

Richland County Joint Ambulance Committee

August 16, 2017

Minutes

Present: Jeanetta Kirkpatrick, Fred Clary, Dan Schweinfus, Paul Corcoran, Mary Rognholt, Gordon Brockway, James Lingel, Verlin Coy, Glen Niemeyer, Steve Chupp, Ryan Keller, Scott Banker, Gordon Palmer, Bob Holets, Jean Nicks, Terrance Jindrick, Darin Gudgeon

Not Present: Calvin Brown, Marc Couey, Pat Marshall

1. Meeting was called to order at 1900.
2. Notification of the meeting had been made and the agenda was posted.
3. Committee attendance was as noted above, with 16 present.
4. A motion was made by Nicks to approve the agenda as posted. Niemeyer made a motion to second it. The agenda was approved.
5. A motion to approve the minutes for the July 19, 2017 meeting was made by Holets and seconded by Nicks. The minutes were approved.
6. In Public Comment, there were several community members who had spoken. Kathy Troxel, a member of the Richland Center City Council, stated that in the vote at the City Council meeting the prior night, there was a 7-1 vote, with her being the dissenting vote. She stated that she has nothing against Richland County or Richland County Ambulance, but she stated that she felt it was not a comparison of apples to apples but apples to oranges rather. She stated that she did not see how the Service could stay afloat financially. She referred to her professional business and recognized how expensive it is to maintain semis and had attended the Fire District meeting, where she recognized the same for the fire trucks. She stated that she felt it was reasonable to assume the same with any ambulance. She stated she made the decision with the community in mind. Kirkpatrick stated that she appreciated Troxel's words and agreed that it was not a comparison of two identical options. Gudgeon stated that he had read Troxel's post online and had liked it. He stated he honored her decision and respected her as a Council member. He informed those in attendance that he had sent a message preemptively to the Service members to remind them to respect her position and decision. The vote showed that the Council was engaged and involved. He told Troxel that he would like to visit with her and hoped they could both learn from each other's perspective and experience. He also stated he appreciated her courage to vote as she did. Troxel responded to the comments stating that the vote was done and that she intends to back the Richland County Ambulance Service as it moves forward. Sandy Palmer and Sharon Schmitz both extended an apology to Troxel regarding online conduct.

Schmitz also reiterated that the City Council had voted for the contract with Richland County Ambulance Service, with many Council members speaking out in support of it. She stated there was a citizen at the meeting who had spoken of a need for the Service to become a paramedic service. Schmitz highlighted the successes of the Joint Ambulance Committee and discussed the

direction of the Service's future. She stated that it appeared people were looking for a per capita rate rather than per call and also stated that the biggest need was for the committee to work together toward achieving their goals.

Jerry Gander spoke to the Committee, stating that he too had spoken at the City Council meeting the night prior. He stated that he had concerns for funding to be done differently and felt that the hospital needed to be involved, as they are also a community partner and should be interested in the future of the service.

7. There were no comments from the EMT Delegation at this time.
8. A/B. The Clerk's report was reviewed. Clary asked where TRIP monies would be reflected. TRIP money would in the Clerk's report, under the appropriate year for the call, in the month in which it was received. Gudgeon stated that the report from the billing company would not be presented as it was last month due to the Cvikota contact being out of the office for health reasons. The payer class breakdown was provided, with no questions being raised. It was clarified that the money represented on the Clerk's report is what was all received for the presented month. Corcoran requested an outstanding claims report and was directed to the Clerk's office for the official check register. Clary asked what Silva LLC was, which Gudgeon informed was a charge for the building.

C. The Call Data Report was reviewed. There was discussion regarding the \$75 charge for no-transport calls. Nicks stated that she felt there should be a charge for any call out, regarding a call in which a person was assisted from a wheelchair to a car. Kirkpatrick asked who decides who can charge. Gudgeon stated that it is set by federal code. A service could bill everyone but if they didn't render care, they would likely not be able to collect on it. If the patient is assessed, they can be billed. He stated if the Committee wished, he could track down the call to bill. Nicks suggested it should be looked into, and Kirkpatrick stated it could be added to a future agenda. Gudgeon clarified again that Medicare rates are pre-established, with Medicare typically only paying a maximum of 80%. If payment is provided by the patient, it has to be returned to them, as it would be illegal to accept it.

Clary asked about where the inter-facility transfers were going, as there had been much discussion on the topic recently. Gudgeon stated that the majority were transporting to a skilled nursing facility in town or a surrounding community or from the Richland Hospital to the MRI Center, but some were from Richland Hospital to a larger hospital system such as Gundersen or the UW. Niemeyer asked why Baraboo hadn't taken it, which Gudgeon explained was due to the call volume of the day. Baraboo had already had two rigs tied up for transfers out of the Richland Hospital at that time, so this service was needed to assist in transferring patients to definitive care. Niemeyer stated that this made it even more evident that there was a need for the three rigs to cover backup and transfers if the primary truck is on a call. From the audience, Gander provided statistics he had read at the City Council meeting regarding the number of transfers from Richland Hospital and wondered if Richland County Ambulance Service would be able to cover more of these calls. He said it appeared to him that one needed to step up to the game or step out of it. Palmer mentioned that many of the items discussed during this meeting had been discussed numerous times at the sub-committee level and had goals established to work toward; the Committee just needed to begin pursuing them more actively. Kerry Severson,

a County Board member in attendance, asked Gander if the statistics read were classified as ALS or BLS transfers, as Richland County Ambulance Service can take BLS or ALS1 transfers. Gander stated that it is possible the hospital may be more willing to give some of the transfers to this service if the Service is capable of handling them. There was discussion regarding where the money would come from. Severson encouraged all members to speak with their municipalities to write a letter in support of Assembly Bill 368, which will help municipalities raise levy limits.

9. The 2018/2019 contract was discussed. It was recognized that the municipalities had been provided them three months ago and that some municipalities were waiting for more information regarding possible changes to their service coverage. Clary spoke again about the complications that changing boundary lines can present and that such official requests need to be made sooner rather than later due to the amount of time that may be required. Kirkpatrick asked who would be the responsible party for ensuring these changes are done in time. Palmer stated that since the townships are responsible for providing the ambulance coverage, that they are likely responsible for ensuring such changes are appropriately made. Clary also stated that the township needed to make an official request for the change and then the County would ensure all appropriate changes were made, as it is the County that is in charge of such systems. Discussion followed regarding the numbering of addresses. Gudgeon reiterated that most of the changes being discussed made sense in terms of the response times, with some being able to get to an area faster than this service could. Nicks asked the group how three potential townships leaving would affect the overall budget the contracts were based on. Gudgeon mentioned in many cases, it would not be the entire township leaving. Lora Hynek, Bloom Township Treasurer, stated that they were waiting for plans to be finalized. Chupp stated that he expected six sections of Marshall Township would be going to Kickapoo Valley Rescue Squad. Gudgeon stated that it could be reasonably estimated to be an impact of less than \$1,500. Palmer stated that in the future, a per capita basis seems to be more favorable at this time. Brockway stated that he had abstained from the vote at the past meeting because he expected all of Buena Vista to be covered by Lone Rock EMS. Palmer recognized that there were 29 calls to that township in 2016. Kirkpatrick asked if there was a need for a revote regarding the contract, which no one made a motion for. She urged the sub-committee to create a plan to achieve the goals as laid out previously. Corcoran stated that reconfiguring should be considered after the contracts have all been turned in, should there be a need for such action.

In other business, Palm stated that he had heard many comments about people questioning the progress of the Joint Ambulance Committee. He stated that this is a sign that people are not being informed of the work of the Committee. Rognholt also stated she had heard many misconceptions with many people not even necessarily recognizing the committee exists. Kirkpatrick stated that the Committee minutes and agendas are published on the website and newspaper as any other County committee meeting. She reminded the group that each municipality has a representative on the committee not only to give them a voice but to also keep the municipality informed.

10. The next meeting will be September 20<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. Contracts should be turned in by then. Palmer made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Niemeyer. Meeting adjourned at 20:07.