

FIRST RESPONSE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Meeting Date: May 27, 2025, 6 p.m., Trowsdale County Courthouse

Present: Amber Russell, Chris Gregory, David Nollner, Judy Kerr, Steve Whittaker, Linda Sue Bruce

Others Present: Sheriff Ray Russell, Fire Chief Mark Beeler, Gina Duncan, Lonnie Giese, Amy Thomas, Wayland Cothron, David Thomas, Ken Buckmaster

Chairman Amber Russell called the meeting to order.

Minutes of the April 28, 2025 meeting were reviewed. **Motion to approve by Nollner, second by Kerr. Motion approved.**

Motion to set agenda by Gregory, second by Nollner. Motion approved.

EMS Director Matt Batey was not present to give department report; run sheet was provided to committee.

Fire Chief Mark Beeler presented his report. Brush truck 12 is back in service, being tested currently. From Dec. 1-May 20, department had 59 total calls. Support 11 and Rescue 3 vehicles being kept outside currently because of lack of storage room. Per diem cost to county would be estimated \$12,900 as of meeting date. Volunteers have in-person training monthly plus three hours of online training (43 online hours completed thus far), online does not count toward county pay. Department expects to receive Enbridge grant funding within two weeks. About one-third of radios have been upgraded to date, plus some equipment added on Brush 12. Fire hall has been repainted and floors rewaxed, carpets cleaned inside. Pay resolution passed Finance Committee, to be heard at June commission.

Chairman Russell asked about metal building request. No update from architect. Framing lumber could be option if steel too costly.

Gregory asked if outside vehicles could be stored elsewhere. It is possible but could potentially slow response time, Beeler felt better to keep at fire hall.

Chairman Russell asked about Lowery report from state on fire-EMS merge. Nothing received to date.

Lonnie Giese presented Rescue Squad report. Department has responded to 23 calls (10 MVA, 10 EMS assist) since Dec. 1, \$2,460 per diem cost to date. Kerr asked who decides when Rescue responds to a call. Chief Deputy Cothron explained that dispatch takes calls, based on information given will page out fire. Rescue usually paged out if other departments request assistance. Beeler discussed E-dispatch system used by phone app. Giese said four Rescue members underwent swiftwater training and all passed. Level 1 compliance, hoping to get Level 2 next year. Narcan training also completed.

Chairman Russell asked about Rescue providing lift assists to EMS. Giese said question is better referred to EMS Director Batey. Rescue does not provide medical assistance and only helps EMT in limited role (driving, placing someone on cot, etc.).

Sheriff Ray Russell presented department report. Three deputies, one female corrections officer positions vacant at present. Finance Committee allowed for one vehicle purchase instead of three asked for. Chief Deputy Cothron presented call report - 17 MVA, 130 citations, 70 booked at jail over last 30 days. Equipment - dispatch has reported 12 portable radios as receiving poorly, mostly in Castalian Springs/Bethpage area. Hoping that new Gravel Hill tower will help when ready. Tower architect talked to

sheriff last week, expect 1-2 weeks from going to bid. County will fund tower, 911 will pay for equipping it. Training - 4 jailers completed in-service, deputies underwent recent firearms training. No maintenance needs at present.

Budget needs - sheriff requested 10 percent raise, offered to eliminate two deputy positions to help fund. Gregory provided brief update on budget hearings as member of that committee, no decisions made as of yet.

Chairman Russell asked about sally port discussions at justice center, mentioned in April. No discussions held yet.

Discussions held on prison impact on local departments, courts. Sheriff Russell said 50 prison cases expected to be heard on June 16, judges are getting backlogged. TCSD keeping eye on parking lot. Nollner asked if court cases could be heard at prison. Sheriff said some video arraignments had been done in past, but CoreCivic not cooperating. Gregory suggested making this a requirement in next contract. Sheriff said hard to get communication with prison wardens as they change so rapidly.

Gregory asked if justice center sally port would require bid or could be done by Public Works; probably will require bidding out, per sheriff.

Public comment: Gina Duncan with Hartsville Vidette said she observed a CoreCivic day in courts, recommended commissioners go and observe as well. Can take between 5-20 minutes to book an inmate, depending on cooperation. Sheriff mentioned prisoners serving life just don't care how they act.

Next meeting scheduled for Monday, June 23 at 6 p.m.

Motion to adjourn by Nollner, second by Gregory. Motion approved.

Minutes presented by Chris Gregory.