

LYON COUNTY AUDITOR'S OFFICE
JULY 25, 2013

ROCK RAPIDS, IA

The Lyon County Board of Supervisors met with Lyon County Ambulance to discuss solutions to help out the ambulance squad. President Amy Borman opened the meeting and thanked the Board for coming to listen and talk with the squad to clear the air.

Borman explained that when she came to the Board just under a year ago she was seeking advice regarding ideas as how to help the squad function more smoothly. Borman states there was never the intention of her making the Board feel that the squad wasn't able to keep running, it was more a matter of filling schedule times. Borman asked the Board members what prompted them to look at outside services as the squad really had no idea the Board had any intentions of discontinuing the squad.

Supervisor Michael explained that the idea really started with the retirement of the past Emergency Management Director and the thoughts of possibly creating a director position combining E911, Emergency Management and the ambulance. As Michael pointed out, the mentioned boards decided that would not be in the best interest of all involved and so that idea faded. The idea started Michael thinking however and he began to view some concerns as to the direction the ambulance was headed. Michael stated he visited with the squad on May 20th about these very concerns and asked the squad their feelings about a service director. It was the consensus of the squad that if a director position would happen, the director should not be hired from within. Michael continued to explain that it is hard for the Board to find answers for the squad when the Board members are not part of the ambulance. Michael decided that the best way for him to learn about ambulance services was to call a business that specializes in the service. He contacted MedStar to simply do research about the business. The Board always had impression that using an outside service would never be financially feasible for the county. After talking with MedStar, Michael was surprised to learn that using an outside service could possibly be affordable for the county. However, Michael made it very clear to the group that the Board is in no hurry to make a decision regarding entering into a contract with MedStar or any other 3rd party for ambulance services. The Board relayed their job is to look years down the road to make sure Lyon County residents have an ambulance service.

Michael stated he would like to see the squad come up with ideas to up recruitment. Michael gave Borman praise for her quick action in getting things together for the fair to advertise the squad. Borman stated that the squad has ideas and wondered if they could be implemented without the Board of Supervisor's approval. The Board members agreed that they are not in the practice of micro-managing and if the ambulance budget has the money to implement their ideas they do not need the Board's approval. The goal is to have the squad come up with ideas that work for the squad members. Michael pointed out that the Board doesn't tell the Engineer how to fix bridges or the Attorney how to prosecute as that is what each of them is trained to do. It is no different with the ambulance.

There was discussion also regarding the new healthcare regulations that were to start as of 1-1-2014 with reference to offering health insurance to any

employee that works 30 or more hours per week and how it could impact the squad as it is a costly benefit for the county. There was also discussion about the possibility of working with the Lyon County Development Director and the local businesses to see if they could play a role in increasing squad numbers.

The squad thanked the Board for coming and answering questions and clearing the air regarding possibility of replacing the service. The squad now feels more part of the discussion and asked to be included in any further talks about using a third party service. The Board agreed to keep them informed and asked the squad to keep the Board updated as to new ideas they implement.