



WASHOE COUNTY

Integrity Communication Service

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STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: *June 10, 2025*

DATE: May 19, 2025

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Dave Solaro, Assistant County Manager
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THROUGH: Eric Brown, County Manager

SUBJECT: Recommendation to approve a Contractor Agreement between Washoe County, a political subdivision of the State of Nevada, and Royal Ambulance, Inc. a California corporation authorized to do business in the State of Nevada to provide emergency medical services for a two and a half year term to the Gerlach area of Washoe County effective July 1, 2025 and ending December 31, 2027 with an option for a two year extension. [annual cost \$603,000.00]. (Commission District 5).

SUMMARY

The staff is requesting that the Board of County Commissioners approve the recommendation to enter into a Contractor Agreement between Washoe County and Royal Ambulance, Inc. to provide emergency medical services to the Gerlach area for a term beginning July 1, 2025, and ending December 31, 2027, with an option for a two-year extension. This agreement is intended to address the critical need for emergency medical services in the Gerlach area, ensuring consistent and professional care for residents and visitors in this remote region. The proposed annual cost of \$603,000.00 reflects the comprehensive scope of services outlined in the agreement, including staffing, equipment, and operational support.

The Gerlach area has historically faced challenges in maintaining adequate emergency medical services due to its geographic isolation and limited local resources. This agreement with Royal Ambulance, Inc., a California corporation authorized to operate in Nevada, represents a strategic solution to enhance service delivery and improve response times. The contractor has demonstrated the necessary qualifications, experience, and readiness to fulfill the requirements outlined in the agreement, ensuring compliance with industry standards and regulatory obligations.

This initiative aligns with the FY24-Washoe County- Strategic Plan by prioritizing the health and safety of residents in underserved areas. The agreement also supports fiscal sustainability by providing a predictable cost structure and leveraging the expertise of an external contractor to deliver specialized services efficiently.

AGENDA ITEM # _____

The annual cost of \$603,000.00 has been carefully evaluated to ensure it represents fair market value for the services provided, including provisions for inflation adjustments. The agreement includes mechanisms for performance monitoring and reporting, ensuring accountability and transparency in service delivery. Additionally, the option for a two-year extension provides flexibility to adapt to future needs while maintaining continuity of care for the Gerlach community.

PREVIOUS ACTION

On July 12, 2022, the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners approved an interlocal agreement with the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe to provide emergency response services to the Gerlach area. This agreement, effective upon approval by the Pyramid Lake Tribal Council, established a five-year initial term with provisions for two-year extensions upon mutual agreement. The agreement included the use of Washoe County facilities and equipment in Gerlach to support the Tribe's operations.

On April 12, 2022, the Board approved a cooperative agreement with the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe for similar emergency response services in Gerlach. This agreement also featured a five-year term with two-year extensions and outlined the responsibilities of both parties, including staffing, equipment usage, and operational costs.

On September 18, 2018, the Board of Fire Commissioners reviewed a staff presentation regarding the potential adjustment of Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District boundaries to include Gerlach. This discussion was part of broader efforts to address emergency response needs in the region.

BACKGROUND

Historical Summary

The provision of emergency medical services (EMS) in the Gerlach area of Washoe County has undergone significant evolution to address the unique challenges of this remote region. Historically, EMS in Gerlach has been provided through a combination of volunteer efforts and interagency agreements. The Gerlach Volunteer Fire Department, a domestic nonprofit corporation, has played a central role in delivering basic emergency response services, previously supported by intermittent hourly staff and two Fire Protection Officers employed by Washoe County. However, this model faced persistent challenges, including difficulties in recruiting and retaining qualified personnel, limited resources, and the demand for EMS coverage in this geographically isolated area.

For the past three years, Washoe County has implemented alternative solutions to enhance EMS delivery in Gerlach. Notably, the County entered into a cooperative agreement with the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe in 2022, leveraging the Tribe's capacity to provide 24/7 emergency response services, including paramedic-level care and ambulance transport. This agreement aimed to address staffing shortages and improve service levels by integrating tribal resources with County-owned facilities and equipment. Despite these efforts, the need for a sustainable, long-term EMS solution remained a priority for the County. The Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe notified Washoe County in early 2025 that they will no longer be able to provide the services for the community of Gerlach.

The current proposal to engage Royal Ambulance, Inc., represents a continuation of Washoe County's commitment to ensuring high-quality EMS for the Gerlach community. Royal Ambulance, a California-based corporation authorized to operate in Nevada, has

been identified as a qualified contractor capable of meeting the region's EMS needs. The proposed agreement outlines a two-and-a-half-year term, with an annual cost of \$603,000, and includes an option for a two-year extension.

At a public meeting held in the community during the month of March a discussion with the community provided an understanding that the most important service provision for the majority of the community was to have 24 hour per day 7 day a week paramedic services. In fairness to the community there were three choices provided based on the available funding from the general fund and only two services can be afforded, fire service, and/or, paramedic services, and/or 24 hours a day 7 days a week, but not all three.

The services for emergency medical do not contemplate response for fire emergencies and Washoe County staff are committed to continuing discussions with the Gerlach Volunteer Fire Department to build that organizational capacity to work with Royal Ambulance. Washoe County has various agreements for assistance from neighboring jurisdictions; however, as Gerlach is remote in nature the speed of response can be problematic.

Legal and Regulatory References

The provision of EMS in Gerlach is governed by several legal and regulatory frameworks. Under Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 277.180, public agencies are authorized to enter into interlocal agreements to perform governmental services, including emergency response. This statute has been instrumental in facilitating past agreements, such as the cooperative arrangement with the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe. Similarly, the County's exclusive franchise agreement with the Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority (REMSA) excludes the Gerlach area, allowing for alternative EMS providers to operate in this jurisdiction.

The proposed agreement with Royal Ambulance aligns with these legal provisions, ensuring compliance with state and local regulations. The contract includes specific clauses addressing liability, insurance, and performance standards, as required under Nevada law. Additionally, the agreement incorporates federal compliance measures, such as adherence to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and anti-kickback statutes, to safeguard the integrity of EMS operations.

FISCAL IMPACT

The proposed contractor agreement between Washoe County and Royal Ambulance, Inc. for the provision of emergency medical services in the Gerlach area will have a significant fiscal impact on the County's budget. The annual cost of the agreement is set at \$603,000 for the first year, with subsequent years subject to an annual adjustment based on the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) or a 3% increase, whichever is greater. This adjustment ensures that the contractor's compensation aligns with inflationary trends and operational cost increases.

The funding for this agreement has been identified in the County's general fund in Fiscal Year 2026 within County Manager (101-0), Gerlach (187530). As outlined in the agreement the County will make equal monthly payments to Royal Ambulance, Inc., ensuring consistent cash flow for the contractor while maintaining predictable expenditure patterns for the County. Additionally, the agreement specifies that the

contractor will provide monthly call statistics, enabling the County to monitor service delivery and ensure accountability for the allocated funds.

Beyond the direct compensation to Royal Ambulance, Inc., the County will also incur ancillary costs associated with the provision of facilities and operational support. These include the use of County-owned living quarters and the fire station in Gerlach, as well as the payment of utilities, internet, and phone services for these properties. The County will also cover fuel and maintenance costs for the apparatus provided under the agreement. These additional expenditures are necessary to support the contractor's operations and ensure the effective delivery of emergency medical services in the region.

The agreement includes provisions for financial oversight and accountability. Royal Ambulance, Inc. is required to maintain comprehensive records of its operations and financial transactions, which will be subject to inspection and audit by the County. This ensures transparency and compliance with applicable regulations, safeguarding the County's financial interests. Furthermore, the agreement allows for termination in cases of non-appropriation of funds, providing the County with a safeguard against unforeseen budgetary constraints.

The financial implications of this agreement are substantial but necessary to ensure the provision of reliable emergency medical services in the Gerlach area. The structured payment terms, cost adjustments, and accountability measures embedded in the agreement reflect a balanced approach to managing fiscal responsibilities while meeting the community's critical needs.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Board of County Commissioners approve the Contractor Agreement between Washoe County, a political subdivision of the State of Nevada, and Royal Ambulance, Inc., a California corporation authorized to do business in the State of Nevada, to provide emergency medical services for a two-and-a-half-year term to the Gerlach area of Washoe County, effective July 1, 2025, and ending December 31, 2027, with an option for a two-year extension, at an annual cost of \$603,000.00."

POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Board agree with the staff's recommendation, a possible motion would be: "Move to approve the Contractor Agreement between Washoe County, a political subdivision of the State of Nevada, and Royal Ambulance, Inc., a California corporation authorized to do business in the State of Nevada, to provide emergency medical services for a two-and-a-half-year term to the Gerlach area of Washoe County, effective July 1, 2025, and ending December 31, 2027, with an option for a two-year extension, at an annual cost of \$603,000.00."