



Rescue Team Highland Ambulance District

HIGHLAND RESCUE TEAM AMBULANCE DISTRICT SPECIAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING October 5, 2020, 1:00p.m.

Chairman Robert Keating called the meeting to order at 1:02

Other Directors present: Roxanne Lenny, Patricia Hall, Terry McCarthy, and John Zima.

Others present: Chief Alan Feldman, Assistant Chief Jan Keating, and Barbara DeBoer

The purpose of this board meeting is to have the board members interview and ask questions to the Chief candidates. Rob Keating thanked all the board members for attending this special board meeting and asked Chief Feldman to summarize the steps the recruiting committee had completed thus far.

Chief Feldman explained that over the past few weeks the candidates have gone through background checks, an interview, a practical test, and a written test. At the beginning of this process we had 4 candidates. One withdrew early in the process because he was offered a new job at his current employment. Another candidate was eliminated due to poor test results.

Our goal today is informational only. Due to the new state law, the board is not allowed to make a decision until the 2-week public posting period is over. That date will be Oct 12. The Board may decide at the Oct 13th Board meeting.

The two remaining candidates have been asked the written interview questions so we will not follow that format but instead invite the board members to ask any questions or follow up questions that may come from their review of the candidates resumes.

Assistant Chief Jan Keating mentioned that we should ask both candidates the same questions.

Candidate one, Bob Fager was an EMT when he joined Indian Hills Fire Department. He has his paramedic certification now. He has been a volunteer for over 12 years at Indian Hills. Alan feels he has a strong background and has grown his current agency from a BLS agency to an ALS agency. His grade on the scenario was a 28 which was the highest score of the 3 medics tested. His medicine and organization skills were overall strong. There was no statistical difference between the 2 remaining candidate's protocol tests.



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Roxanne Lenny mentioned that the packet the recruiting committee put together was excellent. The other board members all agreed.

Captain Bob Fager with Indian Hills Fire was introduced to the Board. He introduced himself and shared that he loves EMS. He enjoys working with volunteers including the boy scouts. His 20-year career has been in IT.

Roxanne Lenny introduced herself.

She asked Bob what his Eagle project had been? He responded that he worked with the local fire department to get a stream cleaned up. Both his parents were involved with the fire department while he was growing up.

What is the highest compliment that someone could pay you?

Bob responded that people say he is likeable and that he gets along well with people.

Terry McCarthy stated he was very curious about the differences of leading a volunteer group vs a paid group since Highland Rescue Team has both.

Bob responded he will work for the volunteers, figure out what motivates them. Make sure the volunteers feel appreciated. We also need to support the rest of the volunteer's family because they also give up a lot.

Patty Hall- What makes you successful?

Bob-Hard work. I am a bit of an overachiever. I always try to be the best at what I do.

John Zima- What is your vision for Highland in the future 10-15 years?

Bob- I love that you attract a lot of volunteers. As time goes by people are pulled in a lot of different directions. We need to figure out how to work with them and somewhat adapt to their schedules.

Roxanne Lenny asked about Indian Hills.

Bob responded it has a population of 1600. 500 households and run a third of the calls that Highland does. They have 22 members in the Indian Hills Fire Department.

Have you run into situations where you have had to manage a tough situation with members who you are friendly with?

Bob said they often make decisions as a panel. We have a member who has been there 7-8 years. He did station duties but had stopped running calls. We have a requirement that everyone runs 15% of all calls. We had to let him go and he is a close friend.

Terry McCarthy asked what types of things might you incorporate from your tech background?



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Bob said he has done several tech projects at Indian Hills. He has automated getting face sheets. He has created an interface to Hospitals. He has automated RAW information to set up fire danger alerts to the leadership.

Roxanne asked if he has done any fundraising at Indian Hills.

He has helped with the annual pancake breakfast, 5K run, - They have a nonprofit like Highland does "Fire Boots" and he is the president of that.

Rob Keating asked him to share his experience with radio systems.

He is a ham operator. He also participated in grant writing and programming of radios for Indian Hills.

Roxanne asked if he had experience writing grants? Bob listed considerable experience with writing grants. He also credited an Indian Hills member who has helped him and who is a PHD who teaches grant writing at DU.

John Zima- One of the things that concerns John is that this job is more than a full-time job. How will Bob handle the time commitment?

Bob responded that obviously some delegation is important. ***How does he feel about delegation?*** The best person will be someone who figures out what each member's strengths are and put them to work at what they will be successful with.

Roxanne- how will you incentivize them?

Bob- They need to feel that what they do is appreciated. You need to make sure people enjoy their time around the station. Bring in social interactions- build a sense of community.

Patty Hall asked what would you say are essential qualities for a chief to possess?

Bob said to know your strengths and weaknesses and find people who can help fill the gaps where you need them. Leadership is important-know when you need to decide on the spot and know when you need time and input to make a decision.
Be a Role model.

He was asked his greatest strength- He feels he is a good problem solver. The first step of understanding the problem is often overlooked. You must identify it correctly.

He was asked his greatest weakness- He is horrible at names.

Terry McCarthy asked *what is Indian Hill's doing that Highland can benefit from?* Bob hopes that he can stay at Indian Hills if he is hired. He knows he will learn a lot that can benefit Indian Hills. They have gotten a new ambulance that has some features that Highland may like.



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Roxanne Lenny- as a board we believe we have a great organization and want to build an even better one. The revolving door of leadership has been problematic. She is a big fan of “best practices”. The staff and volunteers have always been self-starters. How do you feel about coming into that environment?

Bob understands what she is saying because Indian Hills has gone through the transition to a paid Chief recently. Anyone leading volunteers must give them jobs they enjoy.

Patty Hall-How would you manage your time between here and Indian Hills?

Bob- I have always worked full time and handled volunteering.” He would end up delegating more at Indian Hills.

Patty Hall- We have 2 very qualified candidates. What makes you the best one?

Bob- You are looking for someone who can lead volunteers and I have no doubt I can do that.

If you get this position and our internal candidate does not how are you going to handle it.?

Bob – This is a concern that he has thought about. He will make sure he gets to know Damon well and make sure he continues to love what he does here.

Roxanne discussed questions Bob has had for Highland through this process and he shared them and felt he had gotten them answered. He wanted to know why Alan stepped down.

Rob Keating asked him to tell us about an award he got in DC. He received the Bells Lab award on that project.

Patty Hall asked Bob to describe his management experience. He admitted he is lacking in this area with paid staff. He has lead teams at work. He has managed volunteers and scouts.

Recap after Bob left the room.

Alan asked the board if they have any follow up questions.

Patty Hall asked Chief Feldman if he had any concern about Bob’s ability to work here and volunteer at Indian Hills. Alan did not seem concerned since he has worked full time while volunteering at Indian Hills for over 12 years.

Barbara DeBoer asked what his hours were going to be?

Chief Feldman replied 9-5 but he would also be expected to attend Chief meetings, QI meetings, and reporting requirements. He would respond on 2nd out calls.

It would not be acceptable for him to go on Indian Hills calls while he was on duty here.



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The Board went into executive session Personnel Matters, S 24-6-402(4)(f), C.R.S. for at 2:34.

Resumed the Board Meeting at 3:05

Candidate 2, Damon Brown was brought into the meeting.

Captain Damon Brown has been with Highland Rescue Team since 1998. He did a few third rides way back in 1993.

Patty Hall – The final question on your application was “Have you ever been terminated by an employer or been asked to resign in lieu of termination?” You responded “Yes”. Please explain.

Damon explained that when he worked at Chile’s, he had two cases of dine and dash patrons that he was held accountable for. He also had a complaint from another patron who was not happy with his meal, so he was subsequently fired for having 3 incidents.

Roxanne Lenny asked Damon where he wants to take Highland in the future? Does he know about other organizations that do things better?

Damon said we are a bit of a unicorn. We are a unique organization- we are not a fire department and we are one of the few EMS organizations that relies so heavily on volunteers. He feels one of the areas we could do better is with advanced training. More mass casualty training. We do a great job at basic training but do not offer as much for the advanced (ALS) members. Community Relationships are good, but he would like to see us do better there also. Community Paramedics is a way we can grow. He would like to see us pioneer more community programs. He mentioned an example in Canada where they have a program to transport end of life hospice patients to see family members for no charge.

Terry McCarthy asked if Damon could tell him why he thinks Highland does a great job.

Damon responded that Highland has a professional team- we provide good service. He always stresses to the team to do whatever can make the patient more comfortable. We can take the extra time. We practice good medicine.

Roxanne noted Damon’s passion for taking care of patients. How would he feel about not doing that?

Damon is comfortable doing the administrative side of things. He does feel that having a presence on scene is important too for a Chief – it will be a balance. He has been running calls for a long time and is looking forward to sleeping regularly.

Roxanne Lenny pointed out this is a 9-5 job plus he will have to work occasional evenings.



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Damon feels there should be a bit flexibility. He knows it will be a 40+ hour job. He feels it will benefit this position to work some weekends and evenings so he can work with all crew members.

Terry McCarthy -You have been here a long time. Why do you want this position?

Damon explained that it is a natural progression that he has been working toward his whole career. He feels there is a special culture here and he can make sure it stays. He knows what this job takes after working with many good and bad chiefs here at Highland. He has learned from both.

Roxanne Lenny- Do you have a perspective on how you can keep volunteers longer?

Damon feels we do a rather good job at it. We have several categories. The young person is not going to stay longer than 2-5 years. The other category is older individuals who want to do community service. We have more applicants now than we can use. We can afford to be picky. To maintain them we need to understand why people are here and make sure we meet their needs.

Patty Hall asked what makes you the success that you are?

Determination. It boils down to a good work effort and taking all the steps necessary to get a project done.

What makes a good leader?

Damon- "The ability to make a decision is critical and if you make the wrong one, you correct it. Patience is key with volunteers."

Patty- How do you motivate people?

Lead by doing. Get in there and start working and get the volunteers to join in.

Patty-What are essential qualities for a chief to possess?

Decisiveness, patience, understanding.

How do you promote teamwork?

Damon, "Get to know people, learn what motivates them. What are their career goals? Know their families. Squash division before it can start. Try to erase lines between groups so we stay one big team. Communication is key."

Terry- This would be a change in role for you. Are there any concerns?

Damon feels in a way it will be the same. Looking out for the whole agency instead of a pocket of it. He has worked well with Barb for a long time- 10 years. We are a small organization so the paid staff has to all work together all help each other complete tasks.



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Roxanne Lenny asked how are you on the computer?

Damon says he is decent. He can do an excel spread sheet and can call tech support when it is needed.

Roxanne thought Alan's advanced work on the mill levy issue really helped. If you get this position an advanced level of computers is required. More training may be necessary.

Damon would be happy to take additional computer classes and learn new skills if needed.

Rob Keating- With your current job what part of your job would you keep as a Chief?

Damon would continue taking a command role when needed on big calls. Getting to know members and building strong relationships with Genesee and Foothills.

Rob Keating- What has kept us from doing more ALS training here?

Because there is only one ALS member on at a time we sometimes work as an island. Damon would like to see us run more scenarios of pediatric calls.

Patty Hall- Could you describe your management experience?

Damon –Most of my management experience has been here at Highland. It has been a learning process for me. I have worked with many Chiefs over the years who have had a variety of management styles- some good, some bad.

Patty-What is your management style?

Calm, clear, and patient, direct, honest. You must be clear about expectations- have good communication skills. Open door policy.

Patty-Can you describe your most challenging management situation?

Damon – We had a member that was causing a lot of problems and making accusations. He learned to always have a second person available in the meetings to help.

Successes?

Damon is proud of where Highland is today compared to where it was in the past. He really wanted Highland to become more professional over the years and has worked toward that goal. There used to be no schedule- you never knew who was on. He worked on setting up a team calendar. Each ambulance was always different in the past which made it hard to find medical equipment while on calls. He has worked hard to standardize our fleet.

Failures?

Damon does not see any large failures.

Roxanne- With this revolving door with different chiefs- How is it going to feel and how will the team feel with a more structured leadership.



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Damon replied, "I think you will have a mixed reaction. Most members will be happy with more consistency."

He has played the role of mending broken relationships where past Chiefs had made problems.

Patty Hall asked Damon his greatest strength.

Damon's responded that his willingness to take on any tasks and to learn what he must do to complete any task were his strengths. Also, his determination to always push forward.

Greatest Weakness?

Damon feels he can take on too much sometimes. Needs to understand his limitations and be willing to delegate.

Terry- what do you think about working with this board? Are there things we can do to help you?

Damon views this board as always being helpful. He feels he can utilize the members to help get projects done that pull from their areas of expertise.

Patty- We have 2 qualified candidates. What makes you best for this job?

He has been training for this job for a long time. He has a varied skill set. A long history of good reviews. Knows how to manage a scene. He can apply for a grant- he has gotten several for Highland. He can speak well and write well. Communicate with the community and maintain our excellent reputation. He will work hard to safeguard this reputation.

Patty- if you do not get the job how will you work with Bob to transition into this role?

Damon will work hard for Bob and do it like he has with every new volunteer chief in the past.

***Executive Session was called for Personnel Matters, S 24-6-402(4)(f), C.R.S. at 4:03
Executive Session ended 5:02***

The Special Board Meeting was Adjourned at 5:03