dr. McKinney and Stacy Prater voted no. Motion Passed.***
- ***Motion by Morphis, second by Wheat to accept the Policy Statement as written. Motion Passed.***
- This concluded the business of Panel 2.

AGREED AND CONSENT ORDERS – IRIS ROOM

Houston Looney, Paramedic License #212109, Docket #17.34-2531298

- Disposition: 3-year probation and completion of an 8-hour Board-approved ethics course within 90 days.
- ***Motion by Bagwell, second by Hooker to accept the Agreed Order. The roll-call vote passed.***

Jacob Hitchcock, Paramedic License #36766, Case #2023013981

- Disposition: revocation.
- ***Motion by Hooker, second by Bagwell to accept the Consent Order. The roll-call vote passed.***

Justin Richardson, AEMT License #219986, Case #2025032771

- Disposition: suspension pending evaluation by TNAP; if monitoring is recommended, probation runs concurrently with the monitoring agreement for no more than 3 years; if monitoring is not recommended, the license is placed on 3-year probation.
- ***Motion by Hooker, second by Bagwell, to accept the Consent Order as written. Motion passed by roll-call vote.***

Myron Rhodes, Jr., EMT License #217411, Case #2024003141

- Disposition: suspension with TNAP evaluation and monitoring recommendations; probation for up to 3 years as outlined in the Consent Order.

- ***Motion by Hooker, second by Bagwell, to accept the Consent Order. Jason Tunstall abstained because he had not received the newly presented order. Motion passed.***

Hawkins County EMS, Ambulance Service License #3702, Case #2025031171

- Disposition: reprimand and civil penalty of \$7,000 for allowing an unlicensed ambulance operator to work beyond the 12-month grace period.
- ***Motion by Bagwell, second by Diden, to accept the Consent Order. Motion passed by roll-call vote.***

Travis Dorn, Paramedic License #214362, Case #2025009411

- Disposition: 3-year probation and civil penalty of \$8,750 for practicing on an expired license for approximately 18 months.
- ***Motion by Hooker, second by Diden, to accept the Consent Order. Motion passed by roll-call vote.***

Dalton Susee, AEMT License #218761, Case #2025005411

- Disposition: 3-year probation and civil penalty of \$450 for practicing on an expired license for approximately 10 days and participating in approximately 9 transports.
- ***Motion by Bagwell, second by Bell, to accept the Consent Order. Motion passed by roll-call vote.***

TNPAP REPORT

- Teresa Phillips provided the Tennessee Professional Assistance Program report covering July 1, 2025 through March 31, 2026. She reviewed monitoring, referrals, agreements, discharges, and workplace drug-screen referrals by licensure level.
- Ms. Phillips noted an increase in positive workplace drug screens, including several positive cocaine results, and provided a mental-health resource for distribution to EMS personnel.
- Ms. Smalls reviewed the statutory reporting process for employers and self-referrals, including the three-business-day period for a practitioner with a confirmed positive workplace drug screen to provide a lawful explanation or report to the peer assistance program. No Board action was required with the report.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

- Grayson Carter, Assistant Commissioner of Legislative Affairs, provided an informational update on legislation passed during the 2026 session. EMS-related topics included the Tennessee K-9 Emergency Medical Care and Transportation Act, authority for trained paramedics to determine and pronounce death, changes affecting rulemaking, military-family licensing, and other health-related legislation.
- Any Board action required because of the legislation was reserved for discussion with the full Board.
- The panels recessed for lunch from approximately 11:45 AM until 12:45 PM. Panel 2 continued its contested case after lunch. The Board later reconvened as a single group in the Iris Room.

FULL BOARD RECONVENED

- Chairman Miller called the roll after the panels rejoined. Eleven members were present in person, Jason Tunstall was present virtually, and David Blevins was absent. A quorum was confirmed.

COPEC REPORT

- Natasha Kurth presented the 2026 joint annual COPEC report. Highlights included statewide pediatric-readiness data, pediatric transport devices, education modules, the My Hero Cares program, pediatric readiness recognition goals, and concerns regarding future federal funding for the EMS for Children program.
- ***A motion by Bagwell, second by Dr. McKinney to approve the 2026 COPEC annual report for statutory submission. Motion passed by roll-call vote.***

CONSENT ORDERS – FULL BOARD

- The matter involving Jason Ingram was removed from consideration after counsel identified an item requiring correction before presentation.

Zachary Helvey, AEMT License #211000, Case #2025030671

- Disposition: 3-year probation and civil penalty of \$800 for working 16 transport calls while his license was expired.
- ***Motion by Hamby, second by Dr. McKinney, to accept the Consent Order. Motion passed by roll-call vote.***

Caleb Staggs, Paramedic License #217429, Case #2025042621

- Disposition: suspension with TNPAP evaluation; if monitoring is not recommended, the suspension is lifted and the license is placed on 3-year probation. The order incorporates TNPAP recommendations.
- ***Motion by Bagwell, second by Dr. McKinney, to accept the Consent Order. Motion passed by roll-call vote.***

Matthew Reid, AEMT License #216189, Case #2025002341

- Disposition: suspension with TNPAP evaluation; if monitoring is not recommended, the suspension is lifted and the license is placed on 3-year probation.
- Drew Hooker recused from this matter.
- ***Motion by Hamby, second by Noles, to accept the Consent Order. Motion passed by roll-call vote with Hooker recused.***

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- ***Motion by Prater, second by Noles, to approve the March 2026 Board meeting minutes. Motion passed by roll-call vote.***

APPLICANT APPROVAL

Peter John O'Hara – Reciprocity Paramedic Application

- Mr. O'Hara appeared before the Board and provided documentation concerning prior professional licensure discipline and resolution of a previously pending court matter. He requested approval of his Tennessee Paramedic license by reciprocity.
- ***Motion by Hooker, second by Prater, to approve the application. Motion passed by roll-call vote.***
- Other applicants who had been requested to appear were deferred to the following day because they were not present.

APPLICANT UPGRADE APPROVAL

Zolton Scales II – AEMT to Paramedic Upgrade

- Mr. Scales had complied with the requirements of a prior Consent Order except for the continuing probationary period. The conditional licensing order carried the existing probation to the upgraded Paramedic license through March 19, 2028.
- ***Motion by Prater, second by Hamby, to approve the conditional upgrade. Motion passed by roll-call vote.***

Alexander Miles – AEMT to Paramedic Upgrade

- Mr. Miles had complied with the civil-penalty requirement of a prior Consent Order. The conditional licensing order carried the existing probation to the upgraded Paramedic license through September 17, 2028.
- ***Motion by Hamby, second by Dr. McKinney, to approve the conditional upgrade. Motion passed by roll-call vote.***

DIRECTOR'S REPORT / SCHOOL APPROVALS

- Director Ward recognized Brad Phillips, longtime Jefferson County EMS Director and former EMS Board member, upon his retirement.

Knoxville Fire Department – Paramedic Program

- ***Motion by Hooker, second by Prater, to approve the Paramedic education program. Motion passed by roll-call vote.***

Nashville State Community College – Dickson – EMT Program

- ***Motion by Prater, second by Wheat, to approve the EMT education program. Motion passed by roll-call vote.***

EMS MEDICAL DIRECTOR / CLINICAL ISSUES COMMITTEE

- Dr. Joe Holley provided the Clinical Issues Committee and EMS Medical Director report. The Clinical Issues charter has been finalized and forwarded to the Oversight Committee.
- The Committee reviewed a proposed pilot project involving expanded medication use by AEMTs, including IV steroids, benzodiazepines for seizures, TXA, and amiodarone. The proposal was returned for revisions and additional Committee review before any recommendation to the Board.
- The discussion expanded to interpretation of the National EMS Scope of Practice language allowing certain medications to be "defined by state/local protocol," and whether local medical directors may independently expand medications or whether Board authorization is required.

- ***Motion by Hooker, second by Prater to table a final decision and direct OGC to research the legal interpretation of the scope-of-practice language, review other jurisdictions, and clarify the Board's authority and pathway for future approvals. Jeanie Diden was not present for the vote. Motion passed by roll-call vote.***

OLD BUSINESS – K-9 EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE AND TRANSPORT

- The Board discussed Public Chapter 713, the Tennessee K-9 Emergency Medical Care and Transportation Act, and the need for best-practice guidance for ambulance services that elect to transport and provide emergency care to canine first responders.
- Stacy Prater recommended that participating services consult with a veterinary medical director for guidelines, training, and quality assurance; require reputable hands-on and didactic training; discourage use of live animals for training except assessment; limit personnel to skills equivalent to their EMS scope of practice; and use heightened cleaning standards after canine transport.
- ***Motion by Hooker, second by Morphis to direct OGC to draft a policy statement incorporating the five recommendations for Board consideration on June 18. Jeanie Diden was not present for the vote. Motion passed by roll-call vote.***

CONTINUED BUSINESS

- Remaining committee reports, TASA update, and other agenda items not reached were carried forward to the June 18, 2026 meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

- ***A motion and second were received to adjourn. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:00 PM, with the Board scheduled to reconvene at 8:00 AM on June 18, 2026.***