

# HIGHLAND RESCUE TEAM AMBULANCE DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

Highland Station, 317 South Lookout Mountain Road

March 11, 2025

2:30 p.m.

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

**Others present:** Chief Bob Fager, Assistant Chief Steve Telgener, Deputy Chief Damon Brown, Accountant Christina Jantzef, and Administrator Laura Cardon.

## **CALL TO ORDER**

President McCarthy called the meeting to order at 2:02 P.M. Since the meeting began early, all resolutions or items to be voted on were moved until after 2:30 p.m.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.

## **FINANCIAL REPORTS**

*Admin Report (L. Cardon)*

The District billed \$44,170 for 29 transports in February 2024. \$23,292 payments were received, bringing accounts receivable to \$110,807. This balance slightly increased from January 2025 for the first time in a year, but is still considerably lower than January 2024 when it was \$164,521.

Highland saw a decrease in Medicare patients in February 2024, matched by an increase in Medicaid and commercial insurance patients. Self-pay patients remained stable at 25% of patients.

Days in accounts receivable continues to go down, sitting at 86 days on average for the year to date. The majority of outstanding accounts are self-pay, or uninsured patients.

For full billing details, refer to the 2025-03 Admin Report pdf.

BC Services estimated a settlement campaign would recover approximately \$5,000 from accounts currently in collection. Ms Cardon stated she is still getting information about the suggested 35% discount and whether that is standard for medical billing or other emergency services

The district recently completed documentation for the Colorado EMS Supplemental Medicaid Program, which is a federally-funded, state-run program that reimburses EMS agencies for bills not fully reimbursed by Medicaid. At the end of February, "desk review"

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questions were sent out to applicants to be completed by March 1. Desk review is done for any questions the program has about reported information.

The district had one desk review question; Highland was asked to explain a 50% increase in medical supplies from FY23-24 to FY24-25. After going through the expense statements line-by-line, Ms. Cardon discovered two large expenditures that contributed to the \$10,000 difference. The district had to restock its Intraosseous (IO) Kits, which are nearly \$1,000 each. Additionally, the district purchased hypothermia kits for itself and two additional districts. Ms. Cardon submitted that additional information to the CO EMS program and is waiting to hear back from them.

## *Financial Report (C. Jantzef)*

Cancelling the election (see next section) will save the district several thousand dollars. Ms. Jantzef had nothing additional to report as revenues and expenses were both on-target for this time of year.

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

In 2025, Highland had two board positions up for re-election. Only two self-nomination forms were received by the deadline, so both board members were elected by acclamation. Director Kasinec and Director Cooper will officially begin their next four-year term at the May 2025 board meeting. Both directors were notified via email by Ms. Cardon, who is also the Designated Election Official, of their election by acclamation. Both directors will take their next Oath of Office at the May 2025 board meeting.

Ms. Cardon has posted a physical copy of an election cancellation notice in the district's posting box and will also publish it in the Golden Transcript in the next two weeks.

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

In February, Highland responded to 64 calls for help and transported 30 patients. Year-to-date, the district has responded to 123 calls and transported 55 patients.

## *Staffing*

Two paramedics resigned in February due to work and school demands. One recently accepted a job offer in Iraq and the other is in medical school. Both had struggled to meet membership requirements for some time and ultimately decided to resign.

## *Recruitment*

Skills testing and interviews are currently underway for the next probationary class, which will attend orientation April 19-20. Lieutenant Daniel Rivkin has committed significant time

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to skills testing 12 applicants, all of whom will be interviewed for 4-5 spots. Deputy Chief Brown is managing the interview process.

## *Training Division Changes*

Captain David Leonard recently resigned from the Training Director position and returned to the PRN role. He wants to continue participating in education for the team, but without the personnel management responsibilities. Captain Dan Vinnola, formerly our Community Paramedic, has been selected to replace him.

During the interview process, the District identified several issues with the training and community paramedic roles. Both roles were required to be on duty for 24 hours per week, leaving only 16 hours per week for position-specific work. This has not left enough capacity for these roles to commit to training or community paramedicine.

Instead of replacing the Community Paramedic role, responsibilities for that program will be spread among the district's paramedics who are also getting certified as Community Paramedics. Additionally, the district created a Deputy Director of Training Position to hire for and add capacity to the training division. Those candidates are largely from the Training Director role and will be interviewed this week.

## *Leadership Roles*

Members have been asked to re-apply or apply for various volunteer lieutenant-level roles that are up for renewal. Positions include:

- Director of Standards/Evaluation
- Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement Manager
- Plans/Progs/Checks Lieutenant
- Qualifications/Currency Manager
- Recruitment and Retention
- Fleet and Facilities
- Assistant of Operations
- Assistant of Logistics
- Lead Field Training Officer
- Ropes Lieutenant
- Wildland Lieutenant
- B Squad Leader
- C Squad Leader
- Training Coordinator (a new role also created to add capacity to the training division)

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Applications are due at the end of next week and Chief Fager will provide an update at the next meeting.

## *New Ambulance*

The new ambulance's final inspection is at the beginning of May. Deputy Chief Brown will fly to Portland May 8 and drive it back to Highland with a volunteer member.

## *Membership Meeting*

The next membership meeting will be on March 27. President McCarthy asked if any board members were available to attend. He planned to attend and encouraged all the members to attend if able.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### *Facility Update (D. Brown, C. Garlasco)*

Director Garlasco is now co-managing the project with Deputy Chief Brown.

Mt. Vernon Country Club approved an easement for the septic system on the south side of the building and will be doing a site visit on March 12, 2025. A septic engineer has marked out the revised plan. The goal is to break ground in spring or summer 2025.

Since the district isn't able to acquire more land to the north, new design plans were made for multi-level parking in the existing parking area. This will increase parking from 10 spots to 24. Director Garlasco and Deputy Chief Brown will work with any contractors to determine how to incorporate the parking lot project into the larger facility expansion project.

Director Garlasco reached out to an owner's representative firm, Wember Inc. that worked with the Genesee Foundation on projects over the last several years. Wember acknowledged this is a small-scale project for most firms, which could be why the District has struggled to hear back from other firms to date. Wember agreed to see if they could recruit architectural firms or engineers willing to work on a smaller project such as Highland's.

Typically an owner's representative costs about 10% of the total project cost. Design and construction will be split into two distinct projects and the owner's representative costs will be split between the two. Ms. Jantze added that the construction phase will need to go through a public bidding process, but not architecture or engineering services.

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Director Garlasco presented an estimated project timeline that went through the third quarter of 2027. For the first quarter of 2025, the board's goal is to confirm scope of work, with a cost estimate done in the second half of the year.

Director Kasinec asked Chief Fager what grant funding, if any, was available for facility updates. Chief Fager answered he was unaware of any opportunities that fund facilities that are not fire stations, but he would research the matter.

Director Garlasco and Deputy Chief Brown will have a further update at the next Board of Directors meeting. The board agreed to add a facilities update to the agenda each month moving forward.

## **PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**

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

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### *Length of Service Award Program - LOSAP (L. Cardon)*

The LOSAP Board unanimously approved the amount of \$50,423.71 for the 2024 LOSAP contribution for volunteer members who met qualifications and recommended the district board do the same. President McCarthy made a motion to formally approve a \$50,423.71 contribution to Lincoln Financial to fund qualifying members LOSAP accounts. Director Garlasco seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

### *Election Cancellation Resolution (L. Cardon)*

Ms. Cardon presented the formal resolution to cancel the election per the earlier discussion. Director Garlasco moved to approve Resolution 2025-03. Director Jones seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

## **ADJOURN**

Director Cooper moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:51 p.m. Director Jones seconded. Unanimously approved.