



**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors
December 16, 2021**

The Regular Meeting of the Eagle County Health Service District occurred on December 16, 2021 at 8:00am; at 1055 Edwards Village Blvd., Edwards, Eagle County, Colorado, in accordance with the applicable statutes of the State of Colorado.

The following Directors were present and acting:

Attending In Person:

Jeff Babb
Dr. John "Chip" Woodland
Mark Bergman
Janet Bartnik
Dan Smith

Eagle County Health Service District Staff in Attendance In-Person:

Amy Gnojek, CEO/CFO
Jim Bradford, CEO/COO
Steve Vardaman, Operations Manager
Ryan Bush, Operations Specialist
Will Dunn, Clinical Manager
Michelle Gennett, Human Resources Manager
Dana Query, IT Systems Administrator
Veronica Ross, Finance Manager
Katie Coakley, Communications & Marketing Coordinator
Sarah Braucht, Office Coordinator

Eagle County Health Service District Staff in Attendance Virtually:

Hank Bevington, Paramedic Supervisor
Scott Homlar, Paramedic Supervisor
Dave DiFlumeri, Paramedic Supervisor
Brenda Hazard, Community Paramedic
John Farris, Community Paramedic
David Miller, Community Paramedic
Greg Sawyer, Paramedic
Amelia Van Dyke, Paramedic
Grant Middlebrook, Paramedic
Chris Marsh, Paramedic

CJ Castle, Paramedic
Keith Dudley, Paramedic
Jennifer Cooley Follett, Accounting Clerk

Public in Attendance Virtually:
Kathryn Winn of Collins, Cockrel & Cole

Call to Order The Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of Eagle County Health Service District was called to order by Director Babb on December 16, 2021 at 8:00am noting a quorum was present.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Ms. Bartnik made a motion to enter into Executive Session pursuant to Colorado Revised Statute §24-6-402(4)(c), Matters required to be kept confidential by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Mr. Smith seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. The Board entered into Executive Session at 8:01am.

The Board reconvened at 8:06am

Mr. Bergman made a motion to approve charitable write offs as recommended by staff. Mr. Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA:

A motion was made by Ms. Bartnik to approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. Smith seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

RESOLVED to approve the November 18, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes and November Monthly Expenditures.

BOARD BUSINESS ITEMS:

Board Succession Event -

Vail Symposium will be holding a Board Recruitment event the evening of Tuesday, January 11th at 6:00pm

Ms. Gnojek said staff has been working with the Vail Symposium and Valley Valley Partnership to set up an event for special district recruitment. Speakers include board members from various special districts around the county, including Ms. Bartnik to represent the District. The community is invited to participate in the panel discussion.

Spring Creek Village Property Tax Exemption -

Spring Creek Village sought support from ECPS regarding an additional property tax exemption for affordable housing/rental development. ECPS obliged as the exemption results in very nominal tax revenue impacts and increases availability of affordable housing in the valley.

Jerry Flynn reached out to Mr. Babb regarding this new housing development and the District has provided a letter of support for the project which will include 282 dwelling units. Ms.

Bartnik said that by state statute, Eagle County Housing Authority has the ability and has already authorized a 50% property tax exemption. This would request to raise that exemption to 75%. Mr. Smith is concerned that this will snowball to other projects asking for exemptions and he doesn't want to set up a precedent. The Town of Gypsum supports the project, but the developers will need to make a payment to the Gypsum Fire Department who does not support the tax exemption since they are struggling financially. Eagle County and the school district support the project. Mr. Bergman stated that the tax exemption is a small amount of money and doesn't provide much leverage. He also suggested asking for dedicated first responder units in the development.

Discussion on Changes to Meeting Dates/Times in 2022 -

Ms. Gnojek said that in light of the upcoming special district election, the morning Board meeting time might be prohibitive for those with jobs or children. Mr. Smith would like to stick with the same time of day. Mr. Bergman stated that any time of the day will impact someone and he doesn't know if changing the meeting time will impact board recruitment. Ms. Bartnik said the morning might be hard for the public to attend and weeknights are more accessible to the public. Mr. Babb thought that evening meetings tend to drag on. Mr. Woodland is not opposed to afternoon or later morning meetings, but he is not in favor of an evening meeting. Ms. Bartnik suggested trying out 3pm for the Board meeting in January to see how it works. Ms. Gnojek said that the third Thursday of the month is sometimes challenging to get the finance numbers together in time. Mr. Bradford stated that the county-wide public safety council meets on the first Thursday of every other month. Mr. Dunn said that moving the Board meeting to a different date or time will have a ripple effect on other long standing scheduled meetings. Ms. Gnojek said it wouldn't be a problem to adjust the financial reports and analysis to keep the meeting on the same date. The Board agreed to keep the Board meeting on the same third Thursday of the month, but move the time to 3:00pm.

CEO Search Update -

Ms. Gennett received the CEO recruitment brochure from the District's search firm, SGR. Staff is still reviewing it and she is hoping to post the job next week. There is no real set timeline for hiring a CEO and it all depends on the volume and quality of the applicants. Mr. Bradford commented that the first paragraph of the brochure reads strangely and asked if the second paragraph can be beefed up more with some "bragging" about the District. Mr. Dunn thought that the brochure was trying to promote Eagle County more than the District. Ms. Bartnik suggested arranging the brochure sections in the order of organization, community, then job description. Mr. Bradford acknowledged that housing might be a challenge in recruiting a candidate, so the District is still holding on to its rental unit just in case it's needed. Mr. Woodland noted that the brochure should convey the lifestyle of mountain living, both its pros and cons.

ACTION ITEMS:

EC Paramedics Fund Balance & Reserve Policy -

Eagle County Paramedics proposes a fund balance policy as recommended by the GFOA. GFOA guidelines and proposed policy included in the board packet materials.

Ms. Gnojek and Ms. Bartnik have been working on this policy for the past few months and how to better manage the District's financial reserves. They reviewed the Mountain Recreation reserve policy to get some ideas on how to improve the District's policy. This new reserve policy meets the needs of the organization better and allows flexibility for future allocations and assignments. Ms. Bartnik noted that this tells the story better of the reserve balance and she prefers a 25-30% operating reserve. Ms. Gnojek commented that this new format will make it easier to explain why the District has such a large reserve balance when applying for grants and it sets up the District for a future mill levy increase when needed. Mr. Woodland asked what GFOA stands for and it is the Government Finance Officers Association. Mr. Bergman would like more time to read and understand the proposed fund balance & reserve policy. The Board will approve it by email next week and ratify the decision at the January meeting.

Consideration of Changes to Counsel -

Collins, Cockrel, & Cole is dissolving and forming two firms: Collins Cole Flynn Winn & Ulmer, PLLC; and Cockrel Ela Glesne Greher & Ruhland, P.C. The District shall decide whether to retain one of these two firms or consider other firms.

Kathryn Winn of Collins, Cockrel & Cole explained that the firm is dissolving on December 31, 2021 and two new firms will be formed. Jim Collins has historically worked with the District. The District can pick either firm or choose to go with someone else. Ms. Winn stepped out of the meeting for discussion amongst staff and the Board. Ms. Gnojek and Mr. Babb have discussed the situation. The District has had a mixed experience in the past two years from Collins, Cockrel & Cole. The main concerns include billing for work and research that has been questionable and receiving advice that the District views as wishy-washy. The District can communicate these concerns and hopefully they will be fixed or go with another legal firm. Mr. Dunn said that the separation of Collins, Cockrel & Cole was very surprising and he thinks the split has not been measured or thoughtful. He thinks that the current lawyers may be afraid of litigation and going to court. Mr. Smith likes Bob Cole and the District owes them honesty on the District's concerns about the billing practices. Mr. Bergman feels the District should solicit proposals from other firms, but stay with Collins Cole et al on an interim basis. Other firms may offer an economy of scale working with other special districts. Ms. Bartnik would like to explore other options.

A motion was made by Mr. Bergman to contract with Collins Cole Flynn Winn & Ulmer, PLLC on an interim basis and to solicit proposals from other legal firms. Ms. Bartnik seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

RESOLVED to contract with Collins Cole Flynn Winn & Ulmer, PLLC on an interim basis and to solicit proposals from other legal firms.

UPDATES:

Executive/Operations Report –

Mr. Bradford stated that call volume for 2021 is down 15% compared to the last “normal” call year in 2019, however other agencies in the Central Mountain Regional Emergency Trauma Advisory Council are slightly up on calls comparatively. The change in the District’s call database might have affected the numbers that were pulled. Vail Health Hospital is developing the fifth floor above the District station quarters and there will be some impacts to the station area. The Eagle Valley Behavioral Health campus in Edwards was approved last week by the County Board of Commissioners. Mr. Bradford will be out of town this weekend, so he will miss the District’s holiday party on Friday evening.

Executive/Finance Report –

Ms. Gnojek discussed the financial and administrative highlights:

- The District received some nice offers to sponsor the employee holiday party noting that the Savvik Buying Group paid for nearly the entire party and the District’s retirement company, Highpoint/PCS, is paying for safe rides home after the party.
- There have been some challenges with the District’s medical billing company, EMS Management & Consultants, and the District is looking at pursuing other companies. The issues center around lack of customer service and account management.
- The District has a solid financial and year end projection with \$1.225 million in surplus, so no budget amendment will be needed. The surplus is from windfall one time payments to reimburse covid expenses.
- The District will need the Board’s approval to pre-purchase ambulances scheduled to be bought in 2022. Our ambulance supplier is raising their prices in January by 10-15% and the District will save \$20,000 by buying early. The District intends to buy one dedicated wildland ambulance and a second budgeted ambulance. Mr. Bergman made a motion to pre-purchase two ambulances in 2021 that were originally budgeted for 2022. Mr. Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

RESOLVED to pre-purchase two ambulances in 2021 that were originally budgeted for 2022.

- The AFG grant reopened for 2021 and the District has two weeks to reapply for funds to purchase a wildland pickup truck and gear. Ms. Gnojek thanked the team for pulling together information for this grant application at the last minute.
- Mr. Query is working on upgrading the District’s phone system.
- A team of employees were awarded the Call of the Year at the Public Safety Awards Ceremony recently.

BOARD STRATEGY DISCUSSION:

Strategic Planning -

The ECPS Leadership Team is focusing its efforts in 2022 on building a 3-5 year strategic plan and seeks the Board's involvement in identifying priorities and establishing goals and objectives as it pertains to the strategic planning process.

Mr. Babb asked the Board members if they have any items to prioritize for the strategic plan? Mr. Bradford wants the District to be a progressive emergency medical provider and to move more into preventative care. He is working on reframing the job description for the Community Paramedic Manager into a Community Health Manager to broaden the vision of the position. He also wants to look at more cost effective ways to deliver emergency medicine. Mr. Smith would like to focus on how to reach underserved populations and how to make emergency medicine more accessible and affordable. Mr. Bergman wants to see the District use our resources more wisely and look into partnering with other community organizations. Mr. Bradford noted that the District is uniquely positioned as a mobile business. As of the first of the year, home nursing will now only be serving the Eagle and Gypsum areas. Mr. Bradford is meeting with Will Cook at Vail Health to discuss funding for the community paramedic program. The new CEO position will hopefully be good for state and national lobbying for progressive emergency medical programs. Ms. Bartnik would like to see internal strategic goals for company culture. Mr. Woodland cautioned that there should be careful financial analysis for any new programs or equipment. Ms. Gnojek said the strategic planning process is important for the next CEO so that they have a foundation and understanding of the organization.

Adjournment –

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Woodland seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

RESOLVED to adjourn the Regular Meeting of December 16, 2021 at 10:06am.

Respectfully submitted,
Secretary for the Meeting
Sarah Braucht

Approved: Board of Directors




