

# Malheur County ASD

## Meeting Minutes

October 16, 2018

The Ambulance Service District Board meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Rob Hunsucker at 0904 hrs.

**Roll call: members present – Lieut. Rich Harriman, Dr. Brian Kitamura, Rob Hunsucker, Pam Uyeki, Doug Dewar, and Bob Dickinson.**

**Members absent: Kathy Sherman, Kathy Pimentel, Jim Maret**

**Guests present:** Commissioner Larry Wilson, Commissioner Don Hodge, Vale City Manager Katy Lamb, Todd Hesse Vale Ambulance, Chief Terry Leighton, Chad Miller Adrian QRU, Russell and Marta Martin Jordan Valley Ambulance, Steve Patterson, Treasure Valley Paramedics, Heather Land TVP. Dave Ingram Malheur County assessor via teleconference.

Motion to accept the previous meeting minutes were moved by Rob Hunsucker seconded by Rich Harriman. Motion passed unanimously.

**Old Business:** Replaced an amplifier, then an antenna switch was recently fixed as well. Our Cottonwood repeater was also fixed last Friday. The fall of 2019 we are going to switch into the BLM building on Rinehart. They are going to replace the battery and the generator.

**New Business:** Bob Dickinson explained to us that Dave Ingram Malheur County assessor would be joining us via teleconference to explain where our funding comes from, for example, taxes collected etc. and that we are losing approximately \$2000 annually in tax collection. Dave states that the funds are collected by putting a \$16 charge on every home. Businesses are little different in that they charge \$0.50 per employee. He states that that's pretty difficult sometimes to get that information. When an application for exemption, comes through and is granted, that exemption removes the charge from that account. Since his tenure there have been many new exemptions come along. Some of the businesses or qualifying pieces of property to qualify for enterprise zone exemption comes off as well. Dave states

that he has been trying to get those in the enterprise zones to pay for the ambulance district in lieu of taxes but as of yet they haven't done that yet. Dave states that some of the exemptions are schools, hospitals, medical clinics, and some individual organizations that are exempt. Dave said that he would give us some information from the Department of Revenue if we wanted to increase the household tax. And help with the process. Bob states that it is his understanding, that there was \$1.50 charge for hotel motel room, as well as \$1.50 per full-time equivalent employee. Dave corrected his previous statement of saying that it was \$0.50 and agreed that it was a \$1.50 per employee.

Bob states that that we have been operating in the black for years, the price of doing business for example supplies, just total cost of services increases annually and on the flipside there's a decrease in revenue. Dave said that some of the older subdivisions people have paid less because of a downward trend. He said that he would be working hard to try to get some of these enterprise zones to kick money our way in the event of establishing a business in the County if possible.

Rob asked Dave whether or not Ore-Ida was paying for all their employees, or if there were some exemptions. Dave states that there are some food processing exemptions. But states this is a great one to look into to see that they're getting all the employees. There is no specific timing it's just a line item on their tax bill.

Rich Harriman asked the question, what are some of the conditions that a company might qualify for exemptions? As far as the other exemptions, i.e. charitable exemptions, that's done through the assessor's office, Dave qualifies those. He looks at every exemption as it comes across his desk. The majority are charitable organizations and the qualifying factor they give back to the community, they are more of a help than a hindrance. Rich asked if the prison was exempt and Dave did say yes. Dave stated that he had a meeting with his staff the other day and they will be looking at all the companies and will be diligent on making sure every property is assessed.

Dr. Kitamura commented that we keep fighting inflation, and \$16 a household is much different than it was in 1990. We may not proceed with this now but it will be necessary in the future. The things that our community expects in regards to training, equipment, dispatch, and who responds is important. Equipment that we had available in 1996 was totally different than what we can put on an ambulance today to take care of our patients. How are we going to fund that he asks are we just not going to have those things available. Here, particularly in the older community you may have a hard time convincing them to donate to a pool, but as the population ages that elderly population will need Emergency medical services more often.

Commissioner Don Hodge asked if an ambulance responds to a call do they go back and send out a bill. He followed up that question with what happens when insurance only covers so much do they write it off. Heather from Treasure Valley Paramedics responded that they have Medicare and Medicaid you have to accept what they pay car insurances are not ordered by Medicare and Medicaid guidelines then those are recovered in full Heather states if they transport a Medicare patient they collect \$420.62 you can bill up to \$2000 and they will only pay the \$420.62 they will pay for the first 10 miles of transport but after which they pay \$3.72 a mile. Medicaid pays a little less. Terry Leighton goes on to say that they

aren't paying anything for Rescue 1 services and that they get funded through the ASD. "We still going out there and handling emergency medical calls".

Heather states that only one service can bill for their services. Todd Hesse states that 1/3 of their calls are non-transport and we collect nothing from those yet we still have to respond. Russell Martin states that the other night they went 160 miles round trip on a Highway 95 call and when they got there the patient refused therefore they had will not receive reimbursement. Heather does state that it's a constant fight and sometimes you have to touch the chart up to 10 times and be really diligent about your billing in order to recoup some of the costs.

Rob Hunsucker stated that \$16 household was started in 1990 but as we move forward we need to figure out where we are at this next fiscal year and project what next year's budget will bring. Commissioner Larry Wilson states that he met with Bob Dickinson the other day and that he showed him on the levy report that he pays 13 different taxing districts and that he doesn't think it will be a problem but we should probably address the issue with the voters when we're closer to being in the red than when we're operating in the black.

Todd Hesse gave a report that he taught an EMR class in Unity and has at least one EMR trained going to Ironside and possibly two. They do have a low call volume but we have possibly 2 EMR's to respond in that area.

Todd presented to the board that his supervisor vehicle, about six weeks ago blew an engine. They took it to the mechanic and he said it was a 1997 vehicle and should probably not be repaired at that time. Chief Cook from Parma Fire had received a new vehicle recently and loaned us their old one which was a 2007 F150, Todd states he took his information to the city council and they weighed their options and found that it was in the best interest and the most viable option to buy the Parma vehicle for \$10,000. He is asking the board to help with the purchase and requested \$3000. Most of his calls are motor vehicle accidents and 1/3 are transports, he said they thought of carrying battery-operated Jaws of Life and other extrication equipment. He said that the Rescue truck has not been very reliable over the last year and responds to only about two thirds of the requests. Bob asked if we are going to be hit up again for another \$10,000 from the Vale Fire department. Todd states he cannot speak for the fire Department and Bob reminded him that he was the one who requested \$10,000 last time, Bob continues to state that the wages etc. were included in that request and that those items are not covered by the ASD. Todd states that this was not his intent it was total operating cost there were 75 calls and QRU last year " I respond to almost all MVAs, and all the serious calls." The new vehicle has 120,000 miles on it, it's been gone through by a mechanic and is sound to his knowledge. Council had funded it already with the knowledge that the ASD would contribute to \$3000, we have not intended this to be replacing the Rescue truck. "It's almost a no brainer and budgets get tight" Dr. Kitamura moved to allow \$3000 be allocated toward the purchase of the new command vehicle motion second by Doug Dewar unanimously accepted.

Steve Patterson spoke about St. Luke's transfers and some of the problems that they have been faced with lately. There has been some bad blood across the river and initially Mike McGrane from St. Luke's had stated that they would share transfers with Treasure Valley Paramedics and Payette County Paramedics however after Mike McGrane left that no longer happened. Payette County Paramedics offered to take the transfers under contract and asked that they be able to charge the patient. This initially slowed down the amount of transfers Treasure Valley Paramedics received. It didn't take long to realize that Payette County Paramedics were not able to keep up with the transfer volume so Treasure Valley Paramedics decided to initiate the same policy and that they would charge the patient and not accept a standard transfer fee from St. Luke's. In the last six months TVP had 68 transfers from St. Luke's. All but 2 have been paid for the total of approx. \$86,700 or \$175,000 per year. Nyssa doesn't make any money so this offsets the loss in Nyssa. We just paid \$32,000 for ambulance cots. Our tasks are that we keep two paramedic ambulances in the county at all times we still take care of the prison and transfers. We have a responsibility to take care of our contract with the county first. Dual dispatch has been fantastic but we still have to staff it and pay for it.

Chad Miller asked the board if we would consider reimbursement for one if not two EMT students that have both signed multiyear contracts and agreements for working with them as an EMT basic. Bob states that we need to come up with a plan that we can help fund those agencies but they have to sign a letter or come up with a contract that says they will work for that organization for said period of time. The money was initially designed for populating the county with EMTs and EMR's. Because most the county are volunteer organizations.

No further discussion Rob moved that the meeting be adjourned seconded by Doug Dewar meeting adjourned at 1055 hrs.

Respectfully,

Bob Dickinson ASD executive secretary