

Richland County Joint Ambulance Committee
January 15, 2020
Minutes

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

Not Present: Scott Wallace.

1. Meeting was called to order at 1900.
2. Notification of the meeting had been made, and the agenda was posted.
3. Committee attendance was as noted above, with 15 members present.
4. A motion was made by Severson to approve the agenda as posted. Couey seconded it. Motion Carried; the agenda was approved.
5. A motion was made by Holets and seconded by Nicks to approve the minutes of the previous meeting as presented. Motion carried; the minutes were approved.
6. There were no comments from the public.
7. There were no comments from the EMT delegation.
8. Niemeyer explained to the Committee about the subcommittee's analysis of facility requirements, recognizing the need for six bedrooms, accessible restrooms and showers, and other items as documented on the handout. McGraw stated that there had been community members who believed the cost to put up a facility such as a pole shed on a plot of land would cost a considerably less amount and did not understand the scope of what was needed. Many in the community do not recognize the need for living quarters and work stations, etc. A pole shed simply would not be able to meet the needs of the Service. Holets also added that in order to compete with other services for employees, the facilities need to be such that a person would want to work in that environment. Severson asked how many offices would be needed. If the director's position would eventually split from Emergency Management, the space needs would need to be considered for that as well. Gudgeon stated that a similar co-location of the offices can be found in Dane County, where EMS and Emergency Management are within the same facility. Severson also posed the question as to whether the Service would be willing to share that space if and when a District would be formed. Nicks stated that there would still be a need for that relationship to exist so sharing a building should not be problematic. McGraw stated that the only foreseeable issue he noted was if the growth of the Service was so much as to require EMS utilization of the space, however, that did not appear to be issue for some time. Gudgeon stated administrative growth at that level did not seem to be an issue as much as potentially operationally, though it appeared unlikely that the operation would overwhelm the facility out of space. Palmer questioned if having a new facility meant the need for a custodian. Gudgeon stated that full-time/part-time staff would have chores to keep the building clean. Snow removal would likely need to be addressed but there are possibilities there to have that

handled as well. Niemeyer requested Gudgeon explain to committee members the events after a crew returned from an ambulance call. Gudgeon stated that the crew will typically clean the ambulance at the hospital and return to the garage to wash the rig, restock supplies, and write the report documenting details of the call for service. A typical call within the City will take approximately an hour and 45 minutes to complete the call, clean-up, and documentation. With the current set-up, crew members have to take home any bio-hazard contaminated personal laundry, which spreads potential contamination into responders' homes and is unacceptable. Also, in order to park the ambulance, an additional crew member must spot for the driver to ensure there is no damage to the ambulance or garage structure. Coy asked if the REC building would be able to accommodate washing the ambulance inside the bay. Gudgeon stated that one bay was deeper so it may be able to be used for that purpose. McGraw asked if there was anything that needed to be listed or amended to fit the Committee's understanding of the needs. The importance of a few items was highlighted, including the benefits of having an exercise room. Such a space not only encourages staff but also can be opened up to other public safety partners which elsewhere has proven to develop stronger relationships through the opportunity to interact outside of stressful situations. McGraw stated that having this explanation of the space needs will be helpful in educating the County Board members and other members of the public. Gudgeon added that the language in the proposed bond has the \$600,000 to go toward an "Ambulance Garage" but the list shows that it is much more than just a space to park ambulances. The benefits of this facility would go far beyond just the ambulance service boundaries with the offices of Emergency Management and spaces for Salvation Army and the local amateur radio operators group as well as potentially other community organizations. Severson made a motion to approve the facility requirements as presented, seconded by Palmer. Motion carried.

9. McGraw introduced discussion on the preferred building option by first explaining the need for such a decision to be made, stating that the USDA-RD grant could potentially provide \$200,000 to the project but in order to proceed with an application, a preferred location would need to be identified to write the application for. After looking at the building options as they have arisen thus far, the committee generally recognized that the REC building was the best fit. In order to know if the quoted price of \$600,000 was fair for that building purchase, an appraisal would need to be conducted. It was also recognized that if the space would need to be assessed to know if it met the needs of the Service as outlined earlier and estimates of necessary improvements and costs would need to be determined. A future step will be to send out a request for bids to have someone analyze the space needs and costs to know if a particular building will meet the needs and better ensure no surprises later on. Gudgeon stated that there had been a space needs study done of the Courthouse several years prior that may be of some use in understanding needs. Couey asked if the Committee had ruled out constructing a new building. Gudgeon pointed the Committee's attention to the Building Construction Comparison handout, stating that while it is an option, it may prove to be unaffordable. Couey recognized the urgent need as well as the need to pursue the best option for the cost. Clarson pointed out that the City has a building inspector that may be of some use in the process. It was identified that the blue prints of the REC building would be beneficial as well as an appraisal to know

value. Duhr stated that he had some familiarity with the REC building and noted that there may be complications to remodeling such as concrete walls that may not be seen in an inspection. After some discussion, Holets made a motion to acknowledge the REC building as the preferred location unless anything should show otherwise, seconded by Schmitz. Motion carried.

10. Based upon the previous vote, discussion was opened on the need for an appraisal. Gudgeon stated that he had contacted three different appraisal companies. The first quoted a price of \$750-\$1000. The second stated that they would not be able to conduct the appraisal as the building is estimated to cost more than \$250,000 and therefore required a certified general appraiser. The third never returned the calls. Clarson made a motion to have the first company conduct the appraisal; motion seconded by Palmer. Motion carried.
11. The USDA-RD grant was discussed, with the goal of an application being completed for submission by the end of February. Time is of the essence, as the funding is limited. The application would need to be approved through both State and Federal loan committees. The appraisal should be completed within two weeks. In order for the USDA-RD grant to be successful, the house that is currently on the REC property would need to no longer be standing and be considered previously disturbed ground. Jindrick asked if a maximum project cost had been identified to know when such a project would out of reach. At this time, no maximum cost had been set. Couey pointed out that the bond amount of \$600,000 for the building was not spent within the three-year time frame, those funds could be used for other projects included on the bond such as roads or dams. The Committee was reminded of the need to reach out to their County Board representative to explain the need for the building purchase and value to all county residents. Gudgeon also reminded the Committee about the application to the Joan Woodman Orton McCollum Foundation; they are waiting until a project is presented to them to determine any granted funds to be given. After discussion, general consensus was to continue working to complete an application for the USDA-RD grant.
12. Nicks made a motion to adjourn the meeting; motion seconded by Couey. The motion carried; meeting adjourned at 20:26. The next regularly scheduled meeting is set for May 20, 2020.