

Regional Emergency Services Task Force

Meeting Minutes

3/5/2009

Manor Township Maintenance Building

I. Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Guthrie at 7:00 p.m.

II. Recognize Present Members and Visitors

Chairman Guthrie recognized members present and welcomed others and asked all to identify themselves.

III. Roll call

The following task force members were present:

Jay Breneman – Manor Twp.
Russell Guthrie – Manor Twp. – Citizen
Phil Lastowski – Millersville Boro Council
Robert Thompson – Millersville Boro. – Citizen
Jim Eshleman – Millersville Fire Co.
Don McCann – Millersville Fire Co. – Citizen
Carl Harnish – Highville Fire Co. – Citizen
Scott Haverstick – Washington Boro Fire Co. – Citizen
Mark Lauriello – West Lancaster Fire Co. – Citizen
Gregory G. Noll – Community-at-large – Citizen

Unable to attend:

Glenn Hess – Highville Fire Co.
Ron Goe – Washington Boro Fire Co.
Craig Hohman – West Lancaster Fire Co.

Others attending:

Ted Gingrich – West Lancaster Fire Co.
Chad Eshleman – Millersville Fire Co.
Dean Gantz – Mountville Fire Co.
Keith Eshleman – Millersville Fire Co.
John Broome – Washington Boro Fire Co.
Glenn Deatrack – Highville Fire Co.

Dick Schoch – Washington Boro Fire Co.
Les Eckman – Washington Boro

Review and approve 2/5/08 Meeting Minutes

Motion by Robert Thompson to approve the 2/5/08 minutes as presented.

Second by [after review of the meeting a question was raised about the Second, so the minutes will be re-presented for approval at the April Meeting].

IV. Sub-Committee Report – Tactical

Mark advised that the four chiefs will be working on Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG) with a target date for completion of July 1st. Ron Goe of the Tactical Committee will schedule, coordinate and lead the process.

Mark advised that three proposals have been received in response the RFP we sent out, with a price range of \$19,500 to over \$50,000. The proposal with the lowest price was submitted by Emergency Services Education and Consulting Group of York, PA. They are a subsidiary of Glatfelter Insurance which is a provider of insurance for Fire Companies. Mark said he reviewed all responses and felt they all met the requirements. He could find no reason not to go with the low bid and his recommendation would be that we approve Emergency Services Education and Consulting Group.

Jim Eshleman asked if he thought they could complete the project in the time frame. Mark said they committed to submitting the report by August, as did the other two vendors.

Scott Haverstick said that after his review of the three proposals he felt all would accomplish the objective, and there was not a lot of difference in what would be provided, and felt we should go with the low bid.

Phil asked why there was such a wide spread in the bids. Scott Haverstick said it may be related to the desire for the contract and the therefore the aggressiveness of the bid.

Jim Eshleman said two of them were by individuals who “went out on their own” to create a business, and the third was business that was developed locally as an offshoot of the insurance business that has grown.

Robert Thompson said he understood there has been some contact of Emergency Services Education and Consulting Group by the fire companies and asked why that contact ceased.

Keith Eshleman said that State Representative Scott Boyd had arranged the contact early on. He also noted that William Jenaway of Emergency Services Education and Consulting Group

is well connected politically, and that is why he was contacted, but at that point in time, three years ago, the fire companies just weren't ready for the services and the contact just ceased.

Phil Lastowski noted that not all the quotes were firm and suggested that we should in our acceptance of the winning bid note in our letter that the cost should not exceed the quote.

Don McCann said he like the fact that the Emergency Services Education and Consulting Group proposal provided specific examples of the format and content of their report, and indicated that they will follow a standard model in their study.

Robert Thompson said they will be focusing on the fire company self assessment form and asked if any of the companies have completed the form. Keith Eshleman indicated that he is familiar with the self assessment.

Russell Guthrie said he reviewed all three with the price obscured by his wife before he read them so he would not be influenced by the price, and liked the York proposal best.

Greg Noll said he is familiar with all the principals of the proposals. He said William Jenaway has a long history in the fire services and has done much at the state and national level with legislation related to fire service. Greg said across the board, for all three proposals, he can say nothing negative about any of the players, and felt that all would do a good job. So ultimately it comes down to price because he can not see a justification for overcoming the price differential.

Motion by Jim Eshleman that we accept the proposal by Emergency Services Education and Consulting Group of York to do the study for \$19,500.

Second by Mark Lauriello.

Discussion: Robert Thompson asked if we have the time, energy and commitment to take on this study with our current workload. We have had difficulty getting current financial information.

Robert also asked, do we have the availability and knowledge of the Borough and Township to complete the information on zoning and planning? Jay Breneman said he thought the Township did have the resources. Phil Lastowski also felt the Borough would have.

And Robert also asked if someone would take on the responsibility to coordinate and arrange the meetings. Russ Guthrie said he would do that.

Don McCann said he has some of the 2008 and 2009 projected information and in defense of the fire companies he indicated that it normally takes time to get yearend information together, especially considering that it is volunteers doing the work. Jim Eshleman said that this year

with the new legislative requirement for reporting to the municipalities that Millersville Fire Company has hired an outside firm, which was not easy, to do the annual audit and revise the accounting system, and this is taking extra time.

Jay Breneman asked if the Secretary could forward the 2008 financial information to Manor Township when received from the fire companies. Don McCann indicated that he would.

Russell indicated that if this is what is needed to get the process accomplished then so be it. He also indicated that getting the information together can be a real challenge for the companies.

Motion passed, with Robert Thompson voting “no.”

Carl Harnish asked if Robert was indicating disagreement with the choice of vendors. Robert indicated it was not the choice but rather that he felt we were not ready to do a study at this time.

Motion by Scott Haverstick that Russell Guthrie be designated to sign the contract with Emergency Services Education and Consulting Group of York to proceed with the study.

Second by Mark Lauriello.

Motion passed.

V. Sub-Committee Report -- Administrative

Robert Thompson reported that the Administrative Committee met on February 19th with 8 members present. We agree to re-evaluate the 2007 and the expected 2008 operating numbers, and 2009 operating projections, along with capital expenditure projections from the Tactical Committee for submission of a spreadsheet and a “talking points” presentation to Manor Township and Millersville Borough in August.

The Committee began discussion of bylaws by discussing how the station chiefs would be elected. After much discussion no conclusion was obtained, but it demonstrates the complexity of developing the governing documents that need to be developed. We have had a presentation of the Manheim Township model and the Warrior Run models, but so far not a presentation on a straight consolidation.

Motion by Robert Thompson that we have a presentation by an organization that has gone through a successful pure Consolidation.

Second by Phil Lastowski.

John Broome said that Columbia went through a consolidation of three companies and he offered to share a copy of the book documenting process.

Motion Passed.

Motion by Robert Thompson that the Administrative Subcommittee meetings on the 3rd Thursday of each month and Tactical Subcommittee meetings on the last Thursday of each month be advertised.

Second by Phil Lastowski.

Discussion: Scott Haverstick expressed concern that he has had information from several attorneys that the Sunshine Law is not applicable to subcommittees, and may not even be applicable to the Task Force as a whole. If we want to spend the money, so be it, but he feels in is unwarranted.

Phil Lastowski felt the Sunshine Law applies.

Jay Breneman said his understanding, and the opinion of the Townships solicitor is that it does not apply. Responding to a question, he said it would cost about \$120 to advertise the meetings.

Phil Lastowski said the Borough solicitor's opinion is that it does apply.

Motion passed. Voting "aye" Don McCann, Robert Thompson, Phil Lastowski, Carl Harnish, Mark Lauriello and Russ Guthrie. Voting "no" Jim Eshleman, Greg Noll, Jay Breneman and Scott Haverstick.

Motion by Robert Thompson that the task force officers, Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary, initiate a search for a legal advisor for the Emergency Services Task Force.

Second by Mark Lauriello.

Discussion: John Broome said Columbia's consolidation was handled by Nickolaus & Hohenadel.

Robert Thompson said a firm in Mechanicsburg handles fire company matters.

Scott Haverstick said he felt there are a number of firms in Lancaster that would be qualified.

Keith Eshleman said there is an attorney in York who exclusively handles fire company matters. Russell Guthrie asked Keith to provide the information to him.

Motion Passed.

V.1. Washington Boro Tanker

Mark said the Tactical Committee had not made a specific recommendation on the old tanker, and asked why it would not be sold.

Jay Breneman said that the tanker issue may come up in the study to be done, and if so hanging on to it would keep our options open.

John Broome clarified that the old tank does not need to be replaced, but does need repair. If the truck is totally refurbished it would be about \$125,000. At present the old tanker is out of service for some repairs, other than to the tank, and should be back in service next week, and will be retained until the study is completed.

Don McCann asked if it would cost anything to get quotes on repair.

Scott Haverstick asked if it conceivably be of use. John Broome said limited use, but with the understanding that it is 20 years old and has safety limitations, i.e., it is more prone to rollover.

Jim Eshleman said if repair estimates obtained we would have all the information for consideration.

Don McCann asked about the outstanding loan on the tanker. Dick Shock clarified that there is no loan on the old tanker.

Greg Noll said safety concerns are important, not just the economics.

Russell Guthrie concluded the discussion with the comment that the consensus is that we will wait for the completion of the study before taking action on the tanker.

VI. Discussion of the Warrior Run Co-Op Model

Russell has been in contact with the attorney, now a District Attorney, to determine the rationale for the co-op model. Russell said he understood it is an issue of structuring the organization considering liability, and that at present a Fire Authority is not possible in Pennsylvania.

Russell presented a slide of the co-op organization, and discussed their per capita funding. He is still awaiting clarification from the attorney on the co-op rationale.

VII. Breakup for Subcommittee meetings

It was agreed no need for subcommittee meetings tonight.

VIII. “Wrap Up” Comments Roundtable for the Good of the Order

Phil Lastowski said that he has been keeping the Borough Council advised of the Task Force activity, and he said it is a two way communication. He has received several questions from Council Members and will share them with the Task Force via email.

Jay Breneman said the Task Force effort will be a lead article in a newsletter from the Township to be published in April.

Mark asked if we are at the point in time that a new update should be delivered to the municipalities and fire companies.

Russell said he will work on producing a PowerPoint update for the Task Force in April for possible presentation in May.

IX. Adjournment

By unanimous consent Chairman Guthrie adjourned the meeting at 8:37 p.m.

X. Next Meeting

Time – 7:00 p.m.

Date – April 2, 2009

Place – Manor Township Maintenance Building

Route 999 and Supervisor Road

Minutes submitted by: Don McCann, Recording Secretary

The following notes from the Administrative Committee, by Robert Thompson, and Tactical Committee, by Mark Lauriello, which met later in March, are incorporated here for reference.

The Administrative Committee met 3/19/09.

Five members (Ted, Don, Glen, Phil and Bob) met at the Highville Station on Thursday 19th at 7 PM.

Finance

A computer glitch has prevented the West Lancaster Station from providing Don with 2008 financials and the 2009 projections. It was not immediately determined if the data loss is permanent. The group decided that Relief Association information in the same format would be helpful.

Constitution/Bylaws

Receipt of a copy of the merger documents of the three Columbia Companies was acknowledged and provides interesting reading.

At this point the Sub-Committee feels that it is only spinning its wheels. The RESTF must provide direction. With the 'devil being in the details" we must begin to chart a more definite path toward our goal. We need assistance and direction from a knowledgeable legal entity.

Toward that goal of setting a course an updated schedule of meetings and scheduled speakers is requested.

Mark Lauriello reported that the Tactical Committee did not meet on Thursday, March 26,

Mark noted the following are activities related to the Tactical Committee:

- Consultant study kicked-off by Russ on March 23rd;
- SOG Sub-committee meeting on Wednesday, March 25th to start the SOGs – this meeting is a GO.