



Hyalite Rural Fire District

Board Meeting Synopsis Approval Form

The written synopsis of the October 6, 2020 Special Meeting regarding Ambulance Transport was approved by motion of the HRFD Board of Trustees on October 20, 2020.


Chair Signature

Eugene M. Geddes, III
Printed Name


Secretary Signature

Nick Shrauger
Printed Name

**HYALITE RURAL FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SPECIAL MEETING
AMBULANCE TRANSPORT
SYNOPSIS**

DATE: OCTOBER 6, 2020

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Sourdough Fire Station, 4541 S. 3rd Rd., Bozeman, MT

In compliance with [MCA 2017 2-3-212](#) and the Hyalite Rural Fire District Bylaws, the minutes of HRFD Board of Trustees open public meetings are comprised of an audio recording and a written synopsis. The audio recording is designated as the official record of a meeting. The written synopsis serves to assist the public in accessing portions of the audio recording and is a good faith attempt to provide the public with another method to be informed about the actions of the Board. The minutes are available to the public at www.hyalitefire.org/board-meeting-minutes/ or at the Hyalite Rural Fire District Administrative Offices, 4541 S. 3rd Rd., Bozeman, MT, during its standard business hours.

TRUSTEES IN ATTENDANCE:

Pete Geddes
Justin Miller
Nick Shrauger
Walt Zidack

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

Jason Revisky, Fire Chief
Brian Nickolay, Assistant Fire Chief
Sheryl Wyman, Administrative Assistant

PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE:

Pat Wilson
Bob Ogren
Steve White
John Lambert
Brian Crandall
Alice Siebecker
Terese Schmidt
Stela Allen
Beartooth EMS
Michael Buffington, Volunteer Firefighter
Colin Prato, Volunteer Firefighter

0:00:02	WELCOME AND REVIEW OF PURPOSE AND PROCEDURE
	Chair Geddes welcomes everyone for attending the meeting. The reason for the meeting is to discuss the proposal for ambulance transport services. Most importantly to answer any questions and to hear from the public.

	<p>Chair Geddes goes over the Agenda and process for the meeting. He explains that no decision will be made tonight.</p> <p>The purpose of the meeting tonight is for information. The board has been considering the proposal for the last four or five months.</p> <p><i>[See Attachment A - Agenda]</i></p>
0:03:09	<p>CONCEPTUAL OVERVIEW AND RATIONALE FOR PROPOSAL</p> <p>Chief Revisky provides background on the proposal. The proposal is to expand our services to include more ambulance transport service for the Hyalite Rural Fire District. Chief Revisky goes over the history of emergency medical services of HRFD.</p> <p>He explains that all of our volunteer firefighters are licensed EMTs. We own an ambulance (QRU6). The QRU6 goes on every medical call. Numbers show between January 1 through mid-September, HRFD had been called out 23 times for ambulance transport when AMR was not available. On September 8, 2020 AMR was not available for two calls and we were required transport the patients. We also no longer have back-up available through the Bozeman Fire Department. The goal of this proposal is to ensure that we have a reliable and robust ambulance transport service for the taxpayers and residents of the Hyalite Rural Fire District.</p> <p>Answering the question on why we want to do more transports, Chief Revisky responds if we want our folks to be good at what they do they will need to have the practice and experience. He has around 50 volunteers and four paid staff and wants to make sure they have more practice than what they are getting.</p> <p>Answering the question on why we would be kicking out AMR, the Chief responds we are not and have a very integrated plan with AMR. AMR would be kept on a number of calls depending on the type of call. We are trying to fill the gaps and lighten the load and make sure that we are providing the best service possible to the customers who need the service.</p> <p>We want to do this the most cost effective way. The current proposal does not increase property taxes. No additional staffing or personnel will be needed.</p> <p>Chief Revisky states that Pat Wilson, subcommittee member, feels we are adding to the resource pool. We aren't taking anything away, we aren't diminishing anything, in fact, we are strengthening the entire system in Gallatin County. Other districts have no ambulance transport capabilities and have to fully rely on AMR for ambulance transport. The position is that this would not be acceptable for the residents of our district.</p>
0:14:08	<p>PRESENTATION BY SUBCOMMITTEE</p> <p>Committee Member Steve White goes over the numbers of the cost/revenue spreadsheet prepared by the subcommittee. There would be a different rate for an in district member vs. an out of district member. He worked with different scenarios and different numbers and the net revenue showed a positive return.</p> <p>The point of the exercise was to show the board and confirmation that the proposal will not come out of tax dollars and that money can be set aside to purchase or replace an ambulance. This only works with volunteers, but does include a stipend to the volunteers.</p>

	<p>He is encouraged with what the numbers show. We will know more after six months to a year with real numbers.</p> <p>Chair Geddes thanks the volunteers who worked on the subcommittee. Although the numbers may not be precise but they are a starting point to help the board and the public in making a decision.</p> <p><i>[See Attachment B – Costs Spreadsheet]</i></p>
0:26:30	<p>TRUSTEE REMARKS</p> <p>Chair Geddes explains this part of the agenda is to allow members of the public hear how the individual trustees are thinking about the proposal.</p> <p>Trustee Shrauger gives his background and makes comments. He understands that 50-60% calls are medical service related calls. He feels that although we have the EMTs, equipment, and unit but money in our budget will be repurposed. He suggests the public may want this service and this would be a good thing to do. He is worried we won't be able to build up our reserves if they are moved to the ambulance side instead of the fire side.</p>
0:31:41	<p>Trustee Zidack gives his background and is currently serving as the Treasure. He explains the Capital Replacement Plan. The current capital replacement plan does in fact include monies for replacement of the QRU which is currently in service. The Capital Replacement Plan is available for anyone who would like to look at it. He explains the board makes every attempt to use our tax dollars judiciously and reserve a portion of those dollars for capital replacement so that we don't have to go back to the taxpayers for funds. He thanks Pat Wilson and Steve White for their work as community members to look at the proposal. Trustee Zidack feels we need to provide this service to our constituents. If we can accommodate providing the service and reduce the risk factors of losing that service we should do it.</p> <p>Trustee Miller gives his background and explains the current ambulance is old and worn out and we are set to replace the ambulance through our capital replacement. He asks Chief Revisky how many crews AMR has on shift. Chief Revisky gives more information about AMR and their service model. Trustee Miller sees that the job of the board members is to protect the constituents of the community. He wants to make sure that if AMR is unable to provide the service we can take care of our people. His goal is to protect our customers. When anyone in our district dials 911 an ambulance will show up.</p>
0:37:45	<p>Chair Geddes gives his background. He feels the fundamental obligations of the board of trustees is to be forward looking and be ahead of the curve on issues. Chair Geddes provides background on the history of the financial status of the district and how in the past most needs were a tax issue. The board has worked very hard over the past decade to build up the capital replacement funds so that is no longer necessary. He feels this service ties into this scenario. He thinks there is a need to make sure the residents have the type of service they have been accustomed to. Chair Geddes summarizes the board is engaged in exactly what they were hired to do and to make sure they are responsible with tax dollars but responsible in thinking about the emergency services that are provided to the community.</p>

0:41:07	PUBLIC COMMENT, Q&A, and DISCUSSION
0:56:56	<p>Bob Ogren provides comments and asks questions. He encourages coming to meetings and states Chair Geddes runs a great meeting. He feels there is a need for a good ambulance service. He asks questions regarding getting numbers from other districts. Chief Revisky provides background on other districts but the numbers wouldn't be applicable to our district. Chair Geddes provides further comments. Mr. Ogren asks what would happen to any surplus received. Chair Geddes advises those funds would go into the capital replacement fund.</p> <p>Steve White explains that as tax dollars would no longer be used to subsidize the ambulance more tax dollars would be available for other uses. The beneficiaries of the ambulance service would be paying for the capital replacement. Steve White also explained the subcommittee wanted to make sure as the calls went up the proposal could still be affordable. The numbers showed that in fact it could and even more money could be put aside for capital replacement.</p> <p>Stela Allen thanks everyone for their work and appreciates what HRFD does for the community. She asks for clarification that the revenues would then work in conjunction with tax dollars and create surplus monies. Trustee Zidack provides and clarifies Ms. Allen's statement that yes in fact we could include those monies in capital replacement and provide more flexibility. Ms. Allen states she sees this as a great benefit. She spoke with the Forest Service and they agreed and were excited that HRFD is going forward with ambulance transport. She has concerns because of the growing numbers she doesn't want to see the service create money issues for the fire department and wants to see this succeed. Chief Revisky provides further comments regarding the difference between capital replacement and how this will relieve taxpayer dollars and the benefits taxpayers will receive from this service.</p> <p>John Lambert asks four questions. Does the concept include the ability to bill Medicare and insurance companies? What is in the current reserve budget? How do you track response time from AMR and the HRFD response? If additional staffing is needed, what would that cost? Chief Revisky responds that yes, we are working with a billing company and they would bill Medicare, Medicaid, and insurance companies. Regarding response times, Chief Revisky states the Hyalite Fire Department shows up to a scene either before AMR or at the same time. This is dependent on where AMR may be located at the time of a call. He feels our response would be better if not the same as AMR. The model for staffing would be using the volunteer workforce. We currently have around 50 volunteers. Chief Revisky explains we have eight (8) residents at the Sourdough Station, three (3) residents at the Rae Station, and the Cottonwood Station is staffed with four (4) volunteers on sleeper nights. The volunteers already go on all the calls and the only difference from the model currently in place is that instead of moving a patient into an AMR ambulance they would load the patient into our ambulance and take them to the hospital. Chief Revisky states the volunteers very motivated and excited to do transport. Trustee Zidack reports from the latest report dated August 31st the capital reserve for apparatus replacement fund currently holds \$1,557,270; building replacement/repair \$4,473; and capital improvement is \$175,388.</p> <p>Joel from Beartooth EMS came to offer support and help in any way they can. He provides information regarding billing and Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements.</p>

1:11:44	<p>Chair Geddes asks for any further board discussion. Trustee Shrauger makes further comments. Trustee Shrauger wants to make sure there is a very strict accounting of all the costs associated with transport.</p> <p>Chair Geddes offers attendees a tour of the facility.</p> <p><i>[Attachment C – E-Mail from Wayne Gipp]</i></p>
1:26:02	<p>NEXT STEPS</p> <p>Next Board Meeting is set for Tuesday, October 20, 2020. A decision is planned and a vote will be taken on the proposal at that next meeting scheduled for October 20, 2020. Chair Geddes encourages and invites everyone to attend.</p>
1:27.33	ADJOURN

**HYALITE RURAL FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SPECIAL PUBLIC MEETING
AMBULANCE TRANSPORT PROPOSAL**

DATE: OCTOBER 6, 2020

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: Sourdough Fire Station, 4541 S. 3rd.

BY: Hyalite Rural Fire District Board of Trustees.

REMINDER TO PUBLIC THAT MEETINGS ARE BEING RECORDED

I. Welcome and review of purpose and procedure

II. Conceptual overview and rationale for proposal

III. Presentation by a subcommittee

IV. Trustee remarks

V. Public comment, Q&A, and discussion

VI. Next steps

VII. Adjourn

This notice is posted on the door of the Administrative Building of the Sourdough Fire Station, the Rae Fire Station, The Cottonwood Fire Station and posted on the Hyalite website and/or Facebook Page at least 48 hours prior to the meeting. Notice of the meeting is published in the Bozeman Daily Chronicle at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

Table 1

HRFD Ambulance Projections					
EXPENSES	\$\$ Per Call	100	150	200	← # Calls / Year
Supplies	\$25.00	\$2,500.00	\$3,750.00	\$5,000.00	
Reporting Software (Annual)		\$750.00	\$750.00	\$750.00	
Cost of Fuel	\$3.00	\$300.00	\$450.00	\$600.00	
Capital Replacement (Annual)		\$12,000.00	\$18,000.00	\$24,000.00	
Stipend (\$50 per EMT)	\$100.00	\$10,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$20,000.00	
Total Costs		\$25,550.00	\$37,950.00	\$50,350.00	
REVENUE					
% of Calls are District Residents	60.0%				
Billing / Call (District Residents)	\$500.00	\$30,000.00	\$45,000.00	\$60,000.00	
Billing / Call (Non-District Residents)	\$2000.00	\$80,000.00	\$120,000.00	\$160,000.00	
Total Revenue (Billed)		\$110,000.00	\$165,000.00	\$220,000.00	
BILLING REVENUE					
Delinquency (%)	30.0%	-\$33,000.00	-\$49,500.00	-\$66,000.00	
Patient Bills Paid (Non-delinquency)		\$77,000.00	\$115,500.00	\$154,000.00	
Billing Charges (8% of Paid)	8%	-\$6,160.00	-\$9,240.00	-\$12,320.00	
Less Total Costs (From Expense Section)		-\$25,550.00	-\$37,950.00	-\$50,350.00	
TOTAL NET REVENUE		\$45,290.00	\$68,310.00	\$91,330.00	



Hyalite Admin <bookkeeper@hyalitefire.org>

Proposed Ambulance Transport Service

1 message

Wayne Gipp <pigsky2@me.com>

Tue, Oct 6, 2020 at 2:43 PM

To: "Admin@hyalitefire.org" <Admin@hyalitefire.org>

Date: October 6, 2020

To: HRFD Board of Trustees

FR: Wayne Gipp, District Resident and Taxpayer

I have been following with interest your proposal to add Ambulance Transport to services offered by HRFD. Some comments and questions:

1. The HRFD has not presented a complete, detailed, documented, independent needs assessment for this service. The discussion provided by the HRFD Board may be correct, but it simply represents thoughts and opinions. It also presents only the positive (PROs) side of adding the service and none of the negative or reservations (CONS) side of adding the service. Plus no data is given to support the need.
2. The proposed budget is quite skimpy and in my opinion does not completely present the increased costs that will be incurred by increasing the current level of transport service. If the need and expected volume of calls are as great as implied in the proposal and discussion, the nature of HRFD operations could be greatly altered. A simple example will be the increased administration, billing, record keeping and other "paperwork". Another example is will there be a need for two "Chiefs" one for medical operations and one for fire operations? (or will the current or future Chief require a higher salary due to the increased responsibilities and possibility of greater personal liability associated with operating in the medical field).
3. A mailing should be made to all taxpayer residents of the HRFD giving complete information and a survey to gauge the desires of every resident. I realize that you posted information in the Board meeting minutes and published a legal notice in the paper and that this likely fulfills any legal notification requirements. But I have not seen an effort to assure that every taxpayer is aware of the proposal under discussion. Such a mailing and survey would actually strengthen the Board's position because if the facts are as have been presented it is likely the proposal would be supported. The cost of such a mailing would be a reasonable expense (is 2500 residents times about \$1/ resident or \$2500 about a correct estimate?) given the importance of the issue.
4. EMT Stipend Question: Does paying the responding EMT a stipend make them a "paid" employee while they are on a call? Are they paid the stipend as an "independent contractor" thus transferring all liability to them? Does receiving a stipend remove the EMT from protection under the "good samaritan" law covering citizen volunteers? I don't know the answers to these questions, but they could have important ramifications for both the EMT and HRFD.
5. Question on charge to resident for receiving service: The \$500 proposed for residents may be well below the going rate charged by private entities for such service. However it is 2 to 3 times greater than the actual cost incurred to HRFD for providing the service to them (based on the information presented in the cost spreadsheet provided by the HRFD Board). Is it legal or ethical to charge a taxpayer more than the actual cost? A related question is what is the definition of a "resident"...if my out of state adult son visiting and staying with me requires transport from within the District will he be charged the resident or non-resident fee?

I remain neutral on the proposal. My questions and comments may appear trivial, but hopefully they convey the need for a complete, comprehensive, documented consideration of all aspects and impacts of the issue.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Wayne Gipp