

# HIGHLAND RESCUE TEAM AMBULANCE DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

Highland Station 317 S Lookout Mountain Rd  
April 16, 2024 at 2:30 p.m.

**President Terry McCarthy called the meeting to order at 2:33 p.m.**

**Directors present:** President Terry McCarthy, Treasurer Dan Kasinec, Sharon Jones, Chris Garlasco

**Others present:** Chief Bob Fager, Assistant Chief Steve Telgener, Deputy Chief of Operations Damon Brown, Lieutenant Carl Joyce, Administrator Laura Cardon, Chief Bob Fager, Accountant Christina Jantzeff, Highland Rescue Team Foundation Board Members Roxanne Lenny and Nancy Woodruff.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Director McCarthy introduced the Highland Rescue Team Foundation Board Members in attendance (Ms. Lenny, Assistant Chief Telgener, and Ms. Woodruff).

Assistant Chief Telgener serves as the liaison between the Foundation and the Highland Rescue Team members. Director McCarthy also serves on the Foundation Board as the liaison between the two boards.

## **PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**

Director Kasinec moved to approve the January meeting minutes. Director Jones seconded. Unanimous approval.

## **FINANCIAL REPORT**

### *February Billing (L. Cardon)*

- Systems Design West (SDW) billed \$52,388.80 for 34 transports in March. Payments received were \$14,846.82 and \$2,564.27 was sent to collections.
- In the first quarter of the year, most patients (44%) had Medicare insurance.
- Ms. Cardon requested feedback on reporting from the board and did not receive any during the meeting.
- For full details refer to the 2024-04 Admin Report document.

### *February Financial Report (C. Jantzeff)*

- March was a large billing month, which put Highland over target. Total revenues are also above target this time of year due to property tax payments.
- All expenses are within normal range for this time of year.
- The cash balance was high at month's end.
- For full details refer to the Memo 04-24 document.

### *Financial Updates (C. Jantze)*

- Annual Fieldwork Audit is complete. The board should have a draft of the financial audit report at the next meeting.
- Director Kasinec inquired whether this was the same audit as the Supplemental CO EMS Audit. Ms. Jantze clarified it is not.
  - We were randomly selected for the CO EMS audit, which Ms. Jantze expected since Highland was one of the first participants in the program. The follow-up requests were extremely minor and she does not expect any further requests.
  - Ms. Jantze also added that Highland was randomly selected for an Unemployment Insurance audit through the state Department of Labor. Given the multiple other audits that are ongoing, she has engaged with the assigned auditor to clarify the scope and timeline of the audit. Overall she has no concerns.

### **CHIEF'S REPORT (B. FAGER)**

- March was a busy month with 87 calls and 38 transports.

### *Staffing*

- One member has come off of a leave of absence. Otherwise, numbers are the same as last month.
- A class of new members starts Friday. Highland had lots of applicants, interviewed 9, and brought in 6 EMTs. The increase in applicants has allowed Highland to be more selective with qualifications for applicants.

### *Organizational Restructure*

- Nearly all positions are filled and training for new officers is in progress. Leadership is currently gathering information from new officers on their availability and areas of interest.

### *Facilities*

- Deputy Chief Brown and Chief Fager both met with an architect shortly after the last board meeting to discuss the need for future expansion. The architect evaluated the needs and after a site visit, put together a conceptual drawing for additions and redesign of the building.
- Chief Fager then met with a structural engineer to discuss feasibility of adding a second story. The engineer was very confident that the newer portion of the building could have a second story, which, along with connecting Bay 4 to the existing dayroom, would meet Highland's future needs.
- The drawings made so far are very conceptual and do not have measurements or numbers attached to them. A second story would also require an elevator.

- Director Garlasco added additional context for limiting factors and feasibility. Director Garlasco explained it would be much more expensive to build west into the hillside and a second story could be more cost effective. Highland also wants to move beyond a septic tank to a leach field, which would be significantly more expensive to build up into the hillside as well. While an elevator is expensive, the cost would be offset by savings from not needing additional land with expanding west.
- Director Garlasco also added that the architect who made the conceptual drawings would not be contracted for final drawings. That architect recommended engaging a professional with expertise designing Emergency Medical Services (EMS) buildings.
- Director Kasinec inquired about the plan for increasing septic capacity.
  - Deputy Chief Brown answered that the district is still unsure if it's possible to expand to the south. The best option at this time is to go north and work with Mount Vernon, which has previously gifted the district land. Deputy Chief Brown also clarified that the final look of the leach field is that of open space, so it would not impact the look and feel of the surrounding area for neighbors.
- Director McCarthy inquired whether there were concrete next steps.
  - Chief Fager answered that the district still needs to engage with neighbors on both sides of the building. He noted that he will work with Deputy Chief Brown to identify future needs to develop any expansion plan.
  - Deputy Chief Brown added that Mount Vernon has invited Highland to their next meeting in mid-October to discuss the project. The meeting was supposed to take place in the spring but was delayed due to the recent snowstorm. Deputy Chief Brown mentioned he could get on the agenda for a board meeting before that if the Highland board preferred.
  - Director Garlasco recommended that details of need and septic sizing would help in any discussions with the Mount Vernon board.

### *Audits*

- The annual fieldwork audit was uneventful. The auditors had a few questions that were quick and easy to address.
- Director Kasinec asked what timeframe the additional Department of Labor unemployment insurance audit was reviewing.
  - Ms. Jantzeff answered that audit is looking at calendar year 2022. The auditor initially asked for a level of documents typically used for forensic accounting, but is willing to narrow the scope. Ms. Jantzeff reiterated that she is not concerned about the additional audit.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

*Digital Accessibility Policy (L. Cardon)*

- Ms. Cardon shared the proposed digital accessibility policy for the board and provided an update from the Special District Association (SDA) accessibility workshop this month.
- Colorado has passed state legislation to further strengthen ADA accessibility protections. These protections specifically call out digital content, which includes email newsletters, websites, and other content.
- Making materials accessible for all is the right thing to do, and there is additional legal liability that the district should avoid. In California, where similar legislation has been passed, the same 10 law firms have targeted small districts that aren't in compliance with lawsuits.
- Best practices include a board-approved accessibility policy generally stating that the district is committed to making all digital content accessible. The policy should also list two methods of contact for an Accessibility Officer for any questions, concerns, or accommodations.
- The Highland website is relatively simple, so getting all the materials to compliance should not be a major undertaking.
- Assistant Chief Telgener inquired whether all the pdfs on the website have ADA standards as well.
  - Ms. Cardon answered that yes, they do. She applied for a State Internet Portal Authority (SIPA) grant to get a software license for CommonLook, an app that scans and corrects pdfs. All non-compliant pdfs have been removed by the website and will be worked on for the July 1 deadline. All pdfs on the website are compliant.
- Director Garlasco asked if it would be valuable to put a map of the district boundaries on the website.
  - Chief Fager answered a map is on the contact page. Director Garlasco asked district staff to consider an additional spot in the website for the map for easier access.
- Director McCarthy moved to approve the Digital Accessibility Policy. Director Kasinec seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### *Xero and Quickbooks Transition*

- Ms. Jantzeff said she has started training on Xero, the product she recommends replacing Quickbooks with. Part of Xero's integration plan is specifically for migrating Quickbooks data for free, which Ms. Jantzeff was encouraged by.
- Director McCarthy asked whether Ms. Jantzeff's other clients were moving to Xero.
  - Ms. Jantzeff replied not all of her clients use Quickbooks, so not all of them have to move right away. Genessee Fire District does use Quickbooks and will also be moving to Xero.

### *Personnel Issues*

- Director Garlasco requested an update on Katy Miller's personnel issues. Director McCarthy said the final bill had been paid and the matter is considered finished.
- Director Garlasco asked if a written report as part of the required scope of the mediation.
  - Director McCarthy said he was not aware of any such scope requirement. Chief Fager added he met with the mediator just before the final bill was paid and she considered the matter wrapped up.
- Director Garlasco asked if rules and regulations were reviewed to address issues found in mediation.
  - Director McCarthy said the board and Highland staff needed to confirm this and report back at the next board meeting.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Director Jones moved to adjourn the meeting. Director Kasinec seconded. Unanimously approved.

**The meeting adjourned at 3:21 p.m.**