

Richland County Joint Ambulance Committee
November 18, 2021
Minutes

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

Not Present: Kerry Severson, Marc Couey, Todd Coppernoll, Jerome Durst, 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 9 members present.
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 Schmitz and seconded by Niemeyer 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. The Subcommittee met on November 11 to discuss the REC Building progress. The officer to purchase was signed and closing was set for December 15. The 14ft variance was approved by the City. Discussing the timeline with engineers, it is anticipated that the remodel specifications will be ready by January 22 with bids to be received by the end of February or beginning of March. For the roof repair, the estimated costs was \$2,000; REC has offered to reimburse up to \$10,000 for the repairs. The JAC will choose the contractor and pay, with REC reimbursing. The County Administrator joined the Subcommittee meeting to discuss hiring a consultant to do an analysis of the Service and EMS to provide recommendations for the future. This would be a comprehensive evaluation considering county-run service versus district, operations, staffing, etc. ARPA Funds will be used to pay for this study.
 - A. A report on Strategic Planning for Rural EMS is available and has similar areas listed for evaluation consideration as what is expected from the consultant.
 - B. The Goals and Priorities were reviewed. It was recognized that the wages will increase for 2022, the handbook has been updated to assist with staffing procedures, the consultant will provide input for several goals listed, funds continue to be set aside to achieve goals, transfer requests are being tracked, and the long-range goals are still relevant but not yet ready to directly pursue.
9.
 - A. The Revenue/Expense Reports were reviewed for the quarter. For the month of August, there was \$23,426.59 in revenue with \$35,102.75 in expenditures leaving an ending balance of \$250,295.41. September had \$70,150.97 in revenue and \$42,284.67 in expenses, with an end balance of \$278,161.71. Invoices from Jewell have been paid put of the budgeted contracted services in the EMS Fund 51. For October, revenues totaled \$41,966.55 and expenditures totaled \$63,220.19 leaving an end balance of \$256,908.07. The increase in expenditures was due to the annual premium for insurances.
 - B. The Cvikota Billing Report was reviewed, which showed 106 billable calls for August, 91 for September, and 105 for October. January 1 through October 31, there were 909 billable calls.

Total charges in that time equaled \$698,085.50. Total payments received were \$289,193.87, with allowances (write-offs) at \$336,738.72.

C. The Ambulance Call Data Report showed 333 total calls for this quarter, which included 285 911 calls with 71 covered by back-up. Of these calls, 7.51% of patients were transported emergent to the hospital. Gudgeon pointed out that as of this date, there were 1069 calls for the year. 2019 saw 1114 calls, which had previously been the highest call volume in recent years.

10. Regarding the REC Building, a handful of members showed interest in touring the building. Arrangements will be made; please contact Brian McGraw if interested.
11. The County is establishing a Strategic Planning Committee. Gudgeon was asked by the County Administrator in September to answer various questions regarding the Service as a non-mandated service provided by the County. At this time, the County Committee has requested feedback from the JAC regarding Gudgeon's response. Questions asked were if the Service lines up with the strategic priorities and what changes would help it better align. The goal is to look at the bigger picture, not just this Service. Several neighboring services are able to levy taxes as part of the local fire department. Some receive funds from their local village to help cover costs. In Wisconsin, EMS is not considered an essential service. In 2012, a report showed that tax payers spend more on garbage removal than on EMS. This service is still considered new, having only been established in 1968. State Statute 60.565 states a Town Board shall contract for, operate, and maintain an ambulance service, but a County is allowed to operate a service under 59.54. Gudgeon's response asked for open-mindedness from all County Board members, municipalities, services, members, and residents. The volunteer model has proven not to be sustainable; it can no longer be considered the backbone. The consultant will be looking into this issue to address if there is a better way. The decisions made today cannot be based on the past but upon today and what is expected to come. McGraw stated his support of Gudgeon's response. Schmitz agreed and recommended some of this message be disseminated to the public to help them understand current needs and how things have changed. Schmitz made a motion to submit Gudgeon's response as presented to the County Administrator with the full support of the JAC, seconded by Niemeyer. Motion carried.
12. Gudgeon presented expenditures related to ambulance and stretcher repairs. For the ambulance, repairs for Unit 35 were initially approved in August by McGraw and the County Administrator. These repairs included tires, winterization, and a pedal position sensor, totaling around \$2,000. Another repair was necessary since due to rough idling, which has taken the costs for repairs of this unit to \$6,000 in the past six months. Unit 34 had some minor repairs and tires this month at a cost of just over \$2,500 as well. In addition, a stretcher which was purchased in 2014 required a new CPU, which cost \$2,000. The Ambulance Maintenance Budget is likely over its line. However, the net effect may not be felt as others are under-budget. Gudgeon points out that because of the necessary ambulance repairs, there was a period of time where there was only one ambulance in service.
13. For the cardiac monitors, Gudgeon stated the County Attorney does not support the terms of agreement for the monitor contract for financing. The Association has raised funds and the Committee has budgeted for this purchase, however there is still a need for additional funding. An application has been submitted to the Joan Woodman Orton McCullum Foundation for assistance on the remainder, however a response has not been received. The current monitors

are only supported by Philips until the end of January, so the new monitors must be purchased now. The total cost for three monitors will be \$89,000, but this price is also expected to increase the first of February. One of the grants received by the Association requires reporting back where funds were spent, which must be submitted by January 31. In the case that the Foundation does not provide assistance on this purchase, Gudgeon inquired if the Committee would approve the purchase using the available funds in the Service's account. It will take 4-5 weeks for the monitors to be received and put into service; the monitors have an expected lifespan of 13-15 years. Jelinek made a motion to approve up to \$79,000 toward the acquisition of the LifePak15 monitors unless other funding comes available, seconded by Schmitz. Motion carried. Service member Kim Clark thanked the Committee on behalf of the Service members.

14. Schmitz made a motion to adjourn the meeting; motion seconded by Niemeyer. The motion carried; the meeting was adjourned at 20:23. The next meeting is scheduled for February 10th.