

Richland County Joint Ambulance Committee  
Minutes of meeting  
Wednesday, August 19, 2015

Present were: Fred Clary, County Board; Jeanetta Kirkpatrick, County Board; Paul Corcoran, Richland Center Mayor;; Calvin Brown, Bloom Township; Gordon Brockway, Buena Vista Township; James Lingel, Dayton Township; Marc Couey, Eagle Township; Verlin Coy, Henrietta Township; Glen Niemeyer, Ithaca Township; Steve Chupp, Marshall Township; Ryan Keller, Orion Township; Gordon Palmer, Richland Township; Scott Banker, Rockbridge Township; Pat Marshall, Sylvan Township; Bob Holets, Willow Township; Jean Nicks, Boaz; Jim Huffman, Yuba; Darin Gudgeon, Ambulance Director; John Heinen, Acting Secretary.

Absent were: Marsha Machotka, Richland Center City Council; Mary Rognholt, Akan Township.

Chair Kirkpatrick, called meeting to order 7:02pm.

Meeting had been properly posted.

Meeting is being recorded as Rice could not be present  
Heinen called roll call of members. 17 present.  
Corcoran arrived at 7:13pm; Clary arrived at 7:38pm.

Holets made motion, seconded by Brown to approve agenda – motion carried.

Holets commented that actual changes to handbook that were acted upon at last meeting were missing from the minutes of the last meeting. Darin to mail out list of actual changes made to handbook presented to the Personnel Committee and acted upon.  
Huffman made motion, seconded by Holets to approve minutes of July 15, 2015 meeting – motion carried.

Public Comment/Input:

Kirkpatrick called committee's attention to letter composed and presented by Sharon Schmitz.  
Sharon questioned the open shifts of the primary crew.

Gudgeon explained that since the beginning of January there had been 11 to 12 shifts when there were open slots or period of time we did not have a legal crew. Since the 12<sup>th</sup> of May we have not had an open primary shift, we have fully covered primary from May 12th all the way through this date and have not missed a call during that time. The primary crew is the first truck that responds to a first call and the back-up crew responds if another call comes in while primary is out. There might have been some misinformation being given that shifts were not being covered, but that is inaccurate. Gudgeon has reported to the State, Chairman Kirkpatrick and Mayor Corcoran the dates and times when we have not had a legal crew – and that has not occurred since May 12th. We have had over 450 calls for the year and have only missed one and that was on January 3rd. We are filling our trucks with our people – have not had to use Baraboo people to fill crews. We have made the request in advance, but in the end were able to fill crews with our own people.

Sharon had a question regarding the overtime being paid out.

We started out hiring 2 people (David Yardley on January 30<sup>th</sup> and Lori Post on February 1<sup>st</sup>). At that time we still had open shifts that needed to be filled and we didn't have a back-up agreement signed with Baraboo but were still working with them. There is overtime being paid to the full time people. Looking at the cost balance between overtime to our people at \$16.50 an hour for the 12 hour shift vs. \$700 to Baraboo – overtime will be given to our staff. When there are open shifts, we will wait as long as possible for our volunteers first (typically 36 to 48 hours) and if they cannot fill in, the time is given to the full time staff if they are willing to take it and it will be overtime. They have built in overtime because they work at 24 hour shift. With the hiring of Rachel Kerian, we have one full time staff on every day except Wednesday. There have been 5 squad members that have stepped up and said they are willing to fill in the schedule for that day between the 5 of them. We have better coverage. There are shifts open in September and our volunteers are filling in as they may. When it gets closer to the actual day that is open, we have 2 options, give it to Baraboo or pay our staff overtime. And to be cost effective and out of respect to them, the position will be given to our staff rather than Baraboo.

#### EMT Delegation:

EMT Judy Shireman wondering how full time staff will work out if they are working every weekend.

Gudgeon explained that was done by design because all the volunteers originally said that if we were to hire full time staff, they would have to work nights weekends and holidays. She has prepared a schedule that she felt would work. Judy does feel this is an issue that needs to be addressed.

Judy said she and 2 other EMT staff members met with Gudgeon and were told that the paid staff had to work 40 hours a week to have insurance paid for. She said that there are people hired by the county that have rotating shifts and they do not get paid overtime in one week, it goes over to the next week.

It is done by pay period, so why is it different for the EMTs? Kirkpatrick stated it would have to be looked at through the Clerk's office. Judy said it is called the federal rotating system and affects the Sheriff's department, they work 6 days on and 3 days off and they do not get paid overtime for the 6 days they are on. Gudgeon stated the sheriff's department staff is protected status and can work up to 56 hours without being paid overtime. We don't want to have a 72 hour work week for our staff. The county handbook states that an employee has to work 34.99 hours to have insurance paid. When we hired full time staff, they were told they would receive certain benefits and it would be very unfair to now cut their pay and expect them to pay even more for their health insurance.

Full time staff member Rachel Kerian addressed concern Judy had regarding the full time staff working weekends. She said when staff were hired they came into this with their eyes open, realizing that weekends were part of the bargain. Filling crews for weekends has been a weak point with the volunteers for some time. Judy as a volunteer feels like she is being pushed out and not wanted.

Kirkpatrick stated they are working as hard as they can to take care of the service effectively. The purpose of the schedule is not to push out the volunteers.

#### Director's Report:

Gudgeon apologized to committee for receiving the reports from June rather than July in the mail. You were also short the payroll sheet, the revenue sheet and cash on hand report which you have in front of you now. July Municipality report was incorrect. Sylvan had 2 calls that were not listed on count at left side of graph. The graph is correct. Will have corrected sheet for you at the next meeting.

Gudgeon went over monthly report.

We had 59 billable calls in July for a year to date total of 405.

Billed out \$42,464.25 for a year to date total of \$293.43.00.

We received \$17,602.83 in July for a year to date total of \$108,319.28 received on 2015 accounts.

We had 71 calls for service in the month of July. 12 were non-billable and 59 were billable. Of the billable calls, 52 were BLS, 4 ALS and 3 were for special events. 38 will be billed to Medicare, 6 to Medical Assistance, 12 to private insurance and 3 are private pay. Of the 12 non-billable calls, 3 were for lift assist, 2 cancelled calls, 6 no injuries and 1 deceased. Have \$34,531.75 cash on hand as of today, 8/19/15. Bills posted to the ambulance account for July totaled \$25,265.37. Year to date, \$149,984.95.

\$77,650.00 has been received from townships through this date with \$41,250.00 to be collected which will make up the \$118,900 total the townships are to pay the county. Of the 71 calls for service, 0 went to Akan, 0 to Bloom, 4 to Buena Vista, 4 to Dayton, 1 to Eagle, 0 to Henrietta, 1 to Ithaca, 1 to Marshall, 0 to Orion, 2 to the town of Richland, 45 to Richland Center, 0 to Rockbridge, 0 to Willow, 2 to Sylvan, 0 to Boaz, 0 to Yuba. Service calls also include 5 to Pine Valley, 2 transfers, 3 events and 1 mutual aid to assist Lone Rock.

Approve List of Paid Holiday (part of employee handbook):

When we discussed the paid holidays at the last meeting, we said the list could be the same as Pine Valley. Holets made suggestion that we number the attachments as they correspond to the agenda in the future. When Gudgeon went to the Personnel/Finance Committee there was discussion on paid holidays and was decided that instead of giving the paid staff 2 personal days as Pine Valley staff have, they will be given 10 paid holidays. Paid holidays will include: New Year Day, Good Friday, Easter, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the last day before Christmas, Christmas Day and Veterans' Day. Holidays will not include the day after Thanksgiving. This list of paid holidays will be consistent for both paid staff and volunteers. Keller made motion, seconded by Brown – motion carried with 1 dissenting vote.

Approve Rate for Non Transport Calls (non billable calls):

On the listings of data collected each month for non transports, Kirkpatrick does not see a pattern. When the County was doing this alone, we chose not to charge for non transports, but it is up to this committee to make a decision if they wish to charge. Corcoran made motion, seconded by Marshall not to charge the individual, municipality, township or entity for non transport calls. Discussion followed: Fire Department charges \$200 for assisting the ambulance on a call. This comes out of our budget. The Fire Department raised their charge from \$125 and ambulance has not at this time. We do not ask for insurance information when we pick up a patient. We either get this information from the hospital, information in our system if we have had the patient before or by mailing request to the patient for insurance information. Medicaid will pay \$69 for a non transport. Only established rates we have set at this time is the BLS charge of \$650. We are currently billing Medicaid people for non transport at the BLS rate. The "no transport" sheets are also non-billable calls. No transports on the sheet are those that we do not charge anything for at this time. Clary said that if we decide not to charge for non transports, this will also include those that have Medicaid and stop billing them. AYES: Clary, Kirkpatrick, Corcoran, Brown, Brockway, Lingel, Coy, Niemeyer, Palmer, Banker, Marshall, Holets, Nicks, Huffman. NOES: Couey, Chupp, Keller. AYES 14, NOES 3, TOTAL 17. Motion carried. Clary indicated that expenses are paid from the user fees, then if that does not cover all expenses, it comes out of the general fund.

Approve 2016 Contract for Ambulance Services (create district or continue with county):

Question is now do we stay with the County for the second year or end the contract and create a District. We have given you much information over the past 6 months. We are improving and are here to serve you if that is what you want to us do. Last month we gave you a sheet listing the total number of calls in 2014 so that would be the contract cost for 2016. The sheet shows the contract fees per municipality for a total of \$108,450. The county has agreed to honor the rate for the 3 years of \$150 per call. If that is not enough, the county will absorb the difference. Total of last year's contract was \$118,700.

Calls are being covered and there have been lots of progress in the last 6 – 8 months. EMT Rachel Kerian stated that we are reworking policies and protocols, doing rig checks every day so that we are ready for calls. Still will have issues to overcome but we are all working together and moving forward. Members went around the room making comments on the ambulance service, scheduling and costs for municipalities. Originally the contract fees had two options, per capita and per call. We are currently using the per call fee and may look at a per capita fee when 3-year contract period is up. Calls are not being missed and we have an emergency plan in place. As long as we make sure an ambulance responds and provides the quality of service when needed there is no reason to change at this time. Holets made motion, seconded by Palmer to continue with the County for 2016 – motion carried.

Approve Municipalities Contract Amount (based on 2014 calls):

Need the approval of contract amount to municipalities for 2016.

Brown made motion, seconded by Banker to approve 2016 contract amount – motion carried.

Approve Pay Rate Change for 2 employees who have completed probationary period:

David Yardley and Lori Post have successfully completed their 6 month probationary period. Gudgeon has completed their performance evaluations and is recommending that both be promoted to full time status.

Couey made motion, seconded by Huffman to approve promotion to full time status and pay rate change for David Yardley and Lori Post – motion carried.

Meeting has to be held with this committee to discuss the 2016 budget which is to go before the Personnel/Finance committee on Friday the 11th of September.

Next meeting to be held on Thursday, September 3rd at 7:00pm in the County Board Room.

Marshall made motion, seconded by Niemeyer to adjourn – motion carried.

Meeting adjourned 8:42pm.