

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
TRI-TOWN EMS
Wednesday, March 10, 2021
Pembroke Town Hall
311 Pembroke Street
Pembroke, New Hampshire 03275

The March 10, 2021 meeting of the Tri-Town EMS Board of Directors was called to order by Vice Chair Mike O'Meara at 3:30 pm.

Roll Call

Present on the Board: Dave Jodoin, Bob Bourque, Mike O'Meara, Paul Gagnon, Derik Goodine, Paul St. Germaine

Present on the Staff: Chris Gamache, Director

Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting

Mr. Bourque made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 10, 2020 meeting as written. Chief St. Germaine seconded the motion.

Vice Chair O'Meara called for a roll call vote on the motion.

Bob Bourque – Aye

Derik Goodine – Aye

Dave Jodoin – Aye

Paul Gagnon – Aye

Mike O'Meara – Aye

Paul St. Germaine - Aye

The motion carried unanimously.

Approve Expenditures

Mr. Jodoin presented a March 10, 2021 Accounts Payable manifest in the amount of \$3,715.74 and Payroll manifests dated March 11, 2021 and February 25, 2021.

Mr. Bourque made a motion to approve the Accounts Payable manifest in the amount of \$3,715.74 and the Payroll manifests dated March 11, 2021 and February 25, 2021.

Vice Chair O'Meara called for a roll call vote on the motion.

Bob Bourque – Aye

Derik Goodine – Aye

Dave Jodoin – Aye

Paul Gagnon – Aye

Mike O'Meara – Aye

Paul St. Germaine - Aye

The motion carried unanimously.

Old Business

- **Continue Review of Service Policies/Procedures**

Mr. Bourque referred to the section on Gifts to Employees, saying the employees should not be receiving gift from people they serve.

Mr. Gamache said the intent is to allow employees to accept gifts of food and gift cards during the holiday season. He said it is a generic policy.

Mr. Bourque said that is okay if food gifts are brought to the Fire Station to be shared by all employees.

Mr. Jodoin said that gifts of food are acceptable but he has a problem with gift cards. People can donate to Tri-Town instead, if they go through the proper channels.

Mr. Gamache said that he thinks there is a State law on this issue.

Mr. Jodoin responded that the State guidelines are too broad.

Mr. Gamache suggested that he remove all of Section 211.2.1.c.

Vice Chair O'Meara said he has no problem with store and food gift cards because they cannot be converted to cash.

Mr. Jodoin said gift cards can be considered to be cash and therefore should not be allowed.

Mr. Gamache said that the policy can say that employees cannot accept gift cards.

Mr. Bourque offered a small correction to the text, saying that in Section 2.12.2.1, it should say 'proof of' not 'proof are,' He next referred to the Hiring Processes section on page 30. He said that the travel distance and time should be defined.

Mr. Gamache explained that this is specified later in the policy and is for those hired to be on call, not per diem employees.

Vice Chair O'Meara suggested making a reference to the other section.

Mr. Bourque next referred to page 33, Section 213.3.3, which calls for applicants for employment to divulge any relationships with they have to Selectboard members, EMS Board members and EMS employees. He said it could be a privacy issue.

Mr. Gamache said that the purpose is to get this information out in the open, to avoid any appearance of conflict of interest or undue influence in hiring.

Mr. Bourque referred next to Item 3c on page 35. This section allows the Director of the Service to place employees on probation. Mr. Bourque would like to give the Board of Directors this same authority.

Mr. Bourque asked about the verbiage requiring employees to provide availability for one major and one minor holiday each year. He asked which holidays are considered major.

Mr. Gamache said there are only two – Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Mr. Bourque said that the list of acceptable reasons for not being able to work a shift on page 41 should include jury duty and military service.

Mr. Gamache said that these are covered under Leaves of Absence.

Mr. Bourque noted that, on page 42, under a, the word ‘extended’ should be ‘expended.’

Mr. Gamache said that when employees swap schedules with one another before using their time off, it is difficult to fill shifts in December, as they all try to use up their time off before losing it. So, the policy requires employees to use time off before swapping schedules.

Mr. Bourque continued, referring to page 44, 216.6.2, which addresses call backs. He said employees shouldn’t be penalized for negative contacts (not answering their telephones).

Mr. Gamache said that call backs almost never happen. As opposed to the time before cell phones, he said, there is no excuse now for not answering their phones. He added that the Service is not trying to set employees up for failure and is reasonable.

Mr. Bourque next referred to page 45 and asked about employees consuming alcohol off shift and then being called in.

Mr. Gamache reiterated that they never call anyone back for a shift. Furthermore, if asked to return for any reason, he would expect them to simply tell him they had had a few drinks.

Mr. Jodoin said that the CLD license would cover that.

Mr. Bourque next addressed the issue of Workers Compensation and the reporting of injuries.

Mr. Gamache said the policy is to report all injuries, regardless of severity.

Vice Chair O'Meara said that this section needs to be reworded for clarity, and he said that the policy should require employees to report injuries prior to the end of their shift.

Mr. Bourque referenced page 47, #6, Leave of Absence, and asked about providing train-up time.

Mr. Gamache said this is dealt with on a case-by-case basis, but that most often the issue is credentialing and licensing, which involves training at the State level.

New Business

▪ Election of Officers

Mr. Bourque nominated Mike O'Meara as Chairman of the EMS Board of Directors. Mr. Goodine seconded the motion.

Vice Chair O'Meara called for a roll call vote on the motion.

Bob Bourque – Aye

Derik Goodine – Aye

Dave Jodoin – Aye

Paul Gagnon – Aye

Paul St. Germaine – Aye

Mike O'Meara – Abstained because he is the nominee

The motion carried unanimously.

Chair O'Meara nominated Bob Bourque as Vice Chairman of the EMS Board of Directors. Mr. Jodoin seconded the motion.

Chair O'Meara called for a roll call vote on the motion.

Derik Goodine – Aye

Dave Jodoin – Aye

Paul Gagnon – Aye

Mike O'Meara – Aye

Paul St. Germaine – Aye

Bob Bourque – Abstained because he is the nominee

The motion carried unanimously.

Chair O'Meara nominated Dave Jodoin as Secretary of the EMS Board of Directors. Chief St. Germaine seconded the motion.

Chair O'Meara called for a roll call vote on the motion.

Bob Bourque – Aye

Derik Goodine – Aye

Paul Gagnon – Aye

Mike O'Meara – Aye

Paul St. Germaine – Aye

Dave Jodoin – Abstained because he is the nominee

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Bourque asked Chair O'Meara to prepare a letter of thanks to Harold Paulsen for his service to the Pembroke Fire Department and the Tri-Town EMS Board of Directors.

Chair O'Meara said that he would be glad to do that.

▪ **Comstar Billing Report**

Mr. Jodoin reported February billings in the amount of \$81,968; collections of \$31,339.77; write-offs of \$47,593.33; and an uncollected balance of \$879,943.46. The uncollected balance is up \$3,000. Most of this balance is past 120 days, so in reality, the uncollected balance is about \$130,000.

▪ **Director's Report**

Mr. Gamache reported 83 runs in February, making it the slowest month since December of 2016. Transports totaled 55 (67.9%), bringing this statistic back to the average. Mutual Aid was given six times and received six times as well. The average time out the door was 1.06 minutes. I spoke with the staff about my concerns with this average. So far in March, we are averaging 54 seconds out the door – where we are supposed to be.

Mr. Gamache continued, saying that both ambulances had their biannual state inspections. For both, the portable batteries had to be replaced. Of the staff members needing relicensing, only two or three are not done yet. The portable ventilator in Ambulance 3 was taken by Voll for repair and has been returned. Regarding COVID, Mr. Gamache said they continue to clean and disinfect the ambulances between calls. Of the 28 staff members, 22 are fully vaccinated, three have had their first shots, two refuse to be vaccinated and one has not yet responded. Elliot Hospital and Concord Hospital have relaxed visiting restrictions. CMC has not. Tri-Town still does not allow anyone to ride in the ambulance with patients other than parents or guardians, except for when there is a pressing need.

Mr. Gamache next reported on the budget. After two months, revenue is down \$6,000 from the budgeted amount. The only expense account which is running over budget is overtime, he said, the result of a full-time employee being on vacation in January.

Mr. Gamache next addressed the FFR Disposition Report. He said that last year, uncollected amounts from 2014 through 2016 were written off, and he is now recommending the write-off of \$130,774.13 from 2017 through 2018.

Mr. Jodoin made a motion to write off \$130,774.13 from 2017 – 2018 uncollected accounts. Mr. Bourque seconded the motion.

Chair O'Meara called for a roll call vote on the motion.

Bob Bourque – Aye

Derik Goodine – Aye

Dave Jodoin – Aye

Paul Gagnon – Aye

Mike O’Meara – Aye

Paul St. Germaine - Aye

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gamache next recommended the write off of \$19,682.40 from 2019 – 2020, the accounts of Medicaid patients without supplemental insurance. After the 55% Medicare reduction, Medicare pays 80% and the patient is responsible for 20%. This 20% is the amount proposed for write-off. The total of these amounts is \$150,456.53, split between FFR and Comstar. From 2019-2020 accounts, I am sending \$51, 679.98 to FFR for collection. The good news, he said, is that FFR has collected \$42,389.34 on accounts between 2014 and 2018.

Mr. Gamache next said he wants to hire Skylar Gush, a two-year EMT. She started the application process in the fall, and her hiring was delayed because of COVID issues and the budget. She will start at \$15.68 per hour as a per diem employee.

Mr. Jodoin made a motion to approve the hiring of Skylar Gush as a per diem EMT at a rate of \$15.68 per hour. Mr. Bourque seconded the motion.

Chair O’Meara called for a roll call vote on the motion.

Bob Bourque – Aye

Derik Goodine – Aye

Dave Jodoin – Aye

Paul Gagnon – Aye

Mike O’Meara – Aye

Paul St. Germaine - Aye

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gamache reported that he has completed all of the reviews of the per diem employee as planned. With the exception of a few, each will get a 1.5% merit increase and the 1.6% COLA increase. Those who show up when called and are available regularly will get the merit increase. Only a few did not work enough to fulfill the availability criteria.

Non-Public Session

Chair O’Meara made a motion to enter non-public session in accordance with the provisions of RSA 91-A:3, II (a). Mr. Jodoin seconded the motion.

Chair O’Meara called for a roll call vote on the motion.

Bob Bourque – Aye

Derik Goodine – Aye

Dave Jodoin – Aye

Paul Gagnon – Aye

Mike O’Meara – Aye

Paul St. Germaine - Aye

The motion carried unanimously.

Chair O'Meara made a motion to return to public session at 4:42 pm. Mr. Jodoin seconded the motion

Chair O'Meara called for a roll call vote on the motion.

Bob Bourque – Aye

Derik Goodine – Aye

Dave Jodoin – Aye

Paul Gagnon – Aye

Mike O'Meara – Aye

Paul St. Germaine - Aye

The motion carried unanimously.

Chair O'Meara made a motion to seal the minutes of the non-public session, as they might adversely affect the reputation of someone not a member of the board. Mr. Jodoin seconded the motion.

Chair O'Meara called for a roll call vote on the motion.

Bob Bourque – Aye

Derik Goodine – Aye

Dave Jodoin – Aye

Paul Gagnon – Aye

Mike O'Meara – Aye

Paul St. Germaine - Aye

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Jodoin made a motion to approve the merit and COLA wage increases for the Tri-Town EMS per diem employees as presented by Mr. Gamache. Mr. Bourque seconded the motion.

Chair O'Meara called for a roll call vote on the motion.

Bob Bourque – Aye

Derik Goodine – Aye

Dave Jodoin – Aye

Paul Gagnon – Aye

Mike O'Meara – Aye

Paul St. Germaine - Aye

The motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment

Mr. Bourque made a motion to adjourn at 4:44 pm. Mr. Jodoin seconded the motion.

Chair O'Meara called for a roll call vote on the motion.

Bob Bourque – Aye

Derik Goodine – Aye

Dave Jodoin – Aye

Paul Gagnon – Aye

Mike O'Meara – Aye

Paul St. Germaine - Aye

The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned.