



FIRE AND EMS COMMITTEE MEETING Minutes

VILLAGE OF TILTON
5/12/2026 5:30 PM
1001 TILTON RD, TILTON IL 61833

1. CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Weidenburner called meeting to order at 530pm

2. ROLL CALL

Attendance

Present:

Members: John Barnes, Brian Dunavan, Butch Fields, Lori Fields, Bob Finley, Tiffany Jones-McClellan, Cassidy Warrick, Mike Weidenburner

Absent:

Members: Chris McMahon, Billy Wear

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – IF NEEDED

None presented

4. SOP UPDATES

Discussion touched on existing and needed standard operating procedures, particularly regarding fire apparatus response. Trustee Weidenburner noted that a document titled "Fire Apparatus Response to Structured Fires – Best Practices" had been uploaded to the department's system by Fire Chief Chris McMahon. Deputy Chief Dunavan and Trustee Weidenburner discussed the distinction between SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures, which are mandatory) and SOGs (Standard Operating Guidelines, which allow for situational flexibility), with both expressing a preference for clear, enforceable procedures over vague "best practices" language.

A concern was raised regarding the deployment of the ladder truck outside of the Village. Trustee Weidenburner noted that the ladder truck had been responding to out-of-town calls, including the Hodge Street fire, and expressed concern that doing so puts wear on the most expensive apparatus in the fleet and leaves the Village without that asset if a major incident occurs in Tilton. He indicated this issue would require further review of the SOPs once he has had more time to examine them. The committee also discussed the number of personnel responding to certain calls, particularly lift assists and lower-acuity calls where large numbers of first responders were appearing on scene.

Trustee Weidenburner noted a recent combative-person call that drew ten responders, while some lift assists saw only two. EMS Coordinator Fields stated that trained personnel should be capable of assessing upon arrival whether additional help is needed, and that two to three responders from the ambulance service are typically sufficient to make that determination. The practical challenge of managing volunteer enthusiasm without discouraging participation was acknowledged by all parties.

The committee further discussed the policy around responding to calls in personal vehicles. EMS Coordinator Fields confirmed this practice does occur occasionally and raised serious liability concerns, noting that EMS providers responding outside of their official capacity are not protected by Good

Samaritan laws and could be held personally liable. It was agreed that existing policy prohibits personal vehicle response and that this policy needs to be consistently enforced and communicated. Trustee Weidenburner also raised the related issue of excessive speed while driving to the station, noting that community members and the Mayor had reported concerns. A broader discussion of whether a departmental speed policy for emergency vehicles should be formalized was introduced, with the committee agreeing further research and discussion were needed before any policy change.

5. FIRE AND EMS MUTUAL AID AGREEMENTS

The committee discussed mutual aid documentation practices and the legal requirements governing ambulance service participation. EMS Coordinator Fields distributed printed copies of relevant Illinois law (Section 8 of the Illinois Department of Public Health rules) and the ECI EMS system policy governing mutual aid response. He clarified that the law requires the ambulance service to respond when called by 9-1-1, regardless of the originating jurisdiction.

Deputy Chief Dunavan clarified that for fire reporting purposes, departments document only what their own units did at a scene and are not responsible for documenting actions taken by mutual aid departments. EMS Coordinator Fields confirmed the same standard applies to the ambulance service. Trustee Weidenburner raised the concern that sending multiple engines and a significant portion of personnel out of town on mutual aid calls could leave Tilton without adequate coverage in the event of a concurrent local emergency. He questioned whether current mutual aid deployment practices—particularly the number of apparatus sent—are appropriate and whether the SOPs adequately address this. The committee agreed this warrants further review.

6. ESO

EMS Coordinator Fields reported that following a discussion at the previous board meeting regarding the cost of the ESO software platform—which was found to be \$13,233.37 annually—he had contacted ESO's accounts receivable department to clarify what could be cancelled and at what cost. He provided the committee with an updated pricing breakdown.

Fields explained that the ambulance service must retain specific ESO modules: the EHR/CAD integration, the cardiac monitor integration (required to transmit 12-lead ECGs to the hospital, as mandated by the EMS system), and the Outcomes module (which provides patient outcome data and assists billing with updated insurance information). The remaining modules, primarily those used by the fire department side, could potentially be cancelled if the fire department transitions to a different platform.

A technical issue was also described in which the CAD integration is currently pulling times from the fire department's run number rather than the ambulance service's run number, causing inaccurate time-stamps on EMS run reports. This is significant because the State of Illinois mandates that ambulance services report precise timestamps for dispatch, en route, on-scene, patient contact, departure, hospital arrival, and return to service. Fields noted that correcting this requires ESO to reconfigure the integration, and that there had been internal disagreement with Chief McMahon about changing it due to the additional data entry it would require for mutual aid fire calls.

The committee considered whether transitioning the fire department to the First Due platform would resolve the issue, as it would allow ESO to be reconfigured solely for EMS use. Trustee Weidenburner

summarized the financial comparison: the current combined ESO and I Am Responding cost is approximately \$5,217, while First Due would cost approximately \$7,000 plus an upfront fee—a difference of roughly \$2,800 more per year. However, removing the fire-side ESO modules would produce a savings of approximately \$4,217, meaning the net cost difference between staying with ESO plus First Due versus the current arrangement is a relatively modest amount. The committee directed EMS Coordinator Fields to obtain updated pricing from ESO for only the EMS-required modules, in order to complete a full cost comparison.

7. RUN REPORTS YTD

Clerk Fields shared year-to-date call volume data for the ambulance service, broken down by jurisdiction. As of the meeting date, Tilton accounted for 213 calls (approximately 62% of total volume), Lynch Township 77, Oakwood 25, Georgetown 23, and Danville 5, for a total of 343 calls. EMS Coordinator Fields noted that "dummy tickets" generated by CAD errors—such as incorrect unit identifiers entered by dispatch—are excluded from the reported numbers. The overall call volume was running at approximately 2–3 calls per day.

The committee also briefly discussed the lift assist fee ordinance draft that had previously been prepared by the Village Attorney. The statute was noted to allow charging for lift assists after the sixth occurrence, though the Village's home rule authority may allow charging from the first occurrence. The draft ordinance, as written, does not provide for any free assists and sets the fee at \$200 per call, consistent with the statute's requirement that fees be consistent with actual cost. It was noted that the fee would likely apply primarily at assisted living and care facilities. Trustee Weidenburner indicated the committee should revisit this item but did not take action at this meeting.

8. MABAS 40 AGREEMENT

Trustee Weidenburner raised several concerns regarding Tilton's role as host of MABAS Division 40. He noted that the committee had not been adequately briefed when Tilton took on this responsibility and that a full inventory of MABAS equipment currently stored by the department has not been conducted. He expressed concern about the Village's liability for equipment stored in trailers, the lack of insurance coverage on MABAS assets, and the uncertainty around who is responsible for maintenance costs.

EMS Coordinator Fields clarified that MABAS 40 is a federally-structured program, not a state program, and that the "MABAS tone" used locally is not a true MABAS activation but rather a mutual aid alert mechanism adopted by Vermilion County fire chiefs to ensure coverage when a primary department cannot respond. He noted that historically, Gary Hawker managed most of MABAS 40's operations from Potomac, and that much of the institutional knowledge resides with him. Fields also noted that the I&I Association has some role in supporting MABAS operations and that Mark Ames, as I&I president, may be a useful resource.

Trustee Weidenburner suggested that a focused meeting be convened with Chief Fields, Gary Hawker, and Mark Ames to gain a clearer understanding of the Village's obligations, what equipment is on hand, and whether certain assets—such as the MABAS light tower, which duplicates Tilton's own unit—could be redistributed to departments in the northern part of the county that lack such equipment. The committee agreed that Tilton does not necessarily need to hold all MABAS 40 assets

and that reducing the inventory to a manageable subset would be appropriate. No formal action was taken.

9. BOF CLASS

10.

Deputy Chief Dunavan reported that the Basics of Firefighting (BOF) class is progressing well. The hybrid course involves weekly online reading and a 60-question quiz, followed by hands-on training at the department with an instructor. Approximately two weeks remain in the course. Dunavan noted that one participant has been struggling slightly and has been spoken to, while the remainder of the class is performing adequately. He clarified that while the State of Illinois does not impose a specific certification requirement for volunteer firefighters, it does set minimum standards, and individual departments are responsible for setting their own requirements above that baseline.

11. FLY CAR

EMS Coordinator Fields presented a seven-month operational summary of the fly car program (October 1 through April 30). Key statistics reported were as follows: of 420 total shifts (day and night combined), 343 shifts had ALS coverage either on-shift or via the fly car; 26 shifts had no ALS coverage; and 51 shifts were covered by the fly car unit (Unit 92). Unit 92 responded to 55 calls during that period, of which 10 were refusals, standbys, or no-patient contacts, and 45 resulted in an ALS-level assessment being performed, enabling an ALS billing upcharge.

Financially, the cost of staffing the 51 fly car shifts at \$90 per shift totaled \$4,590. The 45 calls upgraded to ALS billing represented an estimated \$3,364.65 in additional revenue potential—representing approximately \$1,200 more in staffing cost than revenue generated over the seven-month period. EMS Coordinator Fields and Trustee Weidenburner agreed this margin is close enough that the program should be considered operationally sound, with the potential to be revenue-positive, particularly if outside intercept agreements are expanded in the future.

Fields noted that Tilton currently has an intercept agreement with Oakwood at \$175 per intercept when their unit is transporting to Danville, but expressed a preference to complete a full year of internal operations before actively pursuing contracts with additional jurisdictions. Fields also referenced the situation in the western portion of Vermilion County, where Oakwood Ambulance Service may be dissolved and a proposed ambulance district—covering Vance Township, Sidell, Fairmount, Muncie, and Collison, but not Oakwood itself—has been placed on the November ballot. Fields indicated he has been monitoring this situation and has been in contact with several fire chiefs in those communities, and that Tilton may be in a position to consider providing coverage if that district effort fails. The committee agreed to formally re-evaluate the fly car program in October 2026 at the one-year mark.

12. OTHER

Earthrise Solar Project / Emergency Response Preparedness

Trustee Weidenburner reported that he and Scott (from the Catlin area) recently met with representatives from Earthrise, the developer of the proposed solar farm, including safety representative Heather and project representative Justin. The meeting focused on emergency response considerations during construction and during operations. Trustee Weidenburner noted that

the most significant emergency scenarios are likely to occur during the construction phase, as workers are on-site but emergency medical resources are not. He requested that Earthrise connect Tilton with a fire or EMS contact in Will County—where similar facilities have been in operation longer—to gain practical insight from experienced responders. An invitation was extended to visit the Gibson City solar facility. EMS Coordinator Fields was specifically requested to be included given the ambulance service's role in any emergency response. Trustee Weidenburner also stated his intent to pursue language prohibiting battery storage within Village limits, noting the Mayor has expressed similar support. He acknowledged that while battery storage is not currently in Earthrise's plans, that could change, and proactive policy is preferable.

ESO Policy Book / Ambulance Service Documentation

EMS Coordinator Fields distributed printed copies of the ambulance service's policy book and directional memos issued over the past year. He also provided copies of the annual letter of commitment submitted to the State of Illinois on behalf of the Village, which includes unit VIN numbers, primary and secondary response maps, and the personnel roster. Fields noted that the state reviews the policy book periodically (approximately every two years) and that a waiver previously granted for a roster requirement is unlikely to be renewed for next year.

13. AUDIENCE
None requested

14. ADJOURN
Motion to adjourn at 7:40pm

Motion:

Motion moved by Mike Weidenburner and motion seconded by Bob Finley. 3 AYES, 0 NAYES, MOTION PASSED

LORI FIELDS-CLERK

5-21-2026

APPROVED

