

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF  
CARBON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
SPECIAL MEETING  
Thursday, November 8, 2007  
Hanna Recreation Center  
Hanna, Wyoming**

A special meeting of the Board of Carbon County Commissioners commenced Thursday, November 8, 2007 at the Hanna Recreation Center in Hanna, Wyoming to discuss ambulance response. Attending the meeting were Commissioners Terry Weickum and Jerry Paxton; County Attorney, Cindy DeLancey; and Deputy Clerk, Kathy Turner. Chairman Art Zeiger was absent.

Commissioner Weickum, Acting Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

**PURPOSE**

Commissioner Weickum stated there would be no public comments at this time, however, any comments could be mailed to the Carbon County Commissioners in Rawlins. He further stated each entity would have one spokesperson and the purpose of the meeting was to define short term and long term goals to provide an ambulance service in the eastern end of Carbon County. Commissioner Weickum asked the spokesperson from each entity to come forward and called for introductions.

**CURRENT SITUATION**

Gary Borah, Hanna/Elmo Fire and Emergency Medical Service (EMS); Todd Heward, Medicine Bow Volunteer Fire Department; William Sherwood, Elk Mountain Fire Department; Tyler Sims, McFadden Volunteer Fire Department; Keith Miles, Sinclair Fire Department; and Bill Dahlke, Saratoga EMS provided updates on their current situations.

Commissioner Weickum asked Patsy Carter, Chief Executive Officer of Memorial Hospital of Carbon County (MHCC) to provide an update regarding MHCC's present ambulance service operating in this portion of the county and what the hospital's current needs are. Ms. Carter stated the hospital has an emergency medical service (EMS) out of the hospital with ten full time emergency medical technicians (EMTs), both intermediate and basic and twelve EMTs working on a per diem basis. There are always two EMTs that respond from the emergency room and two EMTs on call. She stated that since the last part of May 2007, their service has responded to their normal call area plus the area that Hanna personnel previously covered.

**SHORT TERM GOALS**

Commissioner Weickum suggested forming a joint powers board (JPB), with members from the county, MHCC, Hanna, Medicine Bow and Elk Mountain to possibly establish a new ambulance service. He stated he does not know the legalities or answers on how this would work. Currently, there are highly trained individuals in Carbon County interested in working under such a structure. He further stated that if done right, with the county, towns, and MHCC involved, this could possibly be an entity eligible for grants to generate enough money to purchase equipment, maintain that equipment, and hire at least one full time employee to run an ambulance service.

Hanna, Medicine Bow, and Elk Mountain indicated they were in favor of a JPB, but discussed that certain areas would have to be looked at such as response time, staffing, and location. Rock Creek also expressed interest in the joint powers board. Ms. Carter from MHCC stated she thinks this is a reasonable goal to pursue.

Ms. Carter stated in the winter months there are fifteen to twenty ambulance runs from Hanna taking approximately three hours from Rawlins each run dependent on weather. She stated she would like a couple EMTs located in Hanna available from 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. every day. She stated MHCC currently has three ambulances, one of which could be located in or near Hanna for approximately six months and be set up for advanced life support. There are currently six individuals from Hanna being trained as EMTs. Their training will be complete in February 2008 after which those EMTs could work with MHCC EMTs during the six month period.

Ms. Carter advised they have contacted several ambulance services, but only one responded costing \$47,000 per month for 24/7 coverage. She stated it will cost MHCC

approximately \$100,000 for the six month period including staffing, but she hopes local municipalities can contribute funding. She stated the goal is to have trained people located in the eastern side of the county to respond to calls in that area. She advised Dr. Abels, MHCC Medical Director, could not attend tonight, but that he is willing to commit to the six month period with MHCC as the sponsoring hospital.

Commissioner Weickum advised State Representative George Bagby researched state statues referencing ambulance services and no one is specifically charged with running an ambulance service, but there is a legal and moral commitment to do so. He stated if the JPB were to establish an ambulance service, there would still be questions of where to locate it. Brian Hightree, County Fire/MHCC, stated each municipality has their own calls that they handle, but the majority of the ambulance calls are in the Elk Mountain area on the Interstate.

Commissioner Weickum asked if Elk Mountain has room for an ambulance and Mr. Sherwood replied that they could house the ambulance. Commissioner Weickum asked Medicine Bow if they could house an ambulance and Mr. Heward said they could but that it would be ideal if it were located in Elk Mountain. Commissioner Weickum asked Hanna if they could house an ambulance and Mr. Borah replied that they do have sufficient space, including kitchen and TV areas as well as space for cots if needed for staff.

Commissioner Weickum asked what the response time to Interstate 80 is from each location. Mr. Sherwood replied three miles from Elk Mountain, Mr. Heward replied thirty minutes from Medicine Bow, and Mr. Borah replied eleven miles from Hanna. Commissioner Weickum stated it would have to be MHCC's decision as to where to place the ambulance and staff. Ms. Carter stated that if the Hanna crew completes their EMT class and responds on the calls with MHCC staff, Hanna would be the logical place, however, she would have to discuss this with other MHCC staff before making a final decision.

### **RECESS**

Commissioner Weickum called a recess at 6:52 p.m. and reconvened at 7:12 p.m.

### **SHORT TERM GOALS (CONTINUED)**

Commissioner Weickum asked for a show of hands who supports basing an ambulance in Elk Mountain, basing one vehicle in Elmo and vehicles for use by EMTs to respond to call locations. The majority of the entities agreed with this approach. Commissioner Weickum asked for volunteers to be on a committee to investigate forming a JPB to establish a new ambulance service.

Bill Sherwood of Elk Mountain, Troy Maddox of Medicine Bow, Tracy Fowler and Mark Kostovny of Hanna, Mike Morris of the Carbon County Sheriff's Department, Brad McConnell of the Wyoming Highway Patrol, Ralph Brokaw of Rock Creek, and Patsy Carter of MHCC volunteered to serve on this committee with Ms. Carter as the lead. Commissioner Weickum stated he and County Attorney Cindy DeLancey will also sit on this committee.

### **LONG TERM GOALS**

Commissioner Weickum discussed the long term goals and stated State Representative Jeb Steward will work with the legislatures. Mr. Steward stated the idea of a JPB was a surprise and mirrors health care issues he has been working on. He stated he has proposed legislation as there is clearly a need for a system whereby the state can respond to local needs and assist with funding.

### **SUMMARY**

Commissioner Weickum summarized the short term goal is to have a committee form a JPB to decide how to establish an ambulance service and hire EMS personnel in the areas of need. Commissioner Weickum asked Ms. Carter to get an ambulance to the area as soon as possible for the six month period. Commissioner Weickum summarized the long term goal is to get the legislature to assist with funding.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Commissioner Weickum adjourned the meeting at 7:28 p.m.

-s- Gwynn G. Rothenberger, Carbon County Clerk

Approved this 4th day of December 2007.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
CARBON COUNTY, WYOMING

-s- Terry Weickum, Acting Chairman