

SABINE COUNTY HOSPITAL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
MEETING MINUTES

October 23, 2017

The Sabine County Hospital District Board of Directors met for a Regular Meeting on October 23, 2017 at 5:30 PM in the Sabine County Hospital Board Room.

**Present**

**Phil Yocom, President**  
**Mark Pearson, Vice President**  
**Joe McNaughten, Secretary**  
**Earl Willis, Board Member**  
**Diane Powell, Contracted Employee**  
**Chloe Schafer, EMS Administrator**

**Others Present**

**Jacy Daugherty, Administrative Assistant**  
**Jerry Howell, Sabine County Hospital Administrator**  
**Cecil Tatum, Sabine County Reporter**  
**Austin Fruge, Sabine County EMS Employee**  
**Jacob Wagner, Sabine County EMS Employee**  
**Jonathan Legind, Sabine County EMS Employee**  
**Johnathan Bunton, Sabine County EMS Employee**  
**Anthony Long, Sabine County EMS Employee**  
**Montez McNaughten, Citizen**

- I. Mr. Yocom called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.
- II. Mr. McNaughten opened the meeting in prayer.
- III. Public Comments: Mr. Legind said that he had a letter stating that the employees of Sabine County EMS enjoyed having Ms. Powell as District Administrator, and if there were any way that she could rescind her resignation, the employees would fully support that. Mr. Yocom read the letter into the record and pointed out that 15 employees signed it. The letter stated, "We, the undersigned employees of Sabine County EMS, under the Sabine County Hospital District, fully endorse and formally request to the Hospital District Board of Directors, that Administrator Diane Powell retain her position and all current responsibilities associated therein." Mr. Yocom informed Mr. Legind that, according to policy, the board of directors does not address issues in public comments,

but he thanked Mr. Legind for his comments. Mr. Howell added that he concurred with the comments made by Mr. Legind on behalf of himself and Preferred Hospital Leasing.

- IV. Ms. Powell pointed out that there was a clerical issue in the September 25, 2017 regular meeting minutes, and it would be corrected in the final minutes. Ms. Powell stated there was also a clerical error in the financials from last month that she had corrected. Mr. Willis moved to accept the financials and invoices and the September 25, 2017 regular meeting minutes, September 19, 2017 Special Tax Meeting Minutes, and September 19, 2017 and October 4, 2017 Special Meeting Minutes. Mr. McNaughten seconded. Motion passed by raise of hands.
- V. Mr. Howell presented the Hospital Administrator's Report. Mr. Howell stated that activity has picked up versus the few months before. Mr. Howell said that, year to date, Sabine County Hospital is down 11% in inpatient days and 49% in swing bed days and emergency room visits are up 5%. Mr. Howell said that for the month of September, emergency room visits were up 24% compared to last September. Mr. Howell stated that total emergency room visits for September were 380 and that is the highest he has seen them since he came to Sabine County Hospital. Mr. Howell said that, year to date, admits from the emergency room are up 11%, outpatient visits are down 15%, and clinic visits are down 16%. Mr. Howell stated that Sabine County Hospital is making some changes to where providers will be working. He said on November 1 Chris Melcher is going to move from the Sabine Family Clinic to Toledo Bend. Mr. Howell stated that Sabine County Hospital hired an additional P.A. who will start on November 1 at Sabine Family Clinic. Mr. Howell stated that this would allow them to keep both clinics open every day. Mr. Yocom asked who the new hire was. Mr. Howell responded that his name is Mike Litwicki and he has been working in the Jasper area and has been a P.A. for several years. Mr. Howell stated the Flu vaccines were now available at the hospital. Mr. Howell stated that Sabine County Hospital would be having a Thanksgiving meal on November 21 and that Sabine County EMS is invited. Mr. Howell finished by saying that all areas of activity at the hospital has been very strong for the past couple of months. Mr. Pearson commented that he appreciates Mr. Howell taking initiative on the clinic issue. Mr. Pearson stated that he has personally experienced both clinics being closed when he was sick. Mr. Yocom asked if Mr. Howell had heard anything else on the resignation of Preferred Hospital Leasing's CFO. Mr. Howell responded that Preferred has hired someone to replace him. Mr. Pearson asked if Mr. Howell could pass word that he would like to meet the new CFO. Mr. Howell responded that he suspects the new CFO would be at the November board meeting. Mr. Willis moved to accept the Hospital Administrator's Report. Mr. Pearson seconded. Motion passed by raise of hands.
- VI. Ms. Schafer presented the EMS Administrator's Report. Ms. Schafer stated that Sabine County EMS had 145 calls for the month of September and 30 of those calls were refusals. Ms. Schafer stated that Sabine County EMS also did seven standby and assists for San Augustine County EMS. Ms. Schafer stated that total calls year to date are down 214 calls compared to September of last year. Ms. Schafer said that refusals, however, are about the same percentage as last year. Ms. Schafer said she expects call volume to rise as football season continues and hunting season begins. Ms. Schafer stated that response

time is 46 seconds higher than last year but Sabine County EMS has had some calls that were further out in the county this month. Ms. Schafer said that most of the calls are from the hospital and nursing homes. Mr. Yocom asked if San Augustine County EMS reciprocated for our standby and assists. Ms. Schafer responded that there is a mutual aid agreement in place but that Sabine County EMS never has to use San Augustine County EMS because they never take all ambulances out of the county at once. Ms. Powell pointed out that standbys at football games, fires, and for San Augustine County were included in the call volume reports, and this year, they are not. Ms. Powell stated that considering those closes the gap between last year's call volume and this year's. Ms. Schafer added that there were 108 911 calls, 2 emergency facility transfers, 14 non-emergent facility transfers, and 19 medical facility transfers. Ms. Powell stated that she and Ms. Schafer received updated pictures of Med 3. Mr. Pearson asked if they knew an estimated date for when Med 3 would be back at Sabine County EMS. Ms. Powell responded the end of November. Mr. Pearson asked if it would be possible for a few of the Sabine County EMS employees to come to each board meeting so that the board could get to know them better and recognize them for their good work. Ms. Schafer responded that of course they could as long as they are not on a call. Ms. Powell stated that December 2 is going to be the Sabine County EMS annual Christmas party. Ms. Powell stated that there were some extra funds left over from EMS Appreciation Day and asked if she could use those to add to the Christmas gifts this year. The Board of Directors responded that they had no problem with that. Mr. Willis moved to accept the EMS Administrator's report. Mr. Pearson seconded. Motion passed by raise of hands.

- VII. Mr. Willis stated that the discussion and possible action concerning the CT machine at Sabine County Hospital was not needed because Ms. Powell explained that the maintenance of the CT machines were part of Preferred Hospital Leasing's contract. No action taken.
- VIII. Ms. Powell explained what the Stryker Powerlift Stretcher Attachments were. Ms. Powell stated that there is a 50/50 grant out for these right now. Upon approval, the grant would pay for half of the cost of Powerlift Stretcher Attachments and Sabine County EMS would pay half of the cost. Ms. Powell stated that the total cost for two would be \$60,000 plus the maintenance contract. Ms. Powell stated that, at this time, Toughbook computers were needed more than Powerlift Stretchers. Mr. Pearson asked Ms. Powell to elaborate. Ms. Powell explained that Sabine County EMS uses tablets to do their reports but Toughbook computers would work better and be more efficient. Ms. Powell stated that four new Toughbook computers would cost roughly \$37,000-\$39,000. Ms. Powell added that AT&T offers Sabine County EMS a commercial discount and 0% financing. Ms. Powell said that she believes she has enough things that she can drop from AT&T to cover the cost of the Toughbook computers. Mr. Yocom asked Ms. Powell, Ms. Schafer, and the medics in the room what their recommendations were between Toughbook computers and Powerlift Stretchers, and they all agreed on Toughbook computers. Mr. Bunton added that Powerlift Stretchers would be a requirement on any new ambulances purchased in the future. Mr. Yocom asked if there were any grants available for Toughbook computers. Ms. Powell responded that there were not any that she could find but she would look more into it and bring a recommendation to the November board

meeting. Mr. Yocom asked if there was enough money in the budget for the Toughbook computers. Ms. Powell responded yes because the tablets were paid off and could be traded in. Mr. Yocom asked Ms. Powell if her recommendation was to take no action concerning the Stryker Powerlift Stretcher Attachments. Ms. Powell responded not at this time. Mr. Pearson said to apply for the Stryker grant to see if it is approved. Mr. Pearson said that if Sabine County EMS is approved for the grant, they could discuss getting both the Toughbook computers and the Powerlift Stretchers. Mr. Yocom agreed. Mr. Yocom told Ms. Powell to add Toughbook computers to the next agenda. No action taken.

- IX. Ms. Schafer went over the quote from Diesel Diagnostics. Ms. Schafer stated that to replace the exhaust system on the ambulances would cost \$2,966 each and take 3-4 days per ambulance. Ms. Schafer stated that to delete the DEF systems on the ambulances would cost \$1,700 each and take 1-2 days per ambulance. Ms. Schafer said that the DEF system is the cause of all of the problems with the ambulances and deleting it would also save on the cost of DEF. Mr. Yocom moved to delete the DEF systems in Sabine County EMS ambulances. Mr. Willis seconded. Motion passed by raise of hands.
- X. Ms. Powell stated that the board of directors never established a spending authority for Ms. Schafer as EMS Administrator. Mr. Yocom moved to establish a \$2,500 spending authority for the EMS Administrator. Mr. Willis seconded. Motion passed by raise of hands.
- XI. Mr. Yocom asked, in light of the comments made during the public comments portion of this meeting, what the board of directors would like to do concerning the District Administrator position. Mr. Willis moved to table this agenda item until the November board meeting. Mr. McNaughten seconded. Motion passed by raise of hands.
- XII. Ms. Powell said that the discussion concerning Sabine County EMS Employee Handbook was her agenda item and is no longer needed. No action taken.
- XIII. Ms. Powell stated that Sabine County EMS employee health benefits have gone up 35% since last year, which makes them almost unaffordable to the employees purchasing health benefits through Sabine County EMS. Ms. Powell stated that if Sabine County EMS did not offer health benefits, employees could get them on the exchange for a cheaper price. Ms. Powell stated that Sabine County EMS has fallen behind a little because surrounding EMS companies pay 100% of employee health benefits. Ms. Powell suggested taking benefits away and giving every full time employee a stipend to pay for health insurance. Ms. Powell suggested using any leftover funds for retirement. Mr. Willis asked how many full time employees there were and how many were on the insurance. Ms. Powell responded that there were 14 employees and only 4 on the insurance. Mr. Willis asked how many would get on the insurance if it were completely paid for. Ms. Powell responded that most employees already have insurance through other jobs or a spouse but, at most, there would be around seven who would get on Sabine County EMS's insurance. Ms. Powell suggested giving full time employees a stipend of \$400 a month and letting them find insurance on the open market. Mr. Yocom asked if the employees found an insurance plan for less than \$400, the rest would go into

a retirement plan. Ms. Powell stated there were several employees who talked to her about a retirement plan and that was something she needed to look into more. Mr. Yocom told Ms. Powell to ask for an extension on the current insurance through November because there will be enough information brought to the next meeting to make a decision. Mr. Willis asked if there was a cancellation clause for the current insurance. Ms. Powell said she would call and find out for sure and that she thinks she can get a 30-day extension. Mr. Yocom stated that his main concern at this time is making sure that the four employees that are currently on the insurance do not suffer from any changes made. No action taken.

XIV. Mr. Yocom went over each bid. Mr. Yocom moved to approve all sealed bids from Linebarger Goggan Blair & Sampson, LLP. Mr. Willis seconded. Motion passed by raise of hands.

XV. Ms. Powell stated that the December board meeting is on Christmas Day and needs rescheduling. Ms. Powell said the board meeting needed to be moved to December 18. Mr. Yocom moved to move the regular December board meeting to December 18. Mr. Willis seconded. Motion passed by raise of hands.

XVI. Board Member Comments:

Mr. Willis told the Sabine County EMS employees present to hang in there with the insurance and that they will be taken care of to the best of the Board of Directors' ability. Mr. Willis also thanked the Sabine County EMS employees present for attending this board meeting.


Mr. Pearson commended the Sabine County EMS employees for coming and expressing their feelings about Ms. Powell's presence at Sabine County EMS. Mr. Pearson added that the Sabine County EMS employees do a wonderful job in the community and that the Board of Directors are always there for them.

Mr. McNaughten: None

Mr. Yocom: None

XVII. Board meeting adjourned at 6:13 p.m.

  
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Phil Yocom  
President  
Sabine County Hospital District  
Board of Directors

  
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Joe McNaughten  
Secretary  
Sabine County Hospital District  
Board of Directors