

Richland County Joint Ambulance Committee

April 19, 2017

Minutes

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

Not Present: Marc Couey, Terrance Jindrick

1. Meeting was called to order at 1903.
2. Notification of the meeting had been made and the agenda was posted.
3. Committee attendance was as noted above, with 17 present.
4. A motion was made by Nicks to approve the agenda as posted. A motion was made to second it (name not recorded).
5. A motion to approve the minutes for the January 18, 2017 meeting was made by Nicks and seconded by Niemeyer.
6. From the EMT Delegation, Cheryl Dull presented everyone with 4 county maps, one that showed the current coverage area for Ambulances serving the townships in the county, two that depicted census data, and one as an overlay of the census data and Ambulance jurisdictions. Judy Shireman spoke about her concerns over the direction of the committee and the future of the service.
7. Mike Koles, Wisconsin Towns Association Executive Director, and Rick Manthe, Wisconsin Towns Association Legal Counsel, spoke about a potential new funding source for ambulance services. Mike stated that it's been recognized that towns are typically either stealing from their transportation budgets, taking from their savings accounts, or bonding for things and backfilling in order to pay for an ambulance service, none of which are financially sound or stable. Mike stated that they have come up with a proposed legislative change to be able to charge similarly to the charge for storm water run-off, which is based off of the amount of storm water run-off rather than by property value. Such a charge would be based on a measurement but they were not exactly sure what it would look like yet. It would also require a law change in order to enact this. Mike stated this would also be able to then capture non-property taxed properties, such as churches.
Rick spoke about a Fire/EMS Collaboration Dividend. See handout for explanation. He stated it would not be creating another governmental oversight entity and could use current policies available so as not to lose local authority to run it. He also recognized towns with split services and stated that they would be able to do a rolling average and would be able to be considered a partner in both. County lines wouldn't matter, as it would be municipal based. Rick discussed how there are five counties in Wisconsin that do a County-Wide charge for a County-run ambulance, however, it's been seen to not always be very effective. He also noted that fees based on per person and per parcel would likely work out to be very similar, so it would be

easier to apply based on the property. Rick also stated that the ambulance would still be able to bill for services and that Fire and EMS could be treated as separate entities but that the system currently only has a solution for Fire and needs to be able to be applied to EMS as well.

There was discussion on the timeline. Mike stated that the first step would be talking with legislators, and then creating a Legislative Reference Bureau Draft, which would take a couple weeks typically. This Draft would then have to circulate around legislators to gain support before it would be drafted into a Bill and a committee could be formed. After the committee, there would need to be a hearing, followed by an executive session and the bill going before the Assembly and Senate floors before being signed into law by the Governor. He stated that they had several bills pass last year, with the shortest time frame being 11 months and the longest being 15 months. He also mentioned that, when there is urgency, it can be done in less than a month, but that is up to the legislators to determine. The group noted that the uncertainty has been seen to cause stress so it appeared to be an urgent matter to them. If it was to pass legislation, Mike stated he felt one could anticipate it taking 18-24 months to establish the system for the Service to utilize, depending upon how the municipalities moved to create it. He stated he felt it was feasible to be in place by the end of 2019. As it is set now, the Memorandum of Understanding between the municipalities and Service would likely change a little but the Collaboration Dividend could apply to this organization. They would also ensure the gateway into the Collaboration Dividend would be wide.

There was discussion on tentatively scheduling a meeting with legislators for the third Wednesday in June (June 21), dependent upon the decision made in the May meeting. There was also discussion regarding a County-Wide system, which the Wisconsin Towns Association representatives felt outlying ambulance services may have to be wrapped in to have it apply. They stated it may be possible to collect the money as a County-Wide service and turn it over to other services but it would need to be researched and they were unsure of counties futures in the ambulance business. They stated they would assist in contacting Senator Marklein's legislative council and the Department of Revenue to determine if it would be able to be applied.

A non-binding straw-poll was conducted via voice vote, calling two questions: Do you want a County-Wide solution? Do you want to pursue the legislation as discussed tonight? The Chair noted that about half wanted a County-Wide and half wished to pursue legislation, with no votes against either. She stated that these two questions would be on the May agenda for an official vote as well as action on updating the contract for next year.

8. The next meeting date will be May 17th at 7pm. A motion was made by Nicks to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Brown. The meeting was adjourned at 2100.