

Santa Rosa County  
Emergency Services Advisory Committee  
September 28, 2005  
2:00 p.m.

MINUTES (Corrected)

**Members present:**

Stephen Cozart  
John E. Reble  
Joe Diamond  
James Chalmers

Tony Simmons  
Don Vanderryt  
Werner Panchenko

**Members absent:**

Bryan Gibson

**Staff present:**

Sheryl Bracewell

Deb Grinde

Agenda approved as submitted for this meeting.

Minutes for meeting held on August 24, 2005 approved as submitted.

**Persons to Appear**

Commissioner Jacque Gorris, Midway Fire District Fire Commission, appeared on behalf of Fire Chief Stephen Demeter. The purpose of his appearance is to request that the county absorb a portion of the costs to purchase the LIFEPAK 12. The LIFEPAK 12 is a defibrillator/monitoring device manufactured by Medtronic that is new to the industry. The Midway Fire District recently purchased the device and is requesting assistance from the county to purchase what may be a huge benefit to the community.

Commissioner Gorris expounded on the purpose, the capabilities of the equipment and the benefits to the community. He stated that protocols will need to be put in place and that criteria for the system would need to be tested and approved prior to routine use of the device.

J. Diamond expressed concern with the idea of funding equipment that has not yet been approved for use by local cardiologists.

J. Chalmers advised that Rural Metro is concerned that any delay may be detrimental or problematic for the patient. Rural Metro would also be concerned with Gulf Breeze Hospital prioritizing transmissions to hospital systems other than their own.

Discussion ensued regarding methods of data transmission, a diagnosis provided by the monitor and ownership of the equipment (Midway Fire District).

Chief Reble stated that it seems the arrangement is between one particular fire district and one large private organization.

T. Simmons questioned the necessity of using the system in relation to the length of time it would take to respond and transport to the hospitals. J. Chalmers advised that the last reports indicated that Rural Metro arrives approximately four (4) minutes after the fire department arrives on scene. In addition, Rural Metro has been communicating with Dr. Leker and the Cardiologist Group regarding the different types of medicines the ambulances would be required to carry.

Chief Reble reiterated that the ownership of the equipment would remain an issue to be dealt with if, in fact, the county made a contribution.

D. Vanderryt questioned the costs to operate the equipment, qualifications to operate the device and whether the device would be made available to other fire districts.

Commissioner Gorris reiterated the benefits of the device to all areas of the county and stressed the fact that we should be attempting to search for excellence.

Chief Reble stated again that only Midway's personnel and Rural Metro employees are qualified to use the device. He also stressed that Midway is the most well-funded district in the county and our concern must be for the entire county.

Commissioner Gorris closed by stating that most of their work is directed toward EMS issues rather than fire issues and that they are looking toward the future and ways to excel.

D. Vanderryt made motion to deny the request for county funding at this time. Motion was carried with one (1) dissenting vote (S. Cozart).

**Review of Reports and Statistics**

Reports for the months of August were reviewed by this committee. Chief Reble expressed dismay with the 'spike' in the number of calls not responded to.

S. Bracewell advised that the fuel shortages intensified by hurricanes may have contributed to the increase number of calls in this category. She will review the numbers and advise further.

**Review of Correspondence**

**Old Business**

Inmate Work Crews

Chief Reble has not received a response from H. Walker to date.

Fire Hydrants

This committee reviewed a hand-out from Chief Reble that covered the guidelines and procedures for performing the necessary testing and maintenance of the hydrants throughout the county. This document should be used by the county to issue to the contractors who might bid on the proposal including the following items:

- Inspection
  - Added item to cover blue reflectors
- Maintenance
- Flow Testing
  - Paint red with reflector paint on flange and then caps/covers
- Record Keeping
- Numbering System

Chief Reble advised that the City of Milton water district should not be included.

This committee determined that it will be necessary to issue a Memorandum of Understanding (M.O.U.) between the water purveyors and the county that should indicate how the costs will be managed.

S. Cozart made motion to approve procedure as discussed. Motion approved unanimously.

### **New Business**

#### **Budgets**

An open discussion was held by this committee regarding the spending plans of fire departments supported by MSBU funding.

It was suggested by this committee that the BOCC review the audits for each of these fire districts. J. Diamond volunteered to bring a copy of the format that the Avalon VFD utilized. He also volunteered to audit a few to present as an example.

Chief Reble will draft a letter to the Board of County Commissioners regarding this matter.

D. Vanderryt questioned whether the State of Florida audits these fire districts. It was determined that the districts are not in compliance at a local level if, in fact, they do not submit a budget. It was suggested by this committee that, as a consequence, no funding be provided to the districts until such time that the budgets are submitted.

#### **Audits**

After reviewing several audits provided to this committee by the Clerk's Office open discussion was held regarding the issues brought forth.

This committee determined that the fire districts must show what each check is written for, e.g. item and dollar amount.

It was also determined that noted 'exceptions' on the audits should remain an issue to be dealt with, whether by the BOCC or someone appointed to take care of this problem.

Suggestion made that a percentage of the budget be held back until such time that the proper documentation is provided for each exception. Additional suggestion made that a percentage of the budget be apportioned to pay a person who would be responsible for tracking accounts, budgets and audits for each district.

S. Cozart indicated that logistics may be a problem in reference to how and when each transaction is occurring. S. Cozart also stated it may be necessary for the Board of County Commissioners to amend the ordinances to reflect these measures.

This committee approved the submission of the letter to the Board of County Commissioners by Chief Reble to also indicate concerns and suggestions to address the discrepancies on subject fire district audits.

### **Public Comments and Questions**

Richard Collins, 8600 Chumuckla Hwy, Pace, FL 32571

Mr. Collins appreciates that this committee is investigating detailed items. Mr. Collins believes that these issues should be brought to the attention of the fire commissioners board of directors of the respective districts. They are not supporting the departments as they should be; Mr. Collins believes that a listing of all commissioners members of the board of directors for each district should be listed somewhere and made available to citizens. He also believes that the commissioners members of the boards should be well known to the citizens of Santa Rosa County.

Mr. Collins observed that the hydrant located at Elizabeth Chapel may require maintenance. He stated that the bottom of the hydrant is well below the ground line. Mr. Collins was advised that the purple color hydrant indicates sewage outflow.

It is Mr. Collins understanding that the purpose of the ordinance regarding the MSBU funding is that all monies should be spent to reduce fire insurance rates.

Mr. Collins believes that the fire districts need guidelines for spending the funds; the auditors use state guidelines while the fire districts do not.

It is Mr. Collins firm belief that the reports, both the budgets and the audits, are filed and that absolutely no action is taken.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM.

Next meeting is Wednesday, October 26, 2005 at 2:00 PM