Jordan Valley EMS Authority Special Board Meeting Minutes
October 5, 2026 at 5:30pm
555 Maple St. East Jordan MI 49727

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance: 5:30pm
2. Invocation: Alex Busman
3. Roll Call: Brian Olszewski (Wilson Twp), Tim Timmer (Echo Twp), Joshua Chamberlain (South Arm Twp), Mark Penzien (City of East Jordan), Alex Busman (Banks Twp), Jim Rathbun (Jordan Twp). Staff: Joel Yonkman (EMS Director), Andrea Seese (Meeting Minutes Recorder) Heather Jackson (EMS Accountant) Ryanne Lucero (EMS Deputy Director) Guests: 3 (signed in) 6 total.
4. Approval of Agenda: With only one agenda item, Yonkman requested closed session with two staff members present during his review. Timmer made a motion to amend the agenda to reflect, Busman supported, there was some question as to Robert's Rules and if that was appropriate, discussion was had, there was some confusion as to if this was allowable, as a result Yonkman withdrew his request for a closed session and the meeting remained open. Busman made a motion to continue as an open session, supported by Rathbun, all members in favor. Motion Carried.
5. Public Comment: No public comment at this time. During the discussion regarding the agenda, a member of the audience suggested if there is only one item and there is a chance that it may be closed session that it potentially be marked/identified as such. It was also discussed that at the time of the meeting posting and agenda distribution it was unknown if it was to be a requested closed session.
6. Special Meeting Items
    a. Directors Review: The board asked Yonkman to discuss how he feels he has done as Director. Yonkman provided a handout with details regarding his view of his performance and proposed increase in salary. Information was later shared that was provided by a neighboring director of salaries for an EMS Director in this area at the request of a board member and Yonkman's current salary was on the lower end of that scale. The board then asked staff members present how they felt about Yonkman's role/leadership. Three different staff members spoke about how they viewed Yonkman as a director, they indicated they "felt heard" when talking to him, that their concerns were addressed, mentioning the fact that he is willing to come in and get on a truck to cover vacancies and that he is trying to turn around a situation that he was handed and didn't create. Each board member had an opportunity to provide input/feedback as well. The following is a summary of those comments as several board

members indicated or echoed the same things. There were areas that were identified as needing improvement such as communication to the board, turn around times when the board asks for something, and asking for permission/approval for purchases. A board member mentioned grants, stating there should always be a discussion between the board and director before applying for any kind of grant and how he is embarrassed to have other entities look at our finances, the comment was made "we won't get it". It was stated Yonkman should be working to get crews an increase in wages before his own, paying back our partners, paying our accountant, and getting the raise to our supervisors. There were also inquiries regarding office hours and availability. There was additional discussion regarding trust and timing, there have been some initiatives brought to the table and unfortunately, they have not been as successful as the board would like to see or would expect to see at this point, as well as some board members feeling they were not being honest with in conversation related to specific items. Some positive aspects were identified as well, things such as bringing on staff, the morale of staff, the positive comments from the community regarding our staff members, improving equipment, transport capability/availability, working with neighboring agencies, acquiring Boyne Valley (which one board member attributed to it being the "right time" when it was stated past directors didn't want to or couldn't absorb another coverage area and this was attributed to the deteriorating relationship between Boyne Valley and Boyne City rather than Yonkman's efforts), as well as the increase in expected payments/revenue received. Some board members relayed they want to see Yonkman be successful, they encouraged him to use the experience and expertise of the board moving forward. The board stated repeatedly that they didn't want to micromanage, but some questioned the decisions made by Yonkman and feel they should be more informed/involved. Yonkman acknowledges he can do better, he asked for feedback as well as parameters to purchases, including an amount allowed to spend without seeking approval from board, it was stated by one board member that under $1000.00 would be appropriate, the others did not object, this was noted by Yonkman and in the future will be standard. It was also identified through conversation the fact we don't make as much as our neighbors from the millage, we need to be resourceful and work together. The need for checks and balances was addressed, inquires into FOIA requests and their status, participating as a tactical medical unit if needed was discussed with many questions from a board member. After all board members had a chance to share their input Timmer made a motion that

the board revisit in 120 days, to reevaluate Yonkman's performance, indicating this would give sufficient time for Yonkman to focus on those specific areas addressed as needing improvement from the board as well as provide a better picture as to the financial stability of the Authority. Busman supported, Olszewski, Timmer, Penzien, Busman and Ruthbun voted yes, Chamberlain did not, Motion Carried 5-1.

7. Public Comment: No public comment at this time.
8. Authority Board Member Comments: Olszewski thanked everyone for the good discussion. Timmer felt he said enough during the review. Chamberlain was bothered by changed agenda at the last meeting, saying they should have been provided with an update prior to the meeting, he also requested the Echo Unit be added to the next agenda. Busman discussed how his township distributes the agenda and the timeline of getting topics to be added, suggested using an outlook calendar notification to ensure timelines are met. Penzien stated it would be nice to review the full agenda ahead of the meeting. Rathbun appreciates what Yonkman has been doing, reiterating this was something inherited and he knows Yonkman has put in a lot of hours making sure things are covered.
9. Meeting adjourned by Penzien at 7:28pm.

Presented By: Andrea Seese

Board Secretary: Jim Rathbun