

JEFFERSON COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES AGENCY



MEETING MINUTES OCTOBER 22, 2014

Chairman Kelley called the meeting of the Jefferson County Emergency Services Agency to order at 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, October 22, 2014 in the Jefferson County Emergency Services Agency Building, 419 Sixteenth Avenue, Ranson, WV.

Attendance	Present	Absent	Attendance	Present	Absent
B. Aitcheson		X	P. Kelley	X	
D. Carter	X		J. Tabb	X	
C. Conroy	X		J. Wysong	X	

Also in attendance:

Doug Pittinger, Director

Ed Hannon, Deputy Director

Joshua Smith, JCFRA

Gary Lescalleet, BRMVFC

Ross Morgan, SFD

Marshall Demeritt, SFD

Marty Freeman, JCESA

Quinton Davis, BFD

Approval Minutes: September 16 – Changes to page 4 comments under Chris Conroy edited and page 5 Pete Rosa changed to Paul Rosa.

Motion by Jane Tabb to approve seconded by Denise Carter

Vote: Unanimous.

October 7, 2014 Special Meeting

Motion by Chris Conroy to approve seconded by Denise Carter

Vote: Unanimous.

OLD BUSINESS

Appoint Chairman of Personnel Committee: Pete Kelley Chairman, Jack Wysong and Bob Aitcheson committee members with community involvement.

Motion by Jane Tabb to approve seconded by Denise Carter

Vote: Unanimous.

Appoint Chairman CIP Committee: Chris Conroy, Chairman with community involvement.

Motion by Jane Tabb to approve these appointments seconded by Denise Carter

Vote: Unanimous

Review Bylaws: A draft version containing edits/corrections was made available. A motion was made to have a final version prepared for approval by the Board and submission to the County Commission.

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A motion by Jane Tabb to approve draft bylaws a presented with handwritten edits from Mr. Aitcheson made public to be presented at our November meeting. Seconded by Jack Wysong.
Vote: Unanimous.

Rewrite JCESA Mission Statement: J. Wysong proposal, distributed in September, to rewrite the mission statement to say JCESA is here to assist the volunteer Fire Departments and not to run an ambulance service and it needs to keep site of the fire mission. The Director mentioned that the mission statement must include non-discriminatory wording to satisfy State requirements. Item tabled until next month.

Review OG 2390: C. Conroy advised that there is a meeting with A. Norton next week and that a report is pending from the State. Item tabled until next month.

Develop Cost Sharing Model for Ambulance Revenues: J. Tabb informed the Board it was her opinion that no Ambulance Fee funding could be spent until a cost sharing model was developed. Item tabled until next month.

TREASURER REPORT

September Financial report included in Board packet. No comments /changes from Board.

Payroll/Federal Tax items presented to Board to make aware that payroll is paid electronically without issuance of checks.

2012-2013 completed State Audit and corrections requested are now complete. Needs to be transmitted to the County. Chairman suggested that a letter be prepared and delivered to the Commission and scanned and placed on the website.

2013-2014 audit vendor needs to be selected. C. Conroy and J. Wysong volunteered to be on the Committee.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Reported that he had attended JCFRA meeting 10-14-14 and meeting with Director weekly.

PRESIDENT JCFRA

Reported there had been a JCFRA meeting October 14th including some bylaw changes, revenue sharing, standardization of station operation rules for JCESA employees, funding agreement for next fiscal year. Chairman Kelley to meet with the departments to discuss how to do this.

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President Smith stated that all seven fire departments opposed any type of revenue sharing and JCESA will be receiving written documentation of same.

Chairman Kelley asked President Josh Smith to provide a written report of his report for the JCESA Board to review.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Director highlighted excerpts of his report provided to the Board including.

- Update on new Protocol training ongoing.
- Panasonic tough books for CAD to be delivered by 10/31
- FT paramedic going on extended sick leave. One PT employee is interested in conversion to FT which is funded out of the Ambulance Account. Director's ready to make job offers next month for new employees. J. Tabb will get advice from Legal Counsel to get confirmation that funding cannot be spent until Revenue sharing is completed. Agency to continue job process but not to make job offers.
- 2014 FEMA Grant will be prepared and JCESA will seek the help of a Fire Company to complete.
- CIS data over inflated require updating by Fire Departments.
- Skills day attendance
- EMS Incident at Washington High School

BOARD MEMBER REQUESTS

- Letter from B Aitcheson reviewed under the OG 2390. No additional requests.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ad Hoc Committee – MOU between Eackles, Spencer & Norton and JCESA – Tabled until next month.

Personnel Committee - None

CIP Committee – None

Employee Liaison – None

NEW BUSINESS

Review of Improved Services / Chief Ross Morgan - written copy of speech attached to the minutes.

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BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

J. Tabb mentioned the upcoming timeline which has an ESA hearing in December with submission to the County in January. A schedule from the County will be requested.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

M. Demeritt suggested that the Board consider charging \$1 per call in revenue sharing.

A motion was made by C. Conroy to adjourn seconded by J. Wysong. The Board adjourned at 9:09 pm

Good evening, for those of you who may or may not me, my name is Ross L. Morgan. I currently hold the rank of Fire Chief for the Shep FD.

I joined the department in Jan of 1979, prior to that I joined the Jr Dept in Jan of 1976 and before that I went on many calls, fire, EMS and public service calls ever since I was old enough to walk. I had this wonderful opportunity because my father, the late D. Lee Morgan served as Fire Chief for Shep for 35 years, but more importantly he was the greatest public servant in the entire tri-county area and beyond. During these past 45 or so years I had the privilege to be exposed to a lot of wonderful people of all walks of life and watched and listened and ask few questions but learned a lot more than anyone can learn thru books. I tell you this because I feel that with this background I think I have just a little bit of knowledge to express to you my thoughts and direction I feel that this agency should go.

First thing is to bring up is what paves the way for a lot of things in this world, money. We need to remember that Jefferson County is not like a lot of other surrounding counties or jurisdictions, we do not have the tax revenue that others have. We don't have it because we have very very little manufacturing plants and industries to create jobs and create the tax base. Jefferson County is mainly known as a bedroom community to the DC, Metropolitan area. We have a lot of tourism, residential housing and home to many Fed Government facilities which pays zero tax dollars, (I may be wrong, but I think they are even exempt from the new \$40.00 ambulance fee) and 3/4 of these employees do not live in Jefferson County. But there are ways that this agency can get a lot more bang for the buck, this will be presented to you next month with a Proposed Staffing Plan that has been put together by volunteers, I am very confident that you will like what you see when it is presented.

Next, even though Jefferson County does not have a lot of money, it does have a extremely lot of wealth thru it's citizens and their knowledge. Jefferson County, to me, is a unique county. Did you know that if you combined all 7 volunteer departments years of existence, we have a over 580 years of expertise in the fire and EMS field, I am very confident that not many, if any, other counties in the state can say that. I bring that up because this agency does not have to reinvent the wheel or even try to create their own empire. This agency should focus on one thing, which is to supplement the volunteer departments with career staff. Don't confuse that with not looking at other avenues or ideas, but we need to use, what little money we have, wisely and not over extend our spending for things that already exists. Some of these big ticket items I am speaking of is, we, the volunteers already have nice stations, a top of the line of rolling stock of apparatus. Personal Protective Equipment, and various other supplies too numerous to mention. Just on the EMS side there is a total of 12 ambulance transport units, all set up for ALS Providers. This is why I feel that there would be a great cost savings if this agency got rid of all but 2 chase cars of their rolling stock. The Medic 11 needs to be parked to stop duplicating services that we already provide, the reserve unit could also be sold. Yes a reserve unit is very nice to have when one of the volunteer units breaks down, but before we made out just fine by sharing our units with each other just as we have had to do in the past.

Revenue Sharing, this should absolutely not be a item to even discuss. The County Commission already has x amount of dollars budgeted to this agency, the new fee is creating revenue for this agency, the transports that you bill for is creating revenue. This is not fair simply because we, the volunteers purchase the transport units, the durgs and

supplies for the units, fuel, tires and maintenance, the insurance we provide the buildings that house these units and your employees, with most of the stations with bunk rooms for overnight stays, not to mention the utilities for these buildings. And our revenue from the county, now going thru this agency, is getting smaller and smaller all the time. Please remember, these funds from EMS billings does not just support the EMS services of the volunteers, it is a huge necessity income in order for the fire services to keep their head above water. I know that some are really serious about privatizing the services, but I can assure you, that Jefferson County, in no way shape or form can even afford just to think about this. You are easily talking a minimum of 25 to 50 million dollars to provide these services. And why even think that way when the services are already being provided by the volunteers now. Again, focus on the staffing to supplement the volunteers. There is another idea that I feel will work that will help create revenue for this agency and not affect the volunteers. I need to do some more research on this idea and if findings prove to be beneficial to all stake holders then I will come back at a later time to talk about this, but please, Revenue Sharing needs to be eliminated from everyone's minds.

New hires, now that money is coming in from the new fee there are several things to think about. When hiring these new employees a very strong emphasis should be placed on their experience and training of both EMS and Fire, but also Driving Pump Operations. I wish that this was a requirement, not just a plus on the resume.

Current employees, I strongly feel that current employees who only have EMS training and shows no interest in fire, should not in any way be penalized for this or even feel that their job is in jeopardy. These

employees should continue as they currently are now and thru attrition, all new hires will be crossed trained. If any of the current employees would like to expand the services to become crossed train then I feel that this agency could pay for the course but not be paid while taking the training, since this should not be a requirement. There should be however, some sort of incentive such as a pay increase or something to make them want to be crossed train. Other ideas to look at is to hire folks that already possess both EMS and Fire training and driving experience. I know for a fact that there are a lot of folks who's full time job is a career firefighter/EMT or firefighter/Medic who would love to work here on a part time basis. This alone would save this agency money since you don't have to pay part timers the full benefits.

Rotating or not rotating staff. There are more pros than cons for NOT rotating staff. For instance, many volunteers thru out this county are career folks who work in neighboring counties but volunteer here. If these individuals got part time jobs here, then let them work in the same house they volunteer in. They already have their own PPE, these individuals know the apparatus, so no driving training would be needed. They know their first due area and it would instill more pride in that individual.

Fire Fee, I know that the commission has brought up in the past the talk about fire fees. I am here to say that is not the way to go. Last week at the JCFRA meeting a motion was brought to the floor and unanimously voted for approval to revisit the State Legislature and again get the senate bill to reflect that Jefferson County can put in place a fee for combined EMS and Fire services. This is the only way to go, it is a one stop shop for everyone, there would be only one fee, one board, one administrator to oversee the paper work and a lot less accounting for

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the volunteer organizations. If you separate both a EMS and a fire fee then you would have to duplicate everything, the board, administrator etc and the volunteer would again have two more separate accounts to keep track of. In the motion, the association placed Mr. Jay Watson as the committee chair to for this combined fee. He will be contacting this board for input I can only hope that this board will bend over backwards to help make this a success.

There are many other things that I could go on about but one more bit of advice I would like to share with this board, remember, you as the Jefferson County Emergency Services Agency Board, are the driving force of the agency employees, from the director down to the newest employee. You are in the driver's seat, not the back seat as it has been in the past. You need to drive this agency in the right direction while taking driving tips and advice from all stake holders. In closing please remember, Jefferson County is a unique county, we have the strongest most community oriented volunteer system in the entire state, with this board providing the labor that we sorely need, we can set the tone of excellence for the rest of the state and continue, as we have done in the past 580 combined years, the best possible service that Jefferson County can provide. Thank You