

Enterprise Fund Committee/Ambulance Committee Minutes
March 14, 2022
6:00 p.m. Selectmen's Office

Josh Lang called the meeting to order at 3:45 p.m. Members present included: Josh Lang, Chairman, Robert Derksen, Chief of Police, Jennifer Weber, EMS Director, and Jeff Dechaine, Fire Chief. This was a joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen.

Paid Staffing Discussion with Ambulance Enterprise Fund

Jen Weber led the discussion. She discussed how volunteerism in EMS is dying. It's hard to maintain licensees and increased eligibility. Work and family life is busier than ever. EMS is a difficult profession. There is a lot of emotional traumas. The ambulance is going out on calls but the population in Lanesborough is aging. Record for calls has steadily rose over the past three years. There are also increased requests for Lanesborough to respond to neighboring Towns. Lanesborough does participate in mutual aid with other Towns. In 2021 there was a record request for mutual aid assistance from Lanesborough. Requesting Mon-Fri., 8 am to Midnight. There would be 5-7 per diem employees and 1- 2 full time. Staffing salary budget line item is \$123,000 (\$20 per hour). There are requirements that need to have which is MA EMT Certification and completion of NIMS/ICS training. AHA BLS CPR Card and undergo and pass a pre-hire physical screening and Cori Security Check. Reporting to the EMS Director. Midnight to 8 am (12-18%). Down time! Staff can participate in community outreach, clerical duties, maintenance, blood pressure clinics, going to Council on Aging, being seen in the community, presence at events. Lanesborough could seek a contract with an existing EMS service. Contracts range around \$300,000 for a contract. That doesn't even guarantee service. 2021, Lanesborough ambulance out of service, we waited 28 minutes for another ambulance. Lanesborough has shown commitment to the EMS department and residents have approved for a new ambulance and EMS hopes to continue to provide great care.

Selectman Hubbard:

The town would have to pay a couple hundred thousand dollars?

Ms. Jen Weber:

Yes, there is generally a promise to respond 85% of the time, but this is never accurate.

Selectman Hubbard:

Used to run a volunteer ambulance. If we hire inhouse we would get personal and faster services. It would be no more expensive than a contract and then it's our town residents and our town staff.

Josh Lang, Town Administrator

Jen, as the EMS Director what are the efficiencies or lack thereof?

Ms. Weber:

We only requested mutual aid 13 times (unheard of)

There are overlapping calls. Sometimes we declare an MCI. I've heard from staff and police

departments. When there is a mutual aid call, residents are waiting for a long time (unsafe). Ambulance enterprise fund doesn't cover staff. There is not enough reimbursement. Enterprise fund comes from user fees, what we bill the insurance. This covers EMS fees for higher validity calls. It's \$285. This covers COMMSTARS (billing agent) and also Jen's salary and the new ambulance which we put \$150,000 towards.

Josh Lang, Town Administrator

User fee amounts are raised and appropriated at the Annual Town Meeting and then make a request to have funds moved. Jen's total amount includes staffing and day-to-day expenses to run the ambulance.

Fire Chief Jeff DeChaine:

Those expenses have been taken out of the fire department budget.

Selectman Murphy:

Did you have a chance to talk to Lynne Lemanski, the new accountant?

Josh Lang, Town Administrator:

We are working with Lynne on the budget process and Marcia from the Division of Financial Management Resource Bureau. She provided us with a great forecasting tool.

Selectman Murphy:

It would be beneficial for the residents to hear from financial experts and other experts regarding similar information.

Adjourn at 6:45 pm

Josh Lang, Chair