

CARTERET COUNTY FIRE & EMS COMMISSION

MINUTES OF MEETING

February 22nd 2016

Attending: Mark Shouse Lee Dixon Eddie Lewis
 Howard Garner Charles Wallace Michael Smith
 Al Linden Nick Salter

Absent:

Call Meeting to Order

Chairman Mark Shouse called the meeting to order at 6:00pm in the shared conference room at Emergency Services Office.

Approval of Agenda

A motion was made to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded. All were in favor, the agenda was approved.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Shouse stated it appears we don't have any minutes to approve unless you typed them up. Mr. Lewis stated we actually still have it on recorder and on another recorder and it has not been transcribed. We did some minutes based upon some of the budget things that were asked for amendments. It was very generic but that is what we have on file right now.

Visitor Comments

No visitor comments.

Old Business

Mr. Shouse asked if everyone got the emails about the budget hearings, starting the last weekend in March. Mr. Shouse stated that Teresa Fulk is not going to be available the first weekend in April. Mr. Shouse said to Eddie Lewis we need to work too or we are just going to have to skip that week. If we have some that we can start prior to the last weekend in March. Mr. Lewis stated they first dated in March, I forget what date it was, but we went ahead and did the schedule but we haven't published it

out yet. We had it down anywhere from three to four nights dated on the same week. Mr. Shouse asked do you think you can get it done that quickly. Mr. Lewis said we used a lot of that based upon last years and the year before how we went through some of the smaller departments the first night and knocked the majority of it out. Howard Garner stated I don't see why the point of us meeting if Teresa Fulk can't be here. Mr. Shouse responded with no we can't. So if we can work it out like that so there are leftovers or if someone has to come back we can do it after she is done. When were they instructed to have them back to you? Mrs. Fulk responded with, by the 11th of March. Mr. Shouse stated they've got the tax base information. Mrs. Fulk stated no they don't have that from the tax department yet. Mr. Shouse asked when will you have it. Mrs. Fulk stated the last email she received was Friday of last week and Rory Tupper said she was working on the numbers but she did not give me a date. Charles Wallace asked how are you going to work the budget if you don't have any numbers to work with. Mr. Shouse said budget what you know you are going to need. Mark Shouse stated you just have to put in last years and adjust. Mr. Shouse responded with, yes.

Mrs. Shouse asked anything else under old business? Nick Salter said this is with budgets, I tried to reply to that old email and it kicked it back, but Tuesdays are bad for me just so you know. Mr. Shouse said what we will do since we have so many are to at least make sure that we got the majority here available. Everybody look at that schedule and if you will send out an email with what you are proposing now. Let us get a response back, and if there is one night that we are not going to have enough here we are just going to have to move it. Mr. Lewis stated we will do that in the morning.

New Business

BROAD & GALES CREEK EMS Melinda Ward, Chief

Mr. Shouse opened for new business asking if Melinda Ward was going to do it or Terrence MacMahon talk about the budget for Broad and Gales. Terrence MacMahon responded with a couple of questions for the budget sir. Mr. Shouse responded with, alright. Terrence MacMahon said number 1 due to the fact that everybody knows that we are attempting to be paramedic certified by July 2017. When it comes to the penny we've got no clue what the pennies going to bring or whatever the magic number is. It always seems like are we going to get the entire penny towards the budget or are they going to go ahead and stuff \$30,000-\$40,000 into the county accounts. Mr. Shouse stated no you are going to get it all. Terrence MacMahon asked we are going to get it all? Mr. Shouse stated yes. Mr. Shouse stated that the one cent if the collection rate is 97% or 98% then you are going to get the 98% or the 97% of the full penny. Terrence MacMahon but do we have a figure of what the penny is worth. Mr. Shouse stated well yours is not going to change much at all from last year. Melinda Ward knows what it is and you know what it is or what it was from last year that is what I would base it on. Terrence MacMahon asked then why construction down there though, it stays the same? Mr. Shouse stated I'm not saying it is going to stay the same but it is not going to go down from last year, put it that way. Terrence MacMahon said ok so then whatever the magic number is it could just be the entire penny. Instead of only collecting only 5% we understand 5% we won't be getting, that we are going to be getting the entire penny? Mr. Shouse responded with yes.

Terrence MacMahon said the other question I got is it appears that the board has always wanted us to go ahead and have medics at the same scale intermediates and so on and so forth. Do we have any information on the matrix of staffing for this because we are going into it not knowing if are we going to be high or are we going to be low. Melinda Ward stated well we don't want to get into a place like what this board has talked about for years. Mr. Shouse stated if Eddie could make a note that Stephen does have some comparables as far as what other departments are making and what the county medics are making and so forth. We have talked about this a long time and that is what I would use and he could get you that information. Terrence MacMahon stated that is fine we just want to try and get it set up and move it to purchasing and that type of stuff. If we are a little high the first year we are willing to go back down like we have done in the past. We have to get the equipment purchased and the salaries in place. We don't have a magic number yet it definitely won't be two cents I can tell you that, which the county wanted from us. It is going to be up and once it gets squared away we are willing to lower the tax again.

Mr. Shouse asked how are your monitors Melinda... Melinda Ward responded with we have one that is not compatible. Mr. Shouse then stated so one is and one is not. Melinda Ward stated they are looking at getting a used one, and trying to make them come down a little bit. The other one is very old but it works and is fine. Mark Shouse asked what does it have to have, that CO2 stuff. Melinda Ward stated the capnography. Melinda Ward stated actually we've got capnography on them so that's fine. Melinda Ward also stated we can't pace on the old one because they used the module for capnography so we have run out of modules on the old life Pak 12. Melinda Ward said we don't have it on the weekend for the paramedic can do the pacing and stuff. They are not able to upgrade it because it is so old; it is one of the first life pak 12s. Mark Shouse asked because they are not feasible to upgrade are they? Terrence MacMahon stated the life pak 12 that we are going to have in the next six months or so we are not going to recognize anymore. Melinda Ward responded with yeah they are not. Al Linden asked and a 15 is what about \$33,000 or \$35,000 somewhere in there? Melinda Ward stated yes. Al Linden asked and you have other equipment to buy and medications? You've got to jack your salaries up so you got your cost somewhere between \$50,000-\$75,000, no big deal. Melinda Ward stated we are looking at it and we are trying to do everything we can, and we have been working on this for six months. Al Linden said you even told me a year ago you were working on it so I know you are on top of things. Terrence MacMahon said I'm just trying to get the numbers straight so we don't end up high or low on the matrix. Mr. Shouse said Melinda if you will send Stephen an email he has got those salary ranges for other areas.

Nick Salter asked if I could caveat off of that Mr. Chairman. Mr. Shouse responded with yes. Nick Salter stated Terrence MacMahon to answer your question I have been speaking with Stephen Rae and with the Chiefs Associations. Chief Hunter and I spoke at the last meeting. Somehow with all this other stuff I got put in this vice chair of that panel also. Exactly what you are saying is some of the things that I have been discussing. I spoke with Stephen and he said this could be an avenue to bring it up as well with Chief Hunter. I feel this is the Chiefs Association and the Chiefs of all the departments should be working together to exactly not have that a bidding war and competition on prices. I have actually worked with the numbers and I will share it with you guys because my department is the same as yours.

Talking to Stephen and talking to other paid departments we know the municipalities are on their own and can do their own thing. Nick Salter stated as far as say the non-profits have a standard across the board for compensation package whether it is the east side of the county or the west side starting. Of course, each can have their own if they go full time or part time make it as their own thing, as far as COLA, step increases, or tenure increases, try to make that exact. Mr. Shouse asked so you all are trying to do that through the Chief Association? Kevin Hunter said we are going to be trying to work on it. Terrence MacMahon said but you have a budget on the 11th so how are you going to be working on it? Mr. Shouse said now I applaud that.

Mr. Shouse said but let me ask you this since you've got the different shift schedules because Beaufort has gone or do they want to go to four shifts? Nick Salter asked Beaufort EMS? Nick Salter said they have been 4. Mr. Shouse said well that kind of throws everything out of whack. Are they the only one left doing that? Nick Salter said at a 4? Mr. Shouse said, yes. Nick Salter said they are going to have to stay at a 4 or their compensation is going to have to go up dramatically. Mr. Shouse said he understands but what he is saying for others like you, Harkers Island, Sea Level, and Broad and Gales. Nick Salter said if I have to put paid people I am looking at 4 shifts. Mr. Shouse stated 4 shifts. Nick Salter said because if you're doing primarily EMS with the NC Labor Laws anything over 40 hours a week is overtime. The fire fighter EMS you can do the 53 hour work week but if there job is primarily EMS then....Al Linden states if you are a non-profit anything over forty you have to pay overtime. Nick Salter responds with, yes. Al Linden says you have no choice. I know way back around 2000, maybe 1999, town of Cape Carteret paid for an analysis because they had very high over time rates. The recommendation coming out of Chapel Hill is that they go from four shifts to three to save money and overtime. I could get you a copy of that if you would be interested. I think I have one in my file or maybe Kevin has one in here. It was clear that we could save on overtime to go to three shifts instead of four. Mr. Shouse asked do you run three. Al Linden responded with yes we run three. Mr. Shouse asked and it works fine? Kevin Hunter responded well one of the things we are doing this year, each shift has a part time person on it that makes up for that fifth person that second medic. We are going to all full time medics this year, but it is two medics per shift for three shifts. It works fine as long as when you get sick people and you can't fill a slot then you get overtime, and we had that happen just last week. Mark Shouse stated yeah but what I am saying is the three shifts compared to the four shift. Kevin Hunter stated yeah and the other thing all of our people are fire fighter medics and they run on their schedule 24 on and 24 off. That depends on how they are going to run their shifts and, they are going to do 24, 16, or 8. Terrence MacMahon said but then again that is like a municipality where you want a 53 hours. Nick Salter said honestly looking at it I agree with Terrence MacMahon we are supposed to be good stewards of the tax payer's dollar, and trying to look at the most cost effective way. Eventually am I probably going to have to put four full time personnel that are paramedics to ensure that I have 24/7 paramedic coverage. Then we'll have to augment the way we have been doing the shift coverage or try to start with the shift coverage. Mr. Shouse said my suggestion would be, and correct me if I am wrong Chief, if you base your pay on hourly rate and not a salary then you are fine because there were some departments that were basing that had a four shift and they were basing it on salary. There hourly rate was through the rough. Nick Salter said it will be off an hourly rate Terrence MacMahon and Melinda because the three departments that were called out were y'all's, mine, and

Harkers Islands. We are right there together because Chief Mann I have been meaning to have communication with him, I have been meaning to email you, and we can all talk afterwards to make sure you have my info especially where those three departments were named. I think that the three of us should definitely be communicating. Mr. Shouse said he would talk to the others too. Nick Salter said they agreed and also added that Chief Hunter said that there is no way before budget with Chief Association to be able to push something out. The numbers that I have looked at, I have talked to other Chiefs and other areas, even Stephen. It's right in line with the county and it's right in line with other agencies and just kind of puts something formally. Even if Chief Wallace if they want to try and put something down there way and it is something to look at. For us up here looking at budgets it shouldn't be this huge fluctuation. Nick Salter said like you said this hourly rate times X amount of hours a year is X dollars, plain and simple. Mr. Shouse asked anything else on this?

Ms. Shouse continued with he was sorry that he forgot to introduce Chief Wallace who is now the Associations replacement for Chief Bergamini, and we welcome you and glad to have you. Mr. Shouse asked Melinda do you have anything else on this. Melinda Ward responded with no he is my treasurer and we have been discussing this for weeks and he wanted to know an answer. Mr. Shouse responded with the best thing to do is base your one penny off of what last year's one penny netted. Mike Smith stated your problem with all of this is going to be your number of paramedics in the county. Mr. Shouse said he would agree with that as well. Ms. Shouse asked let me give you this scenario and I wouldn't call it a worst case scenario but it is a likely scenario. Let's say we go under a storm warning the municipalities are going to do a call back on personnel then what happens to the outline areas. Mike Smith responds with there is none. Melinda Ward stated you have to keep two full time eyes on, and like in our department we have to have two full time eyes at all times, because if not they pull theirs back in and you don't get anyone. Mr. Shouse said I understand but with a limited number of paramedics until a year or so go by that more people can upgrade, and wouldn't that create a hardship on some of the departments? Melinda Ward stated I really don't think there is a shortage with what people think it is, because they are putting them out every day at the college. I think the problem is getting them experienced paramedics. Kevin Hunter said some of the ones that are coming out of the colleges I am not putting to work. That is the other problem you can't put fresh paramedic out of school on a bus, and tell them there you go you are going to run. Most of us even my department you don't have the funds to have a field training officer like a big organization has where they ride with a field training officer for like six months. That is the problem too and I think that is what Mike was alluding to as far as quality medics with the experience and the time. When you have to pay somebody you have to get what you are paying for and you can't put the public at risk in the process. Ms. Shouse asked the quality of the experienced medics that you are talking about? Kevin Hunter responded that they are full time somewhere. Ms. Shouse stated at one of the municipalities most likely. Ms. Shouse asked any other questions on this.

Ms. Shouse said I assumed everyone saw the article in the paper that the information that came out in the retreat. Basically that the commissioners have taken a stance that there is not going to be a consolidation at this point. They have requested that Otway, Harkers Island, and Broad and Gales go to

paramedic level service and the county medic assets can be used in the outlined areas mainly to help cover South River and Mill Creek in particular.

Ms. Shouse asked any other questions or comments. Al Linden asked what if the non-profits don't do it. The law requires the county that it is their responsibility. Ms. Shouse said here is what the take on it was, that the opposition by those specific departments to the proposal in lieu of the county doing it they said ok we won't do it if these three departments will upgrade. If these three departments don't upgrade then the county may be forced to take additional steps on it. Al Linden asked what are they going to do to help South River and Merrimon, and I go out there a lot because I have homes out there. If I get sick I want more than Mr. Wallace I want a paramedic. Ms. Shouse said the first version of the proposal was coverage but the problem is you have such a long distance, and Charles you are familiar with this. In such a low call volume that it doesn't make sense to staff it. What they were trying to use is Beaufort EMS to station a unit that way at some point and time. Al Linden said put one on Laurel Rd. it seems to make sense. Charles Wallace said the actual proposal that he had was QRV would be stationed at South River; QRV1 would be in the county take over. I guess he would be the supervisor, I guess they figured they would put him down there he wouldn't have too many calls to answer so he could take care of the supervision duties too.

Mr. Shouse said and then there was a second version of the plan that came out that gave more coverage to Mill Creek and South River. The plan I guess now but I don't know if it has been ironed out, you are going to get priority that area from a medic stand point. Is that correct Eddie? I don't know about EMS but I know that Pine Knoll Shores was tasked with going. Mr. Shouse said I did leave them out they are going to cover Indian Beach and Pine Knoll Shores. Mr. Lewis said so that QRV unit there may be deployed somewhere else I don't know. Mr. Shouse said so they wouldn't need two, but one is down your way isn't it? Nick Salter said she has two and one is ours. I was talking to Stephen the other day because he came to our station because we had to meet with Marshallbergs first responders. We asked about that and what they said was the QRV1 truck was going to South River, the QRV 2 is a Broad Creek station is going to Mill Creek, and QRV3 is going to be moving to Indian Beach for the county district that is there. Mr. Shouse said until Pine Knoll Shores....Nick Salter said they are going to make an agreement. Mr. Shouse said when that is done which should be hopefully by July 17th then Pine Knoll Shores will cover Indian Beach. Charles Wallace said when we had our meeting down there with John I had a bunch of people from the community came here and pretty much told him as far as they were concerned they could spend the money to fully staff an ambulance down there and they didn't mind paying the tax money for it. That is what the people told him. Mr. Shouse said it is something you want to have there. Charles Wallace said because the original proposal was not going to make things that much better than it is now. I have taken some steps this year to improve the response time deal tremendously. It will be forth coming in my budget because I had to ask for a little bit of an increase to cover it, but I've got people at my station every night now.

Mark Shouse how is the thing with the first responders with your neighbor going? Nick Salter said it should be going live March 1st. Ms. Shouse asked any other items for discussion?

Other Items for Discussion

Ms. Shouse said would you like to update us on the North River fire contract was signed. Mr. Lewis said I don't know that it was. Mr. Shouse said it was. Mr. Lewis said was it that is the first I have heard of it. Ms. Shouse said it was, wasn't it Charles. Charles responded with I couldn't tell you, I don't know anything about it. Mr. Shouse said according to Mr. Rob Wheatly it has been worked out. Mr. Lewis said I haven't seen anything official let me put it that way. Mr. Shouse asked any other questions? Howard Garner said I believe Bill told me that Smith said it was worked out too. Ms. Shouse said I think it had been at their last meeting.

Kevin Hunter said the tanker at Western Carteret was Mr. Lewis's office sent someone out to survey it and you all have a copy of the survey. Mr. Shouse said we did. Kevin Hunter stated we nursed it along as far as we can. Of course as you remember in 2011 when I became the Chief there we had three vehicles that were on the verge of falling apart on us. One of them we just got rid of and wrote off and the other one is the one we replaced two years ago, and this tanker which we do have to have to maintain our class six rating is the next one on the list. It has been on our capital improvement plan since we created the capital improvement plan back in 2010 before I became Chief. Mr. Shouse asked have you already specked out a truck. Kevin Hunter said we have the ideas of what we want but can't really do anything official because we are moving it and is going to be done in the new fiscal year. Rather than do it now and try to do an emergency purchase and do a budget amendment. We are just going to do it in the new budget year. We have been working on it and we know what we want it is just a very basic 2000 gallon tanker that will haul water for us and will last 25 years. Mr. Shouse asked have you seen Moreheads, I have assumed you have. Kevin Hunter stated yes I have and I saw it yesterday. Mr. Shouse said it was impressive. Kevin Hunter asked what was it they paid for theirs again. Mr. Shouse stated it was \$210,000 or \$215,000 and it was barely over \$200,000 originally and had a 500 GPM PTO pump with a 2000 gallon tank. For very little money they upgraded to a 1000 GPM pump with proper equipment on it so it can be a rated engine. He can dump up to 2000 gallons in less than one minute. Kevin Hunter asked he didn't get the vacuum tanker did he? Mr. Shouse stated no he didn't, said it is a polymer with a 2000 gallon on a single axle. Kevin Hunter said that's what this one will be the estimates we got from a couple different manufactures are between \$260,000 and \$280,000, and that is what we are looking at. Al Linden said we budgeted \$300,000.

Kevin Hunter said when you mentioned first responder; Stella is now a first responder department. Steve went out and did the inspections and everything on them. They've got there utility truck up and rolling as a first responder truck. Officially it will be March 1st, but they are all ready to roll in that regards. That will also help us out.

Moving on to the future many reasons why we are going on to the second medic being a full time medic. One of them is that a part of that phase in plan that we presented two year ago when we did the QRV that hopefully not this coming fiscal year but the 2017-2018 fiscal year we'll look at possibly moving that second ambulance to Stella. If we can make something work for having a place for them to sleep and shower. That was part of that phase in plan that we presented to you all and to the county commissioners two years ago. It is coming together and it is a process but finally Stella is a first

responder. Mr. Shouse asked if there was anything else anybody has, words of wisdom. Mr. Shouse asked anything you have Mr. Lewis. Mr. Lewis responded with no.

Mr. Shouse asks if there are any other questions for this meeting. Mr. Shouse made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded. All were in favor. The motion carries unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm.

Jesica Bryan, Administrative Support Specialist