

# **Wabasha Ambulance Commission Meeting**

**Wednesday October 17th, 2012**

**Ambulance Base 7pm**

Members Present: Barb Tentis, Mike Wallerich, Pat Carrels, John Friedmeyer and Mark Jarstad.

Members Absent: Dr. Robert Taylor

Others Present: Sean Lathrop, Ambulance Director

Meeting called to order at 19:01 by Mike Wallerich

MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING WERE UNAVAILABLE DUE TO DIRECTOR CHANGE AND LENGTH PASSED SINCE LAST MEETING.

## **AMBULANCE UPDATE**

The commission was updated on recent and planned work to be done on the trucks. Director Lathrop has noticed a few issues with the truck. While working with the vendor, North Central Ambulance, arrangements have been made to redo the graphics on the trucks as there was an issue with the graphics peeling and cracking. The truck doors also had to be adjusted and some final straps added. There also is an active recall on the trucks that will be taken care of next week in between when the graphics are being redone.

## **MUTUAL AID CONVERSATION WITH ALMA AMBULANCE**

Director Lathrop stated he spoke with the Alma Ambulance director in reference to offering our service to help cover calls in the Town of Nelson. After past conversations with the Wisconsin EMS Regulatory Board, it sounds like we can cover Nelson on a mutual aid basis as long as two of three prongs are Minnesota based. Therefore, a MN licensed service that picks up a WI patient would have to transport to a MN hospital (i.e. St Elizabeths) in order to be able to do this. Further conversations may be held, this is FYI only at this point.

## **AMBULANCE COLLECTIONS/REVENUE RECAPTURE**

Director Lathrop stated that there is approximately \$34,000 worth of ambulance bills that have not been turned over to collections being that we have not set up this service. A conversation was held in reference to the approach our collections should take. A company called American Accounts & Advisors, Inc. sounds like the best option as they work with us for what to say to customers and what process to take. The discussion included whether or not we want to also do Revenue Recapture through the State of MN. The cost of both was discussed and whether or not we should have both processes work at the same time or only one at a time. Barb made the motion and Mike seconded to approve utilizing both services at the same time and to move forward, motion passed.

#### 800MHZ/PAGER UPDATE/NEEDS

Director Lathrop informed the commission that all of the pagers have now been narrow-banded. This process went well for the service with only 2 pagers having issues so far. The cost was \$525 which the service was responsible for.

#### STORAGE SPACE NEEDS

Director Lathrop stated that the storage concerns have not gone away. There still is a need for some sort of storage options. This is being looked into and we will continue to work on plans and see if it is feasible.

#### SEPTEMBER CALLS FOR SERVICE

Director Lathrop stated that the service ran 52 calls in the month of September. That is a very busy month for the service. With that being said, just prior to the meeting we billed out our 418<sup>th</sup> call for the year. So we should finish strong.

#### SOLD MONITORS

Director Lathrop stated that in the process of cleaning around the Ambulance Base, he found the 3 old monitors that were approved to be sold at a previous commission meeting. He followed up with the company that was going to buy them and they agreed to extend the offer and accept the monitors for \$3,000. These were sent off and the check will be placed into the equipment replacement fund when it comes in. There also was another account with physio-control that owed us \$318 which Director Lathrop requested they send back to us instead of just keeping it as a credit as we do not do much business with them.

#### FINANCE/BUDGET

Director Lathrop has reviewed the expenditures and is determining where we currently are in reference to our budget. A discussion was held in reference to ordering process in the interim and how that has been changed. It was also discussed how we may be over in certain areas of our budget, but should come in close. Further review is being done by Director Lathrop.

#### SOFTWARE (IMAGE TREND/EMS MANAGER)

Director Lathrop and John Friedmeyer introduced the topic of the service going to an electronic patient care report and scheduling system. The patient care software is through a company in the metro area called Image Trend. This system will cost about \$9,000. Some of the highlights of both systems were discussed, we spoke about concerns of the crews reception to these and how to manage that. Ultimately, it was deemed that the systems were a good option to move forward with and we would try to utilize the computers that the State Patrol donated to Chief Warren at the Police Department that he has allowed us to use. These computers will be looked at on Thursday to see what work is needed to be done on them. The scheduling software will cost about \$90/month and will allow for real time schedule updates and monitoring of training for the crew.

**MOTION BY TENTIS SECOND BY CARRELS TO PURCHASE BOTH SYSTEMS AND TRAIN THE CREW. ALL AYES.**

## EMT CLASS

Director Lathrop informed the commission that we would be holding an EMT class starting 1/15/13. The commission was informed that this is going to be held, and that we are currently working on recruiting and will start advertising soon.

## NEW EMS LAW REFERENCE INFANTS

The commission was informed of a new law where a mother can hand over an infant up to 7 days old to an ambulance service in response to a 911 call. This prevents tragedies by allowing the mother experiencing issues such as post-partum depression the opportunity to get help.

## RESPONSE VEHICLE

Director Lathrop spoke about the new response vehicle the ambulance service obtained. This vehicle is a 2003 chevy impala that was an old police car owned by the city. This car was about to be retired. The opportunity came up to transfer it to the ambulance. Russ from Russ' Auto had time to work on the vehicle and Craig Hough of Cowtown Studios both worked together to come up with reduced rates. A donation from Jeff Wallerich of Carquest also helped in keeping the budget low. With all of these available options, it was decided to move forward rapidly. This response vehicle will allow Director Lathrop to respond to calls to assist the crew as needed. It also releases liability of a full time employee responding in a private vehicle. A discussion ensued about the benefits of this and the wish of the commission to thank those that made this possible. This will ultimately be a great asset to the service in order to provide even faster patient contact when responding to emergency calls.

## STAFFING

A discussion was held in reference to some concerns in reference to the schedule. The concern falls in that some members take exorbitant amounts of call time, while others either are unable to take much, or simply don't take much. There was discussion as to how to reenergize those that don't take much and get more help or what would happen if they don't take call.

## RES-Q-POD & CPR ASSIST DEVICE

Director Lathrop informed the commission of some new tools available to EMS. These are the Res-q-pod and Lucas or other CPR device. These tools help in dealing with individuals in severe medical circumstances. The problem is that these CPR assist devices would cost around \$30,000 to equip our trucks. In the end this is a great product to have and services around the country are seeing significant spikes in numbers of individuals brought back from a cardiac arrest. Director Lathrop stated there is grant money available that he is working on, and seeing about possible community support.

## CREW MEMBER RESPONSE AREAS

A discussion was held in reference to acceptable limits of crew members responding to medical calls in their personal vehicles when they are not on call. The commission agreed that an acceptable limit would be up to the discretion of the director and that it should be

about one mile from the crew members location. There are a few variables to this but this is a general statement to move forward.

#### TRAUMA TACTICS & ARROWHEAD EMS

Director Lathrop informed the commission of the recent Trauma Tactics conference that he attended. He stated this is a great chance for the service to gain some recognition and see what the new products and trends in EMS are. This also provides individuals to go the training for different situations we may face with our patients. The Arrowhead EMS conference will be held in Duluth in January 2013 and is one of the largest conferences in the state. This ultimately assures that we are providing the best patient care possible here in Wabasha.

#### HOSPITAL DISCHARGES

Director Lathrop spoke of a recent conversation with the hospital. The hospital asked for a routine transfer of a patient out of the hospital back to the nursing home. This is something that we would normally do. In this situation, the hospital was already utilizing our 1<sup>st</sup> truck for a transfer to Rochester. The hospital was provided the opportunity to send the patient prior to the transfer or wait until the other truck returned. Director Lathrop informed the hospital that we would not be able to assist in this discharge until after the truck returned. Ultimately, he wants to make sure that there is an ambulance available to respond to emergency calls. After a conversation with hospital staff, they do understand and agree with our stance on this topic.

#### HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

The Wabasha Ambulance will be hosting a holiday open house at the same time as the "100 miles of Christmas" that the Chamber of Commerce is having on Saturday December 1<sup>st</sup>. The event will be held in the afternoon and is open to the community. Lathrop encourages commission members, council, and ambulance staff to attend.

#### VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

Director Lathrop informed the commission that he is working on local businesses to donate funds to a volunteer rewards program. He intends to reward 4 people per month with a \$25 gift card for somewhere in town. This could be to a business or chamber bucks. He would have a rotation per month so it is either the top four calltakers or something random like the person that takes the most call time and doesn't get any calls or something. This should help reenergize the crew.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING MADE BY TENTIS SECONDED BY  
CARRELS. ALL AYES. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 21:04**

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Sean Lathrop, Ambulance Director