EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AUTHORITY - A Public Trust
Special Meeting of the Financial, Investment, Nomination and Personnel Committee held on April 23, 2014, at 12:00 p.m., via video conference
EMSA Corporate Offices
1111 Classen Drive, Oklahoma City, OK 74103
1417 N. Lansing Ave., Tulsa, OK 74106

MINUTES:

NOTICE AND AMENDED AGENDA for the Committee Meeting of the Financial Investment, Nomination and Personnel Committee of the Board of Trustees of the Emergency Medical Services Authority, a Public Trust, was posted April 22, 2014, in the offices of the City Clerk of Oklahoma City at 11:08 a.m., and with the City Clerk of the City of Tulsa on April 22, 2014, at 11:09 a.m.

The meeting was called to order at 12:14 p.m., by Mr. Joe Hodges.

TRUSTEES PRESENT

Mr. Larry McAtee
Mr. Larry Stevens
Mr. Joe Hodges
Mr. Mark Joslin
Mr. Phil Lakin

OTHERS PRESENT

Steve Williamson, EMSA
Kent Torrence, EMSA
Kelli Bruer, EMSA
Frank Gresh, EMSA
Tracy Johnson, EMSA
Sara Bovaird, EMSA
Mike Murphy, AMR
Lara O'Leary, AMR

Joe Hodges called the meeting to order at 12:14 p.m.

Mr. Williamson started off telling everyone that he attended a budget meeting with the Mayor, Chief of Staff, City Manager and their team. In the meeting they discussed avenues to increase revenue. Both the Council and the mayor's office will turn in the budget by May 1st – they are trying to find avenues to increase revenue for police and fire. Councilman Lakin had asked about making a line item for contributions by the utility users for specifics like police and fire. The Courts said that would not be legal.

So they then asked if they can receive some money from EMSA to help offset the cost for first response. Right now we have 106,000 taps in the Tulsa service area and we receive $3.64 a month.

Prior to RFP process for our contractor – we had said that we would raise the utility fee to $5.65 in fiscal year 2016. The City asked that we raise the amount on July 1st to give Tulsa Fire $1 Million dollars a year. First response to Tulsa Fire. The request is by July 1st to raise the utility amount to $5.45. In the budget we had $350,000 for fire already. We gave a million plus the $350,000, then we got it down to $600,000 plus the $350,000, and then we got it down to just $350,000.

Mr. Williamson asked for a discussion at the Regular Board Meeting that follows this one - that we have a motion at the Board Meeting for discussion and vote on whether to raise the Eastern Division only this year, effective July 1st from $3.364 to $5.45, and that amount will stay constant for the next five years, pending any other issue.

Mr. McAtee says that he believes this to be a terrible precedent to set. Mr. Lakin and Mr. Joslin agree.

Mr. Lakin said that you just can't put a fee on the bill – that would be in effect a tax. In this particular case, this allows people to opt out, but it does not have to go to a vote of the people to be actually put on the bill – we already have the charge in place. EMSA cannot be the heavy here – this is for fire only.

Mr. Hodges would like to know if this will be the cap of raising the rate for five years.

Mr. Williamson said no – but we would not change the rate unless something changes. We were going to change the rate to $4.80 in two years anyway. We have not changed the rate since its conception, which was 6 years ago in 2008.

Mr. Lakin said this puts EMSA in a secondary role because the increase is taking care of the needs of Fire – at least over the next two years. The City of Tulsa is receiving less and less and less revenue of the sale tax generation because of all the activities of the surrounding municipalities with respect to retail. That is just a fact and it's going to continue.

Mr. Joslin asks Mr. Williamson – what if in two years the City has financial constraints – would we have to increase the rate again?

Mr. Williamson said that was correct and that would get us through 2019. We are going to bring this up at the Board Meeting which is next.

Mr. Lakin added that someone is going to have to pay for this somehow – so you either have to cut fire fighters or cut police officers or cut park staff, etc.

Mr. McAtee admitted that he is very upset as a trustee to be faced with this at the 11th hour. Mr. Lakin completely understands.

Mr. Lakin said that this came about with the City of Tulsa just about a week ago – and Mr. Williamson was brought in just four days ago. This was really a new idea that the City had. I am really sorry that the City of Tulsa has put EMSA in this position. We need to let it be known that this increase is for Fire alone – not EMSA in anyway.

Mr. Williamson informed the Board that he was caught between a rock and a hard place – that is why he put this last minute on the Agenda – having to raise the fee from $3.64 to $5.45.

Mr. Hodges suggests that we move on to self-assessments – maybe have a sub-committee take a look at it and come up with some recommendations.

Mr. Williamson has access to some experts that could look at it and see what they see in these numbers. He will bring it back here to this committee next month.

Mr. Williamson now talks about excused absences. There is talk about them in the Trust Indenture and the Bylaws. It makes sense to combine these two together into one document. We just need to define “excused” and “unexcused” absences. I will ask legal about this and combine in one document.

This meeting was adjourned by Mr. Joe Hodges at 12:54 p.m.