



## Hyalite Rural Fire District

### Board Meeting Synopsis Approval Form

---

The written synopsis of the November 23, 2020 Hyalite Rural Fire District (HRFD) Board of Trustees special work meeting-Ambulance Transport Service was approved by motion of the HRFD Board of Trustees on December 15, 2020.

  
Chair Signature

Eugene M. Geddes, III  
Printed Name

  
Secretary Signature

Nick Shrauger  
Printed Name

**HYALITE RURAL FIRE DISTRICT  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES SPECIAL WORK SESSION-AMBULANCE TRANSPORT SERVICE  
PUBLIC MEETING  
SYNOPSIS**

DATE: NOVEMBER 23, 2020

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Sourdough Fire Station, 4541 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> 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/](http://www.hyalitefire.org/board-meeting-minutes/) or at the Hyalite Rural Fire District Administrative Offices, 4541 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Rd., Bozeman, MT, during its standard business hours.*

---

**TRUSTEES IN ATTENDANCE:**

Pete Geddes  
Justin Miller  
Nick Shrauger  
Walt Zidack  
Jason Jarrett

**STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:**

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

**PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE:**

Pat Wilson  
Steve White  
Ben King  
Larry Thomas-Via Phone

<b>0:00:01</b>	<b>CALL TO ORDER OF HYALITE RURAL FIRE DISTRICT – 7:00</b>  Chair Geddes called the meeting to order and reminded the public that the meeting was being recorded.  Chair Geddes asked for any public comment on non-agenda items. None given.
<b>0:00:40</b>	<b>POLICY DISCUSSION AND DECISIONS REGARDING BUDGET CREATION AND COST TRACKING FOR AMBULANCE SERVICE</b>  Chair Geddes turned over the discussion to Chief Revisky. Chief Revisky provides his matrix of costs to track for the ambulance transport service. Items include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• # of EMS calls</li><li>• # of Transports<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Transported by HRFD</li><li>○ Transported by AMR (Including Other Transports)</li></ul></li><li>• Resident Transports</li></ul>

<p><b>0:08:50</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-Resident Transports</li> <li>• Medical Supplies – For Any Transport</li> <li>• Mileage – 8.6 miles at 57.5 cents = \$4.95 for a transport</li> <li>• Maintenance Costs</li> <li>• Stipends for Volunteers</li> <li>• Any other costs</li> </ul> <p>Questions asked by Trustees Jarrett, Zidack.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Receivables</li> <li>○ Quarterly Reports</li> <li>○ Rating</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Trustee Jarrett asks how the billing company costs are shown. Chief Revisky explains how the cost for billing will be demonstrated based on what is collected. They receive a percentage of what is collected and the true cost won't be known for an approximate time period of six to twelve months.</p> <p>Chair Geddes asks for more comments from board members. Trustee Zidack describes the partial budgeting approach and billing rates. Chief Revisky responds the board will have the discretion to set billing rates and policies and suggests the billing company can counsel on billing and fee schedules. Trustee Zidack asks about capital depreciation of the ambulance. Chief Revisky states the original plan developed by Steve White accounts for capital replacement. Chair Geddes makes comments on billing practices.</p>
<p><b>0:18:11</b></p>	<p>Chair Geddes asks for more discussion. Assistant Chief Nickolay describes how the ambulance supports the overall fire operation.</p> <p>Trustee Shrauger makes comments. Chair Geddes asks for any further board discussion. None give at this time.</p>
<p><b>0:21:06</b></p>	<p>Chair Geddes asks for any public comment. Steve White makes comments. Pat Wilson makes comments. Suggests using a log book. He asks questions regarding mileage and the ambulance. Chair Geddes responds to comments. Pat Wilson makes a clarification. Chief Revisky gives comments.</p>
<p><b>0:30:21</b></p>	<p>Trustee Zidack discusses capital replacement and the depreciation schedule. Steve White gives information on the capital replacement amounts. Trustee Jarrett asks about the current QRU-6 and its status. Chief Revisky responds. Trustee Shrauger makes comments regarding mileage rates. Chief Revisky responds. Trustee Shrauger makes comments regarding the administrative costs. Chair Geddes responds. Trustee Zidack makes comments regarding the marginal costs of transport. Chair Geddes asks for more board discussion. Trustee Shrauger suggests adding administrative costs.</p>
<p><b>0:46:45</b></p>	<p>Chair Geddes asks caller Thomas if he has any questions. Mr. Thomas asks two questions. Chief Revisky responds.</p> <p>Chair Geddes asks for any further public comment. None given.</p>

<p><b>0:49:47</b></p>	<p>Chair Geddes asks for more board discussion. Trustee Shrauger acknowledges there were letters to be added to the record. He also asks if a contract has been signed with the billing company. Chief Revisky advises no contract is in place. Chair Geddes asks for more board discussion. None given.</p> <p>Chair Geddes gives closing comments. A contract decision will be a board agenda item for the December board meeting. Trustee Zidack states that once we have information there will be a discussion on billing rates. Trustee Shrauger inquires on when we may start the service. Chief Revisky responds. Trustee Shrauger requests the call report also shows transports. Discussion is held regarding a spreadsheet for tracking costs and administrative time.</p> <p><i>[See Attachment A for Ambulance Transport Cost-Tracking Worksheet]</i>  <i>[See Attachment B for E-mails Received for Meeting]</i></p>
<p><b>0:59:01</b></p>	<p><b>ADJOURNMENT – 8:01</b></p>

## Ambulance Transport Cost-Tracking Worksheet

- EMS calls for service
- EMS calls for service that result in transport (Hyalite or AMR)
- Transports performed by Hyalite Fire
- Resident transports vs Non-Resident transports
- Cost of medical supplies used on calls for service that result in transport by Hyalite Fire
- All transports will show a cost for 8.6 miles at 57.5 cents per mile (\$4.95)
- All maintenance costs for the ambulance and the equipment on it
- Stipends paid to volunteers
- Any other expenses associated with transport services
- Total amount billed to date
- Total amount collected to date
- Quarterly reports from our billing service on billing performance



---

## Comments for Ambulance Service

1 message

Wayne Gipp <pigsky2@me.com>

Sun, Nov 22, 2020 at 10:49 PM

To: admin@hyalitefire.org

HRFD Board of Trustees,

In regards to the discussions at the last (Nov.) HRFD Board meeting and the planned discussion at the November 23 special meeting:

In this time of the Covid pandemic and the current large number of cases in the Bozeman, I do not think it is medically responsible for the Board to be holding public meetings in any format other than Zoom or other virtual format. It presents too large of a health risk to all, but especially for older and vulnerable residents such as myself to attend. Well publicized and well arranged virtual meetings may well get you better public attendance and greater public input.

I have been following your discussions by reading your meeting minutes and to the extent possible listening to the voice recordings of the meetings. I have a hearing deficiency and unfortunately the billing service representative at the last meeting was hard for me to understand (frequency of her voice, her manner of speaking, and "echo/acoustics" in the room). It would be useful for future meetings for HRFD to look into voice recognition software that could create a written transcript to post along with the voice recording and the meeting synopsis. With that in mind, I apologize if I did not correctly understand all what was said at the Nov. meeting.

From what I could tell, Medicare/Medicaid requires more detailed record keeping and justification of charges than the simpler option of the two record keeping procedures being considered. Hence if HRFD decides to not choose to do detailed costs and records Medicare/Medicaid likely will not pay and seniors will need to pay 100% of any charges. As you may know, Medicare/Medicaid will not pay for services provided by a non approved vendor, even if the services are otherwise eligible for Medicare/Medicaid payment. Additionally, Medicare supplement plans, at least the one I carry, will not pay for Medicare eligible expenses that Medicare refuses simply because the provider was not Medicare approved.

The billing service representative at the last meeting seemed well qualified and well versed in the records and procedures necessary for insurance providers, including Medicare, to accept and approve claims for service. It seemed to me that she did have some reservations on the proposed reduced billing for district residents (I could not clearly hear this part of her discussion) and whether insurance providers would approve such an arrangement.

One of the speakers at the Nov. meeting seemed to have reservations on allocating current expenses between medical and fire operations suggesting it would be costly and time consuming. There also seemed to be some concern that residents would not support medical if the costs were presented in this manner as they would deem it too expensive. My thought is that if you want to have the service, you need to be completely transparent and have a complete accounting.

My final analysis is that HRFD should make a good faith reasonable effort to accurately allocate the total costs of operation between the two operational entities. Fire and Medical. Additionally, The medical operations could be subdivided between the current level of medical service and the additional costs associated with medical transport. Such accounting would show the true cost of each operation, the costs already being covered in the existing budget, and the additional costs (and revenue) associated with ambulance transport. Showing the true total cost associated with medical as well as that already paid by taxpaying residents may help insurance providers (private and medicare/medicaid) approve the differential billing. (My concept being that cost plus profit would be the same for residents and non-residents, for example \$2000, but that residents have already paid part of the cost via taxes and therefore a lower direct charge, for example \$500, is needed to cover the balance. I don't know if that makes sense or not.). Such accounting would also demonstrate to resident taxpayers that the addition of ambulance transport is not costing them any more than they are currently paying (if the argument presented by the Chief and Board is correct). If there is concern that such allocating will cause residents to eliminate even the current level of medical response (which is basically simple first aid and stabilization as first responder) as too expensive, I don't think that will happen. The Chief is correct in that the overhead indirect costs will not decrease much by simply not housing or operating an "ambulance".

I realize that Medicare/Medicaid certification and billing adds a whole layer of complexity and "headache" and the Board will need to decide if they want to go that way. If they don't there likely will be a higher level of user non-payment as well as negative feelings toward HRFD by older residents and customers. In that case HRFD might consider a debt

- forgiveness policy/program for the truly needy as not all of our residents are the well-to-do folks living in high level homes.

Thanks for the opportunity for input.

Wayne Gipp  
Resident HRFD  
Former SVFD Volunteer  
Former SVFD Board of Trustees Member



Hyalite Admin <bookkeeper@hyalitefire.org>

---

## Ambulance

1 message

---

**Tony Wastcoat** <tony.wastcoat@gmail.com>

Mon, Nov 23, 2020 at 8:12 AM

To: Admin@hyalitefire.org

Dear Directors,

After following the discussions about the proposed ambulance service, including last week's two hour meeting, I have not been convinced of the necessity of the service relative to the cost burden placed upon taxpayers of our district.

Please reconsider your progress in your decision, at least delaying a positive decision for several years until there is a greater need. Consider cost vs benefit.

Thank you.

Tony Wastcoat  
110 Hitching Post Road  
(Past volunteer fireman, Sourdough F.D.)





Hyalite Admin <bookkeeper@hyalitefire.org>

---

## Ambulance service

1 message

---

**Bob Ogren** <boboret@gmail.com>

Mon, Nov 23, 2020 at 2:14 PM

To: admin@hyalitefire.org

Please accept the following comments regarding the proposed service. They are offered in no order of importance.

I believe there should be a conversation with the accounting firm which the district deals with. The conversation should include recommendations regarding cost accounting and any differing requirements between public and private accounting practices.

There should be a good understanding of the implications of the future of medicare charges.

If a contracted billing company is retained, provision should be made to import billing information into an accounting system.

Assuming current administrative staff are performing full time jobs, consideration needs to be given to who will do any extra work required.

Thank you.

Robert Ogren  
7969 Gooch Hill Rd.