

At a work session of the Charlotte County Board of Supervisors held at the Administration Building on April 11, 2022 at 5:00 p.m.

Present: Gary D. Walker, Chairman
Will Garnett, Vice Chairman
Garland H. Hamlett, Jr.
Robert L. Shook, Jr.
Hazel Bowman-Smith
Walter Bailey
Anthony Reeves

Absent:

Chairman Walker called the meeting to order.

Mr. Walker stated that Sally Pyle would be presenting about the Charlotte County Rescue Squad first, then anyone from the public would be welcome to speak as well.

Sally Pyle approached the board and handed out packets she had previously prepared regarding Charlotte County Rescue Squad billing and finances. Pyle introduced herself, stating that she has recently taken over the finances for the CCRS and has 20 years of EMS experience along with 10 years of billing and payroll experience and runs Meherrin Rescue Squad, which includes scheduling, billing and payroll.

Pyle stated that she has found numerous things wrong with CCRS's billing system since she started two weeks ago. She stated that calls were not being consistently approved or billed, there were 73 calls "just sitting on the computer ready to be billed dating back to July." She stated that calls were being sent to billing without insurance, there was no tracking of the calls the squad was completing, the face sheets were not being picked up from the hospital, the face sheets were not getting the correct signatures, the paper call sheets were not being entered into the computer system to send for billing. In 2021, CCRS was dispatched to 2,561 calls, 524 were submitted and billable calls to Cornerstone from June until December. She is unsure what was billed with the previously company before that date.

Pyle stated that things she has done since she started are:

- Set up an email with Chris Russell at Call Dispatch for him to receive all call details;
- Cleaned up calls that were waiting to be billed;
- Found face sheets that were waiting to be billed and has sent them to Cornerstone for payment;
- Called Preferred Communications to get a quote for a computer equipment for the trucks;
- Contacted Patient Access to get missing face sheets from surrounding hospitals;
- Reviewed and approved over 100 calls for billing, leaving approximately 15 recent calls waiting. All calls are up to date and being billed on time;
- Created MIVIT drug box exchange form.

Pyle stated she things CCRS needs the following:

- Training for all volunteers and paid staff to understand how to correctly fill out forms and face sheets
- Computers that will work offline, so calls can be entered real time
- Hot spots for trucks to transmit data to hospitals

Supervisor Bailey said the average is showing \$264 a call and it should be above \$400 a call. Pyle stated that it is now up to an average of \$435 per call since she has started.

Pyle stated that the monthly billing ending in March shows 78,203.44 has been collected.

Pyle was also able to obtain a quote for computers on trucks that will work offline, there are grants but they are not eligible to apply because of their current situation. She said these are the most vital.

Pyle stated that from what she has found, it looks like the previous billing system would be random with no consistency. She said since the billing wasn't consistent, the incoming money wasn't consistent.

Supervisor Shook asked how much the computers are, and Pyle said the quote was for \$11,000 for computers with docking stations.

Garnett asked, do they need a spare or does it come with a warranty? Pyle stated they do get a warranty.

Supervisors Bailey and Smith also recommend the docking stations

Supervisor Smith asked was all this shared with the members of the squad before the meeting, and Pyle said it was.

Supervisor Hamlett asked Pyle had she seen the finance statements or balance sheets, to which she responded she said she pulled the information from CCRS billing website.

She expects in a week's time the squad could receive \$15,000- \$25,000 in revenue, with trending upwards. Pyle expects 60%-70% of their billed money to be back by July.

Supervisor Bailey said since the last meeting, Bailey, Shook and Administrator Witt attended a CCRS meeting and the pay raise was rescinded until money is stable.

Supervisors Bailey, Garnett and Administrator Witt will put together an oversight board to oversee the rescue squad. Witt and Bailey will be visiting other organizations to see how they proceeded forward after similar situations.

Supervisor Bailey stated everyone has been very open with him, Captain Matthew LaMotte has been doing a great job and has a big task on his shoulders

Captain LaMotte approaches the podium and says he wants to be completely transparent with his members and with the Board of Supervisors. He stated that his biggest issue is staffing and he doesn't have enough staff to fill three stations. He has scheduled a meeting on Wednesday with surrounding counties to try and get staffing help from them with staffing and schedule creation. He hopes to make the schedules out a month in advance to help his staff and prevent overtime. He wants to keep everyone at 60 hours max. He stated that he needs 14 full time employees to run two stations and that Mecklenburg has been going through the same issues. He has been told to be prepared that other surrounding counties are going to offer higher pay and benefits to try and correct their staffing issues.

Captain LaMotte has been reaching out to former employees to see why they left. He said most employees left for higher pay and some because their issues or problems weren't being addressed. He stated that two current employees are leaving at the end of the month for better pay and benefits at other locations. He has reached out to lifetime members to see if they would come back and help out until these staffing problems are worked through. He is also reaching out to other organizations, and schools to help try and recruit workers to CCRS.

Captain LaMotte stated that the call volume does not support three full time crews. Captain LaMotte and Mrs. Pyle are working together to see how to fix this and hope to have everyone back on track by July.

Capitan LaMotte states he doesn't want to cut out Lunenburg County and suggest that maybe Lunenburg could absorb the costs for calls within their county.

Capitan LaMotte said there are 4 loans outstanding. He is striving to take care of the \$65,000 loan, that it is on an older model ambulance with high mileage, and he sees no reason to have an outstanding balance on it. Second loan is Striker loan in the amount of \$27,000 and an ambulance loan for 101,000. Pyle and Cornerstone, LLC are working on a payment plan for the fourth loan.

The CCRS is also forming committees to help prevent similar situations from happening in the future and also to help keep them being transparent and accountable. He knows he cannot do this by himself, and he appreciates Mrs. Pyle and Mr. Newcomb for their invaluable help. He has been in contact with CCRS's lawyer to create By-laws. He believes that community

involvement is important and wants to show that CCRS cares for the community. They have received a donation from an anonymous source and from Ace Hardware in Keysville.

Capitan LaMotte stated that one thing he wants to rearrange is the number of bank accounts. He would like to set up three bank accounts, one for payroll, one for donations and expenses and one for savings. He plans to set up a budget but thinks it's vital to start saving for a new ambulance now.

Supervisor Bailey stated that 3 ambulances are needed, based on distance and call volume. He stated that a County our size cannot operate on two ambulances. Bailey said that calls are going unanswered and that we need to make sure Charlotte County citizens are taken care of first, before calls in other counties are answered. Bailey says that Nottoway and Prince Edward counties have stated that they will help back staff but want to make sure they will get paid.

Supervisor Hamlett asked about the ambulance loan. Capitan LaMotte says CRS owes approximant \$99,000 with the payoff in 4 years. He has been on the phone with CCRS CPA, but hasn't been able to get the information he wants yet. He stated that the members of the squad have the right to know the money situations.

Supervisor Hamlett asked how many miles does it have on it? LaMotte responded that it has 170,000 miles and he sees no reason for there still to be a payment on a truck they cannot resell.

Supervisor Shook asked if the squad is meeting payroll. Do you have bills that are outstanding? Are you in the red? LaMotte responded that they have 3 weeks of payroll, they are on the red line, the CPA didn't have access to one account and they are trying to sort out accounts and money balances ASAP. Parker Oil has been paid and according to Larry Newcomb is up to date.

Supervisor Smith asks why does the squad we only have one crew working but the county has three stations? LaMotte stated that staffing is the main problem.

Supervisor Bailey says Nottoway and Prince Edward will be willing to help if the Board of Supervisors will guarantee their employees will get paid.

Supervisor Shook asks how many ambulances the Squad has? LaMotte said the Squad has five and he is planning to switch around ambulance locations based on milage. Shook asks are four currently running and the fifth only needs a blower? LaMotte responded yes, the fifth one should be running soon with little cost.

Chairman Walker thanks Captain Lamotte for attending and asks would anyone else from the squad would like to speak. Supervisor Smith asks for everyone to at least introduce themselves.

Jackie Hamlett, CCRS member approached the podium to state that she is full time at Buckingham but promises to do her very best to help CCRS and get them back on track. She states that Charlotte County is her life and her whole family resides here. Some calls aren't covered at Buckingham either, they are also having staffing shortages. Most people are going to places with higher pay, but she feels committed to helping out Charlotte County.

Members of the Rescue Squad introduced themselves:

- Kristy Sutzer
- Denise Hall – Volunteer
- Thomas Hamlett – EMT
- Lauren Kunath- EMT Volunteer
- Larry Newcomb left early when he received a call

Chairman Walker thanked everyone again for their dedication and attendance.

Administrator Witt stated that there is a need for an audit. LaMotte also feels like everyone should know where they stand monetarily. Witt stated that he has contacted 2-3 agencies and an audit will cost approximately \$25,000-money CCRS does not currently have. If there are any problems found, the cost of the audit will increase. Witt suggested the Board should consider paying this and he thinks it would be wise to conduct an audit since it's a \$1.1-million-dollar agency annually.

Supervisor Hamlett asked how would we know the exact costs? Witt replied he would get three quotes and the Board would have control of the audit.

Chairman Walker asks Witt to let the Board know when he has received more information.

Captain LaMotte stated that he would like to thank the Board and his main goal is to be transparent. He also wanted to add that the local Fire Departments have been willing to help and they are willing to house ambulances.

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.