

# HIGHLAND RESCUE TEAM AMBULANCE DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

Highland Station

317 South Lookout Mountain Road

June 10, 2025

2:30 p.m.

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

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

## **CALL TO ORDER**

President McCarthy called the meeting to order at 2:31 p.m.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.

## **PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**

President McCarthy moved to approve the May 2025 board meeting minutes. Director Garlasco seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

## **FINANCIAL REPORTS**

*Admin Report (L. Cardon)*

Highland transported 22 patients in May 2025, billing \$34,702 total. Payments were much higher than normal, with \$25,251 in payments compared to the 12-month average of \$19,633. Just \$654 was sent to collections; typically \$6,500 of bills are sent to collections each month. Higher payments and lower collections write-offs resulted in a substantial decrease in the ending balance to \$100,655.

Patient's insurance providers year-to-date did not change substantially from April 2025. Year to date, 53% of patients rely on Medicare. 24% of patients use commercial insurance.

Self-pay patients make up 16% of patients year-to-date and Medicaid accounts for the remaining 8%.

The collections campaign is still running, although it is well below the amount of recovered revenue estimated by the collections company. Ms. Cardon noted she will reach out to the collections company to discuss insights into why the campaign is not performing as expected. The campaign substantially discounts outstanding balances for patients willing to pay off a discounted amount in lump sum.

For complete details, refer to the 2024-06 Admin Report - May 2025 pdf.

#### *Financial Report (Christina Jantzef)*

This month's financial memo was largely unremarkable.

Training expenses are still above target due to EMS Leadership Academy costs. One grant has been received and Chief Fager finished reimbursement paperwork for the second grant this week.

Apparatus expenses are well below target thanks to no major repairs on ambulances in 2025. However, facilities and station expenses are still above target due to garage door repairs earlier in the year.

Capital expenditures are above target because the new ambulance has been delivered and paid for. That budget is at 100% for the year.

Ms. Jantzef also reported that the auditing company has not yet provided the draft audit report. She was hopeful the report would arrive this week and could be distributed via email. The deadline to submit the report to the state is July 31, so the board will still have time to approve the audit report at the July meeting.

For complete details, refer to the Memo 05-25 pdf.

#### **CHIEF'S REPORT (Chief Bob Fager)**

Chief Fager reported that Highland responded to 54 calls in May, bringing the 2025 total to 283 calls.

#### *Staffing Update*

No staffing changes in the last month.

One staffing challenge that has persisted is getting Advanced Life Support (ALS) volunteer shifts filled. ALS shifts can only be filled by paramedics; each shift requires one ALS provider and at least one Basic Life Support (BLS) provider, typically an Advanced EMT or EMT-Basic.

Chief Fager had very productive conversations with the paramedic volunteer members for how to better fill shifts. Just raising awareness of the issue has helped, with June being completely filled despite typically being one of the hardest months to schedule.

One change that the district would like to implement is a bonus to Length of Service Award Program (LOSAP) contributions. This bonus would be an additional \$250 annually to any ALS member who completes at least 84 of the required 108 shift hours as an ALS provider. This bonus would recognize the increased responsibility of paramedics, who are ultimately accountable for scene management, quality of care, training, and managing probationary members on shift. There currently is no recognition of that increased workload and responsibility.

The board was in agreement with Chief Fager's recommendation. Chief Fager proposed a meeting with the LOSAP Board in July to formalize changes to the rules and regulations.

President McCarthy asked for a rough estimate for what the bonus would cost annually. Chief Fager responded the bonus would be approximately \$2,500 additional each year.

Director Garlasco asked the district to also recognize these members' additional contribution at the year-end awards dinner. Chief Fager and Deputy Chief Brown agreed.

#### *Training Update*

Deputy Chief Brown, Captain Singsheim, and Chief Fager attended the EMS Leadership Academy in May. They found the material extremely valuable and practical. They are working on a condensed version to present to the team as a one-day training opportunity.

#### *Apparatus Update*

The new Ambulance 287 is officially in service and responding to calls.

The old Ambulance 287 went to a mechanic to assess costs for fixing current mechanical issues. Ultimately, it was not worth continued investment to fix the issues before putting it up for sale. The ambulance will be sold as-is with full disclosures from the mechanic.

President McCarthy asked how many ambulances the district would have after the old Ambulance 287 is sold. Deputy Chief Brown responded that the district will have three ambulances following that sale. The district also sold Ambulance 289 earlier this year, which had been used for wildland fire deployments. The ambulance was not being used often enough to justify its ongoing maintenance costs as it aged.

For full details, refer to Chiefs report- 2025-06 pdf.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### *Facility Update (Deputy Chief Brown)*

Mount Vernon officially approved an easement for the district's new septic system. The easement is getting finalized by the district's lawyer. Once that process is complete, Deputy Chief Brown will begin a bidding process for contractors. The goal is to break ground before winter 2025.

Deputy Chief Brown commended Director Garlasco's work to find two competitive options for architecture firms. Deputy Chief Brown and President McCarthy proposed moving forward with Vega's proposal, particularly because one of the lead architects lives in the district. The proposal is a \$5,000 commitment for the first planning and conceptual phase. After meeting with both firms and discussing the proposals during the earlier study session, the board was in agreement to move forward with Vega's proposal.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

### **ADJOURN**

President McCarthy moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:56 p.m. Director Garlasco seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.