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News Release

Commissioners Approve EMS Agreement

February 20, 2015, Monroe, NC – The Union County Board of Commissioners on Monday approved an amendment to the Emergency Medical Services Agreement between Union County and Carolinas Union Healthcare, Inc. that will extend medical services provided by Union-EMS until June 30, 2017.

Union-EMS has provided emergency medical services to Union County since 1997. Prior to 1997, Union County operated Emergency Medical Services as a department of county government. In April of 1997, the county outsourced these services by entering into an agreement with Carolinas Union Healthcare, Inc.

Following many extensions of the original agreement and after reaching a decision to enter into a long-term agreement with CUH in order to provide program stability, On Sept. 29, 2014, the Board of Commissioners established a Working Group of fire chiefs, EMS personnel, county staff, CUH staff and community members to evaluate data, response plans, cost, and reporting procedures associated with emergency medical services. Because the original agreement was scheduled to expire on Oct. 31, it became necessary for the parties to negotiate a new agreement prior to the end of October.

Adopted on October 20, 2014, the new agreement provides for a three-year term with either party having the right to terminate on one year's written notice. It further provides for the parties to resolve the EMS budget through the annual budgetary process and for performance standards to be determined annually based on the amount of funding available. At the time of its adoption, it was anticipated that the new agreement would be amended to reflect the performance standards reached by consensus of the Working Group.

On No. 17, 2014, the chair of the Working Group reported the group's findings to the Board of Commissioners. The result of the committee's work provided a model that was neighborhood - based Advanced Life Support service and provided consistent service levels throughout the entire county. The Board directed staff to negotiate the amendment to the base contract to reflect the committee's recommendations on the necessary metrics.

Union County's Emergency Services Director and Union EMS representatives will meet quarterly to review performance reports and discuss how to continually improve EMS service.