

POLK COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT NO.1

Board of Directors

December 9, 2021

6:00pm – Central Station

LOCATION: Central Fire Station – 1800 Monmouth St. Independence, OR 97351

Also streamed via Zoom at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88501558202?pwd=NWdWOWx6SWdYbHQ0MUZ5TVJidTj4QT09>

Meeting ID: 885 0155 8202 - Passcode: 707682

President Mike Lippsmeyer (at Station 90)

Vice President Jeff Hamilton (remote)

Secretary Cord Von Derahe (remote)

Director Curtis Cole (at Station 90)

Director Dan Miller (at Station 90)

Chief Ben Stange (at Station 90)

DC Mike Mayfield (at Station 90)

Office Admin. Stephanie Hale (at Station 90)

Office Assistant Mary Carlson (at Station 90)

ABSENT:

DC Neal Olson

President Lippsmeyer called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Lippsmeyer stated anyone wishing to address the Board to please sign the sheet on the back table with your name and topic that you would like to discuss.

He added the Meeting Minutes will be recorded and kept for 60 months.

Open for public comment on any of the agenda items.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- 1) Board Agenda
- 2) Approve November 16, 2021 Regular Board Meeting Minutes
- 3) Financials:
 - 3a. Approval of Disbursements for November 1-30, 2021
 - 3b. Finance report for the month of November 2021

President Lippsmeyer – Asked how the Board would like to take the agenda.

Director Miller – Stated to take the Agenda as a whole.

Vice President Von Derahe – Second.

President Lippsmeyer – All in favor, none opposed, carried – Agenda approved.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- a) **Staffing Planning for the Future – Response to Board Questions from November Meeting.**

Q: Director Cole asked how much we gave up in transport revenue to Dallas last year.

A: In 2020 Dallas transport 37 patients from our District. Over the past three years, on average we have collected \$640 per transport. Without knowing the payments received from these exact patients, on average we would expect to collect \$23,680 from these calls. I answered \$38,000 due to a previous presentation I had made for the Board. After reviewing that presentation, however, \$38,000 was the amount we had collected from hospital transfers from the previous year, not the amount they had collected in transports from our District. Thus far in

2021, Dallas has transported 57 patients from our district, a steep increase. That would represent around \$36,000.

Q: Why is our transport revenue different? Are the transports staying the same? Are we transporting more or less? Where's the discrepancy?

A: Chief Stange stated it's difficult to compare annual transport numbers to fiscal year revenue. Even if we run reports of response numbers to match the fiscal year, there are still discrepancies. This is due to the delay in collecting revenue from transports. To answer the question, "are we making less on our transports" we need to look at delayed data. To match annual revenue collected from July to June of any year, we need to match transport volume from around May through April (to assume around a two month delay to submit, bill, and collect). For fiscal year 2018-2019, we collected \$955,687. If we count transports from May of 2018 (most not collected till the next fiscal year) through April of 2019 (most of May and June won't be collected till the next fiscal year) we see 1511 transports. This means we averaged a collection of \$632 per transport. In the next fiscal year 2019-2020, we collected \$900,747. If we once again offset the transport count by two months, we see 1374 transports – a revenue of \$656 per transport. The same for 2020-2021 reveals a revenue of \$642 (less than 2019-2020 but more than 2018-2019). Thus far this fiscal year using the same methodology, we are averaging \$646 per transport. The change is not in collection, it is in transport volume. Using the timelines laid out above, we can see that from May 2018-April 2019 (collections in FY 2018-2019) we refused 15% of the patients who received medical treatment (1,511 transports, 228 refusals). For the next 12 months (collected in FY 2019-2020) we refused 18% of patients (1,374 transports, 247 refusals). In the next year (collected in FY 2020-2021) we refused 25% of patients (1,318 transports, 326 refusals). Despite evaluating and/or providing care to 23 more patients in 2020- 2021 than the previous year, we transported 56 fewer patients and wrote 79 more refusals than the previous year.

Q: A Director stated that they were more interested when we aren't able to meet our response times rather than what the staff to call volume ratio is or when calls happen throughout the day.

A: Our goal response of meeting code 3 EMS calls in town within 8 minutes 90% of the time was met in 2020 with a frequency of 93.6%. Our goal of having a District on scene in our rural areas within 15 minutes 70% of the time was met in 2020 with a frequency of 81%.

President Lippsmeyer – Asked if there were any follow up questions? None at this time.

NEW BUSINESS:

a) Ambulance Rate Increase – Resolution 2021-03

Chief Stange stated the last time the ambulance billing rates for our agency changed was in 2018. He added since this survey was completed in 2017 rates have increased. Chief Stange stated that Polk County Fire District No.1 is behind by 18% - 28% in several categories.

Chief Stange presented three options:

- 1: Maintain the current ambulance billing rates.
- 2: Increase ambulance billing rates to match the median rates of all agencies surveyed.
- 3: Increase ambulance billing rate to match the median rates of college/university communities.

The Board Members discussed the rates and how insurance companies will cover the maximum no matter what the rates are. The Board agreed to stay with the median of the survey. Chief Stange made some fee adjustments to the fee chart and stated he would bring a clean fee schedule and Resolution to the next meeting in January. He added there is no need to vote on the rate increase at this time.

b) GEMT CCO Revenue – Chief Stange explained the GEMT Revenue:

When the Ground Emergency Medical Transport (GEMT) program started in Oregon in 2016, it was limited to Fee for Service (FFS) Oregon Medicaid recipients. We have been receiving revenue from the GEMT FFS program for several years. As you may recall these are reports that are completed and sent in annually for a lump sum reimbursement. Beginning in calendar year 2021 a new program rolled out that included supplemental payments for FEMT Coordinated Care Organization (CCO) Oregon Medicaid recipients. We have been reluctant to forecast revenue for the GEMT CCO program because there were a lot of administrative rules that had not yet been made. We are now in a position to have a better idea of what kind of revenue we are looking at. Unlike the GEMT FFS program, the deposits from the GEMT COO program will come once or twice a month throughout the year. This program will provide supplemental payments for responses to Oregon Medicaid CCO patients when the billing code was A0427 (ALS emergency transport, level 1) or A0429 (BLS emergency transport). The supplemental payments for CCO transports with these billing codes will be \$1,155.10 and \$1,219.39 respectively. These numbers will change as time goes on as the total funding for the program is \$19 million and thus the revenue from these codes will fluctuate.

- c) **Board Access to I Am Responding – Chief Stange** stated that Director Miller inquired about having access to I Am Responding. He added that he feels this decision should be made by the Board. Chief Stange stated that if the Board does decide they would like access to the program he would recommend annual HIPPA training for the Board. Chief Stange presented 2 options:
- 1: Direct staff to grant access to I Am Responding for Board members.
 - 2: Continue to restrict I Am Responding for responders only.

The Board members discussed this recommendation and decided signing up for Pulse Point, an application for public use, would be suffice. The Board members were not wanting to do the annual HIPPA training due to their schedules. Chief Stange stated that was fine and added not need to vote on this issue

CHIEF'S REPORT:

- a) **Hose, ladder, and air pack testing – Chief Stange** stated testing was last month, hoses were in good shape and ladders passed and air pack testing is still in process.
- b) **Monmouth Police Chief hiring process – Chief Stange** stated Isiah Haines was announced as the new Monmouth Police Chief.
- c) **COVID staffing impacts – Chief Stange** stated 2 staff members tested positive from an on the job exposure. He added 1 line member has been ill and 1 line member is on maternity leave. Chief Stange stated shifts have been short staff and thanked volunteers for responding when they can.
- d) **Holiday lights, parade, and P1FFA party – Chief Stange** thanked everyone who helped. The Ladder truck delivered Santa to the tree lighting. He added on Saturday we entered the Chili

Cook off and everyone had fun. Chief Stange stated on Wednesday December 15th is the P1FFA Christmas party.

- e) Notable incident – Chief Stange stated there was a house on Knox St. with a small fire, the home owner was able to extinguish; a vape pen that caught fire due to overcharging and a microwave fire.
- f) Member of the month – Chief Stange stated the volunteer recognized as Member of the Month was Stuart Edgar. Stuart took a couple days off from his job and helped with the hose and ladder testing by shuffling trucks back and forth from the out stations to Station 90.

TOPICS FOLLOWING THE PREPARATION OF THE AGENDA: Chief Stange stated that he had a couple announcements:

- 1) Ron DeVolder passed away.
- 2) Chief Stange stated he would like to call an Executive Session regarding hiring of a new position.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None at this time.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

Director Miller – Nothing at this time.

Director Cole – Thanked Stephanie for the baked cookies.

Vice President Hamilton – Thanked being able to be in California and being able to attend the meeting remotely.

Secretary Von Derahe – Wished everyone a happy holiday and New Year and to be safe.

President Lippsmeyer – Thanked everyone for the hard work.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: **President Lippsmeyer** stated that we would adjourn the regular board meeting and go into Executive Session According to ORS 192.660 and we would not be returning.

ADJOURNMENT: **President Lippsmeyer** adjourned the meeting at 6:38PM.

Chief Stange – Announce the SDAO Conference pamphlet, and stated it is in Eugene Feb. 10 – 11. If interested in going contact Stephanie or himself.