

Richland County Joint Ambulance Committee:
Strategic Planning for EMS Subcommittee
January 6, 2021
Minutes

Present: Brian McGraw, Sharon Schmitz, Mary Rognholt, Glen Niemeyer, Bob Holets, Darin Gudgeon.
Not Present: N/A

1. Meeting was called to order at 18:10.
2. Notification of the meeting had been made and the agenda was posted.
3. Committee attendance was as noted above, with a quorum.
4. A motion was made by Schmitz to approve the agenda. It was seconded by Niemeyer. The agenda was approved.
5. A motion was made by Holets to approve the previous Subcommittee meeting minutes as presented. Motion seconded by Rognholt. The motion carried.
6. For the New Facility Subcommittee, no Joint Ambulance Committee members contacted Gudgeon following the last Committee meeting to say they were interested in participating in the suggested new subcommittee. McGraw had spoken with the County Administrator regarding the creation of a new subcommittee and was informed that it would require approval by the County Board to form the subcommittee and approve membership. This would create a delay. McGraw proposed that the current Subcommittee take on the new facility oversight, as many of the items would likely have been discussed by this subcommittee regardless. There would then be members appointed by the Service to bring perspective and identify needs. Gudgeon recommended these service members include at least one paid-on-call member and full-time/part-time member. Niemeyer, Schmitz, and Rognholt voiced their support. Holets inquired what additional tasks this would entail. McGraw stated he envisioned taking on facility construction issues and looking at the pros and cons of the circumstances to make recommendations to the Joint Ambulance Committee. It overlaps with the current goals of the subcommittee and would need to be approved by the Joint Ambulance Committee. Holets voiced his concern that this may be outside the purview of this subcommittee. It was noted that the title of the subcommittee is "Strategic Planning for EMS Subcommittee." McGraw stated that he would confirm with the County Administrator as to whether this would be an acceptable approach to take. With limited time, if this subcommittee were to take on this task, there would be a need to identify the most important items to be addressed first. McGraw stated that there would inevitably be other things that could have been worked on but those items are not as high of a priority as the new facility, therefore this should take precedence. Rognholt pointed out that the completion of the new facility will hopefully help to meet several of the other goals as well. Holets agreed that other items could be included on meeting agendas as needed. Schmitz made a motion to recommend to the Joint Ambulance Committee that the Strategic Planning for EMS Subcommittee oversee the new facility work contingent upon the County Administrator's approval, seconded by Niemeyer. It was clarified that service members would not be voting members but would be a voice to assist in the process and help inform the decisions of the Joint Ambulance Committee. Motion carried.
7. McGraw reintroduced the goals and priorities as adopted on February 28, 2019, pointing out the progress that has been made in such a short time. He commended the group effort between the Joint Ambulance Committee and the service members. Several items were able to be removed or amended. It was agreed that the highest priorities moving forward were compensation and staffing. On the topic of staffing, Gudgeon noted the need to define the number of full-time

equivalency (FTE) positions needed to staff two ambulances between full-time, part-time, and paid-on-call staff. There is also a need to redraft the policies and procedures of the Handbook due to changes taking place. On the topic of municipality MOUs, McGraw stated the contribution formula currently based on calls to individual municipalities should be evaluated to ensure it is fair to all parties and determine if there are any changes to be made to it. It also would be wise to study the feasibility of establishing a District, and if so, begin to take steps toward that goal as well. McGraw also mentioned the need for the financial reports to be analyzed to be more user-friendly for the Committee to be able to know what the change of balance for the month was more easily; Gudgeon stated that this may be solved through the County Administrator's Office, as it is not only our department struggling with the available financial reports. Two other items to look into were considering the addition of community medicine or medical transports such as transporting a resident to a doctor's appointment to the operational plan and reaching out to neighboring communities to determine if there is a way to strengthen EMS response throughout the area.

8. The Service's Handbook was last revised and adopted on January 10, 2019. Since that time, some sections have been identified as needing corrections and additions. Specific sections include Licensure, Chain of Command, Orientation/Probation, Reporting, Pay, Vacation, Availability, and the 48 Hour Rule. Many of these changes are to correct the section to the current situation such as the inclusion of the County Administrator. For Availability, Gudgeon informed the Committee that member availability is inconsistent and proposed the Committee consider having the overnight require 12-hours for its availability. The inconsistency had long been a problem that was worked around but staffing needs to work better for consistency of coverage. Middle ground needs to be established. Other items needing to be added to the Handbook include assigned chores as will be necessary with the new facility and a policy for New EMT scholarships for training. Once these proposed changes are made to the Handbook, they will be brought before the subcommittee for review followed by the Joint Ambulance Committee and County Board for approval.
9. The Joint Ambulance Committee had previously identified the need to staff two ambulance crews in order to provide consistent coverage for back-up calls and transfers. The need to have two licensed members per each truck equates to 17,520 man hours (8,760 hours each) per year for one staffed ambulance. It would take approximately 7.2 people working 48 hours per week to establish one staffed ambulance. With 12.9 FTE positions, two ambulances could be staffed for a year. At this time, if a back-up call comes in but there is not a crew to staff it, an ambulance is paged from a neighboring service to take the call. Schmitz extended her gratitude to those who were willing and able to put in extra effort and recommended Gudgeon work with the County Administrator to determine the functionality of an FTE staffing model. Gudgeon stated that there are many members who have been service for numerous years and may not be renewing their license in 2023, nor should they feel the need to carry the burden of staffing. 2020 tested the Service, however it was important to note that there were no primary 911 calls missed. There were back-up calls and transfers that staffing was not available to accommodate. Moving forward, the system may not be as resilient as members are burning out; it is important to anticipate the needs of the future.
10. The next subcommittee meeting was scheduled for February 2 at 6pm. Niemeyer made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Schmitz. The meeting was adjourned at 20:15.