

# HIGHLAND RESCUE TEAM AMBULANCE DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

Highland Station

317 South Lookout Mountain Road

February 11, 2025  
2:30 p.m.

**Directors present:** President Terry McCarthy, Treasurer Dan Kasinec, Secretary Kara Cooper, Director Sharon Jones (remote), and Director Chris Garlasco.

**Others present:** Chief Bob Fager, Deputy Chief Damon Brown, Accountant Christina Jantzeff (remote), and Administrator Laura Cardon.

## **CALL TO ORDER**

President McCarthy called the meeting to order at 2:34 p.m.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.:41

## **PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**

President McCarthy asked if there were any questions on the January 2025 draft meeting minutes. There were no questions on the minutes, and Director Kasinec moved to approve the previous meeting's minutes. Director Cooper seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

## **FINANCIAL REPORTS**

*Admin Report (L. Cardon)*

The district billed \$28,732 for 19 transports. The outstanding balance continued to decrease to \$109,242. The majority of patients transported (58%) had Medicare insurance, followed by self-pay patients at 26%.

Days tickets spend in accounts receivable also continued to decrease to an average of 87 days in 2025. In 2024, the average days in accounts receivable was 119. This is a measure of how long it takes transport bills to be paid by the patient.

Ms. Cardon followed up on the board's request for more information about a settlement campaign with the collection agency. A settlement campaign is a one-time message to outstanding accounts offering a discounted bill for lump sum payments. Ms. Cardon said BC Services, the collection agency the district contracts, typically recommends a 35%

discount. The board directed Ms. Cardon to ask BC Services for an estimated amount to be recovered by a settlement campaign and how BC Services can automate the process for better cost-efficiency. Ms. Cardon will provide that information at the March 2025 board meeting.

For full details, refer to the 2025-02 Admin Report pdf.

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

Payments are slightly under target for the year because no property tax income was received in January. 2024 revenue from wildland fire deployments arrived in January and will be reflected in the previous years' revenues.

The district's Safety and Training budget is over target for this time of year due to paying for a member's paramedic school in a lump sum this month. An unexpected garage door repair also put Repairs and Maintenance over target for this time of year.

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

The district had 48 calls for help in January and transported 19 patients. This is a bit slower than normal. January call volume is typically driven by severe snow weather, which has also been lower than normal this winter.

One volunteer has cleared as a volunteer paramedic after completing paramedic school in 2024. One probationary member has cleared to become a full volunteer member.

#### *Leadership Training Opportunity*

Grand County EMS is hosting a leadership academy in May. Chief Fager is pursuing several grants to pay for Highland leadership to attend.

Director Cooper asked how many people Chief planned to send to the training and how those people were chosen. Chief Fager answered the goal is to send four people from Highland. Deputy Chief Brown, Chief Fager, Captain Dan Vinnola, and Captain John Singsheim (volunteer paramedic who reports to Deputy Chief Brown) were originally selected. Since Captain Vinnola is not able to attend, Chief Fager and Deputy Chief Brown will consider other options but have not considered a formal application or public process.

The next class of probationary members will be in April. This class will be smaller based on current staffing needs. This goal is to bring on four new members. There are currently more than 50 applicants with 22 actively engaged in the process.

#### *Every Member, Every Call Initiative*

The Every Member, Every Call initiative is a new program from the Standards and Evaluation Team. Each shift is required to begin each shift with a formal hand-off between crews, and to spend part of the shift training on the Skill of the Month. Members who respond in district are required to come in-person to the station for hand-off and training. There has not been negative feedback so far from in-district members who respond from home. This program came from feedback of newly cleared members who felt like they needed improved opportunities to maintain skills.

Director Kasinec asked if mentorship had been tried with newly cleared members. Deputy Chief Brown responded that it had been tried in the past, but scheduling a mentor and clear member together presented too many logistical challenges.

### *Critical Care Program*

This training program is five weeks in with 10 participants. Dr. Branney, Highland's medical director, is fully supportive of the program. The training program has been a demanding commitment for both employees and volunteer paramedics alike. Ultimately, the Critical Care endorsement will increase Highland's scope of practice.

### **FACILITY UPDATE (D. BROWN)**

The Mt. Vernon Board of Directors turned down Highland's request for additional land to the north of the station. This land would have been for septic system and parking expansion. The Mt. Vernon Board was in favor of the project, but a separate water committee rejected the proposal due to concerns over drinking water impact. There is a pond north of the land in question that goes directly into the well system for Mt. Vernon.

Deputy Chief Brown proposed to the Mt. Vernon Board a different parcel of land to the west of the station that is also farther away from the pond. That proposal is being considered at their February board meeting. This would also make the septic system expansion considerably less expensive for Highland to install. Having to go underneath the existing parking lot could double project costs.

The property owners to the south of that station have been reluctant to discuss a land purchase. Additionally, there is a natural spring running through that property that could be problematic for a septic leech field.

Parking can still be expanded with a multi-tier design, however it will be more expensive. Deputy Chief Brown will come back with an estimated cost increase for the parking lot.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

### *Organization Chart*

Director Cooper asked how the organization chart has been going; how much turnover has occurred and how well the chart is filled in. Chief Fager responded that half of the positions were for one-year terms, so members will be able to re-apply in April.

Director Cooper asked if this would be a significant workload increase. Chief Fager and Deputy Chief Brown answered they were unsure since this was the first time they would be going through the process. Chief Fager added that, overall, the organization chart has gone quite well and the increased clarity has been helpful to members. There were only a handful of members dissatisfied with their positions.

Director Cooper asked if any progress had been made toward establishing an exit interview process. Chief Fager responded that the district had not. The members who have left in the last year were for straightforward reasons such as moving out of state.

Director Kasinec asked what the selection process is for the organization chart if more than one person applies for a leadership position. Deputy Chief Brown responded that the leadership team ranking above the applicant will ultimately choose.

### *2025 Election (L. Cardon)*

The district has not received any additional self-nomination forms besides the two current board members. The deadline for self-nomination is February 28, 2025. If no additional self-nomination forms are received, the election can be formally cancelled on March 3, 2025.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

### **ADJOURN**

Director Cooper moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:42 p.m. Director Kasinec seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.