

Ad-Hoc Emergency Committee Meeting

March 26, 2015 @ 3:00 p.m., Eastville, Va.

Members Present: Pat Coady
Granville Hogg
Willie Randall
Dr. Ervin Jones

Members Absent: Larry LeMond
Linda Ashby
Dr. Federico Molera

Also present: Hollye Carpenter, EMS Director
Janice Williams, County Administrator's Office

The meeting of the Ad-Hoc Emergency Committee was convened at 3:00 p.m. Dr. David Matson, Director of the Eastern Shore Health District, was introduced to the Committee.

Motion was made by Mr. Randall, seconded by Mr. Hogg, that the agenda be approved. All members were present with the exceptions of Ms. Ashby, Dr. Molera and Mr. LeMond and voted "yes." The motion was unanimously passed.

For the Committee's reading pleasure, an article from the National Association of Counties was provided which illustrated the 2015 County Health Rankings.

Motion was made by Mr. Randall, seconded by Dr. Jones, that the minutes of the meeting of January 22, 2015 be approved as presented. All members were present with the exceptions of Ms. Ashby, Dr. Molera and Mr. LeMond and voted "yes." The motion was unanimously passed.

Mr. Greg DeYoung, Chairman of the Northampton Fire & Rescue Commission, indicated that at its January meeting, the Commission voted to send a request to the Ad-Hoc Emergency Care Committee to have a volunteer representative from the Commission to serve. He said that the new charge to the Committee identified several volunteer initiatives and the Commission requested membership on the Ad-Hoc Committee. He indicated that he would like to serve as a full member of the Committee should a vacancy occur.

Dr. Matson indicated that when the hospital moves, all transport times will be increased. He said that his comments today would be focused on addressing the "frequent flyer" citizens. He cited two examples of communities who have attempted to address this problem.

In Western Tidewater, a visiting home nurse program has been established to address chronic patients. An education plan is developed and a four-month intervention plan is enacted followed by a six-month observation period. For the nine individuals who have completed this program, over \$200,000 in cost savings has been realized. In Virginia Beach, home visits are arranged for “frequent flyers”. The outcome of this program is not known.

The Northampton Health Department does similar home visits for nursing home placements, making joint assessments with the Department of Social Services. Perhaps a 3-6 month “test program” expansion of this program could reduce emergency room visits and hospitalizations. A memorandum of understanding and protocol can be developed if the Committee thinks this proposal, which can be drafted in 10-14 days, has merit. The Health Department staff also enjoys liability coverage and public health privileges as it relates to protected health information.

Mr. Hogg asked what the budget would be for this test program. Dr. Matson replied that a small contribution would be necessary to get it started and he expected to be able to tell within the 3-6 month window if the program is reaping positive rewards.

Mr. Randall said that a sample analysis would be available after 3 months but that a whole year is necessary to provide a better budgetary picture.

When questioned by Chairman Coady, Mrs. Carpenter said that the most significant cost savings will be on the hospital side; i.e., removing 10 patients will not substantially affect her call volume. It was noted that the “low hanging fruit” for this program would be the patients who have no insurance coverage at all.

Dr. Matson said that Riverside has initiated its own visiting nurse program and that they are adhering to the new medical regulations which provide that re-admission within a month is not compensable. He said that statistics would be needed from the County on those who are most eligible.

Mr. Hogg asked Dr. Matson what he knew about the regulations of Eastern Shore Rural Health. Dr. Matson responded that ESHR would not provide emergency services and that ESHR’s recent grant application merely merged two existing facilities. He does not have the sense that they would be providing a robust, total solution, even with the new facility.

Motion was made by Mr. Randall, seconded by Mr. Hogg, that the Health Department be requested to provide a proposal in accordance with the terms as addressed above and to bring same back to the Committee for presentation. All members were present with the exceptions of Mrs. Ashby, Mr. LeMond, and Dr. Molera and voted “yes.” The motion was unanimously passed. It was noted that the proposal would cover travel and on-call staff time only.

When questioned about telemedicine, Dr. Matson said that good quality audio and visual were necessary. This is not available in most of the County. He does not see this as being able to solve the “frequent flyer” issue. Mr. Coady commented that telemedicine was working fairly well between medical facilities and “not-so-well” elsewhere.

Mr. Hogg said that he would like to see the Committee meet more frequently, but Mr. Coady said that many of the “players” are still “on the fence”.

Mr. Hogg said that the Board of Supervisors was grappling with placement of an EMS facility and questioned Dr. Matson if it was important to have the EMS office located near a medical facility. Dr. Matson responded that it came down to a cost analysis of the existing stations/calls/operational costs. Mr. Hogg asked what can be done to help provide the Board with some guidance and Dr. Matson indicated that he could not address this issue and suggested that the Board look to Mrs. Carpenter for her thoughts on the matter.

Mr. Coady said that he believed that the Drummond property (the existing site of the EMS office) is the most immediate and practical solution for construction of the needed garage.

Next Meeting

It was noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Ad-Hoc Emergency Care Committee was April 23rd but that representatives of Eastern Shore Rural Health would not be available on that date. They are available on April 16th and April 30th.

Motion was made by Mr. Hogg, seconded by Mr. Coady, that the next meeting of the Committee be held on Thursday, April 16, 2015, commencing at 3:00 p.m., in the Main Conference Room of the County Administration Building, 16404 Courthouse Road, Eastville, Virginia, provided that ESRH can attend. All members were present with the exceptions of Mrs. Ashby, Mr. LeMond, and Dr. Molera and voted “yes.” The motion was unanimously passed.

Motion was made by Mr. Randall, seconded by Dr. Jones, that the meeting be adjourned. All members were present with the exceptions of Ms. Ashby, Dr. Molera and Mr. LeMond and voted “yes”. The motion was unanimously passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice K. Williams
County Administrator’s Office