

Santa Rosa County
Emergency Services Advisory Committee
April 26, 2006
2:23 p.m.
MINUTES

Members present:

Stephen Cozart
Don Vanderryt
Joe Diamond
Werner Panchenko
James Chalmers

Members absent:

Tony Simmons
John E. Reble

Staff present:

Brad Baker

Agenda approved as submitted for this meeting.

Minutes for meeting held on March 22, 2006 approved as submitted with exception of adjournment time. A correction to the adjournment time will be made.

S. Cozart informed the committee that J. Reble has resigned from the committee.

S. Cozart introduced present board members and explained that he is a civilian member with no fire experience.

Water Purveyor Meeting

Representatives from the water companies in attendance include Brian Lambert, Point Baker Water System, Ted Dotson. Pace Water System, Tony Mathis, Point Baker Water System, Rob with Midway Water System and Ray McDaniel with the Town of Jay.

B. Baker handed out the request for proposal for fire hydrant maintenance services for review by all present. S. Cozart explained that this would be for the maintenance of all fire hydrants within the county. He stated that the purpose of this meeting was to go through this RFP with the water purveyors in order to get their comments on the request for procurement. He stated that the proposal will be advertised on April 29, 2006. He also explained that the memorandum will include necessary legal language.

B. Baker stated that the Procurement Department requested that if anyone has knowledge of any qualified proposers that they be submitted to the Procurement Department.

Rob with Midway Water System questioned the painting. He stated that the Midway Water System does the fire hydrant maintenance.

J. Diamond stated that the City of Milton does their fire hydrant maintenance also. Consequently, S. Cozart stated that the City of Milton should not be included in this proposal. B. Baker stated the City of Milton does have water customers outside of the city limits. He will follow up with the City of Milton and Midway Water System.

Cozart stated the purpose is not to force anyone into this program. Water systems can opt out if they have a current system that addresses these state mandated requirements.

T. Mathis stated his concerns regarding the costs of the maintenance. S. Cozart responded to the question stating that at this time we have no feel for what the costs may be. He also stated that the contractor is required to perform the maintenance according to AWWA specifications. Some items are required annually and some are required every five (5) years. It is estimated to take approximately one year for the contractor to complete the hydrants within the county. B. Baker also stated that he does not know what the costs will be at this time. The proposal was instigated because the county was approached to help the water departments. B. Baker stated that the county would like to see the following results come out of this: that all fire hydrants fall under a documented maintenance program, that the location of all fire hydrants be recorded in the county records, and better and easy access to all fire hydrants. Baker further stated that the maintenance of fire hydrants is not a county responsibility; it is the responsibility of the water departments.

T. Dotson stated that some systems requested help with the cost of maintenance. He stated that the responsibility of fire hydrant maintenance is a nuisance to water services. He suggested that we look at prison labor to assist with this program. He also stated that this is a burden on the smaller companies. He indicated that their need is for monetary assistance. He further stated that he is willing to meet the county half way but will not do it all.

Cozart stated the problem with this is that state law puts fire hydrant maintenance responsibility on the water system. What this committee is trying to do is spread the cost out for all fire hydrant maintenance. The committee believes that with a proposal for all fire hydrants the cost would be reduced due to the total number of fire hydrants. The proposal will be based on cost per fire hydrant.

T. Dotson then questioned the number of fire hydrants in the proposal that represents the total number of fire hydrants in Santa Rosa County. B. Baker stated that the number of hydrants was provided by the county GIS Department. T. Dotson stated that they have 28 subdivisions in the Pace Community going in right now and that re-use was not being considered.

W. Panchenko questioned whether re-use is compatible with fire trucks? T. Dotson responded that they are compatible. He stated that they currently have 1.1 million flows available on a daily basis. He questioned whether fire trucks have backflow protection. Panchenko responded that they do not.

T. Dotson stated that foam is a major problem. He again stated that putting the fire hydrant maintenance on the water departments is a real problem and that maybe the water departments should take this to the state level for clarification. He stated that the water department's main concern is providing good, clean potable water to their customers.

W. Panchenko wondered about the loop system. T. Dotson responded that, yes, the Moors lack of pressure has an effect. He further stated that the Moors have no pressure. He also stated that each of the hydrants on the system can mess up potable water. He stated that the county cannot slap the entire burden on the utility.

T. Dotson stated that we do not have enough fire hydrants in the proposal; that we do not know the total number of fire hydrants that we have in the county. He stated that the cost estimates would not be valid based on the low number of fire hydrants we have stated within the proposal. He questioned if we were asking the county to assist with the cost associated with fire hydrant maintenance? He questioned if this proposal was for work or cost. B. Baker responded that the first step was to identify the approximate cost.

J. Diamond stated that the Midway Fire Department takes care of their district's fire hydrant maintenance. He stated that we need to look into getting prison labor to help as previously suggested.

B. Baker stated that we need to wait until we see what the costs will be and meet again to discuss the numbers.

J. Diamond stated we need to include options as the cost may be good for some, but not for others.

B. Baker stated that the committee is trying to dedicate fire fighters to address fires and emergencies.

T. Dotson reiterated that the flushing and opening of the valves is not the problem, that the utilities address these issues. The problems include locating the hydrants, clearing the property around the hydrants, painting the hydrants, etc. He stated that he receives reports from Pace Fire Department for water usage when they flush the fire hydrants. He stated that he appreciates the system log he receives from the fire department for the flushing that they perform. J. Diamond stated that the flushing is not the biggest problem; he stated the biggest problems are water flow, location and accessibility. S. Cozart stated an effort is under way to locate all fire hydrants and to generate a numbering system for hydrants throughout the county. B. Baker added that the GIS Department is including the hydrants in the county mapping system.

S. Cozart asked the Pace Water System if they are attempting to work along with the Pace Fire Department.

W. Panchenko stated that he was led to believe that a mandate was issued requiring a check valve. T. Dotson responded that the hydrant meters do have backflows.

S. Cozart questioned what the expectations were of the water purveyors; what assistance the fire departments can provide for the water purveyors and what the utilities actually need from the fire departments. T. Dotson requested that a method of completing back flows be provided.

W. Panchenko stated that the NAS Whiting Fire Department did a complete history on fire hydrants. He further stated that he felt that in the long run it would be cheaper for the utilities to hire the fire hydrant maintenance.

T. Dotson again stated that maintenance and the requirements was a burden on the water systems.

W. Panchenko stated other issues are fire flows and residuals. He stated that flushing is just one of the steps.

T. Dotson stated the water system does not have enough personnel to locate the fire hydrants. He also stated that determining the pressure is a big problem. T. Mathis questioned whether we are referring to fire hydrants or flush hydrants. W. Panchenko stated the contract would be to maintain both.

T. Mathis stated that his agency has located all 180 fire hydrants that they are responsible for. One hundred thirty (130) are flushing hydrants. The problem they have is manpower and the size of their lines. He stated that their lines range from 2" to 8", and only 500 feet have an eight (8") inch diameter. W. Panchenko stated that in some of the remote areas two inch (2") diameters are better than none at all.

J. Diamond stated that the proposal will be going out for quote on April 29 with a deadline to receive it back no later than May 31, 2006. The results of the request can be discussed at the June meeting. He requested that the water purveyors attend the June meeting in order to discuss the costs, the options, and prison work.

T. Dotson questioned whether prison workers could determine the fire flows, paint the flow, do they have the equipment and tools? He questioned if the proposal addressed this to the contractors?

J. Diamond responded yes, this is part of the proposal. B. Baker stated that we would address the issues after we get the cost. His concern is if the RFP contains everything that needs to be quoted. T. Mathis is concerned that a sufficient number of hydrants are listed in the proposal.

B. Baker stated that the cost will be based on a cost per hydrant and the cost will be determined for each district according to their district responsibility. R. McDaniel would like to know who will be responsible if a hydrant needs a stem repaired. B. Baker responded by stating the contractor will not be doing any repairs. The contractor is to notify the utility and the ECC, then place an orange "Out of Service" bag over the hydrant to alert the fire department. B. Baker stated that we may want to consider re-use.

T. Dotson questioned if they are only committed to hydrant maintenance.

Discussion ensued. S. Cozart then recommended that the response come back in mid-June in order that the organizations that respond will not have to wait for a response from this committee.

R. McDaniel indicated that they utilize prison labor to cut around fire hydrants within their district. S. Cozart stated that the proposal will include a painting system that would be county wide. R. McDaniel stated that he is on the Moore Creek Board and

will discuss this with that board.

Cozart stated that section A.1.a. of the proposal states that hydrant maintenance shall be performed in accordance with the American Water Works Association (AWWA) manual M-17, Chapter 5. He stated that A.1.b. of the proposal requires that the water purveyor shall be notified prior to the commencement of any flushing or testing procedures on hydrants owned by that system. He explained that in section A.1.f. that whenever hydrant maintenance is performed, the blue pavement reflector shall be checked to insure that it is in place and in good order.

If reflector is damaged or missing, a new reflector shall be installed.

B. Baker stated that the county has purchased these blue pavement reflectors and they will be provided to the contractor.

S. Cozart questioned whether the utilities currently place blue reflectors on the roadway and the representatives acknowledged that they do not.

B. Baker suggested that re-use water should be painted purple. He suggested that we add this to the RFP and the policy.

J. Diamond asked what type of maintenance records will be maintained.

S. Cozart explained that this is described in Chapter 5.

S. Cozart then moved that the proposal be extended to mid-June and that the water purveyors receive a copy of the records as described in D. of the RFP.

Motion approved unanimously.

B. Baker stated that the cap should be painted purple painting to indicate re-use water should be added to the proposal.

S. Cozart moved that the cap should be painted purple to indicate re-use water be added to the proposal.

Motion approved unanimously.

Diamond suggested that the committee write a letter to the Fire Association requesting that the Fire Departments report to the utility companies any large amounts of water that they use. This should be reported on a weekly or monthly basis. T. Dotson confirmed that the utilities must account for lost water.

S. Cozart questioned whether this letter should be addressed to the Association or the Chiefs. J. Diamond felt that it should be addressed to the Association, and then be forwarded to the chiefs.

B. Baker stated he would take this item to the Association meeting in May.

J. Diamond questioned whether the report be submitted on a weekly or monthly basis and recommended this report be submitted by e-mail to B. Baker, who would then make sure the utilities get it.

D. Vanderryt stated that he is concerned about the back flow. W. Panchenko stated that it is already mandated by the state. T. Dotson stated that this is a concern for the utility service. S. Cozart questioned whether the back flow needs to be a concern. T. Mathis said that it absolutely must be a concern.

S. Cozart stated that the utilities need to direct their concerns to B. Baker so that the committee can do what they can to help.

T. Dotson stated that the utilities concern is to protect the water system.

S. Cozart stated that the May meeting will be an important meeting and that all members need to attend if possible. Items to be discussed at the next meeting include where we stand as a committee with Chief Reble resigning, a new election, and what our goals will be.

Meeting adjourned at 3:45 PM.

Next meeting is Wednesday, May 24, 2006 at 2:00 PM