

Richland County Joint Ambulance Committee

May 16, 2018

Minutes

Present: Brian McGraw, Kerry Severson, Justin Lockwood, Mary Rognholt, James Lingel, Marc Couey, Glen Niemeyer, Steve Chupp, Ryan Keller, Gordon Palmer, Bob Holets, Jean Nicks, Terrance Jindrlick, Darin Gudgeon.

Not Present: Mike Kaufman, Verlin Coy, Scott Banker.

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 13 present.
4. Gudgeon opened elections for the Committee Chair. Palmer nominated Kerry Severson. Chupp nominated Marc Couey. Couey nominated Brian McGraw. Couey declined his nomination and paper ballots were cast. McGraw received seven votes. Severson received five votes. Couey received one vote. McGraw was elected Chair.
5. McGraw opened elections for the Committee Vice Chair. Palmer nominated Kerry Severson. A motion was made by Keller to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Severson, seconded by Nicks. Motion carried. The ballots were closed; Severson was elected Vice Chair.
6. The Secretary appointment was discussed. Gudgeon stated that traditionally the Secretary is the secretary of the office, however, the group has the ability to appoint whomever they prefer. Nicks nominated Amber Burch as the Secretary. Holets made a motion to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Burch, seconded by Keller. Nominations were closed; Burch was appointed Secretary.
7. A motion was made by Palmer to approve the agenda as posted. Couey seconded it. The agenda was approved.
8. The minutes for the February 21, 2018 meeting were discussed. A motion was made by Holets and seconded by Niemeyer to approve the minutes as presented. The minutes were approved.
9. For public comment, Sandy Palmer encouraged the representatives to report back to their respective municipalities what takes place in the meetings, as there are still many that are unaware. Sharon Schmitz reminded the Committee that the next week would be EMS week and encouraged those present to thank the EMTs.
10. From the EMT delegation, Judy Shireman and Kim Clark spoke to the Committee about the Richland County Ambulance Association's Pancake Breakfast scheduled for Sunday, May 20th from 8a-1p at the Community Center. All proceeds raised by the Association go to the Service for equipment upgrades.
11. A. Gudgeon spoke to the Committee regarding a recent Richland County Board Meeting where the minutes stated there was a deficit in the Ambulance account to be covered by the County. Gudgeon stated that in 2015 a segregated account was created, moving the Ambulance funds from the general fund (Fund 10) to a separate fund (Fund 51). When Jeanne Rice retired as the

Secretary in 2017, her benefits were paid out of the Fund 10 Ambulance account, as the County Board Chair felt that since Rice had maxed out her sick time prior to the creation of the Joint Ambulance Committee and Fund 51, her benefits should be paid out of the Fund 10 Ambulance account. Therefore, it was Fund 10 that was deficient. Fund 51, overseen by the Joint Ambulance Committee had finished the year out as reported in previous meetings.

B. The Revenue/Expense reports were discussed. It was noted that Cvikota had not been paid on the first two months' reports. Gudgeon explained that this is due to complications in the invoice payments. While the Ambulance is in good standing with Cvikota, payments are currently being held per Cvikota staff until it gets sorted out. Gudgeon stated that this complication is being worked out with the president of Cvikota and that the issue is between the Clerk's office and Cvikota. The Committee decided that if their explanation is sufficient and the problem resolved soon, the issue could be considered resolved; otherwise, the Committee would have Joel Kent of Cvikota call in to the next meeting. Lockwood asked for clarification regarding the contract payments. Gudgeon stated that the contracts with the municipalities are based on a 4-year call average with a charge of \$170 per call. Some municipalities pay once a year, some twice, and the City pays the first three months in one sum and then each month individually thereafter. At this point in the year, the majority of municipalities have paid in full their contract. At the end of the year, there are large payments due for the vehicle, workman's compensation, and medical liability insurance; otherwise bills are similar month to month. The Aladtec bill is for the scheduling program. The difference in salaries is due to crew overtime and full-time employee Lori Post going on medical leave of absence. She had injured her knee off duty, so the only cost to the Ambulance Service is her health insurance as long as she continues to pay her portion.

C. The Cvikota Billing report and payer-mix were both reviewed with no discussion.

D. The Call Data Report was reviewed. Gudgeon pointed out that the "No transport provided" category are what is referred to as "On Scene Care" by Cvikota. Gudgeon also noted that this data is for February through April. The question came if other services have had to cover any calls for the Service. Gudgeon stated that there were two back-up calls that Baraboo was asked to cover as there was only a primary crew available at the time of the call.

12. Palmer reported to the Committee regarding the Subcommittee findings since the previous Committee meeting. He suggested the Committee members read through the minutes. He then spoke to the goals of the Subcommittee, stating that at the end of the last contract, many people worried signing a new contract would just put the Committee in the same position again once the new contract was ending. Palmer stated that the Subcommittee's goal is to keep the Committee from that position of an unsure future again, suggesting that the Committee have a decision made by the end of 2018 as to what direction to go so that 2019 can be spent preparing for it. He also informed the Committee regarding the state of finances and the expense of forming a district. He stated it is good to have long range goals, however the group must be realistic about its ability to generate enough revenue to form a district. Nicks recognized that the funds aren't there for a district right now and overall she's been satisfied with the service now that calls have not been missed and it seems more accountable. Funding is the obstacle. Couey stated that since he had been on the Committee previously representing Eagle Township,

he feels that things have changed since his last meeting. He commended the group for their work. Where he previously felt it was a mess, he stated it feels like it was sorted out. He felt it didn't make as much sense to go to a district now as it did before. He stated he was in support of starting work on another contract. Palmer stated the group has discussed and is looking into ways to generate more funds rather than municipalities having to cover their contract fees with money from their road funds. McGraw stated that the Subcommittee has also discussed longer term challenges such as replacement of ambulances and staff recruitment and retention. He stated that EMS is changing from volunteer-based to full-time career, so the ways to recruit and retain are changing. It was recognized that the pay and benefits need to be competitive, as people leave for better opportunities, and that the facility won't work in the long run for the Service. There was discussion regarding going paramedic, which would increase the revenue and assist the Service in getting more transports, however, Gudgeon pointed out to the group that in order to take a transfer, another crew would still need to be available to cover 911 calls. At this time, it is hard to take transfers due to the lack of available staff. Being a paramedic service is most useful for transfers due to the medications that can be given. Transfers also get better Medicare payment due to the base rate plus loaded mileage being paid and little battle with insurance, as there is a written prescription from the doctor for it. Couey stated that because the Service is able to stand alone, the County Board will be more likely to support it. It was noted that the Subcommittee is working on possible sources of revenue, looking for ways in State Statute that the Department of Revenue would approve, and that there would likely be more to report on in future Committee meetings.

13. Gudgeon informed the group that there are often good ambulances available for purchase but on a short time line. In order to be able to purchase such an ambulance, there needs to be a system in place if the Committee would be interested in one. Gudgeon was seeking a process for preapproval. There was discussion regarding who should be included in the process to ensure the ambulance is worth buying and a set amount not to be exceeded would need to be determined. Gudgeon stated that for the purposes of State inspections, all services keep maintenance records. The Service's ambulances are taken to either Jones or Fillback as they are able to work on emergency vehicles. He also mentioned knowledge of a local ambulance service that may be replacing an ambulance in the near future and has stated they would offer it to this Service first if interested. He stated that it appeared most are sold for less than \$35,000. He was unsure of the amount in the new ambulance fund but believed it to be near \$16,000, which would make a difference of \$20,000. Holets asked how it might affect the budget, which the Committee determined would be hard to know with the fluctuations in call volume. Gudgeon suggested the Committee set a dollar amount to be approved up to, and when an ambulance is purchased, payment could be taken from the new ambulance fund and the remainder out of the operating, thereby reducing the potential for money not spent being taken out of the operating fund where it may be needed and left in the new ambulance account. The Committee agreed to making up to \$20,000 from the operating budget available for the purchase. As for the process of approval, the Committee determined that there should be either the Chair or Vice Chair as well as someone from the Committee who is mechanically inclined. Niemeyer stated that he would be willing to help. McGraw stated that he would be willing to be involved as well. It was

also suggested a Service member be involved, with Doug Hill being nominated. Holets made a motion to authorize an additional \$20,000 be earmarked to combine with the current balance of the new ambulance account and have a process put into place that, should an ambulance be identified for consideration by the four persons previously identified, they should consider and, if in agreement, could purchase said ambulance immediately as allowed by the Richland County Board of Directors. The motion was seconded by Keller. Motion carried.

It was discussed that the County Board may preauthorize such a purchase with an appropriate resolution, as other department heads have been granted. It was also identified that the Richland County Ambulance Association may be able to donate an amount to the purchase of the ambulance, however, the specific amount is unknown at this time. Shireman and Clark stated that they could take it to the next Association meeting in June.

14. This item was tied with #13 and was therefore included in discussion and action on that item.
15. Prior to the close of the meeting, Gudgeon informed the Committee that due to the construction and bridge closures, the Richland County Ambulance Service is relying on mutual aid partners to assist in covering some of the affected area to ensure that an ambulance is able to get to a caller faster and safer. Therefore Hillsboro Area Ambulance Service and Cazenovia Area Rescue Squad will be covering parts of the northern territory. This is just temporary until the bridges are reopened. They will bill the patients and will not be charging the Service. The next meeting is scheduled for August 15th. If anyone has items for the agenda, it is requested that they are emailed to the Chair. Nicks made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Holets. The meeting was adjourned at 2046.