

HAMILTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY MAYOR
WESTON WAMP

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**Hamilton County EMS Director John Miller to Retire After
More Than Three Decades of Service as EMT and Paramedic**

*Miller's leadership helped establish Hamilton County Emergency Medical Service
as the regional leader in emergency medical care*

Hamilton County Mayor Weston Wamp today announced the forthcoming retirement of Hamilton County Emergency Medical Services (HCEMS) veteran and current director, John Miller, after nearly 34 years of dedicated service to Hamilton County. From his start as a young emergency medical technician (EMT) shortly after the inception of HCEMS to leading the respected first responder agency, Director Miller has helped create the standard of excellence in emergency medical care in our region.

“John Miller represents the very best of Hamilton County. A Tyner grad who chose to serve his community through emergency medical care for more than three decades as HCEMS grew from a nascent ambulance service to the regional leader,” said **Mayor Wamp**. “It has been a true honor to work with Director Miller to address pay and staffing levels, launch the county’s 17th ambulance, open a new training center, and lay the groundwork for an overdose response unit that will lead the fight against the opioid epidemic in Hamilton County.”

Born and raised in Hamilton County, Miller was initially drawn to a career in emergency medical services thanks to a television series called “Emergency!” which led him to volunteer with Volunteer State Water Rescue shortly after graduating from Tyner High School. Miller secured a job as an EMT in McMinn County before making his way to HCEMS in late 1990 and completed his paramedic training a year later. Spending the majority of his time stationed at Medic 3 on Highway 58, Miller rose through the HCEMS ranks with his promotion to lieutenant in 1998, captain in 2010, assistant chief in 2015, deputy director in 2019, and was appointed as the agency’s director at the height of COVID-19 in November 2020.

In addition to double-digit pay raises for all HCEMS employees, Miller’s leadership is credited with growing a staff of roughly 130 in 2019 to fully staffing a department of 164 employees late last year for the first time in a decade. Miller also played an instrumental role in growing the county’s ambulance fleet from five at the time of his start to today’s total of 17, thus reducing response times county-wide. After devoting 36 years to his calling as an emergency service provider, Miller’s legacy of setting the standard of high-quality patient care will forever be etched into the fabric of HCEMS.

“Hamilton County EMS has been an excellent career and provided me the opportunity to fulfill a lifelong calling,” said **HCEMS Director John Miller**. “Throughout my years as director, my focus has been to advocate for our employees while improving our service and the level of care we provide. I’m beyond grateful to Mayor

Wamp, former Mayor Jim Coppinger, and the County Commission for increasing our pay to more competitive levels in our region and for their steadfast investment in making HCEMS a career service.”

Also retiring from a storied career with HCEMS is Lieutenant Brian Gay—the last original member of HCEMS, established on February 1, 1988. Like Director Miller, Lt. Gay made his start as an EMT with McMinn County in 1983, and went on to work as a paramedic for EMS services in the Knoxville area before joining HCEMS on day one in 1988. Gay was awarded Hamilton County Paramedic of the Year just three years later in 1991 and was recognized as the Southeastern EMS Director’s Association (SEEMSDA) Paramedic of the Year in 1994.

Spending the majority of his career stationed at Medic 12 in Hixson, Gay was promoted to lieutenant and supervisor of all stations on the west side of the county in 1999. Gay was awarded the Chief’s Award in 2007 for playing a pivotal role in constructing the framework and policy for new hire pre-employment testing still used by HCEMS today. Following the horrific 2015 terrorist attack that took the lives of four marines and one Navy sailor in Hamilton County, both Director Miller and Lt. Gay were honored with the Patriot Award, presented by former Mayor Coppinger and former HCEMS Director Ken Wilkerson, to first responders on scene that day.

Both Director Miller and Lt. Gay look forward to spending time with family as their retirement marks the end of an era for HCEMS.

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