

EMS System Plan Oversight Committee Meeting

June 19, 2007

Present: Faye Barefoot, Tom Czaplijski, Jack Cote, Juan March, MD, David Lusk, Jimmy Garris, Jack White, Kyle Willis, Joanne Burdorff, Chuck Owens, Noel Lee

Absent: Melonie Bryan, Duane Holder, Ted Delbridge, MD

Noel Lee, Director, Emergency Management, welcomed the committee members. Noel explained that the Oversight Committee will provide oversight for both Emergency Medical Services providers and Non-emergency Ambulance providers. This committee has 9 voting members and 4 non-voting seats that will serve as a resource for the committee (See Section A of the notebook for the Ordinance).

Chuck Owens will act as designee for Mike Burton for the City of Greenville, David Lusk will replace Charles McGinnis for Pitt Community College and Jack Cote will act as designee for Pitt County Emergency Management.

Scott Elliott, County Manager, welcomed the committee members. Scott reported that the function of the committee will be to oversee Emergency and Non-Emergency services in Pitt County and make formal recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners, i.e. system modification, ordinance changes, etc. Scott reported that there is an executed contract with AmbuMed NC. AmbuMed NC will not be ready to begin the provision of EMS services north of the Tar River July 1, 2007. A letter dated June 15, 2007 from AmbuMed NC, Inc. Ambulance Service was distributed to the committee members. Scott has requested a letter from AmbuMed NC notifying the county when they will be able to begin services.

Introductions:

- Staff to the Committee: Noel Lee, Director, Emergency Management and Helen Bryant, Administrative Assistant, Emergency Management
- David Lusk, Dean of Continuing Education, Pitt Community College. He reported that he has a background in EMS.
- Jack Cote, EMS Coordinator, Pitt County Emergency Management
- Tom Czaplijski, Pitt County Memorial Hospital
- Chuck Owens, Greenville Fire and Rescue, 33 years of EMS Experience
- Jack White, Retired from Lenoir Community College – Citizen-At-Large
- Joanne Burdorff – Pitt County Attorney
- Commissioner Jimmy Garris
- Faye Barefoot, Retired from GlaxoWellcome – Citizen-At-Large
- Juan March, MD, Medical Director
- Kyle Willis, Chair of Pitt County Rescue Association

EMS System:

A Statement of Interest was put out approximately 6 months ago. There were 9 applications returned, four were selected to make presentations; Pitt County, Pitt County Rescue Association, AmbuMed NC and Johnston Ambulance Service. AmbuMed NC was selected by the BOCC to provide coverage for what is presently covered by the county in the Pactolus and Bethel areas north of the Tar River.

Presently all 10 squads in the county and the City of Greenville operate at the paramedic level. The county also operates a Quick Response Vehicle (QRV) in the Industrial Park area of the county during it peak time; 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. 75% to 80% of the EMS workers in the county are paid staff.

Review of Notebook:

Section B: Emergency Medical Services System Plan (Adopted June 2, 2003). Noel pointed out that the System Modification Plan requires 3 signatures; County Manager, EMS Coordinator, and the Medical Director.

Section C: Chapter 13, Subchapter 13P – Emergency Medical Services – Jack Cote reported that this information is available online also. He pointed out to the committee Section .0200 which addresses EMS Systems.

Election of Chair:

Motion: Faye Barefoot made the motion that the committee delay the election of the chair until the next meeting. Jimmy Garris seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Establishment of Meeting Time:

Motion: Kyle Willis made the motion to hold the regular meeting bimonthly on the 2nd Thursday night of the month. David Lusk seconded the motion.

Amendment to motion: The meeting will be held at 6:00 p.m. beginning July 12, 2007. The motion passed unanimously

Discussion: Will need to get information to the Clerk to the Board to have the regular meeting scheduled published. At first the committee will meet monthly. Any additional meetings will need to be advertised.

AmbuMed NC Letter:

Kyle Willis asked if the BOCC have received a copy of the letter and understand the ramifications of the letter.

Dr. March questioned #7 on page 3 of the letter. It addresses the Pactolus area of the county but not Bethel.

Jimmy Garris reported that Scott Elliott told the BOCC that AmbuMed has notified the county that they will not be ready to provide services until August 1, 2007.

Jack Cote asked if there will be a new contract to that effect. Joanne Burdorff reported that there could be an addendum to the contract if requested. At present an addendum has not been requested.

Section H

Proposal for Pitt County EMS Contingency Plan

Discussion

Noel reported that this a draft of a plan in that Pitt County EMS plans to operate a backup program that will include one QRV and one transport ambulance. This was a primary concern of Dr. Juan March, Pitt County Medical Director, in signing the system modification plan. The back up plan will assure coverage of void areas in the event of a squad failure.

Noel reported that the county has mutual aid agreements within the county but this contingency plan is separate.

Noel reported that there have been no RIF letters sent to employees. Noel reported that some employees have already sought other jobs with the expectation that their employment would be terminated as of June 30, 2007.

Jack Cote reported that the EMS personnel have worked countless hours to cover the Bethel and Pactolus areas with limited personnel. Jack thanked them for all their hard work and dedication to the citizens north of the river. Kyle Willis also thanked staff for all their hard work.

Greg White, a paramedic for Pitt County, reported that he had talked with staff and effective 7/01/07 the county will have zero staff to cover the area north of the river. He also stated that if the County voids the contract with AmbuMedNC, and the employees are guaranteed employment they will continue to work past July 1, 2007.

Dr, March reported that the #1 priority of the committee is to ensure that there will be emergency services coverage at the same level as presently provided for the area north of the river come 7/01/07.

Pitt County EMS Contingency Plan:

Article 1: Extended Response Assistance – Disputes over the compensation will have to come back to the committee.

Article 2: Service District Reassignment

Article 3: County Government Reserve – At present the position of Assistant EMS Coordinator is vacant.

Article 4: State of Emergency – This would be used a last resort. The county would tap into other resources before this is done, i.e. Rescue Association, Greenville Fire-Rescue, Non-emergency transport companies, etc.

Discussion: David Lusk asked if there is anyway that during the period of time the county would have to cover the area north of the river until AmbuMed was able to begin services that AmbuMed be required to reimburse the county for the cost.

Tom Czaplinski reported that state regulations prohibit a hospital from providing 911 emergency services.

Jack White asked why can't the county go back to the way the services are being provided and void the contract with AmbuMed since they have nullified their contract already.

Kyle Willis stated that if a conditional contract of employment is provided, the employees may be willing to work come 7/01/07.

Noel reported that he would like to see a reserve force developed in the event a squad needs coverage.

The Contingency Plan needs to be approved by July 1, 2007. Jack reported that a draft of the plan has been submitted to the State along with the system Modification Plan. Dr. March reported that the System Modification Plan has to be approved by North Carolina Office of Emergency Medical Services before AmbuMed can operate. The normal timeframe for approval is 30-60 days. Jack reported that the State is aware of our situation and they are expediting the process. The Plan was submitted on June 2. For the record, the county did not delay the process.

David Lusk asked if this is a viable contingency plan for the county and since the Contingency Plan has already been submitted to the state with the system Modification Plan the committee needs to approve the plan.

***Motion:** Jimmy Garris made the motion to approve the Pitt County EMS Contingency Plan. David Lusk seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The Recommendation will now go to the BOCC for approval.

Dr. March asked if the committee can make any other recommendations to the BOCC to provide services come 7/01/07?

***Motion:** Faye Barefoot made the motion to request that the BOCC have a special called meeting to review and discuss the issues regarding the complications created by AmbuMed NC not beginning services on 7/01/07 and take corrective action.

Dr. March seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Jimmy Garris will take this request to the County Manager and Beth Ward, Chair of the BOCC, on Wednesday morning.

Discussion: Chuck Owens asked if the committee needed to go further and make a recommendation to the BOCC? Dr March suggested that the county pay other squads to cover the area. Jeff White reported that as far as East Care assisting in the coverage that he thought there is a directive that would allow East Care to assist but it would have to come from Drexdal Pratt, Chief of NCOEMS.

Section E

Pitt County Non-Emergency Transports – This committee will be responsible for review of non-emergency ambulance transport franchise applications.

Recommendation: Increase the number of copies of the completed application from 10 to 15.

Committee members were given copies of the application for Coastal Medical Transport for review.

Section F

Budget Information compiled by the Finance Department.

Section G

Pitt County EMS Department Information

Questions and Comments:

Jack Cote asked if the committee needs to meet after the BOCC meeting (if there is one called). The committee members will be contacted if the BOCC meets.

Respectfully submitted

Helen Bryant