

Richland County Joint Ambulance Committee

July 21, 2021

Minutes

Present: Brian McGraw, Kerry Severson, Marc Couey, Sharon Schmitz, Mary Rognholt, James Lingel, Verlin Coy, Glen Niemeyer, David Jelinek, Jean Nicks, Terrance Jindrick, Darin Gudgeon.

Not Present: Todd Coppernoll, Steve Chupp, Brian Clarson, Doug Duhr, Tim Willis.

1. Meeting was called to order at 19:00.
2. Notification of the meeting had been made, and the agenda was posted.
3. Committee attendance was as noted above, with 11 members present in person.
4. A motion was made by Jelinek to approve the agenda as posted. Schmitz seconded it. Motion Carried; the agenda was approved.
5. A motion was made by Severson and seconded by Jindrick 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. Bob Holets submitted his resignation from representing the Town of Willow. At this time, the Committee recognizes the following people as voting members of the Joint Ambulance Committee: Marc Couey and Kerry Severson, County Board; Todd Coppernoll and Sharon Schmitz, Richland Center; Mary Rognholt, Akan; Jim Lingel, Dayton; Brian McGraw, Eagle; Verlin Coy, Henrietta; Glen Niemeyer, Ithaca; Steve Chupp, Marshall; Dave Jelinek, Richland; Doug Duhr, Rockbridge; Tim Willis, Willow; Jean Nicks, Boaz; and Terrance Jindrick, Yuba. Marc Couey informed the committee that Brian Clarson would no longer be representing Orion Township. There was brief discussion regarding whether one person could hold the position of Town representative and County Board representative simultaneously. It was referred to Corporation Counsel to determine. It was also questioned whether Steve Chupp was still to be the representative of Marshall Township. Secretary Burch will reach out to the Town Chair. Filling the vacant position on the subcommittee will be on the next meeting's agenda.
9. A. Gudgeon informed the Committee that the County Board voted on the resolution to purchase the REC building the evening prior. An amended resolution was proposed by Supervisor Murphy-Lopez which suggested, among other items, that the Ambulance Service pay back 40% of the funds, which were paid by County residents which he considered not served by the Richland County Ambulance Service. This amendment was voted down, 15-5. Among other discussion, a neighbor had voiced concerns regarding dangers and disturbances having an ambulance service located in a neighborhood, particularly with the pool. Gudgeon explained standard operating procedures will be implemented for responders' routes and siren usage. The resolution was voted on and passed 16-4. Schmitz thanked everyone who had worked on this project thus far, specifically recognizing Severson and Gudgeon for what was said during the County Board meeting. McGraw stated that with the resolution passed, work must begin on the Offer to Purchase and Closing for the building. McGraw recommended the Closing be set as soon as possible, and if the REC needed to continue to utilize the space, to include a post-closing MOU for space usage so work can begin. McGraw recognized that the timeline suggests a

request for bids to be out in October, meaning there may be delays in construction due to winter weather. It was noted that Simpson would likely prefer the closing take place as soon as possible. Gudgeon stated that in early July, he had met with the County Administrator and the newly appointed Corporation Counsel regarding the building project. Administrator Langreck had requested at that time for Corporation Counsel begin working on Offer to Purchase documents. Gudgeon estimated as much as 70% of the paperwork may be completed at this time. Discussion on whether REC would be allowed to stay after purchase, it was noted that they may not be interested now but in previous conversations had indicated that they may need as much as three months to complete the move. The Committee supported a post-closing agreement in such a case. Discussion on the house previously considered with the property, it was noted that there have been parties indicating they may be interested in purchasing the lot. The house is not part of this transaction and is a separate lot. There were no issues identified with this.

B. The inspections of the HVAC, electrical, fire protection, and roof systems were presented along with the project budget. It was shown that the budget had various areas that were likely to have less cost than reflected within the line, such as the basement which should not require much is any attention and the roof which was likely to be covered by REC. The HVAC would be brought up to current code and prepared for a zoned system for the future. The fire protection work was a direct quote from the inspector's report with the City Water Utilities confirming the cost estimate was reasonable. Currently, the project budget is \$544,644 with an estimated \$33,000 remaining in the bond for contingency. If the project costs exceed this, the Service will be responsible for covering the difference. McGraw also noted that the Architect/Engineer is not included in this budget, however there is approximately \$13,000 left in the 2021 Professional Services budget that had been earmarked for such endeavors.

For the electrical inspection, it was noted that originally some had voiced concerns about potential ungrounded outlets. A thorough inspection was conducted finding no issues with outlets, however other problems were identified. The automatic transfer switch (ATS) for the generator will no longer have replacement parts available to it in 2023 and will need to be replaced. It was noted that the generator was installed in 1999 but is still in good working condition with a log of regular testing and maintenance. There is also issue with the main service disconnect (MSD) that will require correction in order to meet today's code. Because of the extent of work being done, what may otherwise have been identified as a potential problem would now be judged based on today's building code standard and will have to be corrected or would be considered a code violation. There was also an older fuse box that would need to be replaced but was likely to be removed in the process of the remodel anyway. Jelinek stated that considering the age of the building, it does not appear out of line.

The HVAC inspection had initially been documented in a report suggesting the system be re-engineered. The inspector was contacted and prepared a report that broke down the improvements needed for code compliance and the suggestions for future planning and maintenance, which showed four items requiring attention. There is an AC unit in the garage that had been known about that requires removal, which was planned to be done in the remodel. Work is also necessary to better install fresh air intake and install an economizer for

efficiency. Other items will likely be incorporated as they will aid in keeping costs low in the future.

The fire protection system will establish sprinklers throughout the building based upon occupancy and needs. In conversation with City Utilities, work will be necessary to establish the hook-up that will impact the road and sidewalk. These costs are covered in the estimated \$25,000 in the budget.

The roof of the building was installed in 1992 with a 30-year warranty to expire next year. The inspection, which was done pro-bono, showed the roof to be in good condition with only three places identified to have the fiber separating slightly and an area where the flashing needs repaired. The inspector estimated this work would likely only cost \$1,000 to address. Not addressing it would mean the roof needs replacement in approximately two years. Addressing it, he estimated, would yield at least four years before work would need to be done. The estimated replacement cost of the roof is \$75,000 at today's material costs. The need for the chimney was questioned; Gudgeon stated the chimney is expected to support radio communication equipment.

It was recognized that the New Ambulance Outlay account should be renamed to Capital Expenditures to reflect the various purposes funds are being saved for. Funds should then be set aside for new ambulances as well as building maintenance such as roof replacement.

10. McGraw stated that there has been thorough inspection and analysis conducted of the building and the current understanding shows the project to be able to be completed within the parameters of the budget. However, in the case that unknown issues arise, such items would be brought before the Committee for discussion and the Joint Ambulance Committee would take responsibility for any gaps in the budget. The Committee again agreed this was reasonable and was not anticipating it to be an issue.
11. The 2022 budget was presented. It was noted that the salaries were to be higher due to a 6.8% raise for all County employees. This will bring the wages closer to what the Committee had voted upon for 2021 but had not made it through Finance and Personnel Committee. Starting wage would increase from \$13.32 to \$14.58. Mid-range for such positions around this region are \$13.50 to \$14.00/hour however Gudgeon noted he has recently seen several ads for such positions at \$16/hr and heard services still struggled to recruit. Paired with the raise, the building will help in making the Service more marketable moving forward. The budget shows a decrease in health insurance for 2022 due to a change in coverage by an employee. While the ambulance crew pay line has continued to trend down, Gudgeon requested keeping it static as some of this past year's coverage was impacted by members being less available due to the pandemic; he would like to ensure coverage of this line in the case that it adjusts up again. He is working to create a plan to utilize the remaining funds for future staffing options, which he intends to present at a future meeting. The budget also includes the wages for the two currently vacant part-time positions. Gudgeon and Administrator Langreck continue to work on establishing the FTE algorithm, but Gudgeon anticipates it will be between 11 and 13 FTE for two trucks staffed. Four part-time positions would equal two FTE. Two licensed people are required to staff one truck. Gudgeon stated effort has been made to utilize the back-up crew for lifting assistance with the primary crew rather than needing to have Richland Center Fire Department Duty Crew assist but at this time, it was suggested to keep the line the same.

Software maintenance is no longer an eligible expense to be covered by the Funding Assistance Program through the State and is now to be covered by this budget. Gudgeon stated that due to the new facility, he is unsure what to expect for pest control, so it was suggested to increase it slightly at this time. Heating costs were based upon a calculation using data provided by REC. Laundry has been typically done by the hospital, and the Service will now have a washer and dryer at the station, but in the case that something should require it, it was requested to leave the same. Ambulance Equipment Maintenance was increased due to aging cots. The diesel fuel line was increased as the Service provides more transfers. Ambulance Garage Maintenance should be minimal in the coming years, however it was anticipated this line would be used for salt for the sidewalks and such items for grounds maintenance at this time. Gudgeon anticipates staff will cover most needs for snow removal and lawn mowing. New Equipment was increased to cover the cardiac monitor replacement if not completed this year as well as the replacement of at least one cot. There is no anticipation of purchasing a new ambulance in 2022. The insurance for the building is unknown at this time; Gudgeon stated the County Clerk instructed him to keep it the same as last year. The Claims Clearinghouse is the line used to pay the billing company, Cvikota. The more we receive as payments, the more we will pay the billing company as their pay is based upon a percentage of what we receive. The Committee requested \$20,000 be kept in the budget for Contract Services. The Committee agreed to place \$40,000 into Capital Expenditures for a new ambulance and roof replacement. Gudgeon reminded the Committee that 2022 is the last year of the current MOU between the County and Municipalities. Gudgeon also informed the Committee that he and Severson met with the Richland Hospital CEO, CNO, and Service Medical Director regarding the Service and transfers. Education will be done with hospital staff to ensure orders are consistent with the level of care the Service provides. This should have an impact on the revenue. Couey stated that out of all the budgets he has seen, he recognized the value in the Service's budget being run as a fiscally responsible business, honoring the tax payer and not requiring a hand-out to make ends meet. Schmitz made a motion to approve the preliminary budget and refer it to the County Administrator and Finance and Personnel, seconded by Couey. Motion carried.

12. Severson made a motion to go into closed session, seconded by Jelinek. Motion carried by voice vote.
13. In open session, a motion was made by Nicks to move Kisha Blake from probationary status to regular part-time, seconded by Rognholt. Motion carried.
14. Nicks made a motion to adjourn the meeting; motion seconded by Schmitz. The motion carried; the meeting was adjourned at 20:45. The next meeting is scheduled for August 18<sup>th</sup>.