

Gage County EMS Advisory Committee
Beatrice, Nebraska
April 9, 2009
8:00 a.m.

Minutes

Present:

Don Harmon
Dan Hawkins
Brian Daake
Jane Witthoff
Larry Stanosheck
Rex Adams
Ron Miller
Matt Bauman
Alan Fetty

Absent:

Dawn Hill
Dennis Byars
Dee Fritch
Mark Meints

Staff Resources:

Robyn Henderson
Dean Cole
Richard Mettler

Guests:

Jill Jensen
Dave Battiato

Call Meeting to Order

Don Harmon called the meeting to order and asked members to introduce themselves.

Approve Minutes

Motion made and seconded to accept agenda and minutes of March 12, 2009 meeting; motion approved.

Review Committee Charter

Don asked if there were any changes that needed to be made in the Charter. No changes were made.

Physician Medical Director Update

Dr. Rice noted that he is not comfortable with providing a "job description" yet, because it's not absolutely clear to him yet how the position needs to be developed.

Dr. Rice stated that all of the station audits are complete for each department.

He has been working with Wymore on more efficient service and quality issues. They are doing well. Barneston has requested to dissolve its first responder unit and merge with Wymore. The request has been formalized and approved. This merger will help with staffing for Wymore

Beatrice Rural decided not to merge with Beatrice Fire and Rescue. Adams has a unique need for ALS due to Adams' geographic location; it makes more sense for them to transport straight to Lincoln rather than through Cortland. Dr. Rice and Don Harmon will meet with Adams for further discussion.

Dr. Rice has a meeting today with Dr. Havekost at Beatrice Community. He has had preliminary discussions with BryanLGH regarding development of cardiac protocols and wants to share these with Dr. Havekost.

Dr. Rice reported that the planning for the helipads is moving along. Mark Meints has already gotten support from NRDC for grading, etc. at the lake site. Wymore is still determining a location. It would help by showing community support if Wymore can contribute – in-kind is fine. Dr. Rice has been in touch Lincoln Health Endowment (?) as to possible funding for the helipad. He wants this site to be FAA certified as instrument rated for night and bad weather landings.

An email from Mike Pethoud of Adams Rescue was shared with group. One of the concerns noted was about timeliness of filing eNarsis (within 24 hours). Dean Cole reported that this provision will be changed to 48 hours. The change needs to be finalized through regulations process. Departments have 2 years to comply with changes, however it has already been one year and the Board of Health still hasn't set a hearing on the rules change.

Legal Update

Jill Jensen's presentation focused on the two primary options for Gage County for forming a special entity to coordinate EMS services

- Option 1: Inter-local agreements are the format we have now; it is also the most common type of agreement in the state (more than 2000).
- Option 2: Joint Public Agencies look like a corporation and acts like a corporation; there are only four JPAs in the state.

OPTION 1: Status Quo Plus - Expand current inter-local arrangements.

- Register of Deeds Transfer tax issue -- \$.50 goes into county general fund; it is not specifically identified for EMS, but could be.
- Oversight group – members do not have to be elected officials
- Taxing authority for oversight group: Generally no; however, public safety committees can use county-wide sales and use tax to generate funds, but is subject to voter approval. This would be carved out of any existing city sales tax.
- Fiscal responsibilities are shared under Option 1 and it is wide open; the group decides.
- Affiliations with Non-Gage County ambulance services can continue and contract with county.
- Joint Antelope Valley Authority (inter-local agreement) – may be a good template for Gage County
 - Option 1 agreement:
 - Start with current agreement
 - Decide on purposes
 - Joint entity or not?
 - Duration
 - how financed
 - how budget prepared
 - how administered
 - how to terminate, dispose of property, etc.

OPTION 2: Joint Public Agency

- Register of Deeds Transfer tax issue -- \$.50 goes into county general fund; it is not specifically identified for EMS, but could be.
- Oversight group is required and they have to be elected officials, but non-elected members can be designated.
- Non-Gage county services can continue affiliation through contracts.

- Taxing authority can be delegated by establishing authorities; it will be under county lid. Establishing authorities can allocate funds to oversight group to be spent.
- Fiscal responsibilities – wide open depending on wishes of group. Can do revenue and funding bonds, and general obligation bonds
- Agreement between Lancaster County and Lincoln for new corrections facility is good example of JPA.

NEXT STEPS:

Group needs to decide whether to go with inter-local agreement or JPA (new public subdivision)

Jill's Recommendation:

- Use inter-local agreement
- Many examples exist
- More flexibility for administration
- More familiar

Future of EMS funding is changing; Medicare is getting stickier on inter-facility transfers. Services provided will have to begin to meet measurable outcomes. We are looking at a transition of rescue services that consist of paid EMTs and volunteers.

Next steps:

SE-AHEC post minutes on our website – county link to us
Urge folks to be at May 7th meeting
Anything new from County Board

With no other business, meeting adjourned.

Next meeting dates:

May 7, 2009 June 11, 2009 July 9, 2009 August 13, 2009