Santa Rosa County
Emergency Services Advisory Committee
January 17, 2007
2:00 p.m.
MINUTES

Members present:

James Chalmers
Joe Diamond
Don Vanderryt

Staff present:

Brad Baker
Stephen Cozart
Werner Panchenko
Ryan Jenkins
Deb Grinde

S. Cozart introduced Ryan Jenkins as the new representative for District 3. He replaces Tony Simmons who resigned the position. S. Cozart thanked

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Jenkins for volunteering his time for this committee.

Agenda approved as submitted for this meeting with no exception.

Minutes for meeting held on October 18, 2006 approved as drafted and submitted.

Persons to Appear

None

Reports and Statistics

Statistical reports for the months of June 2006 through December 2006 were reviewed by this committee. The reports are not 100% completed at this time but should be no later than the March meeting. Noted that all of the departments are improving through time.

Old Business

Fire Hydrants

S. Cozart reviewed the actions taken to date regarding the fire hydrants within the county. He also reviewed the items one (1) through four (4) listed on the memo intended to be issued to the water purveyors. He stated that he expects the water purveyors to disregard the document.

B. Baker stated that he feels there has been some progress made with the water purveyors. He has been receiving communications and responses from the water purveyors regarding these issues. Berrydale Water System has submitted a comprehensive report and other systems are just beginning to respond to our requests. He stated that we seem to be moving forward and we should maintain that momentum. B. Baker has expressed the need to implement an ordinance that would include these water system activities to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC).

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hydrants. Discussion ensued. B. Baker stated that some of the fire departments

are taking on the project already in order to move forward.
S. Cozart asked if any members wanted to change any parts of the memo to be
issued to the water purveyors.

Diamond, Avalon VFD, questioned the method recommended for painting the

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was determined that a standard color code for all hydrants would be helpful and
S. Cozart will include the system in the memo.

Diamond requested that the color coding system be included in the memo. It

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and/or damaged hydrants) are to be reported to the Emergency
Management Communications Center. B. Baker assured us that through very
positive phone conversations with the water purveyors they completely
understand the necessity
D. Vanderryt questioned whether we have determined what type of numbering
system would be used on the hydrants. S. Cozart stated that the water
purveyors have provided the locations of the hydrants which are extremely
helpful to county staff. B. Baker said that a centralized numbering system does
not seem feasible at this time. He explained that in some instances the water
purveyor has hydrants in more than one fire district, e.g. City of Milton provides
water for customers who live in the Skyline fire district. He stated that each fire
department will have individual sets of hydrant numbers.

Diamond questioned whether out-of-service hydrants (including both nonfunctioningof reporting out-of-service hydrants.

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Flush hydrants are being misconstrued by citizens. He questioned whether they
are being identified as flush hydrants within the system. B. Baker advised that
they are being identified as such.
systems for the hydrants in order to identify them more easily. B. Baker stated
that there is a system in place and he will bring a copy to the next meeting for
this committee to review.
Discussion held regarding the second letter which makes recommendations by
this committee to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC).

Collins. Pace. FLR. Collins suggested different numbering

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added to the letter addressed to the water purveyors.
B. Baker stated that the ISO standards are established on an annual basis.
Chief Demeter, Midway Fire Department, informed the committee that his
department ensures that the hydrants are at least fully opened every year; they
are not necessarily flow tested. He referred to a statute that requires opening of
the hydrant on an annual basis. He stated that the AWAA requires flow testing

Diamond would like to include some additional items to that letter that were

every ten (10) years. He reiterated that the flow ratings are established annually
for the ISO standards and that the hydrants must be opened for flow, not
necessarily testing. Chief Demeter provided the committee with a copy of the
statute.
S. Cozart questioned whether the ordinance should be rewritten or if the water

purveyors be provided the opportunity to complete the activity on a voluntary basis.

W. Panchenko and D. Vanderryt indicated that they thought a new ordinance would be necessary.

an effort to complete the tasks, it would be better to postpone a new ordinance.

S. Cozart agreed and said that a more cooperative spirit would indicate that a new ordinance would not be necessary.

R. Collins. Pace. FL

Mr. Collins stated that all of the water purveyors have had approximately ten (10) years to learn the standards. He stated that insurance companies are looking for reasons to cancel insurance policies and/or increase costs. The ratings that set the insurance rates need to be maintained. "Do not retract; enhance and enforce!"

D. Vanderryt advised that this committee can only make recommendations.

J. Diamond stated that ifthe water purveyors are making

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to ensure that a smooth transition occurs after all

forth by everyone concerned.

Chalmers stated that this committee needs to make the recommendations andof the effort that has been put

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and allow the BOCC to make a decision.

S. Cozart agreed and said that putting this in motion makes sense. At this point all committee members agreed that the requirements should be included in an ordinance format and will omit the voluntary task format.

D. Vanderryt asked Chief Demeter, Midway Fire Department, what his thoughts were about this proposal and what kind of effect it would have on their procedures. Chief Demeter stated that it would not have any effect on their department as they are not an MSBU district; they are a legislative district. He requested that if this is issued the committee reiterate that the local fire departments must be notified by statute; it may affect them if water lines are shut down. He did mention that these activities are the responsibilities of the water purveyors in the south Florida area, although he is not aware of any ordinance for the same.

The second item is in regard to the marking of the hydrants with the blue reflective strips. The supplies are available. The draft letter recommends that an ordinance require the developers to mark the location of the hydrants with the markers in all new subdivisions. We encourage the developers and the fire departments to use those that we have on hand as a start. This is for all new hydrants.

Diamond agreed and said that this committee should make a recommendation

R. Collins. Pace. FL

Mr. Collins reiterated that the ordinance would cover only newly installed hydrants. We may want to consider letting inmate crews install the reflector for the established hydrants as they are in the area.

S. Cozart stated that any previous attempts to utilize inmates has been objected

to for various reasons and has become a difficult concept for this committee to pursue.

Chairman Tom Stewart. Board of Countv Commissioners

Some of the issues that he considers priorities for his tenure and has presented to the BCCC include the EMS system, the ESAC committee, the tier one and tier two concepts and the fire districts' abilities to provide first responder assistance to the county. He explained what his interests are in the ESAC and what problems he knows exists for this committee. Chairman Stewart stated that knowing the solutions are not simple; he will attempt to help solve the problems and will fully support the ESAC committee. His hope is that the ESAC committee provides solutions to the problems so that together we will accomplish objectives for the county. He also stated that he will always attend ESAC meetings each and every time that he is invited to do so!

S. Cozart told Chairman Stewart that we appreciate his attendance. S. Cozart stated that his goals were to improve communications between the BCCC and this committee. He wants to improve the relationship and provide to the commissioners ideas and solutions for all of these issues. His contention is that the more we communicate the more objectives will be met. This committee wants to make a contribution. S. Cozart advised Chairman Stewart to please attend the ESAC meetings any time!

Chairman Stewart stated that he attended the meeting to indicate his support for the ESAC committee.

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existing hydrants. B. Baker stated that he would remind the fire districts at the next SRC Firefighters Association meeting to install as many as possible.

The recommendation regarding the reflectors was approved by this committee as written.

The third item is in regard to the color coding of the hydrants. B Baker will confirm the colors according to the NFPA standards. Discussion of color coding followed regarding visibility, etc.

This item was also approved by this committee as written.

S. Cozart will bring a final draft to our next meeting and will submit to the BCCC upon this committee's approval.

Diamond said that it should not take a lot of time to install the reflectors on

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compel the water purveyors to accomplish these tasks in a timely manner in order to assure that there are no water shortages when the fire departments require it.

Diamond stated that the newspaper is covering hydrant issues. We need to

New Business

Fitch & Associates Report

Report was reviewed by this committee. Each member was provided a copy of the report. Discussion ensued regarding the issues covered in the report.

Some of the key findings included facts and recommendations. Current response times seemed to be longer than optimal times recommended. Current contract with Rural Metro requires a percentile of calls (90%) to meet a

requirement of a twelve (12) minute response time. Rural Metro is currently measured from the time they get enroute or in service to the time they arrive on scene. The RFP will change those parameters and measure from the time the call is received until the time the unit arrives on scene less the time it takes to dispatch the call.

Chief Demeter stated that Midway Fire Department may have had a part in the report coming about and wanted to add a few remarks. The NFPA national standard which is based on national heart standards is basically four (4) minutes for a BLS provider to arrive on scene and eight (8) minutes for an ALS provider to arrive on scene. It is Chief Demeter's understanding that the RFP that will be going out calls for an eighteen (18) minute response time in the rural area and a ten (10) minute response time in the urban area of the county. He believes that the key is to the ALS first response.

The next part of the report addresses the idea that a loss of transport volume or a fragmentation of a service area would be detrimental to the system and would probably result in increased costs without improving patient care.

Chief Demeter addressed the reasons that Midway Fire Department started responding to BLS and ALS calls. He contends that no one is able to provide the statistical data necessary to provide any reason why they should not continue to transport patients.

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Chief Demeter responded that they do about eighty-five (85) per month or approximately one thousand (1,000) per year. They actually reported 1,034 last year. As far as the Midway Fire Department going into the ambulance business Chief Demeter stated that he and his board do not know what kind of effect it would have on the overall system. They are unable to look into the books of a provider who is privately owned to know exact numbers. Midway's interest is to improve the system. He is surprised that the citizens put up with the type of service they are receiving. Discussion ensued regarding examples of service and response time. Midway made an offer to the county that they would respond to calls as a mutual aid provide just as they do as a fire department. The trend is that the fire services will provide emergency services. Santa Rosa County is the only county that Chief Demeter is aware of that totally relies on a private provide for emergency services.

W. Panchenko recalled that there were two (2) services within the county at one time and the outcome was that the citizens received terrible care.

stated that occurred at a different time; all types of services provided negligible services during those times.

Chalmers questioned how many medical transports occur in his district andJ. Diamond

Chief Demeter stated that they pride themselves on the care and customer service they provide, they are very innovative, and they played a part in implementing better medical standards including the Life Met receiving stations that are in every hospital.

The next item on the report addresses the fact that the county should be more involved in the oversight of the departments, especially the MSBU districts. B. Baker has invested a lot of time working on this issue. He updated this committee regarding his activities with the MSBU departments. They continue to

have productive meetings and continue to meet in order to discuss the issues. They are in the planning phase and need to continue to move forward. We need to continue to grow along with them.

S. Cozart stated that this committee needs to come up with a structured means of determining what is needed. It should be an outline of what changes the county should implement. Some ofthe issues include changing the MSBU ordinance, increased interaction with the medical director, the costs involved, etc.

B. Baker advised the committee of his job title change. He is now the Emergency Services Coordinator. He is responsible for the communications dispatch center including 911, liaison for fire services, both MSBU, legislative and municipalities and overseeing the contracted emergency services provider whoever that may be. Staff reporting to B. Baker includes the communications supervisor and staff and the Quality Improvement Coordinator.

Chief Demeter wanted to add the Fitch and Associates background is ambulance service and he stated that the fire arena is not their area of expertise. He does agree, however, with their statement regarding the integration of paid and volunteer firefighters. His concern is that the volunteers get certified. It is required by state statute. Fire chiefs and fire commissioners cannot take on that responsibility. He believes that a County Chiefs Association would help facilitate these issues. Coordination occurs when the chiefs get together and iron most situations out.

S. Cozart stated that a mix of paid and volunteer firefighters must occur. This coincides with what you have stated and we must go in that direction.

Chief Demeter was able to obtain a grant to facilitate Firefighter I training courses. This will be provided at no cost to those who still require the training. The classes will probably start this summer. It is a tremendous liability if they are not fully trained. Huge fines and sometimes criminal charges occur if they are not in compliance with the statute.

B. Baker agrees 100% with the Chief regarding the certification of the firefighters. We are actively encouraging just that.

B. Baker noted that a key finding in the report indicates that the medical direction for the EMS system is fragmented and it would be served best if consolidated under the county for the entire EMS system. The county agrees with that concept and is taking steps to do just that. We have started writing an ordinance that will address that issue. We believe that it will provide a standardized protocol throughout the county. They will have the same protocols and held

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the same standards throughout the county. The Medical Director will be in a better position to enforce the standards.

Chief Demeter agrees with parts of this concept. His concern is that there are protocols regarding some of the medications they carry. Some providers will not carry them due to the costs. They are concerned as their population is willing to pay for those things. His intent is to watch and monitor it closely.

Public Comments

None

No further discussion and meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

Next meeting will be held on February

21, 2007 at 2:00 p.m