



Clarke County Fire & EMS Commission
101 Chalmers Court, Suite B
Berryville, Virginia 22611
(540) 955-5132

MINUTES

December 14th 2017 6:30pm
Clarke County Government Center – Meeting Room AB

Attendees: Van Armacost, Chairman
Bryan Conrad
Jacob White
Matt Hoff
Diane Harrison
David Weiss
Andrew Nicholson

Absent: Tony Roper

Staff: Brian Lichty
Pam Hess
David Ash
Jason Burns
Chris Shipe
Jay Grim
Carolyn Trent
Nick Giamanco

Chairman Armacost called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

1. Mr. Hoff made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was passed with all in favor.
2. Mr. Conrad made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 9th 2017 meeting as presented. The motion was passed with all in favor.
3. Committee Reports –
 - Standards – The committee met on Tuesday December 12th 2017 (see attached evaluation sheet) Ms. Harrison stated that Table 1 did not cross in her email. Mr. Lichty will resend to her.



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- Technology - Mr. Conrad and Mr. Lichty reported that the committee met last week and discussed the maintenance contracts for the radios as well as who owned what. They determined that all equipment will be placed under the Sheriffs control and the maintenance will be kept through the county. FirstNet has a new contract in January 2018 with AT&T. Omnicom will be coming in February 2018 to replace the hardware at dispatch and the moving of the transmitters will occur in Fiscal Year 2019. IPAWS-(Integrated Public Alert Warning System) a nationwide alert system-enrollment needs to be done if the county wishes due to a pending list and slow process. Mr. Ash will look into to this and make a decision. Code Red was bought out by OnSolve-Ms. Hess has resigned the contract and will sign up everyone that will have the need for individual sign ons for access. New phone system to be installed at dispatch on December 18th and communications will be converted onto it January 24th. MDTs for Fire & EMS was determined that it's not needed right now but could be valuable therefore it will be looked at later. The committee wants to recommend to the Commission that the County adopt the Motorola maintenance agreement for subscriber units. The proposal recommended is the basic maintenance agreement. Clarification is needed on who pays for replacement batteries, if the individual Companies are to continue or if the County will cover the expense. There was a discussion about the utility of the pagers, if the IAM responding program over the telephones is providing dispatch capabilities since most people do not carry pagers anymore. They want to make sure that the dispatches go onto IAM responding but due to time lag is it reliable enough.
 - i. Motorola maintenance/service proposal-see attached
- Budget - The committee met on Tuesday November 21st 2017 (see attached budget request/recommendation)
 - i. The Subcommittee met on Tuesday December 12th 2017 and Mr. White presented the two options that they would like the Fire & EMS Commission to consider for recommendation to the Finance Committee and the Board of Supervisors. (see attached) Mr. Weiss questioned how this would be a savings to the county if they don't



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cover apparatus expenditures currently. Mr. White and Ms. Harrison explained that these are just options and examples of how potential future needs could be helped if the Station's stipends were to be doubled in order to still maintain a certain level of service as costs are continuing to rise. Part 3 shows potential options to help to increase additional revenue through Fee for Service or a billable fire levy that would be a separate tax for county residents. Mr. Hoff commented that after reviewing the proposal it appears that main objective for the increase in the stipends would be to cover apparatus purchases and speaking on behalf of Boyce they feel that a stipend increase would be better utilized to hiring of more staff. He stated that you can have all the equipment that you need in the station but it doesn't give you the people required to operate them. Mr. Weiss questioned why nothing is being addressed about the recruitment/retention position. Ms. Harrison stated that the discussions had seemed to weigh towards the position not working as it hasn't in other neighboring counties so the Subcommittee went through the list and gave priority levels to what they felt needed to be address the fastest. Mr. Conrad stated that it seems like we have diverted away from what was the initial focus of the whole process, which was to reduce the scratch rate and get people responding to calls and when talking about buying hardware, there needs to be an bigger effort to get the people to do the work, the focus needs to remain here. Mr. Weiss wanted to remind everyone that the purpose of this Commission and all the work groups was to focus on sustaining a volunteer system but joined as a whole county. It appears that the path the Board of Supervisors set forth has been drastically changed. The focus seems to be more about career staffing and buying apparatus. The BOS/county was told that if they helped to absorb some of the expenditures like the insurance and some of the overhead costs, the companies would be able to manage more appropriately and get better responses from the volunteers but now it appears to be going in the opposite direction. Mr. Weiss stated that he will not be voting at this level because he will be seeing the final proposal and voting then at the appropriate level.



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- ii. Mr. Hoff made a motion to move next meeting to January 3rd, 2018 instead of the 11th to give the appropriate amount of time for voting & submitting the approved budget request by 15th. All passed in favor.
 - iii. Mr. Weiss suggested that it would be helpful for the BOS budget committee to understand how the proposed budget request presented will justify in a detailed manor and more concretely advance the goals of bettering the system.
4. Unfinished Business
 - a. Strategic Plan Review/Update-all members have reviewed and will be sent to the BOS like a report card to show where everything stands and/or has progressed. Mr. Conrad moved to approve report as is. Motion passed all in favor with Mr. Weiss abstaining.
5. Report from the Fire and Rescue Association - Mr. Armacost stated the Association met on November 27th with all 3 chiefs in attendance. The EMS Committee didn't recommend the Narcan grant that is through OEMS because it is something that Clarke gets for free through the hospital and they may not necessarily exchange something that is not in their system. The purchase of the new required ALS drug bags and the additional drugs that the council did not provide, paid for with Four for Life funding, have been integrated and getting out to all stations. Countywide hose testing was discussed and dates are being set.
6. Report from the Director of Fire and EMS - (see attached) Report was emailed in advance and due to the length of this meeting Mr. Lichty asked if there were any questions or comments. No one had any.
7. Public Comment - Chief Jason Burns of Blue Ridge stated that a complete inventory was conducted on everything and the stipend increase request is to help cover any types of costs not just apparatus to maintain an operational system. The volunteers are still going to work and fundraise to make up the difference. He commented that for recruitment/retention, the county needs to help fund the system to make it work. If paid personnel are needed to help fill the voids to maintain the volunteer system by all means do so, but the help is still needed to pay additional



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expenditures. If the county would choose the route to have paid staff running at all the stations then Mr. Lichty needs to be in charge. If you want a volunteer system to remain then the increase request is a necessity due to being sorely underfunded. President Chris Shipe of Enders wanted to add that we all agree that recruitment/retention is a critical piece and the reason why this was all started. Improvements have been made partly due to the county allowing and funding some career staff that has helped on relieving part of the volunteer burden/pressure especially with the senior citizen facilities in town. He is asking to take a little more pressure off and help them leverage money to keep the station and apparatus up. This will help to meet the standards and we need to continue to focus at everything globally. He wants to keep this as a volunteer system but with additional funding from the county. With the numbers presented he states that Enders can make this work. Tremendous strides have been made and we need to continue to focus as a whole. Rescue Captain Carolyn Trent of Blue Ridge commented that she has been active in Loudoun for 8 years and Blue Ridge almost 5 years. She has seen a lot of changes on both sides of the mountain and she feels that Clarke County has something extremely special here but what needs to perpetuate the system is the funding that is proposed. As someone who started out young in the system, if there is no money to pay for uniforms, gear, etc. then why would someone want to volunteer their time? There has been a lost demographic in Clarke and that's through the high school. This needs to be approached to gear the demographic to those coming of age and try to pull them into our system.

8. New Business - Mr. Armacost reminded everyone that elections are next month.
9. Adjourn - Mr. White made a motion to adjourn. The motion was passed all in favor at 7:56 pm.

Next meeting is on January 3rd 2017 at 6:30pm in the Clarke County Government Center – Meeting Room AB.