

**Regional Ambulance Meeting
Monday, November 25, 2019**

Chairman Dick Fortin called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM. This meeting was held at the Freedom Town Hall. These minutes were recorded by Ellen White, Freedom Town Administrator.

Attendance:

Town of Freedom – Selectmen Leslie Babb, Ernest Day, Jr., Alan Fall, and Ellen White, Town Administrator, Rob Cunio, Fire Chief

Town of Madison – Selectmen Bill Lord and Josh Shackford, and Michael Brooks, Asst. Fire Chief

Town of Eaton – Selectmen Dick Fortin and Edward Reilly

Town of Ossipee – Adam Riley, Ossipee Corner Fire Chief, Dana Cullen, Jr., Center Ossipee Fire Chief

Town of Effingham – Selectmen John Meisner and Mike Cahalane, and Randy Burbank, Fire Chief

Town of Tamworth – Selectman William Farnum

Brewster Ambulance – Chris Hogan, Ron Quaranto, George Brewster

CarePlus Ambulance – Eric Damon

Action Ambulance – John Hatch, Chris Hogan, Brian Gleason

Fortin announced that letters were distributed to those companies that were not awarded the ambulance contract, and the updated draft contract was circulated to all town representatives last week. Fortin then distributed the updated call volume statistics; the top section shows data with the 1st quarter of 2015 removed, and the bottom section contains data for 2016, 2017, and 2018.

Fortin then opened the floor to Eric Damon of CarePlus Ambulance who was invited to review the logistics of the recent changes made at CarePlus and to answer questions about the current ambulance contract, specifically related to items #29 and 30.

Damon stated that CarePlus and Brewster Ambulance are working together to combine resources in an effort to improve services. The plan is to continue with offering the existing service until the end of the contract. George Brewster stated that there is no management contract, services will be consolidated to improve weaknesses, he will be helping manage the company but Damon will remain as the point of contact. Babb confirmed that CarePlus is to remain in business. Damon affirmed. Brewster stated that a merger has not taken place, yet. Damon also confirmed that CarePlus employees are still running the ambulances. Fortin stated that there has been concern about staffing shortages that are being filled by employees from down south. Brewster stated that Brewster Ambulance is in the process of applying for licensing in NH but no employees from (Brewster) MA are filling staff shortages.

Brewster noted question of the actual contract expiration date.

Cahalane reviewed item #28 in the contract stating that no consultation took place prior to the management change. Brewster responded that the management and oversight of CarePlus remains

unchanged. Brewster is supplementing CarePlus through billing services, dispatch and employee training.

Meisner questioned who RSA 91-A requests are to be submitted to. Eric Damon is the point of contact. Cahalane requested an updated employee roster. Damon reported there are three new employees.

Meisner verbally requested an RSA 91-A request for the management contract as correspondence received refers to one. Brewster responded that there is no management contract and disagrees that it would be subject to disclosure.

Cahalane questioned the existence of certifications with various hospitals, medical protocols related to infectious diseases, and MOU's with various hospitals. Brewster stated that the new ambulance contract was put out to bid and was offered to a difference contractor, and further questioned the purpose of the meeting. Meisner responded that there are questions about performance of the current contract.

Farnum expressed his concern that most towns became aware that their ambulance provider was under new management by way of social media, before a formal notification was distributed to town representatives. Brewster responded that he cannot control information shared amongst social media and added that employees could not be notified prior to notification to the contract owns, and vice versa.

Brewster stated that the concerns and questions being posed should have been asked long before now. He shared concern for the reputation of Brewster Ambulance. Damon affirmed that this change is a good thing. Babb stated that the towns received a letter as the change was happening. Brewster questioned if they should be awaiting a letter acknowledging the contract will be terminated early. That was not an intention expressed by anyone present.

Cahalane discussed a hypothetical situation to determine what would happen if one of the contract towns was to terminate the contract pursuant to item #25. Brewster questioned what the complaints are, and further questioned if they have been noticed to the contract in writing, and if the contractor has been given the ability to correct any issues. Fortin called the meeting back onto the subject of what is happening with the contract and concerns with staffing.

Brewster reaffirmed Eric Damon as the point of contact and reopened a question on the actual expiration of the contract referencing each town's payment schedule which references six years expiring on 3/31/2021. Reilly responded that the expectation of those present in this body is that the contract expires in March 2020.

Hogan reviewed the positive vibes experienced as a result of recent changes. Farnum acknowledged gratitude commended them for the improvements being made.

Brewster stated that the towns will be the first to be notified of any changes that would affect the contract. He then requested a letter acknowledging the actual date of contract expiration.

All present agreed to proceed with review of the updated statistics and draft contract.

Corrections to be made are as follows:

- Correct the city in the address information for the towns of Effingham and Eaton on page 2.
- Remove the word "primary" preceding ambulance on #6, and 11-i (i)
- Remove "within the respective town" in 11-i (i)

- #22 remains unchanged from last revision; Mike Martin was to reword with new language, Hatch will follow up on this
- #22 paragraph 2 add ... “in effort” to avoid collections proceedings for any patients as long as compliance with Federal Medicare and...
- #29, last sentence add a “d” to “insure”
- It was noted that the material presented by Selectman Fuller was added in as “Miscellaneous Provisions” following #31

Fortin reviewed the updated response statistics and questioned which scenario should be used in calculating each town’s appropriation. Discussion ensued. Fortin then made a motion to use the top data. Fall seconded. All were in favor. The motion carried.

Hatch stated that he will include the % responses in the monthly reports to help with the subsidy calculations. Brooks suggested keeping the appropriation amounts as actual as possible based on the response percentages to be transparent in the actual cost of service each year. Riley questioned if the amount can vary from year to year without requiring Town Meeting approval. Discussion ensued. Brooks noted that Ossipee will be the largest recipient of a percentage-based impact noting their response volume at 41% of the total responses.

Discussion took place on the calculation of each year’s appropriation. Fortin requested a show of hands for those in favor of setting the percentage of responses based on the 5-years of compiled data. Tally was 2. Fortin requested a show of hands for those in favor of adjusting the calculation each year using the actual response volume for the given year. Tally was 8.

Farnum made a motion to annually adjust each town’s contribution using the total cost of contract for the year (recalculated each year at a 3% increase), by the percentage of increase or decrease of call volume. The first year will be set based on all calls beginning in the second quarter of 2015 (18 quarters considered), subsequent years will be adjusted annually for the life of the contract using actual data as of September 30 each year (ie: year 2 will contain 22 quarters, year 3, 26 quarters). Babb seconded. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

Brief discussion took place on the answers provided by CarePlus and Brewster Ambulance.

Hatch requested the boards enter into a non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A, 3, II (c) to discuss matters that may adversely affect the reputation of others. Babb made a motion to enter into a non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (c) at 7:00 PM. Fall seconded. Roll call was taken: Babb-yes, Fall-yes, Reilly-yes, Farnum-yes, Meisner-yes, Cahalane-yes, Shackford-yes, Lord-yes, Day-yes, Fortin-yes. All were in favor. The motion carried. Fall made a motion to come out of non-public session and reconvene public session at 7:38 PM. Reilly seconded. All were in favor. The motion carried.

Farnum made a motion to seal the minutes from the non-public session to protect the reputation of others. Reilly seconded. Roll call vote was taken: Babb-yes, Fall-yes, Reilly-yes, Farnum-yes, Meisner-yes, Cahalane-yes, Shackford-yes, Lord-yes, Day-yes, Fortin-yes. All were in favor. The motion carried.

The next Regional Ambulance Meeting will be scheduled for Monday, 12/9/2019 at 6:00 PM at the Freedom Town Hall.

Shackford made a motion to release the sealed non-public session minutes to the town of Ossipee via Chairman Fortin. Babb seconded. The motion carried.

Being no further discussion, Meisner made a motion to adjourn. Brooks seconded. The motion carried.

Adjourned at 7:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen N. White
Freedom Town Administrator