

Richland County Joint Ambulance Committee
Strategic Planning for EMS Subcommittee
February 1, 2017
Minutes

Present: Jeanetta Kirkpatrick, Bob Holets, Ryan Keller, Bill Kloehn, Gordon Palmer, Darin Gudgeon, Amber Burch, David Yardley, Sharon Schmitz, Kerry Severson

1. Meeting was called to order at 1900.
2. Notification of the meeting had been made and the agenda was posted.
3. A motion was made by Bob to approve the agenda; Ryan seconded.
4. Previous meeting's minutes had been read and approved at the regular committee meeting in October 2016.

5a. Regarding contract proposals:

There was a lot of discussion regarding the ambulance budget and how to bill townships. Jeanetta stated she preferred it be a 3-year contract and a charge of no less than \$150/call, and if it were to call below an 800 call threshold, she felt there should be a clause to make up for it. Darin stated that it takes \$120,000 to adequately run the service at bare minimum. He recognized that the each year of this contract, the budget has been below that number. Though costs stay about the same, there is no way to calculate the number of calls. He stated that payment could be set so if the number of calls was high, the amount due per call from a township would be lower, or if the number of calls were low, the amount due per call would be higher. It was discussed that, due to the income, there was currently no money being set aside for a facility or ambulance. Bill and Ryan stated that the pay per call could be set based on a low number of calls to ensure \$120,000 would be met, with any extra being set aside for extra expenses with a new facility or ambulance. Jeanetta also recognized the need to project \$13/hour for full-time staff in 2018. Darin noted that when the original pay scale was set, the County was competitive. However, with everyone pulling from the same small pool, the wages are quickly rising. Gordon suggested the contract be set similarly to their contract with the highway department, a 5-year contract with the ability to review and adjust the terms at the 3-year mark. It was clarified that if the Ambulance Service was to become a district, it would be completely separate from the County government. It was also recognized that there is a tipping point to where paying for a paramedic level service would make more sense depending on the townships' financial responsibility. Darin pointed out that there was significant value of having the County involved, including having a director being paid at 17.5 hours/week who is willing to come in and work Saturdays when needed. He also noted that, should an outside paramedic service take on the area, it would be more expensive for event coverage. Darin noted that as much as 80% of this service's patients are Medicare patients, meaning there will be no more than \$455 received maximum, despite the actual expense for supplies and crew. He also stated that transfers help to drive revenue, but 911 service to the community takes precedence over transfers. It was also recognized that in 2-3 years, there may be a need to look at assisting other area ambulance services. Bill stated that the District would allow them to increase the tax levy. Jeanetta suggested townships look into tax levy waivers.

Ryan asked about per capita billing and wondered about how the Fire district charges. It is essentially based in per capita. Jeanetta recognized that, should the goal be to stabilize and become a district, it would have to be closer to \$300/call. She suggested a voice-vote at the next meeting. Gordon recognized that there were townships that were being covered by the service but due to the current pay structure, were receiving the assurance of the service without having to pay for it. He suggested a minimum charge be set. Ryan suggested the subcommittee determine two choices to propose to the general committee with the same total being achieved in the end. There was discussion regarding what would happen with a surplus of funds. It was agreed upon that it should not be placed in a general account but should be designated to go toward items such as a garage, ambulance, or pay raise. At this time, it was also clarified that the Ambulance was not touched by recent County-wide withdrawals. Jeanetta was to double check, but she believed anything that appeared to be taken out had been due to the Health Insurance change. Jeanetta also noted that the County may not offer the guarantee to cover should the service go in "the red." Discussion switched back to whether it be set at per capita or per call. Ryan and Gordon stated they preferred per capita, as it was easier to determine what the budget will be and where money will go. Ryan recognized that the committee was essentially running a district with the County covering the hiring, insurance, and ambulances. Bill recognized that per capita was more fair. Jeanetta stated that it would ensure that everyone pays equally, would stabilize the income, would mimic the Fire District, and assist in creating a district in the future if the committee determined that to be their direction. Jeanetta also stated that she would contact the Wisconsin Towns Association's legal counsel as well as Ed Brooks regarding the tax levy. She will email these findings.

(There was also a brief conversation regarding the legality of taking expired medications and exchanging them with a pharmacy for unexpired ones, as drugs are regulated and controlled so they therefore must be destroyed, not returned.)

Gordon stated that the group needed to come to a consensus on the official amount needed for the budget. Jeanetta stated that she had spoken with Ben Southwick regarding a new building. She reported he said it could be done, but there would be hoops. She suggested the group propose \$300/call or going to per capita. Ryan stated the amount needed to be realistic for sustainability and growth. Bill asked if there would be any grants available. Darin stated there would not be any specific to the ambulance but that townships or the County may be eligible for some. Gordon suggested a contract being to be written up for a 5-year contract with a 3-year adjustment clause.

6. The next meeting was set for February 22, 2017 at 7pm with March 1, 2017 as a backup. Items to be brought or investigated for the next meeting were further figures for the budget, tax levy information, policy of exchanging medications.

7. Ryan moved to adjourn the meeting. Bill seconded that motion. The meeting was adjourned at 20:21.