

Richland County Joint Ambulance Committee:
Strategic Planning for EMS Subcommittee
July 18, 2018
Minutes

Present: Brian McGraw, Gordon Palmer, Bob Holets, Darin Gudgeon

Not Present: Ryan Keller, Justin Lockwood

1. Meeting was called to order at 1930.
2. Notification of the meeting had been made and the agenda was posted.
3. Committee attendance was as noted above, with a quorum.
4. A motion was made by McGraw to approve the minutes of the June 20 2017 Subcommittee meeting, seconded by Holets. The motion carried and the previous meeting's minutes were approved as presented.
5. It was noted that Item 8 on the Agenda was too vague. A motion was made by McGraw to approve the a Agenda striking Item 8. It was seconded by Holets. The a Agenda was approved.
6. Palmer reported on the meeting between Shannon Clark with Richland Electric Cooperative (REC) and Brian McGraw and Gordon Palmer regarding the possibility of purchasing the REC Building previously toured. Clark reportedly stated that they would prefer to sell it to this group and that they are not in a rush to sell it. They would be willing to have a written agreement if requested. Clark was informed that this meeting was just a discussion at the subcommittee level with many steps to go before anything could be considered official. The yearly operating expenses for the building were requested but were not immediately available due to personnel vacations. The building was quoted to be 80 by 90 ft. Clark was informed that the building, should it be purchased, would likely house both EMS and Emergency Management, with the possibility of other departments utilizing space as well. Clark advised there was also a house and lot adjoining the REC Building that is owned by REC. At this time, the plan is to have it rezoned, tear the house down, and turn the space into a parking lot. Palmer was unsure how long it has been vacant.
Clark quoted a few prices with that considered. For the entire building including the rezoned lot as a parking lot and if REC carried the debt, the cost would be \$700,000. If a different funding source were to be used, for the same property, it would cost \$600,000. If only a portion of the building were to be purchased, with the current public entry area remaining as REC property, the cost would be \$450,000. Gudgeon stated that, if the grants and loan being looked into come through, it would be wise to pursue the \$600,000 option. He estimated that the grants and loan

would need to make up at least 75-80% of the total cost for the Service to be able to afford it. There was discussion regarding the adjacent lot with the home and the potential to have that remain as it is and sell it. Palmer stated that Clark told them the building has state of the art security and fiber optics. It has a "50 year" rubber roof that they will be spending \$17,000 to repair in a corner. There are also four furnaces, with two being only two years old. Asbestos has been removed; no lead paint had been used in the facility, and it has all LED lighting. The building has not been assessed or appraised but the group estimated it would likely be quoted around \$1 million.

7. Gudgeon updated the members on the two grants previously discussed. He stated both the USDA –Rural Development and the Foundation grant representatives that he spoke with were informed that he was waiting on committee approval before officially submitting anything, and the representatives of both stated that an application at this time would act as more of a placeholder at this point in the process. Gudgeon is currently working with the USDA representative on demographics for the area served, which would determine the balance of grant versus loan. They would then schedule a meeting with the decision makers, both Joint Ambulance Committee and Finance & Personnel, to go over the process and terms. Emergency Management would be able to pay rent for space used, as it is an allowable expense. The building should be considered the same as the purchase of an ambulance in the case that the Service became a District. Minutes from meetings regarding purchasing discussions would need to be reviewed, but there was a consensus that an MOU would be best between the County and municipalities for this type of purchase. As EMS continues to shift from the public safety sector into healthcare, the group must ensure that there is room to grow should the need arise. A resolution would need to be drafted to set up a contract to show that the County would not be on the hook for payments but that the Joint Ambulance Committee and the municipalities represented would be. The group discussed how the building would be good for EMS and Emergency Management and good for the County in providing redundancy through backup systems. Gudgeon has spoken with MIS, who likely would backup their system in the data room. This could be a great selling point for the County.
Gudgeon stated that the USDA grant/loan accepts applications year-round and awards come out quarterly. He is hoping to know the amount the Service would qualify for by the end of August, and interest rates are set at the time the loan is taken out. The interest rates change quarterly.
At the August meeting of the Joint Ambulance Committee, Gudgeon will seek permission to continue working on and submit the grant and loan applications. This action will not commit the Committee to accept a loan or grant, or to acquire property. The Subcommittee will continue gathering the information needed including the operating expenses for the REC building.
Gudgeon informed the subcommittee members that August is the start of working on budgets. The EMS budget will go before the County for approval on September 21, and he will need approval from the Joint Ambulance Committee prior to that. A special JAC meeting will need to be held in September for this purpose. The Joint Ambulance Committee agenda for August 15th is expected to include introduction and discussion about the REC Building; introduction, discussion, and action on the potential grant applications; necessary handbook changes such as the pay scale, vacation accrual, and overtime due to vacation; and a tour of the current facilities

either as a part of the meeting or offered at the conclusion of the meeting. A meeting in September would include budget approval and other items as needed.

8. This item was removed from the agenda.
9. The next subcommittee meeting is tentatively scheduled for August 22. The purpose of this meeting will be to assist in determining the budget for 2019. Holets made a motion to adjourn, seconded by McGraw. The meeting was adjourned at 2043.