

CITIZEN'S ADVISORY GROUP ("CAG")

TO

**SAN JUAN ISLAND EMS ("SJIEMS")
SAN JUAN COUNTY PUBLIC HOSPITAL DISTRICT #1 ("SJCPHD #1")
SAN JUAN COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT #3 ("FD #3")
AND THE TOWN OF FRIDAY HARBOR ("TOWN")**

MINUTES

Wednesday July 18, 2018

6:30 pm, 849 Spring Street Unit B5

CAG representatives:

Chuck Dalldorf, Town (Chair)
George Johnson, SJCPHD #1
Rick Frazer, at large
Dan Paulsen, FD #3
Mark Tompkins, at large

Others Present:

Nathan Butler, SJCPHD #1
SJCPHD #1 Board Recording Sec.

Jerry Martin, SJIEMS Chief

Chris Compton, CPA, SJIEMS

Absent:

None

Public Present:

Karin Augusta

By Phone or teleconference:

None

Call to Order: Chair Dalldorf called the meeting to order at 6:45 pm.

NOTE: There is no audio from this meeting. This was due to a technical error with the recorder. It is believed that due to the length of the meeting (almost 3 hours) the audio reset itself. These minutes are more detailed as a result.

Approve Minutes: By consent the group agreed that the minutes from 6/27/2018 were acceptable.

Chief Jerry Martin, EMS. Per prior arrangement, Chief Jerry Martin presented on his agency's budget and financial position as well as his perspective on the considered consolidation of EMS/Fire District No. 3. Each attendee was given a copy of his 27-page report on this subject and which is posted on the website. The following notes are drawn from Chief Martin's presentation, and keyed to the report he submitted.

Chief Martin started the meeting stating "Why are we here? If the Fire Department doesn't want to do this then we shouldn't do it." He then went on to explain the reasons why he felt the discussed merger was a good idea, keeping in mind that if either agency is solidly opposed to it that it will not succeed.

Martin stated that a merger would better meet future needs as EMS call volume rises and Fire calls decline. He then introduced his SWOT analysis: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (*page 1 of the report*).

Next, he discussed call volume in detail (*page 2 of the report*): Fire had 334 calls, while EMS had 1096 calls. Tax dollars in proportion to calls yields \$3,997 per FD call, while \$1,321 per EMS call. Nationally EMS calls increase as Fire calls decrease, while volunteerism declines.

Chris Compton, CPA contractor for SJIEMS, then addressed financial aspects of SJIEMS (*page 3-11 of the report*). EMS has about \$678,000 in cash, or just under 4 months operating expenses. In 2018 EMS total revenue expected is \$2,087,000, balanced with total expenses of \$2,081,000 for 2018. Expenses and revenue were then broken down in detail.

Questions were then asked regarding material covered thus far.

- Q: How does "on call" work? A: Paramedics are unionized but agreed to only be paid when actually called in for a call or in the office. Work is thirteen 24-hour shifts per month. If they had to be paid the entire time they were on call it would burn up 40 hours/week very quickly. Paramedics go home while on call, but sprint car response times are very fast.
- Q: Do paramedics cover BLS to ALS? A: EMS is moving to EMTs only on BLS, but some pushback at night. During the day the duty EMTs take care of it.
- Q: Have you looked at the cost of in-station staffing? Was it cost prohibitive? Yes, and yes. Here when they go home they are off the clock. Again, if working for a Fire Department, by law paramedics may work 53 hours before paid overtime but working for an EMS department anything over 40 hours is OT.

Chief Martin then resumed the podium from Compton to discuss Medicaid/Medicare fees (*page 13 of the report*).

Then discussed billing (*page 14-16 of the report*). In 2017 EMS has 1093 calls, of that 853 were billable. 61% of calls were paid by Medicare, 14% by Medicaid, 22% by commercial insurance, and 3% by private/self-pay.

Chief Martin then presented on call volumes and types. (*page 17-27 of the report*) Charts covered call volume, time per day, incident type, primary injury breakdowns, call by urgency, call by geographical location, call by location type (e.g. home, doctor's office, ocean, etc.), age range, and air transport volume.

- Q: How many simultaneous and double covered calls? A: "I think 23% were doubled up within 15 minutes of another call."

The presentation completed, CAG members asked general questions of Chief Martin and Chris Compton.

- Q: If EMS is not rolled into Fire is EMS sustainable long-term? A: It is sustainable for about 5 years, beyond that it's hard to say. 10 years out with no change would be hard. EMS could end the no out-of-pocket policy which would add \$100,000/year, could raise rates – that would do it.
- Q: How does paying off the EMS Building affect sustainability? A: EMS pays a 3 1/8 % interest currently and rates are going up. Only have 4 years left before the note ends. In 2022 rates uncertain. Does not make sense to refinance. If merging with Fire the sale of the EMS building is an asset.

Chief Martin closed by inviting CAG members to come by and meet the EMTs and paramedics, see the operation.

New Business:

The CAG agreed to pay Nathan Butler, SJCPHD #1 Recording Secretary, from CAG funds. The next meeting is July 22nd, 6:30 p.m., at SJCPHD #1's business offices 849 Spring Street Unit B-5.


Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

Adjournment: Chair Dalldorf adjourned the meeting at 9:30 p.m.



Signed by Chair



Date

The original document is retained at the San Juan County Public Hospital District #1 Office at 849 Spring Street, Unit B-5, Friday Harbor, WA 98250 in San Juan County Public Hospital District #1 permanent proceedings file.

Attest: Nathan Butler, Board Recording Secretary for SJCPHD #1