



## **General Membership Minutes**

June 28, 2024

11:00 AM – 1:00 PM CST

Pharr One Community Center (1121 E Nolana Loop, Pharr, TX 78577)

**Attendees:** Please contact the TRAC-V office at (956) 364-2022 regarding meeting attendance.

I. **Call to order** – Carlos Palacio, MD

Carlos Palacio called the General Membership meeting to order at 12:010 PM.

II. **Welcome and Introductions of new members**

Introductions of new members attending a TRAC-V General Membership meeting were made.

III. **Review and approval of previous minutes** – April 5, 2024

A motion to accept the minutes by Rene Perez and seconded by Wesley Milum. All in favor. Motion passed.

IV. **Board Report:**

a) **Board Meetings – Carlos Palacio, MD**

Carlos Palacio provided a condensed review of major discussions at the most recent board meetings, primarily the initial inquiry and conversations regarding establishing a regional trauma and EMS registry so that TRAC-V can track submissions to the state. Dr. Palacio also stated that the Board of Directors met on Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup> to learn about the role of a RAC in the state from Ms. Jorie Klein and the governance responsibilities and actions a proactive, strong Board takes from Mr. Kevin Reed. Following these presentations, the Board drafted a strategic plan for the organization that outlines short and long-term goals. Nathan Ramon will discuss more during the Executive Director Report.

**b) Financial Report – Rene Perez**

- EMS/RAC - \$21,686
- RAC Systems Development - \$35,237
- EMS/CO - \$14,793
- SB8 - \$28,450
- EI - \$112,205

The financial report for the organization was provided by the Board Treasurer, Rene Perez. Financial balances provided to attendees represent the remaining grant funds to be spent within the current fiscal year as of May 31, 2024. Mr. Perez reviewed the cash disbursements for the last couple of months and the accounts receivable aging summary. He highlighted that TRAC-V has surpassed its membership collection goal for the year and encourages members to continue paying the RAC early in the year to ensure your organization is in good standing. TRAC-V is in good financial standing and has no debts to pay.

A copy of the financial statement can be requested by contacting the TRAC-V office at (956) 364-2022.

**V. Executive Director’s Report**

**a) Update/Status on quarterly state reports**

Nathan Ramon provided an overview of recent reports submitted to the state for related state contracts, including the 3rd quarter support doc on June 26, the 2<sup>nd</sup> narrative report at the end of May, monthly SB8 reconciliation and expenditure reports, and the plan to begin the RAC annual report in early September to have it done before the October 15<sup>th</sup> deadline.

**b) Other RAC initiatives and activities**

Nathan Ramon provided a secondary review of the financial report to answer any outstanding questions and detailed forecasted expenses. He reminded meeting attendees that the numbers provided are a bit off since they don't take into account expenditures throughout the month of June. For example, all EMS/County funds have been distributed at the time of the meeting.

TRAC-V has taken the initiative to coordinate with other RACs around the state to share SB8 funding to cover the costs of students within our area. Since TRAC-V had already depleted scholarship funds it received, DSHS encouraged RACs who still had funds to share resources with other RACs to try and deplete all allocated funds from the federal government before the December 31, 2024 deadline. So far, TRAC-V has received and paid for an additional 6 EMTs, 22 AEMTs, and 1 Paramedic, equating to \$88,732. Dr. Carlos Palacio encouraged EMS agencies to take advantage of this opportunity because it is not something Nathan or the TRAC-V office needs to accomplish, they are doing extra work to continue meeting the needs of providers and students within our community.

The South Texas Comprehensive Healthcare Symposium held April 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> welcomed a total of 291 attendees across the 3-day span. Initial feedback has been very positive and is being taken into consideration for next year's planning. Thursday, April 18<sup>th</sup> on EMS Day featured the first ever TRAC-V EMS Sim Games, put on through the HCA Houston Healthcare EMS Training Ambulance. Five EMS agencies competed against one another in the same simulation and Brownsville Fire/EMS were the winners. TRAC-V hopes to have location, dates, and preliminary info set within the next 30-60 days to begin marketing next year's event.

TRAC-V has been awarded a \$20,000 grant from the Moody Foundation to aid in procuring Whole Blood equipment for EMS providers. Nathan Ramon is finalizing details and more information will be shared at the next Pre-Hospital Committee meeting.

TRAC-V held a Trauma Outcomes Performance Improvement Course (TOPIC) on Tuesday, June 25<sup>th</sup>. Thirty attendees were present, representing all 12 trauma designated facilities in the region, consisting of registrars, ED Directors, TPMs, TMDs, CNOs and CEOs. There were robust discussions on how to get buy-in from other departments and hospital administration to fully implement PI initiatives.

Stroke Awareness materials have been ordered and delivered to TRAC-V. The Stroke committee finalized a magnet design for BE-FAST and RAPIDO awareness campaigns. They will be distributed to each hospital and TRAC-V will provide some at community events. VAN Score magnets were also ordered and will be given to EMS agencies.

Initial notice has been sent out regarding an Advanced Burn Life Support (ABLS) Course being offered by TRAC-V in August. The ABLS course is a one day training but TRAC-V will be paying for a total of 60 students, 20 students a day across a three day period. If members are interested in registering attendees, they are advised to contact the TRAC-V office.

National Stop the Bleed Day training at Pharr EMS Headquarters was a success and totaled 137 people, however there are hopes to increase that number to be comparable to previous years.

TRAC-V has been featured on multiple community engagement platforms, including the NBC 23 Morning Show, Cameron County Public Health "Health Yes" Podcast, and the KRGV Take 5 "Empowering the RGV" segment.

As mentioned by Dr. Carlos Palacio, TRAC-V Board members met on May 18<sup>th</sup> to identify goals for the organization and ensure we focus our efforts on the role we play within the region. Nathan Ramon recapped the three main goals for the organization within the next 5 years, and there was discussion about why those goals were chosen. Based on these goals, Nathan is in discussions with software companies to discuss the establishment of a regional data registry for both trauma and EMS. This would allow TRAC-V to validate and cross reference all data sent to the state, as well as utilize data to address PI issues at a regional level. After a question about what data will be included, Board Vice-Chair Wesley Milum clarified that we are intending to begin collecting trauma data first because that affects RAC funds from the state, but that does not mean trauma will be prioritized over Stroke, Cardiac, Maternal, or

Perinatal efforts. An increase in RAC funds will still be administered in an equitable manner across service areas depending on the needs of the community.

Additionally, at the May 18<sup>th</sup> meeting, TRAC-V Board of Directors Members were provided copies of the TRAC-V Bylaws, Regional Trauma & Emergency Healthcare System Plan, Mutual Aid Agreement & Regional Multi-Casualty Incident Plan, and other regional emergency response plans. All present members agreed to ratify the current Bylaws and Regional Trauma & Emergency Healthcare System Plan for the remainder of the fiscal year with the understanding the documents will need to be revisited and updated for FY2025. These revisions will align with the bi-annual review of the organization's strategic plan and be presented to the General Membership when applicable.

**VI. GETAC and TETAF Update – Carlos Palacio, MD / Nathan Ramon**

Nathan Ramon provided a brief summary of initiatives and progress made at the most recent GETAC meeting in June.

The Prehospital Whole Blood Task Force continues to discuss regional best practices for rotation sites and the importance of exchanging blood to maximize shelf life and reduce cost. Nathan mentioned that in the RGV, STHS McAllen currently serves as the rotation site for South Texas Blood and Tissue Whole Blood units, but all Blood Banks and centers are participants in the task force. EMS Reimbursement for Whole Blood will be a priority during the upcoming 89<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislative Session.

The original proposed Trauma Designation Rules to replace 157.125 were repealed in April and revised after review of over 5,000 public comments. A new batch of proposed rules have been introduced. If approved, Chapter 157.125 would modify and keep the existing designation requirements until August 31, 2025. On September 1, 2025, a new set of designation rules, Chapter 157.126 would take effect.

The deadline for hospitals to submit Trauma Data is July 1 and the deadline for EMS to submit run numbers is August 1. These numbers affect Uncompensated Care reimbursement and EMS/County distribution funds.

There are a number of performance improvement initiatives happening within each of the committees, including National Pediatric Readiness Assessments for both EDs and Prehospital providers, Stroke committee documents that standardize interfacility transfer terminology and Door In Door Out time goals, and the Performance Improvement Task Force looking at data points to conduct research for the GETAC council.

**VII. EMTF and HPP Coalition Report – Bernie Palacios**

The RGVHPC is pending new contract details and objectives through ASPR at the federal level but once received they will be relayed to coalition members and the calendar invites for the year will be sent out.

**VIII. TRAC-V Sub-Committee Reports**

**a) Allied Health – Jennifer Volcy & Michael Sanchez**

The Committee will be meeting to review the 2024 Healthcare Symposium and begin planning efforts for 2025. Nathan and the TRAC-V team have started initial conversations with various locations to get additional quotes and lock in dates to begin early marketing.

**b) Bylaws – Rene Perez**

Did not meet.

**c) Cardiac – Melissa Aguilera**

The Committee is still looking at developing a CPR and/or cardiac health awareness campaign by creating digital signage to be placed in airports throughout the Rio Grande Valley. The committee is going to revise its proposal and develop a proof of the artwork to be reviewed and approved by the TRAC in the next fiscal year.

**d) Compliance – Rene Perez**

Did not meet.

**e) Injury Prevention / Special Population / Education – Daniel Tuttle & Victor Alanis**

The committee is still avidly seeking additional volunteers and members to participate on a regular basis. Planning is now underway for a region wide injury prevention event during the month of November in which all hospitals and EMS providers will be welcome to share the work they do and give free training to the community.

**f) Medical Oversight Committee – Carlos Palacio**

Did not meet.

**g) Perinatal / NICU / Maternal – Annabelle Salinas & Aide Martinez**

The committee will begin meeting on a quarterly basis, in addition to General Membership meetings, and are currently compiling various data points within the golden hour to being looking at PI opportunities.

**h) Pre-Hospital / Disaster and Communications / EMTF – Gustavo Ramirez**

The committee is working on various initiatives and training courses through the TRAC including Whole Blood MOUs and the disbursement of equipment via the grant received by Nathan, an Advanced Burn Life Support Course, ongoing Pulsara trainings, and reviewing additional trainings that would be beneficial at next year's Healthcare Symposium.

**i) Quality Assurance/Performance Improvement – Mack Gilbert**

Did not meet.

**j) South Texas Trauma Coordinators – Jennifer Volcy & Ruben Pena**

The committee is still working on a number of PI projects to analyze interfacility transfers, coordinated attendees for a TRAC sponsored TOPIC course, will assist with registrations for a TRAC sponsored TCAR Course, and will work with the TMD & EMS Advisory Committee to evaluate sub-specialty coverage.

**k) Stroke – Hamzah Saei & Gene Danugrao**

The BEFAST, RAPIDO, and VAN score magnets requested by the committee were approved and ordered through the TRAC. They will be distributed to each facility. The committee will also begin examining speakers for next years Healthcare Symposium.

**l) Trauma Medical Directors & EMS Advisory – Carlos Palacio & Eric Panzer**

The TMD & EMS Advisory Committee continues to review all out of Valley patient transfers each quarter and will be focusing on sub-specialty coverage at trauma facilities and our region's pediatric capabilities. The next committee meeting is scheduled for the second week of August.

**IX. Old Business**

**X. New Business**

**XI. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn by Michael Sanchez and seconded by Rene Perez. All in favor.  
Motion passed.

**Next Meeting:**

September 27, 2024

11:00 AM – 1:00 PM CST

Edinburg Conference Center at Renaissance

(118 Paseo Del Prado, Edinburg, TX 78539)