

Minutes

Baraboo District Ambulance Commission

Call to Order & Roll Call

- The September 16, 2019 meeting of the Baraboo District Ambulance Service Commission was called to order by Dahlke at 7:00 pm.
- Commissioners present: Dave Dahlke, Robin Meier, Donna Meier, Randy Puttkamer, Scott Sloan, Tim Stieve, Terry Turnquist and Phil Wedekind
- Also present were: Administrator Geick, Chief Sechler, Deputy Chief Rago, Dekeyser, Fiebig, Koepp, N. Rago, Seefeld, Snow, Vande Hei
- Dahlke confirmed that the meeting had been posted in compliance with the Open Meeting Law.
- The agenda was adopted with a motion made by Puttkamer, seconded by Sloan. Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Approval of Previous Minutes

- A motion to approve the August 28, 2019 minutes was made by Sloan, seconded by Stieve. Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Public Invited to Speak

- None

Reports

1. Legal Council Report – No report.
2. Treasurer’s Report – Meier reported that she met with the Billing department to get reports for the Financial statements. She indicated that she was enlightened on several items, and would like to review and discuss some of those items at a future date.
3. President’s Report – Dahlke reported that the engagement letter for Baker Tilly was signed, and was sent to the auditors. He reminded everyone that the City is paying for this audit, and to allow the auditors to do their job without interference, and that there should be complete cooperation. As well, anyone working with the auditors should provide requested information or give access to data so that they can reach their own independent assessment of the Billing processes. This is not the time to offer personal opinions, speculations, or accusations.
4. Chief’s Report – Sechler reported that there had been a change in mindset at the State DHS regarding the ET3 pilot program. There is going to be a Bill introduced very soon to allow for ambulance services to be able to participate in the program. As well, the deadline for the application is going to be extended to October 1st. Sechler requested some direction regarding applying for the program. After discussion, Sloan stated that it would be worth the effort to apply, if there is time to do so.

Old Business

1. Update on the progress of the proposed new Fire/EMS building. Sechler and Stieve reported that at the last City Council meeting, it was decided to approve the building of the new Library first. Geick commented that the plan was to start construction on the Library building in 2021, to be completed in 2022. Most likely the Fire / EMS construction would then be started in 2024, to be completed in 2025. Geick also stated that it had been approved for a site study to be performed for the Fire / EMS building, and the intent was also to have a preliminary design completed, in order to better determine cost estimates of the building.

New Business

1. Preliminary 2020 Budget discussions. Sechler reviewed the various line items within the

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proposed 2020 budget, which included the current and projected call volume; per capita rate options; funding of the reserve accounts, etc. Discussion related to the current and proposed Billing rates are recorded in point #2, below. Discussion also occurred on capitol expenses including preparing for the costs of a new building; budgeting to build the reserve funds; and replacing ambulances over the next few years.

Sechler stated that requests for assistance to help a patient off the floor have been increasing. Specifically, CBRF's, nursing homes, and assisted care facilities have enacted a policy in which their staff will no longer lift a patient off the floor. Their staff now calls 9-1-1 to have the ambulance service respond, and lift the patient. The Commission directed that Sechler discuss the situation with the Administrators of the various facilities to gain more information on the situation, as well as to inform them that if there is not a resolve, that Baraboo EMS will start to bill the entity for "At Scene Assists".

Stieve stated that there were 611 calls that were not categorized as BLS, ALS, or SCT in the data points worksheet, and that he had contacted Sechler earlier to ask how they should be categorized. Sechler shared that those calls were a compilation of the following: responding with the Fire Department to standby at a scene; responding to a Rope Rescue call, and the patient refuses transport; responding to a car accident, and a person refuses transport (typically they were in a car accident, and a passerby calls 9-1-1, even though there are no injuries); responding to other types of 9-1-1 calls, and the person receives some type of medical treatment but refuses transport; as discussed above, responding to a request for service to pick a patient from off the floor. Sechler stated that staff will continue to track those numbers, and he will work on how to categorize them in the data points worksheet.

Meier stated that she had reviewed the trends from past years budgets, in order to run some of the numbers in her own sample budget. She indicated that her preference is to budget conservatively for anticipated income, as well as to budget extra for unanticipated expenses. In her budget, she had determined a per capita rate increase of \$11.00, as compared to the proposed \$3.00.

Stieve asked why there was an option in the Budget for \$7,500 to replace the phone system. It was explained that the current phone system had been in place when the Admin building was purchased, and that it was antiquated, and that the service agreement was no longer in effect, and there were no more patches to be able to fix the system. Stieve stated that we could contact the City to see if we could utilize part of their system. He suggested that we could share services with the City and use their system and piggy-back off of it using their Fiber Optic. It was explained that we don't have Fiber Optic installed to either building. Turnquist commented that it would only be a \$0.42 increase to the per capita, rate if that were added to the Budget, so he suggested a \$1.00 per capita increase to cover the phone system. Dahlke also supported replacing the current phone system.

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Stieve asked about the possibility of sharing Legal services with the City, and using their attorney instead of the current Law firm. Some of the Commissioners responded that they felt that would be a potential conflict of interest.

Sloan commented that even though a new ambulance was scheduled to arrive in December (due to the AFG grant) that there was not a replacement ambulance budgeted for 2020. He suggested that funds be set aside for future ambulance purchases, as well as set aside funds to build up the Reserve funds.

After additional discussion, the Commission directed that the proposed per capita rate increase to \$30 for Members, and \$33 for any contracted service areas / non-members. Sechler and Snow stated that a few more minor changes were needed on the line items related to wages and benefits, but that it should be a wash after the adjustments are made. It was directed that the various suggestions from the Commissioners should then be incorporated into the proposed 2020 Budget, to be reviewed again at the next Commission meeting. Any funds remaining after the adjustments should be used to build up the Reserve funds.

2. Sechler and Snow reviewed the current Billing rates and the proposed Billing rates with the Commission. It has been at least five years since the last increase. The increase in rates will not cause any additional revenue to come in from Medicare and Medicaid; however, there would be an increase in revenue for Commercial insurance and private pay accounts. It is anticipated that the increased fees for base rates and mileage would generate an additional \$100,000 annually, after accounting for write-offs / accepting assignment. After discussion, a motion was made by Sloan, seconded by Turnquist to increase the base rates and mileage as proposed, to go into effect on October 1, 2019. Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Commissioner Comments & Future Agenda Items

- Please mark your calendars for the next Commission meeting, which will be the following:
 - September 25, 2019

Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn by Turnquist, seconded by Sloan at 8:55 pm. Voice vote, all ayes. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Dana Sechler, Chief / EMS Director
Baraboo District Ambulance Service