

SPRING HILL FIRE RESCUE
Commission Meeting
July 23, 2003
7:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Hollander, Commissioner Panozzo, Commissioner Hamilton, Chief Morrison, Assistant Chief Davies, Attorney Salzman

Excused: Commissioner Martin, Commissioner Marasciullo, Dr. Blackburn

Call to Order

Chairman Hollander called the Commission Meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Invocation

Commissioner Panozzo gave the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Hollander led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Chairman Hollander asked if there were any questions regarding the Consent Agenda.

There were no questions.

Motion

Commissioner Panozzo made a Motion to accept the Consent Agenda.

Commissioner Hamilton seconded the Motion.

Commissioner Panozzo asked what was the \$2,500 purchase from the Extendo Bed Company?

Chief Morrison stated that it is a piece of equipment that mounts on the back of their command vehicle that has all the equipment attached to it.

Commissioner Hamilton stated that he was not present for the previous Workshop. Therefore, why do they need a new computer server?

Chief Morrison stated for many reasons, but for one, the Dispatch software is a speciality product

and was manufactured by a company called Cisco. This Vendor no longer wants to support their character base, therefore, they need to move to a Window server.

The Board further discussed the new server.

Commissioner Hamilton stated that he found out the specs for the new system are \$2,000 less than they were quoted.

Chief Morrison stated that the County State bid will come in under and is probably in line with that quote.

The Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

Medical Director's Report

Dr. Blackburn was not present to give a report.

Report of Counsel

There was nothing to report.

Chief's Report

A. Termination of part time dispatcher

Chief Morrison stated that Richard Mason, a part time dispatcher, has currently been employed in Pinellas County as a full time employee. He let the Department know he could not work part time for them. They asked for a letter, a meeting and the return of their equipment. They need to have him taken off the books.

Chairman Hollander stated that if terminated, he is concerned with unemployment insurance for this employee resigning.

Attorney Salzman stated that the employee was part time and abandoned his position, therefore, that should not be an issue. However, the Department should make a note in his file that he abandoned his position, because he has not contacted the Department.

Motion

Commissioner Panozzo made a Motion to accept Staff's recommendation for the termination of Richard Mason.

Commissioner Hamilton seconded the Motion.

The Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

Chief Morrison stated that they have tested for the Dispatch position and 64 applicants were tested and 44 passed. He will soon have an eligibility list for the Board for hiring purposes.

B. Medicare billing software.

Chief Morrison stated that at the last Workshop this issue was discussed extensively. It was nice to have Chairman Hollander meet with the prospective Vendor (Pinpoint) and go over some issues. This item is not something they have to rush and buy, but it is something that is long overdue. This new medical billing software will generate and allow them to recoup more funds for the District and give them greater accountability. The current system is very cumbersome and the Department is currently spending approximately \$300 in overtime per pay circle because of the way personnel has to operate this system. They also have a part time employee helping to keep up with the work load. The work is very labor intensive. They have been researching for months and it has come down to the two major Vendors in the nation and the Department recommended Pinpoint. The Vendor gave a quote, but after having a discussion with Chairman Hollander, the Vendor agreed to give them a seat, which would reduce the cost by \$6,500.

Chairman Hollander stated that he met with the Vendor and their Dunn and Bradstreet report was very solid. The company is owned by a larger corporation that they buy their cardiology equipment from. He checked on the company's status regarding HIPPA requirements and they are able to transmit data with the new format, which will be required by October 16, 2003. Medicare's web site has the company listed as able to transmit A-1, which is the latest protocol. The company is very well organized, as far as, their training capabilities, because all of their trainers are corporate employees and not independents. Originally there was supposed to be nine days of training and five days were going to be for administrative training, but they were able to knock that down to 2-days, by making some recommendations. He felt very comfortable after he met with the Vendor.

Chief Morrison stated that he was not ready to sign a purchase order, because there are still some questions he needs to ask the Vendor. However, he would like to move forward and get approval from the Board to spend up to \$28,000,00.

Commissioner Hamilton asked if they were buying three applications?

Chief Morrison said no.

Chairman Hollander stated that the company charges by the seat.

Commissioner Hamilton stated that in reviewing Pinpoint and the industry in general, it seems that a lot of the billing operations have a hard time getting paid by the insurance companies. However, it is not clear to him whether this company is operating as a Clearing House or just

providing the software. If the company is just going to provide them with the software, will they be using a Clearing House?

Chairman Hollander stated that most of the billing they do goes to Medicare, therefore, the company will be able to transmit directly to Medicare with no Clearing House, that will save them money. As far as, Blue Cross/Blue Shield and any other insurance companies, he understands that those insurance companies do not allow electronic billing they want it on paper.

Commissioner Hamilton stated that when they deal with third party payers who are not government related, they usually have their own forms.

Chairman Hollander stated that all companies accept one form, HIPPA 1500.

Chief Morrison stated that Pinpoint is a Vendor not a Clearing House, they are not using a Clearing House currently, because they are meeting their expectations on billing. He wants to get the new billing software up and running, then look into a Clearing House to see if it would benefit the District.

Chairman Hollander stated that the new ANSI format for Medicare allows data to be entered from any company.

The Board further discussed the new software.

Chief Morrison stated that their current software no longer meets their needs and will no longer be compliant.

Chairman Hollander asked if the current software they are using is ANSI compliant?

Chief Morrison stated that he believes it is, but he wasn't sure.

Chairman Hollander stated that he does not believe it is ANSI compliant and they have until October 16th, to get the new software implemented.

Chief Morrison stated that there is an additional charge, which is standard in the industry. When the Vendor sends a software trainer, the client pays for the travel and lodging.

Commissioner Hamilton stated that Chairman Hollander worked with the Chief on this issue to get some questions answered and he thinks that was a good process, however, he feels the information should be available to all the Board members.

Chairman Hollander stated that notes were taken from that meeting, which can be made available.

Motion

Commissioner Panozzo made a Motion to accept Staff's recommendation to write a purchase order to Pinpoint Technology for up to \$27,250.00.

Commissioner Hamilton seconded the Motion.

The Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

C. Policy committee report

Assistant Chief Davies handed the Board a copy of Section-4 of the policies.

Chief Morrison asked if they had any questions that pertained to Section-4?

Chairman Hollander stated that Section-3 of their policies will be modified by the new proposal of Section-4.

Chief Morrison stated that this was a hard Section to tackle, but it will answer their needs now and in the future.

Captain Rampino suggested that Section 4, page-1, **Lieutenants** and **Captains**, should be changed to read must be a certified FO1 instead of must have a current FO1 and he explained why.

Commissioner Hamilton asked if there is an issue with this, as far as, previously established standards and employees who may be eligible now?

Chief Morrison stated that issue was addressed on page-1, item 04.201, Promotional Requirements.

Commissioner Hamilton asked in a situation where someone was promoted, but did not meet the requirements, what would be the procedure?

Chief Morrison stated that if they were promoted and signed the contract stating they would be a Paramedic within 3-years, and did not comply with the contract, the quick answer would be, they would be demoted.

Commissioner Hamilton stated that they should have a plan for something like this.

Chief Morrison stated that they can have a plan, but there could be other factors involved. He explained what they could be.

Attorney Salzman stated that it will not be a violation, but something that would need to go

through the grievance process. At that point, the question can be answered as to why the person could not obtain the necessary certification. If the person cannot justify the reason then a demotion would be appropriate, based on policy.

The Board further discussed the policy.

Motion

Commissioner Panozzo made a Motion to accept Staff's recommendation.

Commissioner Hamilton seconded the Motion.

Commissioner Hamilton asked if they need to change FO 2 certification on page-2?

Attorney Salzman said no, because that is an additional award point.

Commissioner Panozzo asked how many years are they required to become a paramedic?

Attorney Salzman said 3-years.

Chief Morrison stated that this issue will only apply for the next testing circle and then it's done. They have to be a paramedic in order to sit for the test.

Commissioner Hamilton stated that the note is only effective for 1-year.

Chief Morrison said yes, and in April he will come to the Board and request to take The Note out of policy.

The Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

D. Dispatch Schedule

Chief Morrison stated that they have been working with the Union on a twelve-hour Dispatch schedule. They had a negotiation session and executive session. Attorney Salzman allowed him and Assistant Chief to discuss the issues with the Executive Board. They have come to an agreement with the twelve-hour shift and Attorney Salzman has reviewed it and gave his approval. However, they have not gone to the Bargaining table to open up the contract to change the language, but they have reached an agreement and he would like to move forward with the twelve-hour shift starting August 4th, 2003.

Attorney Salzman stated that since they are recommending implementing this prior to the language change in the contract, he would like a Union representative present.

Captain Rampino, President of Local 2794, stated that he would accept a Letter of Understanding.

Chief Morrison stated that means they do not have to open up a contract.

Motion

Commissioner Panozzo made a Motion to accept Staff's recommendation to add a twelve-hour shift and a Letter of Understanding to the Union that they are not going to open up the contract, but it will be changed at the next contract negotiation.

The Letter of Understanding will come to the Board.

Commissioner Hamilton seconded the Motion.

Captain Rampino stated that there is language in the contract stating they will negotiate this issue. Will this be a problem?

Attorney Salzman stated that with both parties signing off on a Memo of Understanding, he feels it would not be a problem.

Commissioner Hamilton asked what impact if any, will this have on staffing requirements in terms of people or overtime?

Chief Morrison stated it will reduce overtime, only impacting them in overtime slightly, but he is in discussions with the Attorney and the overtime is legally necessary. Overall it will be less in overtime. They will be increasing their Dispatch Center to (3) employees during their peak hours. This will provide better service to the people of Spring Hill. The twelve-hour shift seems to be the most popular one in the country.

Commissioner Hamilton stated that he was interested in what the dollar impact would be.

Chief Morrison stated that the dollar impact will be minimal. They are 40-hour employees, therefore, they will be working 44-hours one week and 36-hours another week.

Commissioner Hamilton stated that he has come across information that something is going on with the Federal Legislature regarding overtime.

Attorney Salzman stated that there is something being discussed, which is going to rid overtime, however, it has not past yet. The language for the Memorandum of Understanding is based on the requirements for overtime. He explained the requirements.

The Board further discussed overtime.

The Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

Chief Morrison stated that he will be on vacation Thursday and Friday, but he will be in town and available. The following Wednesday - Tuesday he will be in New England.

Unfinished Business

Nothing for Unfinished Business

New Business

Nothing for New business

Comments of Commission

Commissioner Panozzo stated that he read in the newspaper that the County is 1- million dollars short in their budget. Was there any word on how short they are for their new Communication Center?

Chief Morrison stated that they have not mentioned anything about that issue and as far as he knows, the EOC is still going forward.

Commissioner Panozzo stated for the record, he is very pleased with the job Chairman Hollander is doing.

Commissioner Hamilton stated that he was very encouraged in reading the Minutes with Chairman Hollander's insistence upon the urgency of putting together a 5-year plan. He was impressed with the beginnings of the justification for a fifth fire station.

Chairman Hollander stated that he was very pleased with the momentum the department has and he has no reason to believe that they will not continue getting the Department where it needs to be.

Open Forum

Chief Morrison stated that it is not in writing yet, but Health Insurance will come in under budget this year. Traditionally, the Chairman sits on the insurance committee, which comprises of the Chief, Assistant Chief, Union President, Union Vice President and a representative from the Board. He would like a short meeting with the Committee to discuss whether or not to shop for insurance this year.

Chairman Hollander stated that he does not have a problem with it, but maybe

Commissioner Hamilton might be better suited to be on the Committee.

Chief Morrison stated that he knows Commissioner Hamilton has a background in this field, but he is already on the policy committee and he did not want to overwhelm him.

Commissioner Hamilton stated that he was in the field of property and casualty and health insurance is a whole different industry.

Chief Morrison stated that maybe the committee would not have to meet, but he wanted to let the Board know, it is not in writing yet, but their health insurance with Blue Cross/Blue Shield will be less than 10% this year.

Attorney Salzman stated that in the past they always had the Union involved with this issue so they had an agreement. He feels it is very important for the Committee to meet and discuss this issue.

The Board further discussed insurance.

Commissioner Hamilton stated that he is more than willing to be on the insurance Committee.

Chief Morrison stated that he will try and set up a meeting with their insurance agent to discuss their options. Even though their insurance does not renew until October, he would like to resolve this issue now.

Motion

Commissioner Panozzo made a Motion to adjourn the meeting

Commissioner Hamilton seconded the Motion.

The Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

Adjourn

Chairman Hollander Adjourned the Commission Meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Jeff Hollander, Chairman

Joan E. Chiofalo