

HIGHLAND RESCUE TEAM AMBULANCE DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

Highland Station, 317 South Lookout Mountain Road, April 15, 2025 at 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, 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 2:34 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

Director Cooper moved to approve the March board meeting minutes. President McCarthy seconded the motion. Approved unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Admin Report (Laura Cardon) - Information

Highland transported 19 patients in March 2025, billing \$29,399. The district received \$12,191 in payments.

Year to date, the amount of transported patients with Medicare insurance increased to 55%. Self-pay patients decreased to 16% and commercially insured patients increased to 21%.

Bills spent fewer days in accounts receivable, decreasing to an average of 83 days year-to-date. There are 88 outstanding accounts, which is another decrease.

The collections settlement campaign began March 13, 2025. BC Services estimated a total of \$5,065 of recovered revenue after six months. There was a normal amount of payments, \$105, in March. However, April is already higher than normal at \$838.22. The campaign does not cost the district anything additional to run since it's automated.

For complete details, refer to the 2024-04 Admin Report - March 2025 pdf.

Financial Report (Christina Jantzef) - Information

Fee revenue was below target after a slower March than previous years. We get a large payment of property taxes in March, so that revenue is above target.

Operations expenses are below target. Safety and training expenses are above target due to the EMS Leadership Academy, which was not budgeted for, but is being offset by grant revenue later in the year.

Facilities and station expenses are above target for gas and propane bills at the beginning of the year. Due to the election getting cancelled, administrative expenses are well below target. Capital expenses are below budget and will stay way until the new ambulance is paid for later in the year.

The annual audit is underway and going smoothly. The draft audit report should be available at the next board meeting.

For complete details, refer to the Memo 03-25 pdf.

CHIEF'S REPORT (B. Fager)

The district responded to 45 calls and transported 19 patients in March.

Staffing

Five new probationary EMTs were hired and attended orientation the previous weekend. Jasmine Burke has been hired as the. Deputy Director of Training hired. One member resigned in April due to interpersonal issues.

Positions on the organizational chart have all been filled except for Deputy Director of Standards and Evaluation. This position is accepting applications until April 27 and will be decided on by the first week of May.

Grants

The district is still waiting to hear back from the Golden Civic Foundation regarding a grant to pay for the EMS Leadership Academy. Tuition expenses will hit the Seminars & Tuition line item before grant revenue will be received. That budget line item will be well over-budget, but is ultimately offset by grant funds.

President McCarthy asked what happens to the \$20,000 budgeted for the election and whether it can be moved. Ms. Jantzef answered that it carries forward into the surplus into 2026. It could be re-allocated to other budget line items if the district or board desires.

Director Garlasco made a motion to send all four candidates to the academy even if the Golden Civic Foundation grant is not awarded. Funds will come from the \$20,000 budgeted

for the now-cancelled election. Director Kasinec seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

Apparatus

Ambulance 289 sold for \$23,400, which was more than expected. President McCarthy asked how old the ambulance was; Chief Fager replied the ambulance was a 2010 model. Ambulance 287 will also be sold once the new ambulance is in service.

The new ambulance is nearing completion. The inspection is May 8, 2025. Deputy Chief Brown and volunteer EMT Seth Carter are flying out to Oregon to pick up the ambulance and drive it back to Highland just in time for the agency-wide skills training on May 10.

Ms. Jantze asked if there were fees deducted from that amount. Chief Fager answered that no, the check would be for the full \$23,400 amount and is in the mail. Ms. Jantze also added that would likely be a revenue gain on the book since the ambulance was fully depreciated in value.

Ms. Cardon has started the process of adding the new ambulance to the district's insurance policy and scheduling an inspection with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE).

NEW BUSINESS

Director Kasinec asked whether there were any updates on property tax legislation. Chief Fager and Ms. Cardon answered there had not been. Ms. Cardon noted she would be watching the Special District Association legislative update the following day. Director Garlasco requested that any relevant property tax updates be sent via email to the board.

Chief Fager shared House Bill 1088 requiring insurance companies to pay the full amount billed by ambulance companies is moving forward, which will have a meaningful impact on how well Highland is reimbursed on medical transport bills.

OLD BUSINESS

Facility Update (Damon Brown, B. Fager)

Deputy Chief Brown shared that Mt Vernon County Club's board and water board have approved the septic plan. Next, the community must vote to approve the plan. Deputy Chief Brown hoped to have that finalized by the end of the month.

Director Garlasco shared that she met with Wember, an owner's representative firm discussed in the March 2025 board meeting. Wember shared that construction costs are up to \$500 per square foot for commercial projects. The firm ultimately declined to represent the project because it is much smaller than what they typically work with.

Director Garlasco asked for referrals to architecture firms with emergency response facilities experience, which resulted in two firms being recommended: Infusion Architecture, LLC and Vega Architecture. The board will be meeting with Vega Architecture on April 16 to discuss the project and meet the firm.

Director Kasinec asked if there were any grant opportunities for facilities updates. Chief Fager said he had not been able to find any yet, but would continue to look. Director Garlasco also proposed an extra issue of the Highlander newsletter that featured the project once costs are better determined.

Assistant Chief Telgener asked whether the reserves Highland have are average for ambulance services. Ms. Jantze responded that it's very difficult to compare between special districts because Highland has less fixed costs than many districts.

The basic accounting rule of thumb is to have a minimum of one-third of your operations for the year in reserve. The statute is to have 3% of operations in reserve. Highland has more than that.

The board agreed final costs and scope still need to be determined, but there are multiple options for financing and phasing the project to spread out costs.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

ADJOURN

President McCarthy moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:53 p.m. Director Garlasco seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.