

TOWN OF ALLENTOWN AND PEMBROKE  
Joint Tri-Town Board  
311 Pembroke Street  
Pembroke, New Hampshire 03275  
Minutes of Regular Meeting  
January 14, 2015

**Call to Order.**

The Joint Tri-Town Board Meeting for January 14, 2015 was called to order by the Chair at 6:32 p.m.

**Roll Call.**

Present on the Board: David Jodoin, Shaun Mulholland, Paige Lorenz, Stephanie Locke, Harold Paulsen, and Dana Pendergast.

Excused: Bob Bourque.

**Others Present.**

Tri-Town Staff: Chris Gamache

**Approve minutes of previous meeting(s).**

Motion. Chief Paulsen made a motion to approve the minutes for December 10, 2014. Ms. Locke seconded the Motion. There was no additional discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Mulholland-Yes; Mr. Pendergast -Yes; Mr. Jodoin – Yes; Ms. Lorenz –Yes; Ms. Locke – Yes; and Mr. Paulsen – Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

**Approve expenditures.**

**The Chair stated they have the previous expenditures from 2014 which were signed but need to be voted on.**

Motion. Chief Pendergast made a motion to approve the payroll manifest and accounts payable for December 2014. Ms. Locke seconded the Motion. There was no additional discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Mulholland-Yes; Mr. Pendergast -Yes; Mr. Jodoin – Yes; Ms. Lorenz –Yes; Ms. Locke – Yes; and Mr. Paulsen – Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

Mr. Jodoin stated he has some close outs for 2014. He stated the first page is two checks which went out for 2015. He stated one check is for the payoff of the ambulance and the other is for the minutes. He stated payroll is in the back of the expenditures. Mr. Gamache asked if all goes into this year or if it's divided between this year and last year. Mr. Jodoin stated it is split; 2014 is in 2014 and 2015 is in 2015. He stated the audits may go back and accrue six or seven days for payroll.

Chief Paulsen stated he was always subject to the date of the check in private business and asked why municipal separates it. Mr. Jodoin stated they go with the invoice date.

Mr. Gamache asked what the value was for the ambulance payoff. Mr. Jodoin stated it was about \$23,675. He stated he is going to hand deliver the check tomorrow. The Chair asked if they put it in the fixed asset. Mr. Jodoin stated the Auditors have not listed the fixed assets completely. He stated this wasn't due until 2016 so they saved about \$300 in interest.

Chief Paulsen stated he hopes the Board will be serious about establishing a Capital Reserve Fund on this coming budget so they can get it going. The Chair stated they don't have a Capital Reserve Fund and in order to get one going they have to do a warrant article. Mr. Jodoin stated he wanted to have the discussion of how they were going to do this in the future.

The Chair stated they could have a separate cash account in their fund balance for that purpose. Mr. Jodoin asked if they were going to show the offsetting revenue if they make the expense. The Chair stated the other option is to have a warrant article as a Capital Reserve Fund giving us agents to expend. Chief Paulsen stated he wants to establish it so they don't get the spike in the appropriations.

Mr. Jodoin stated they paid the property liability, the worker's compensation, and unemployment for 2015. He stated they have to wait for the audit to come in for worker's compensation and unemployment and there may be additional payments to be made there. He stated there are two budgets to actual sheets in the reports; one for 2014 and one for 2015.

Mr. Gamache stated he has a spreadsheet and is tracking everything live. He stated when they order something he is putting it is as money spent. Mr. Jodoin stated they still have a manifest going in and they are closing Friday all 2014 bills.

Motion. Chief Paulsen made a motion to approve the manifest of January 14, 2015 for \$23,716.67 for 2015, January 14, 2015 for \$2,958.37 for 2014 and payroll manifest for January 8, 2015. Chief Pendergast seconded the Motion. There was no additional discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Mulholland-Yes; Mr. Pendergast -Yes; Mr. Jodoin – Yes; Ms. Lorenz –Yes; Ms. Locke – Yes; and Mr. Paulsen – Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

**Approval of purchase orders.**

Mr. Gamache stated the first purchase order is for the second Physio Control Lifepak 15, purchase order #15-01-001 for \$25,472.50.

Motion. Chief Pendergast made a motion to approve purchase order #15-01-001 in the amount of \$25,472.50. Ms. Locke seconded the Motion.

Mr. Gamache stated this is to outfit the second ambulance which means they will turn in their monitors and modems. He stated he received a statement from Physio for the first monitor which is about \$300 less than what they actually paid so they will have a credit. He stated the purchase order amount is based on what they gave us so they can assume it will be on this one as well.

Chief Paulsen suggested they put a \$600 credit on this one. Mr. Gamache stated he doesn't think they will know what the credit will be until the payment is made. Ms. Lorenz asked if they can credit it against the warranty. Mr. Gamache stated the warranty is the third purchase order. He stated they are going to buy things which will use the money up.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Mulholland-Yes; Mr. Pendergast -Yes; Mr. Jodoin – Yes; Ms. Lorenz –Yes; Ms. Locke – Yes; and Mr. Paulsen – Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

Mr. Gamache stated the next purchase order # 15-01-002 which is for the purchase of a simulator manikin which allows the staff to do all the ALS procedures. He stated they have a bunch of Intermediates who don't have a lot of experience outside of this service and if they get the device he will have them do IVs and other tasks on a monthly device. He stated NH is coming back with surgical credentials and he wants to make sure we have a device where the paramedics can practice on a regular basis. CRICS

Motion. Chief Pendergast made a motion to approve purchase order # 15-01-002. Ms. Locke seconded the Motion.

Mr. Gamache stated the manikin is \$6,300.

The Chair asked if this is something they budgeted for. Mr. Gamache stated it is outside of the budget and will be funded out the lines they purchased from last year. He stated it will come out of the training budget this year. The Chair asked how much excess there is. Mr. Gamache stated he hasn't added it up. The Chair asked how they know they are not going to overspend and be short elsewhere. Mr. Gamache stated he added it up as he did stuff.

The Chair stated he wants to make sure they are going to have the money in the budget to buy these things. Mr. Gamache stated they don't need to purchase coats, duty shirts, and house kits for five employees he doesn't think they will need. He stated this is going to come out of the training line item and they can hold off on some things in the line if they need to. He stated they overshot on worker compensation, liability insurance, and unemployment. He stated they bought all of their med pumps last year and they bought all the tablets last year.

Mr. Jodoin asked what they have budgeted for liability insurance. Mr. Gamache stated they have \$7,543 budgeted for liability insurance. Mr. Jodoin stated they have \$1,540 excess.

The Chair recommended they wait on something like this as they are two weeks into the year and don't know what is going to happen. Mr. Jodoin stated overtime can be a problem as well. Chief Paulsen stated he never touched anything when it came to insurances, payrolls, and such.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Mulholland-No; Mr. Pendergast -No; Mr. Jodoin – No; Ms. Lorenz –No; Ms. Locke – No; and Mr. Paulsen – Yes. The Chair declared the Motion failed.

Mr. Gamache stated purchase order # 15-01-003 is for the service agreement for the monitors in the amount of \$6,972. Chief Paulsen asked how the price compared to what was expected. Mr. Gamache stated it was what he expected.

Motion. Chief Pendergast made a motion to approve purchase order #15-01-003 in the amount of \$6,972. Ms. Locke seconded the Motion.

Mr. Gamache stated there were different options with the service agreements for the Lifepaks. He stated if they don't get the agreement up front it goes year by year after the purchase. He stated if they want year by year service agreement it would be \$1,545 for both units. He stated if they go with the five year plan it comes to a cost of about \$1,300 per year. He stated it will be on site repair which is a \$1200 value every time they come and then a 15% discount on all accessories. He stated they budgeted \$2,800 for this year not knowing if they were going to get the Likepak 15.

Mr. Jodoin asked if they ever got a credit back on the old ones. Mr. Gamache stated he doesn't know and can talk to them to find out if they will get a credit. Chief Pendergast stated they credited back him for the old ones. Mr. Gamache stated he will talk to them and see if they can take it off the service agreement.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Mulholland-Yes; Mr. Pendergast -Yes; Mr. Jodoin – Yes; Ms. Lorenz –Yes; Ms. Locke – Yes; and Mr. Paulsen – Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

**Discussion of changes to the Inter-Municipal Agreement to include meeting location, service name, etc...**

The Chair stated one of the things he wanted to talk about is changing the name of the organization. Mr. Gamache stated if they did a straight name change they would be in the same boat as last year where they would go nine months without money from the Federal government. He stated if they determine what the new agency will be called they can go to NH EMS and license the service as a non-transporting EMS service which means they don't have to have an ambulance at the time. He stated they can take new license information and fill out the documents for the government and when it gets approved they can get an ambulance licensed and inspected.

The Chair stated if they fill the paperwork out they will still operate as Tri-Town and have the other paperwork for the other entity which they won't do anything with until it gets approved by the Federal government. He stated they then would quickly turn over to the transport license which will allow them to change the name of the organization.

Mr. Gamache stated the second part of this is the ambulance has to be lettered at the time of licensing with the new agency's name.

Chief Paulsen asked what the problem is with Tri-Town EMS. The Chair stated they don't have three towns. Ms. Lorenz asked if they could think of the third town being the mutual agreements between the two towns. Chief Paulsen stated the name is known by people and throughout the EMS services. There was further discussion of whether or not to change the name.

Motion. Mr. Mulholland made a motion that they add the revision and change the name to Suncook EMS Service. Ms. Locke seconded the Motion.

Chief Pendergast stated when he first got here he thought they needed to change the name because it is not representative of whom they are. Mr. Jodoin stated the Select Boards had a long discussion of whether or not to change the name on the front end. The Chair stated at the end of the day the Select Boards get the final say.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Mulholland-Yes; Mr. Pendergast -Yes; Mr. Jodoin – No; Ms. Lorenz –No; Ms. Locke – Yes; and Mr. Paulsen – No. The Chair declared the Motion failed.

Chief Paulsen stated the only thing he saw was under apportionment of expenses and he is not sure if it needs a revision. He stated the original goal was to take the total calls from Allenstown and Pembroke and it would be the outcome is the determination of the proportion.

Mr. Gamache stated in his opinion the town who takes the most calls should pay less because they are generating more money for the service.

Mr. Jodoin asked who would get billed if a Pembroke resident gets picked up in Allentown for a call. Mr. Gamache stated it shows up where the call happens. Mr. Jodoin stated some calls are listed as Suncook. Mr. Gamache stated there shouldn't be any of those coming in.

The Chair read the revised apportions which would be "revenues shall be apportioned between the towns based on the origin of the call that produces any such revenue. In the event that revenues generate from a call not originating out of the town then the revenue shall be apportioned equally between the two towns."

The Chair read "pursuant to RSA 53A:11 the towns agree that they will apportion costs of each service as based on the ratio of each town's number of calls the total number of calls for the preceding three calendar years of the two towns." Chief Paulsen stated they can't do it for the preceding three years because there is a year delay in there. He stated 2011, 2012, and 2013 would be for 2015. Mr. Jodoin suggested they change it to the three available calendar years.

Motion. Chief Paulsen made a motion to recommend the proposed changes to the respective Boards of Selectmen. Ms. Locke seconded the Motion. There was no additional discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Mulholland-Yes; Mr. Pendergast -Yes; Mr. Jodoin – Yes; Ms. Lorenz –Yes; Ms. Locke – Yes; and Mr. Paulsen – Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

### **Consider adoption of new policies**

#### **Delegation of Authority**

Chief Paulsen stated they all say "may" and asked if it is not required to fill all the positions. Mr. Gamache stated it is just for future things. He stated in the case these positions are implemented they won't have to update other policies.

Mr. Gamache stated he will be addressing section one on all policies they have done. He stated the last statement says "hereafter Tri-Town EMS" and he is going to do hereafter "Service."

Motion. Chief Pendergast made a motion to approve the policy on Delegation of Authority. Mr. Jodoin seconded the Motion. There was no additional discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Mulholland-Yes; Mr. Pendergast -Yes; Mr. Jodoin – Yes; Ms. Lorenz –Yes; Ms. Locke – Yes; and Mr. Paulsen – Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

## **High Visibility Vests & Jackets**

Motion. Chief Pendergast made a motion to approve the policy on High Visibility Vests and Jackets. Ms. Locke seconded the Motion.

Chief Paulsen asked Mr. Gamache intended a policy to tell the employees they are to be worn only on official duty as opposed casually in other places. Mr. Gamache stated he thinks it should be a separate policy and will probably be under a Uniform Policy next month.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Mulholland-Yes; Mr. Pendergast -Yes; Mr. Jodoin – Yes; Ms. Lorenz –Yes; Ms. Locke – Yes; and Mr. Paulsen – Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

## **Payroll Procedures**

Mr. Gamache stated in addition to what the Board has in front of them there is holiday pay. He stated there was a question about holiday pay recently and an employee put in for 16 hours of holiday pay for hours which weren't worked. He stated according to their current policy holiday pay is for hours worked. He stated he took the holiday pay off the employee's pay slip because of the policy however both town administrators don't agree with the policy as written and full-time employees should be paid for eight hours of holiday pay.

Mr. Gamache stated Section 4.4 says "the Service shall recognize the following holidays as it pertains to holiday pay." He stated part b says "covered hours for a holiday shall be considered between the hours of 00:00 to 23:59 of the calendar holiday." He stated the current policy says pretty much the same thing except if the holiday falls on the weekend it would be observed on another day. He stated they are a 24/7 operation with no office staff so it's not fair if someone is working a Saturday which is Christmas they wouldn't get paid but others working on the Friday would get paid. He recommended they remove it and people get paid on the actual holiday.

Mr. Gamache stated he then broke it up into full-time and part-time employees. He stated full-time employees who are not on shift or otherwise working in any way would be paid a total of eight hours of holiday at their normal hourly rate. He stated full-time employees who worked a holiday would be paid a total of two times their hourly rate for hours worked during a covered hours as defined in Section 4.B. He stated anyone who was forced in, because they can force in full-time employees, on a holiday is paid at two and a half times their normal hourly rate.

Mr. Gamache stated he understands where the towns feeling are on this. He stated paying people when it is not their normal work hour is not consistent with the normal EMS industry. He stated what he would rather do or in addition to is pay people on an hour for hour who are on shift for the holiday.

Mr. Gamache stated next year when he does the budget he will have to account for twenty two hours for holiday anyway. He stated the other two hours isn't going to break anybody. He recommended if the Board wants to pay the two full-time positions for the eight hours he has no problem with it however it is outside the normal for the industry and he would rather pay people for every hour during the covered hours.

Chief Paulsen asked Mr. Jodoin if the holiday pay described here is the same as Pembroke's holiday pay policy. Mr. Jodoin stated it is close and they pay the police officers if they are not working. Chief Paulsen expressed concerns if people come in and ask payroll questions would they be consistent with Pembroke. The Chair stated in Allenstown they get paid for an eight hour shift not hour for hour. Mr. Jodoin stated if they have the day off they get paid and if they work the shift they get normal time plus time and a half.

Chief Paulsen stated they did originally discuss eight hours was pay for a holiday. Ms. Locke stated they are working sixteen hours. Chief Pendergast stated it doesn't matter and when he worked a 24 hour shift it was the same thing. He stated the holiday pay is a benefit for the full-time employees.

Mr. Gamache stated most of the policies are written so an office staff doesn't lose money. He stated they are not written to add money to a person's paycheck which is essentially what they are doing. He stated he would see it as more of a draw to get people to cover the rest of the shift if they did hour for hour. Ms. Locke stated she has worked at services where they get paid hour for hour and it's a huge morale booster. There was further discussion of the holiday pay.

The Chair stated everyone needs to see this in writing and they should discuss it at the next meeting. He suggested in the meantime they put an interim policy in place to allow for pay of an eight hour shift because they have a holiday coming up before the next meeting.

Motion. Mr. Mulholland made a motion to put an interim procedure in place which would allow for holiday pay of an eight hour shift rather or not they work until the next meeting. Chief Pendergast seconded the Motion.

Chief Paulsen asked if this is similar to union negotiations where this should be more of a closed session. The Chair stated they would if it was individual pay not when discussing general pay.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Mulholland-Yes; Mr. Pendergast -Yes; Mr. Jodoin – Yes; Ms. Lorenz –Yes; Ms. Locke – Yes; and Mr. Paulsen – Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

## **Tobacco Use**

Motion. Chief Paulsen made a motion to approve the Tobacco Use policy. Mr. Jodoin seconded the Motion.

Chief Paulsen stated at the station he designates the smoking area and asked if they want to refer to it. Mr. Gamache stated the designated smoking area is fine. Mr. Jodoin asked if there is a sign. Chief Paulsen stated there is a designated smoking area. Mr. Gamache stated the catalyst to this change is he saw someone smoking at Subway while sitting in the ambulance leaning through the window.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Mulholland-Yes; Mr. Pendergast -Yes; Mr. Jodoin – Yes; Ms. Lorenz –Yes; Ms. Locke – Yes; and Mr. Paulsen – Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

## **Collections, Insurance Denials and Hardship Cases**

Mr. Gamache stated they need to have a policy in regards to collections, insurance denials, and hardship cases. He stated for insurance denials they are going to find out why it was denied and see if it is something they can fix things.

Mr. Gamache asked how they want to handle collections; who do they want to handle it, do they want to do a payment plan so it doesn't go to collections, or do they want it to automatically go to collections. The Joint Board determined to have Mr. Gamache handle the collections and determine who would go to collections. They also determined to stay with First Financial for collections.

Mr. Gamache recommendation would be to define the process for hardship cases. He suggested they have a form for the patient or authorized representative fill the form out and then maybe do a closed session meeting with the Joint Board.

Mr. Gamache read the hardship policy as he wrote it which reads;

“Patients or authorize representatives shall notify the Service in writing to request a hearing of hardship. The patient or authorize representative shall be responsible for proving that they are not able to pay the ambulance bill without incurring a significant hardship onto the patient and/or immediate family residing in the same residence. The patient or authorize representative shall be responsible for listing all ambulance trips pertaining to the hardship claim. Ambulance trips that are not part of the claim shall be presented in a separate case. All hardship cases will be handled on a case by case basis by the Board of Directors and the decision will be final. Hardship cases will be heard in a non-public session. Rejected hardship cases will be referred to the Service's billing contractor for appropriate action.”

The Chair recommended Mr. Gamache review those hardship cases , make a recommendation, notify the patients of the recommendation and then the patients can appeal to the Joint Board. He stated Mr. Gamache would send a letter to the patient notifying them of the recommendation, date of the hearing and if they fail to appeal it will be turned over to the collection agency. He stated it also needs to include the administrative procedure in the letter to the client. He stated Mr. Gamache would not give the Board information on the hardship case until the day of so they can't be bias against the patient. There was further discussion of how they would proceed with the hardship cases.

Mr. Jodoin stated he wanted to make it clear he is not the collection agency.

### **Approve additional job descriptions**

The Chair stated he thought they were going to do an Assistant Director. Mr. Gamache stated they can however he was going to do an EMS Supervisor to keep it an hourly rate. He stated his goal is to eventually have all full-time staff have some sort of authority.

The Board determined to table this until the next meeting.

### **Discuss ComStar revenue report.**

Mr. Jodoin stated the revenue report doesn't have the large chunk from Medicare and will hit the ComStar report in January 2015. He stated the report shows all the revenues which are due to the towns which totals \$328,552.93. He stated once they get the \$83,000 it will take a good chunk out of the balance due. He stated things look good on the budget and next year January, February, and March will have totals on them. He stated they billed out \$546,000 and had \$150,000 worth of allowances for the year.

### **Director's Report.**

Mr. Gamache stated he gave them the December activity report as well as the yearly activity report. He stated they had 91 responses and 63 transports. He stated he looks at the percentage each month because the higher the number the less liability. He stated the more refusals they do the higher the risk they are going to get suited. He stated they want the percentage in the 70-80s and their number is working its way up.

Mr. Gamache stated he is working with Concord Fire Alarm to get some good data for mutual aid to see what they have coming in. He stated it is very labor intensive so he will continue working on it.

Mr. Gamache stated they have been working on reaction time. He stated for 2013 it was 2:52 and in 2014 it was 1:52. He stated they have a concern they are looking into right now for an almost four minute reaction time. He stated they are comparable to an intercity truck.

Mr. Gamache stated there have been no changes with the staff.

Mr. Gamache stated the cardio monitor came in and when the second one comes in the representative will come and set them up. He stated CO monitors for the crew safety has been put on the bags. He stated they replaced all their in bags and got saline warmers.

Mr. Gamache stated going with the calculated revenues their cash per trip is \$356.39 which is actually pretty good for how nonaggressive they bill. He stated next year when it becomes budget time they will be able to project their transfer numbers for 2016. He stated their cost per trip is \$803.00 which is extremely high in EMS and is volume related.

Mr. Gamache stated they are continuing to update policies. He stated the software has been updated. He stated Ms. Locke is working on the orientation and competencies.

Mr. Gamache stated they had one clinical complaint last month for how medication was administrated and it was handled in house.

Chief Pendergast stated it is interesting to see Tri-Towns call volume is close to Allenstown Fire Station.

Motion. Chief Pendergast made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Jodoin seconded the Motion. There was no additional discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Mulholland-Yes; Mr. Pendergast -Yes; Mr. Jodoin – Yes; Ms. Lorenz –Yes; Ms. Locke – Yes; and Mr. Paulsen – Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 8:02pm.



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SHAUN MULHOLLAND