

Richland County Joint Ambulance Committee

May 19, 2021

Minutes

Present: Brian McGraw, Kerry Severson, Marc Couey, Todd Coppernoll, Sharon Schmitz, Mary Rognholt, James Lingel, Verlin Coy, Doug Duhr, Bob Holets, Jean Nicks via Zoom, Terrance Jindrick, Darin Gudgeon.

Not Present: Glen Niemeyer, Steve Chupp, Brian Clarson, David Jelinek.

1. Meeting was called to order at 19:07.
2. Notification of the meeting had been made, and the agenda was posted.
3. Committee attendance was as noted above, with 13 members present in person and via Zoom. Coppernoll had recently been appointed to represent Richland Center, however the Committee appointment list must be updated to reflect this change prior to him being able to officially vote on any item. County Board member Gary Manning was also in attendance.
4. A motion was made by Couey to approve the agenda as posted. Schmitz seconded it. Motion Carried; the agenda was approved.
5. A motion was made by Holets and seconded by Severson 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 at this time from the EMT delegation.
8. A. Gudgeon extended thanks to County Clerk Kalish and Accounting Supervisor Bell for their assistance on the completion of the fiscal reports for the Committee to review. For the month of December, there was \$50,162.31 in revenue with \$38,762.11 in expenditures leaving an end balance of \$163,766.79 for 2020. Gudgeon noted that there were three pay periods in the month of December. This end balance also still includes the \$20,000 that the Committee had voted to move to the new ambulance fund. For January 2021, there was \$75,850.87 in revenue with 29,302.81 in expenditures, leaving an end balance of \$210,314.85 on January 31st. February had \$21,085.02 in revenue with \$34,529.14 in expenditures, leaving an end balance of \$196,870.73 on February 28th. In the expenditures, Hallada Motors had done repair work on Unit 34 (2003) to rebuild the suspension and Unit 35 (2008) to fix an injector issue. For March, there was \$86,692.19 in revenue and \$30,406.96 in expenditures, leaving an end balance of \$253,155.97 on March 31st. April had \$46,880.00 in revenue and \$35,636.81 in expenditures, with an end balance of \$264,399.16 on April 30th. It was noted that the City pays the first three months in one lump sum in March and then monthly for the remainder of the year. First Responder groups are still eligible for \$1,000 donation upon requests; no requests have been received at this time. However, it was noted that one ambulance service had requested funds as had previously been available to them. The request was received by the Clerk's Office and had not been communicated to the Director prior to being paid.
B. The payer mix as provided by Cvikota was reviewed, which Gudgeon noted showed 69.2% of charges were billed to Medicare and 14.3% of charges were billed to Medicaid. The billing report for January 1 through April 30 was reviewed showing a total of 319 calls billed with \$234,166.10 in charges, \$77,489.10 in payments, and \$97,386.59 in write-offs/allowances for the year.

C. From February 1 through April 30, there were 272 calls for service. At this point in the year, call volume has exceeded each of the previous four years. 5.51% of the 272 calls were transported emergent to the hospital. 247 of the calls were 911 calls, while 24 were transports and one was a planned standby to assist law enforcement. Municipality breakdowns are not included in this report.

9. There was no Subcommittee meeting since the previous Joint Ambulance Committee.
10. McGraw informed the Committee that several weeks earlier, Couey had contacted him stating the REC Building had dropped in price. Couey had contacted Bob Simpson, who stated that he would pay \$200,000 toward the purchase of that building for the Emergency Services Facility. McGraw contacted Shannon Clark with the REC who confirmed the price dropped from \$550,000 to \$350,000. McGraw contacted Simpson who also confirmed a commitment to provide the donation as stated. McGraw reminded the Committee that when the REC Building had previously been considered, there was an estimated \$400,000 deficit. With the reduction in price and the addition of the donation, that gap had considerably closed. Simpson urged the Committee to reconsider this building. McGraw spoke with Gudgeon and County Administrator Langreck about the situation. Jewell was contacted to put the new construction project on hold and determine if the REC Building would now be a viable option. A basic floor plan was drawn up and a cost estimate was determined to be \$591,384 (including purchase and donation). At this time, it appears it is financially feasible to purchase and remodel the REC Building into an Emergency Services Facility. However, McGraw noted that the \$600,000 bonded by the County has had money drawn from it to pay incurred expenses thus far including legal fees incurred by the City for development agreement as well as expenses for engineering services completed by Jewell. An estimated \$25,000 has been spent. McGraw also stated that he would like to see an assessment of the heating and cooling, electrical, plumbing, and roof systems prior to purchase to ensure the needs will be met and anticipate replacement budgets moving forward. An estimate was received for \$1,200 to inspect the HVAC system. Couey stated that he was concerned if there was not progress on the facility soon, the bonded funds may begin to be moved to other projects. Gudgeon pointed out that the majority of the building is turn-key with minimal work needed. Most of the remodel will be to the garage. A shower and sprinkler system will also be necessary. The third major project would be the demolition of existing walls and construction of the four additional bedrooms. The meeting room would be able to be turned into another office if the need arose. The only data ports that would need to be added would be in the new bedrooms. The building also has a full, dry basement that could be used for storage as well as functioning as a public emergency shelter. Schmitz stated that she showed Simpson the floor plan, and he approved. McGraw stated that a tour was done with Richland County MIS to determine technology needs. It was recognized that most of the IT wiring needed is in place and would only need to be temporarily moved during construction. It was noted that REC would retain a small hut measuring approximately 200sqft in the northwest corner of the property. There was discussion regarding the house previously included in the offer, but REC has not given a definitive answer regarding if that is to be included. The house, it was noted, is not livable and the lot is too small to build another home on. Gary Manning stated a donor may come forward to assist in the demolition of the house. McGraw stated that further conversations would be had regarding the house as well as some furnishings but this would be discussed after terms on the

building itself were settled. Gudgeon stated that parking for responders would be in the small parking in the southwest corner or in the alley. Manning stated in his conversation with Simpson, both felt the location was ideal for responders and the community. Holets agreed. Couey voiced his support. Gudgeon stated issues with pedestrian concerns can be avoided through policy and training. He stated his appreciation to all who had helped make this project possible. It was recognized that the cost-estimate did not include further design services nor construction observation.

11. There is a contingency in the budget of \$57,572 for the project. If that was consumed in the renovations, there would be about a \$50,000 shortfall. The Committee recognized this deficit may be covered by funds in the Service operations budget or further donations could be solicited. It was noted that community members may be prepared to donate funds to the project once they learn the project had been committed to. There is also still an application with the Joan Woodman Orton McCullum Foundation. Rognholt stated that if the project was going to be done, it needed to be done soon. Rognholt made a motion to recommend to the County Board to approve the acquisition of the REC Building to renovate for use as an Emergency Services Facility, seconded by Couey. Motion carried by voice vote. The County's Interim Corp Counsel has been involved in the project. Gudgeon hoped to have it on the Finance and Personnel Committee agenda in two weeks followed by the County Board in June. If Finance and Personnel voted to recommend it to the County Board, Gudgeon will work with Corp Counsel and Simpson to ensure all is ready for the County Board meeting. The building would be purchased by the County and be County property; the Ambulance Service is a County-run service. McGraw asked the Committee's wishes on further inspection of HVAC, plumbing, electrical, and roof. Couey stated the County has had recent roof inspections conducted. He would look into it and give McGraw contact information. Severson stated that work should be done to ensure the building is sufficient. McGraw stated that necessary corrections are easier to be made during this phase of a project than later so long as they are known. Coppernoll pointed out that if one was to buy a house, a proper inspection would be conducted. Duhr stated he had done work in the building in the 1990s, noting that much of the wiring is in conduit however may need to be grounded. He estimated this would be a simple process. Schmitz made a motion to approve inspection of the HVAC, plumbing, electrical, and roof with costs not to exceed \$5,000. Rognholt seconded the motion. Motion carried by voice vote.
12. Severson made a motion to adjourn the meeting; motion seconded by Couey. The motion carried; the meeting was adjourned at 20:15. The next meeting is scheduled for July 21st with the expectation of discussion on the building project as well as 2022 budget.