

Minutes
Tri-City Ambulance Board of Directors
Regular Meeting
June 7, 2013
8:30 AM

Present: Mayor Schielke, Batavia; Ald. Alan Wolff, Batavia; Ald. Ron Singer, Geneva; Ald. Richard Marks, Geneva; Ald. Bill Turner, St. Charles; Mayor Rogina, St. Charles; Pat Jaeger, Geneva Township; Wendy Lee, Batavia Township Fire Protection District

Also Present: Chief Schelstreet, St. Charles; Chief Deicke, Batavia; John Schultz, TCA Administrator

Chairman Schielke called a regular meeting of the Tri-City Ambulance Board of Directors to order at 8:30 AM. Roll was called with 8 members present. Mayor Schielke welcomed the new Board members, Ald. Turner and Mayor Rogina from St. Charles and Mr. Jaeger from Geneva Township.

Minutes of the March 8, 2013 Regular Meeting

A motion was made by Ald. Marks and seconded by Ald. Singer to accept the minutes of the March 8, 2013 Regular meeting as presented. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

Receipts and Disbursement Report Presentation

Mr. Schultz reported that the receipts and disbursements for FY 12/13 were under budget. With no further discussion, the report was accepted and placed on file.

Expenditure Approval Listing

A motion was made by Ms. Lee and seconded by Ald. Singer to approve the expenditures as presented. The motion was passed by unanimous voice vote.

Reports of Service 1st Quarter 2013

Mayor Schielke asked if the volume was the same as last year. Mr. Schultz replied the transports to the hospital were down, but the number of patients seen was up. He said this was possibly due to more choosing to transport themselves or signing a release after being attended to by paramedics. With no further discussion, the reports were placed on file.

Old Business

No Old Business to discuss.

New Business

Billing Rates Discussion – In response to the Board's request, Mr. Schultz reported on the current billing rates as compared to surrounding communities. Mr. Schultz reviewed the billing procedure for the Board. He reminded the Board that the current budget is balanced without an increase in fees and that 68% of the revenue comes from billing. He told the members that TCA does have a contract with Medicare and Medicaid, but does not have any agreements with private insurance companies in regard to rate discounts such as a PPO. Mr. Schultz reviewed that

patients are balance billed after insurance has settled claims for private insured, but by law cannot balance bill Medicare or Medicaid patients. Mr. Schultz told the Board that a rate study done by the Naperville Fire Department is used to compare rates. He explained the study has 85 area departments participating and is a valuable tool when considering any rate changes. Mr. Schultz said 29% of the participants have raised their billing rates since 2010. Mr. Schultz reviewed the current billing rates and the tiered system. He said that in 2009 when TCA last changed the billing rates, TCA was at the 89th percentile for BLS, 82nd percentile for ALS 1, and 83rd percentile for ALS 2 in the survey. Now he said TCA is in the 59th, 50th, and 48th percentiles respectively for residents and the 65th, 53rd, and 48th for non-residents. Mr. Schultz said the breakdown of types of calls is 25% BLS, 74% ALS 1, and 1% ALS 2.

Mr. Schultz explained that if there was a flat increase across the levels at \$50 the revenue increase would be an estimated at \$75,233 for this current year. The second proposal, Mr. Schultz said would keep TCA in the 60-70th percentile on the Naperville study which would increase the resident fees \$50 for BLS, \$100 for ALS 1, and \$100 for ALS 2. For non-residents, he said the increase would be \$50 for BLS, \$100 for ALS 1 and \$150 for ALS 2. He said this would be an estimated increase of \$131,331 for the current budget year. Mr. Schultz told the Board the increase in revenue from billing fees in the first option would decrease member contributions for St. Charles and Batavia by \$26, 321, Geneva by \$20,313, Geneva Township by \$565, and Batavia Fire Protection District by \$1693. In the second proposal, he said the member agency contributions would decrease by \$45,966 for St. Charles and Batavia, \$35, 459 for Geneva, \$985 for Geneva Township and \$2955 for Batavia Fire Protection District.

Mr. Schultz reiterated that the current budget is a balanced budget with no fee increase and current revenue is 68% from billing and 32% from member agencies.

Ald. Singer asked if the member contributions would decrease this year if a rate increase was enacted. Mr. Schultz said if an increase was adopted during this fiscal year it could mean a spend-down of reserve funds, then a possible decrease in member contributions for the next budget year. Ald. Singer asked what effect Obamacare would have on the service. Mr. Schultz said a meeting with himself and the fire chiefs was scheduled with Andres to discuss that subject. Chief Schelstreet said they would use Andres for assistance in forecasting in that event. He said there is no need to make a decision at this time, but would be looking for direction for the next budget year.

Mayor Rogina asked about the timeframe for a bill to go to collections. Mr. Schultz explained TCA has decided on a soft collection approach and if there is no contact from the patient after 90 days, the bill is sent to collection. He said if insurance is late in paying it is kicked back to the billing service. Mr. Schultz said he has not received any complaints about the collection service.

Ald. Turner asked if there was a trend to increase billing rates. Mr. Schultz said yes, that TCA is most comparable to Naperville in rates and is the second lowest compared to the surrounding communities in most rates.

Ald. Singer asked about the status of discussion of the citizen assist fee. Chief Schelstreet replied St. Charles uses Senior Services and AID and has seen a decrease in this type of instance using these services. He said it would be up to the individual department to implement these services, but for St. Charles they have been beneficial and there is no charge to the individual. He said there was a consensus not to move forward.

Mayor Schielke said the Board should consider some type of increase in order to keep up and could be considered at the next meeting. Ald. Marks asked if there was any recommendation on an increase. Chief Schelstreet said not at this time.

Mr. Jaeger asked for a copy of the survey and the worksheets used. Mr. Schultz said he would provide them for the next meeting. Ms. Lee said it would be important to have the discussion prior to levy deadline and budget discussions. Mr. Schultz said it would be on the next agenda.

Reserve Ambulance Retrofit for Bariatric patients – Mr. Schultz gave background information to the Board regarding the number of injuries to firefighters and paramedics from lifting injuries and the consideration of a patient's dignity. He said the capital funds for this retrofit were rolled from last year's budget. He told the Board that M252 from Geneva was chosen as the unit to be retrofitted due to its condition and the fact that it is centrally located. He said the unit would be outfitted to include a power cot and a power lift which would be installed by Foster Coach. He said the unit is portable and would be able to be relocated when the reserve unit is cycled out. Mr. Schultz said the total cost of the retrofit is \$37,106.70 and is included in the current budget. Mayor Rogina asked how the unit would be dispatched. Mr. Schultz explained that the dispatch would not change. He said the first arriving units would initiate care and would then call for the bariatric unit, if needed. He said the level of care would not change. Ald. Singer asked how the patient would be transferred at the hospital. Mr. Schultz explained the power cot can be adjusted to any level making it easier to transfer to a bed. With no further discussion, Ald. Singer moved to approve the purchase of equipment to retrofit M252 as a bariatric unit for the cost of \$37,106.70. Ms. Lee seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

Replacement Ambulance – Mr. Schultz reviewed the replacement cycle for frontline ambulances. He said with using larger commercial chassis, it is hoped to push the replacement cycle to seven years instead of five. He said the unit would be purchased through the Suburban Purchasing Cooperative and Foster Coach is the selected vendor. Mr. Schultz told the Board that Medtech which has been the manufacturer of the most recent purchases has gone out of business and the new unit would be a Horton, which is a higher grade product. He said the cost of the unit is \$226,482. A power cot is included for \$12,936. He said a trade-in of \$10,000 was offered

which was well above what had been offered in the past. Mr. Schultz also said a discount for pre-paying of \$4467 and performance bond of \$1698 brings the total cost to \$226,649 which is under what was budgeted for the replacement. With no further discussion, Ald. Marks moved to approve the purchase of replacement ambulance for M153 for the cost of \$226,649 from Foster Coach. Ms. Lee seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

Administrator's Contract – Chief Schelstreet reviewed the process of hiring that took place in 2008 when Mr. Schultz was chosen. He said the Tri-City chiefs have been highly satisfied with Mr. Schultz's performance and recommend approval of the renewal of the contract. Chief Schelstreet said the contract is basically the same as the original however the compensation was increased to \$45,635 annually and requires a posting of scheduled hours for all Tri-City fire chiefs. He said the increase is in line with the increase given to the ambulance provider. Chief Schelstreet added that as an independent contractor Mr. Schultz is required to submit a letter showing proof of Worker's Compensation insurance. Ald. Singer asked if the automobile allowance was increased. Chief Schelstreet it was not. Ald. Singer suggested that with the rising costs the allowance should be increased as well. An amount of \$400 was agreed upon by members of the Board. Ald. Singer moved to approve an increase in the automobile allowance by \$400 to a maximum of \$3640. Mayor Rogina seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Jaeger asked if it was legal to indemnify an independent contractor. Chief Schelstreet said the contract had been reviewed by the St. Charles City Attorney, but he would follow-up and bring back to the Board with clarification.

With no further discussion, Ald. Turner moved to approve the contract for TCA Administrator as amended. Ald. Singer seconded. The motion was passed by unanimous voice vote.

Election of Officers – With new members of the Board present at the meeting, a new slate of officers was required. Mayor Schielke said the slate should include a member from each community and he agreed to serve again as Chairman. Ald. Singer agreed to serve again as Vice-Chairman. Ald. Turner from St. Charles was nominated as Secretary. With no further discussion, Mayor Rogina moved to accept the slate of officers as presented. Ms. Lee seconded and the motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

Other Business

Accreditation Process Update – Mr. Schultz reported that TCA is in the beginning stages of seeking accreditation through CAAS. He said the coordinators from each community have been trained and are gathering the required data. Mr. Schultz looked for submittal the commission in September 2014. Ms. Lee asked what the benefits for the organization are. Mr. Schultz said it shows the communities that TCA provides the best care as measured against set benchmarks. He said it provides a method of establishing an improvement plan and allows for self-assessment. Chief Schelstreet told the members that the commission is an independent third party agency that

reviews the current practices and shows the level of excellence of the organization. Ald. Turner asked if accreditation would affect insurance rates. Chief Schelstreet said it would not affect the rates, but is used as a tool for agency improvement.

Ald. Singer asked a general question about disaster preparedness. Chief Schelstreet said that all three communities are working together constantly to coordinate efforts in the case of a disaster. He said they all follow the NIMS incident command structure. Ald. Singer suggested publicizing the agency's preparedness. Chief Schelstreet replied the administration will work on preparing a press release outlining the departments' preparedness.

Public Forum - Nothing to report.

Executive Session – No executive session needed.

With no further business, Ald. Marks moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Lee seconded. The motion was passed by unanimous voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 9:57 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Nonda Anderson, Recording Secretary