

Richland County Joint Ambulance Committee

May 22, 2019

Minutes

Present: Brian McGraw, Kerry Severson, Mary Rognholt, James Lingel, Marc Couey, Verlin Coy, Glen Niemeyer, Steve Chupp, Brian Clarson, Gordon Palmer, Doug Duhr, Bob Holets, Jean Nicks, Darin Gudgeon.

Not Present: Mike Kaufman, city representative, Scott Banker, Terrance Jindrick.

1. Meeting was called to order at 1805.
2. Notification of the meeting had been made, and the agenda was posted.
3. Committee attendance was as noted above, with 10 members present at the start of the meeting, with three others joining as the meeting progressed.
4. A motion was made by Severson to approve the agenda as posted. Couey seconded it. Motion Carried; the agenda was approved.
5. USDA-Rural Development Representative Jillian Thomas was in attendance to present their loan program to the Committee. McGraw informed her of the work being done and stated that there are no commitments or appraisals for buildings being considered at this time. Thomas stated that the first step in the program will be to determine how much the Service would be eligible for. She stated that there are two loan committees that the application would go before, one State and Federal. The goal is to find a way to make the loan fit the need. They prefer that applicants put money toward the project but it is not required. Any grant or financial gift can be used, depending on how it came in, and all information will go through the Joint Ambulance Committee. One individual would need to be identified as the legal signatory for the Committee. Once the application is submitted, it would go to the loan committee, where funds would be obligated to the project. A letter of conditions would then be provided to the Committee for approval followed by any construction or contracts to build or renovate as established through the competitive bid process. Part of the loan process will be to look at the memorandum between the County and municipalities to ensure there is a dissolution clause. As far as the loan, interest rates may change quarterly but once a loan is established, the rates are locked in for the life of the loan. They offer a 40-year loan though the Committee wouldn't have to borrow for that, nor are there fees associated with paying it off early. In order to determine the affordability, a financial feasibility study must be conducted by a CPA, which the Committee would be responsible to pay. A preliminary architectural report should be conducted to look at the building, any needs to bring up to code and operational need, and the costs associated with those needs. It was noted that it is better to spend a little money to make the building as desired for operations than to spend less and be left with a building that doesn't function as needed. For the application, the USDA would need a five-year financial history, documentation of the project as a whole, and an environmental assessment. The Committee would also need an interim lender for the construction needs and after completion, the USDA loan would be

used to pay off the bank loan. The 40-year loan product makes payments more affordable and ensure there are less surprises down the road. Some groups working through the application project hire a consultant but she did not foresee a need for that with the Committee so long as all parties were able to commit to monthly meetings. It was again pointed out that the Joint Ambulance is a committee of Richland County and would ultimately need County involvement throughout this process as well. As part of the financial review, an A122 audit needs to be completed in order to receive federal funds. USDA will also need letters from local banks for their rates to show that the USDA is not taking business from a local lender. She stated that it is typically a two-month process to determine what it is going to cost, and the USDA has a checklist to ensure everything is prepared for the application to be submitted. An application does not commit funds; the signed letter of conditions would. It is important to note that in order to have the application completed, there will be costs accumulated. At the conclusion of this discussion, Thomas stated that she will stay in communication with Gudgeon if any other questions arise.

6. The minutes for the previous meeting were silently reviewed. A motion was made by Holets and seconded by Palmer to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried; the minutes were approved.
7. There were no comments from the public.
8. There were no comments from the EMT delegation.
9. A. The consolidated reports from February, March, and April were reviewed with minimal discussion.  
B. The Cvikota report was reviewed with clarification of terms for the new members.  
C. The quarterly call summary from February 1 through April 30 was reviewed; Gudgeon noted that only 1.62% ran emergent to the hospital. He explained that an ambulance responds to the call based on dispatch cards created by the Medical Director, EMS, and Dispatch but response from the scene to the hospital is determined by the ambulance crew after all other treatment options are exhausted and the only remaining option is rapid transport.
10. The Subcommittee minutes were provided, and Palmer thanked Rognholt for bringing another building for sale to the attention of the subcommittee. A tour took place followed by a meeting that included discussion over the pros and cons of the buildings being considered. As far as funding a building purchase, it was noted that nothing had been heard back from the Joan Woodman Orton McCullum Foundation. McGraw informed the committee of a meeting scheduled with the Richland Hospital CEO and key staff members to inform the hospital of the goals as set forth by the committee and the work being done to expand the Service to include providing transfer services on a regular basis. McGraw invited members to attend but contact him prior to the meeting to ensure attendance is compliant with County rules. Gudgeon also updated the Committee on the potential purchase of a new used ambulance, stating that a meeting is being scheduled with the group as agreed upon in a previous committee meeting to go inspect the ambulance for sale. It does not have a lift but could have one installed at additional expense.
11. It had been recommended to the Committee Chair that, in order to determine if it is financially feasible to staff the Service with a backup crew in order to provide more transfers, the

committee should consider hiring an analyst. Gudgeon spoke with Southwest Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SWWRPC) regarding if they would be able to conduct an internal cost analysis to determine if the committee would net money or lose it. Troy Maggied of SWWRPC has requested a meeting to discuss the extent of the report being requested and quoted \$60/hr for the work to be done. The committee could expect the report to be presented at the November meeting. Members were invited to join in the meeting, observing County rules regarding committee member attendance. Any proposed contract would be brought before the Committee for approval. The information that this analysis would provide would ensure that decisions are being made based on real numbers instead of speculation.

12. An audited report has not become available at this time. However, based on the information provided by the Clerk's reports and the comparison of the Service's wages versus starting wages around the area, Gudgeon recommended the Committee consider moving the wages up at least one step based on the wage study effective June 1, 2019. This would move starting wages from 12.73/hr to 13.02/hr. This would move full-time and part-time employees up approximately 33¢ from their current wage. The wage increase wasn't specifically planned for in the budget because the Committee wanted to see how the year finished. Gudgeon also recommended the committee increase wages for the paid-on-call staff by 25¢. Couey asked if there was a way to get to a more competitive wage faster than by doing one step at a time, as he felt that it was important to be aggressive. Gudgeon stated that he could bring a breakdown of the wage increases following the increments set by the County Board. Any wage increases would have to be presented to the County Board for approval. It was noted that competitive wages and the purchase of a new building would need to coincide with getting more transfers in order to best balance the budget. It was also recognized that there was not a limit set for number of times in a year that a wage increase could be proposed, therefore the Committee would not be locked in on this decision and could therefore vote on the wage increase in this meeting and could increase again in the year if desired. Severson made the motion to move wages up on step, seconded by Couey. Motion carried. Gudgeon will make this request to the Richland County Finance and Personnel Committee. It was requested that Gudgeon bring wage breakdowns to the next meeting, including numbers for step 8 (final wage step identified).
13. There were two new members present at this meeting: Brian Clarson for Orion Township and Doug Duhr for Rockbridge Township. There is also set to be a new member from the City, however they were not present to be recognized. Holets made a motion to recognize these two members as the townships' respective appointed representatives, seconded by Nicks. Motion carried.
14. The Subcommittee, as previously established, consists of five members and meets outside of Committee meetings to vet information and identify issues to be presented to the Committee. The five previous members were volunteers from the Committee. Two of the five members have since left the Committee, thereby leaving vacancies on the Subcommittee as well. The Committee appeared in general consensus that the two new members could also be volunteers from the Committee. McGraw made a call for volunteers, which Rognholt and Niemeyer answered. Couey made a motion to officially add Rognholt and Niemeyer to the Subcommittee, seconded by Nicks. Motion carried.

15. McGraw informed the Committee that he had met with the Finance and Personnel Committee regarding interest-bearing accounts and learned that the County already has all funds in such accounts so, while the Joint Ambulance Committee is allowed to establish as many non-lapsing accounts as needed, they will not be eligible to be placed into interest-bearing accounts. The accounts managed by the Committee and any other department within the County are managed separately on paper but are in essence one account. Couey stated that he can look into the information provided to McGraw.
16. The next meeting was scheduled for June 26<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. While this meeting is not in the contract, it is necessary for establishing the 2020 budget. If anyone has items for the agenda, it is requested that they are emailed to the Chair. Holets made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Severson. The motion carried; meeting adjourned at 20:15.