

Richland County Joint Ambulance Committee:
Strategic Planning for EMS Subcommittee
May 9, 2018
Minutes

Present: Brian McGraw, Ryan Keller, Gordon Palmer, Bob Holets, Darin Gudgeon

1. Meeting was called to order at 1935.
2. Notification of the meeting had been made and the agenda was posted.
3. Committee attendance was as noted above. There has not officially been a City representative appointed to the subcommittee at this time.
4. A motion was made by Holets to approve the agenda as posted, seconded by Keller. The agenda was approved as presented.
5. A motion was made by Keller to approve the March 21 minutes, seconded by McGraw. The minutes were approved as presented.
6. Palmer reported to the subcommittee regarding his investigations into potential expenses if the Service as it currently stands were to go to a District. He spoke with Shannon Clark about the REC building, which had been discussed in the past. The building is still available, with the current asking price \$450,000, or \$45,000 per year over 10 years. It was discussed that there may be 0% interest loans available, and the owner is wanting to sell it and willing to help. As for the current building expenses, it averages out to about \$5,700 per year for the space, utilities, etc.

Gudgeon stated that there was a program through CDBG for public facilities that may still be available. He has a meeting scheduled with a representative of the CDBG program for an Emergency Management project and will request information from that individual. He also mentioned that the current director of Neighborhood Housing Services of Southwest Wisconsin has some knowledge that may be able to assist on this.

Palmer informed the group that he spoke with Wallace, Cooper, & Elliott, who stated that to provide insurance benefits to the Service for five employees on a single premium with Quartz, dependent upon age, the premiums would fall between \$1,500 and \$2,500 per month. Dean Care could be less potentially. Currently, employees pay 12% of their premium. It was recognized that there were also be other additional costs to identify.

McGraw reported to the subcommittee his findings from looking at relevant State Statutes. He stated that based upon his interpretations, the following Statutes may be of importance to the group and what direction the Service should take:

- 59.54(1): the County Board is allowed to contract for services and charge for such a service
- 66.0602(2) and (3) (e)6.: local levy limits don't apply to the amount that the County levy's for that year for a county wide EMS system. This would require the County to have a county-wide service, meaning this Service would need to have agreements with the other services working within the County.
- 66.0602(2m): Towns should be able to charge, not levy, a reasonable fee to provide EMS service, as the "ambulance" is not listed as a covered service under this subsection.
- 71.935(1),(2) and (3): These statutes allow for municipalities to collect unpaid fees through the Tax Refund Intercept Program, so long as the correct process is followed.

McGraw stated that each municipality would need to check with their lawyer regarding these interpretations, and this still needs to be discussed with the Department of Revenue to ensure that the information is correct. However, as it currently looks, it is not a covered service, therefore there is nothing that says one cannot charge a fee as long as it is reasonable and not generating a profit. It is simply a mechanism to reimburse for the expenses incurred.

Palmer stated that the goal of the subcommittee is to ensure that the Committee and the Service does not find itself where it was at the end of the last contract. A direction needs to be determined so the subcommittee can create a plan to get there to present to the Committee. It was identified that the Committee would need to be looking at ensuring a balance of money to cover replacement of rigs, a new facility, pay raises, retention, and maintenance. There is still a lot to discuss, however the group felt there was progress.

The Committee's current recommendation appears to be the stay with the County, with an emphasis on helping keep County Board and other municipality representatives informed about the Ambulance Service.

There was some discussion regarding fundraising. Gudgeon stated that any fundraising ideas should go through the Ambulance Association, as that is a 501(c)3 created for such projects. 100% of the funds raised go to the Service, with the association discussing with the director what needs the Service has and the association making the final determination about where the money goes.

7. Palmer discussed with the subcommittee an idea for surveying the Service members to get their input. Gudgeon stated that he felt it could be good so long as the right questions were asked. The group would need to determine what kind of information they were wanting to get from the service members. It could contain such a question as "What do you see as the most dire need right now?" Palmer agreed to meet and discuss with Gudgeon the formation of the questionnaire at a later date.
8. The next meeting is scheduled for June 20th at 7:30pm. Potential agenda items include: the questionnaire for approval, CDBG-PF funding opportunity, input from the full committee meeting. McGraw made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Holets. The meeting was adjourned at 20:48.