

# AMBULANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD AT WILTON AMBULANCE & EMS SERVICE BUILDING

April 3, 2019 at 4:00 PM

ATTENDEES: Aaron Patt, Greenfield Town Administrator; Rick McQuade, Greenfield Fire Chief; Steve Desrosiers, Ambulance Chief; Kellie-Sue Boissonnault, Wilton Selectwoman; Deb Harling, Wilton Finance Officer; Paul Branscombe, Wilton Town Administrator; Ken Caisse, Temple Selectman; Russ Boland, Lyndeborough Town Administrator

## NOMINATIONS OF OFFICERS:

Paul nominated Russ for Chair, Ken seconded. All were in favor; motion passed.

Paul nominated Ken for Vice Chair, Deb seconded. All were in favor; motion passed.

Paul nominated Aaron for Secretary, Kellie-Sue seconded. All were in favor; motion passed.

## AMBULANCE REVOLVING FUND

Deb passed out the budget with expenditures through the end of the first quarter. The end of year (2018) revolving fund balance is \$103,057. Russ asked if it was an unassigned fund balance; Deb said the auditors had told her that you cannot assign a revolving fund balance. She distributed the Revenue Report through the end of first quarter; checks received from the towns will be showing in April.

Steve addressed some line items that were high. One is heating fuel; they had a problem with the furnace and found that they were burning fuel at a higher rate than normal, and the resulting repairs caused that line to be increased as well. The other big expenditure is for the dumpster; this is billed annually.

Russ asked who we use for fuel and what we pay per gallon. Russ's rate seems to be really good; we'll check and make sure that the Town of Wilton's rate is just as good.

Aaron asked about the Association, and Deb explained that the Association owns this building, and had set up many things previously as they had been the ones paying the bills. Aaron and Russ spoke about regionalization and getting the best prices for heating fuels. Greenfield does not put their fuel out to bid as they didn't want to pre-buy. We can look at that further this year. Aaron said that Automatic Delivery is very important to them. Russ asked if Wilton Ambulance was in with the Town's bidding process; Steve said "we're getting there". Aaron suggested that we didn't need to take up Steve's time with this; but we will work as towns together to get the best prices.

## FIRST QUARTER REPORT

Steve gave a detailed report including a breakdown of services by town. Rick said Greenfield was down in calls; Steve said Lyndeborough is also down but Temple is up.

## USAGE BILLING, BUDGETS AND STAFFING

Russ asked how we were going to do this going forward; did we agree on how usage billing would work and when we would switch to that? Paul said we'd do this after the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter and Steve explained that the billing going forward into 2020 would be based on actual calls. Aaron said that would be hard; there would be no consistency to the budget numbers. Russ said you could do it by potential or actual. Steve said you could use a 3-year average. Ken said its always been done by population. Steve said that was a discussion between the Select Boards; it makes no difference to him. Aaron said that the rest of the Committee should discuss this; and asked for it to be an agenda item for the next meeting.

Steve said that when the budget was created staffing was for 3 people during the day. Now they are staffing 4 people during the day. He stated we have not missed a single A-2 call; 80% of simultaneous calls happen



between the hours of 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. Steve doesn't feel he can stretch the budget further to staff more on nights and weekends, but he feels confident in where he is now. He said that MACC Base is supposed to tone twice at night; one night they toned out 9 times. Steve feels that any conversation with Jason Johnson at this point goes in one ear and out the other. Rick asked how the response was for the tones; Steve said A-2 has been staffed 78% of the time after 6pm and on weekends. He does have some new people coming on board who live in town so it could go up to 80% but he feels that might be the best that happens. He does require them to come in on an A-2 call, as the Rapid Response Vehicle is already out. The only way to change that would be to change the staffing model, and at this point, the cost of that is not realistic.

Aaron said his staffing is based on per-diem staffing, and if he changed the model too much, it would be a fine line between part-time employee vs. per-diem in a DOL audit. He knows Steve's challenge is that the more he tries to get people in, the more they start to look like part time employees. He noted that Paramedics are paid hourly for hours worked. EMTs are paid for every hour worked M-F daytime hours; after hours they are paid an on-call rate. Steve said most employees – he has a core group of about 8 that work the majority of his hours – may end up with over 100 hours. Russ noted that it's like the muddy roads: there are expectations and there is a budget. One is usually higher than the other. Aaron said that there is a difference in impact and magnitude. With Steve's situation he has to manage 161 calls a quarter without a schedule and with keeping it legal. Aaron asked if there had been any DOL training; the staff needs to be aware of the requirements. Aaron said that you cannot *not* pay someone; its not only a policy issue, it's a legal issue.

Steve said that he's been asked why he has so many people in his per diem pool – this is why. He can't have them work so many hours. Aaron asked if Ambulance had their own SOP; Paul said they do fall under the Town's Personnel Policy Manual, but they also have their own definition of Part Time and Per Diem. Steve went to the Ambulance Manual and for those definitions.

Aaron asked if Steve needed more staff, and if it fit in the budget. Steve answered Yes and No. Russ asked what we need to do to give the people what they want. Steve asked if they were willing to drop 25% of the second calls rather than increase the budget. Aaron said it looks like we're going to need another ambulance and we've just gotten into the second quarter. Russ said that it can't happen this year; the budget is set.

Steve said he had a 5-year plan which did not include Greenfield, but did include another ambulance; however, it would have to include another building as there is no room for another ambulance here. Russ said that somewhere along the line the Board of Selectmen and the Public need to come up with a plan: What do you want? What level of service do you need? Aaron said that Wilton is doing a tremendous job in Greenfield; everything you can possibly want, the public is experiencing when the Wilton Ambulance and EMS arrive. He wants to see what we can do this year with the money that is there.

Paul said the budgets are fixed for 2019; much of the discussion will be in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter. Russ said in order to be successful, we need to discuss it much further out than that. Aaron said that Volunteers are a vanishing breed of person; every town has resources they may need to start tapping into.

Steve said he is looking for direction from this Committee; **Aaron made a motion that we have another administrative meeting, perhaps administrators and select board members. Paul seconded. All were in favor; motion passed.**

#### VEHICLE REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE

Steve said that the Rapid Response Vehicle was purchased used with almost 100,000 miles on it. Unfortunately, this vehicle has cost him a lot of money lately. Continued use of the vehicle won't make that any better, and he feels he needs to move up the time frame of replacement in his CIP; he'd like to replace it this year. Aaron asked Deb for a detail of the maintenance costs; Rick asked for the detail of how many calls it had been on. Steve said it had been on 137 of the 161 calls. Aaron and Russ thought that was very high. Aaron wondered why Steve would send both of his vehicles and Greenfield would send theirs. Russ felt it might be going too

frequently. Aaron wondered why the local department might not have more say. Russ asked for clarification on this. Aaron said going out on 85% of the calls is too high; he doesn't feel its staffed correctly for the amount of work its doing. Paul said if someone isn't taking it home at night, they would be at the bay, and Steve said the personnel would not like that. Aaron said it won't work to replace it with another used vehicle. Steve said he was applying to Assistance to Firefighters for a grant to replace the vehicle.

#### AMBULANCE FACILITY

Rob Cole has put out an email to the towns regarding the Association and the fact that the last payment comes out next month; the Association need to direct the Ambulance as to what they want to do with the building. Ken is on the Association, too. Russ said he hadn't heard back from Rob; Ken hasn't either.

#### OTHER BUSINESS

Aaron wanted to bring up Greenville; Steve said that the cost of taking on another community would really inflate the numbers. They also have a significant drug problem in that community which increases calls and decreases collections. Taking on Greenfield has stretched his capabilities; he can't see taking on another community right now.

Aaron said you also need to talk about utilizing mutual aid; this question needs to be answered before we can deal with the question of "What are the expectations of the residents?" There was further discussion about this.

**At 5:15 Russ moved to adjourn, Ken seconded. All were in favor, motion passed.**