

TRI-TOWN EMS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Wednesday, March 14, 2018
Pembroke Town Hall
311 Pembroke Street
Pembroke, New Hampshire 03275

The March 14, 2018 meeting of the Tri-Town EMS Board of Directors was called to order by Chairman Harold Paulsen at 3:00 p.m.

Present on the Board: Harold Paulsen, Mike O'Meara, Bob Bourque, Mike Stark and Dave Jodoin

Present on the Staff: Chris Gamache, Director; Stephanie Locke, Assistant Director

Approve minutes of previous meeting

On motion of Mr. Jodoin, duly seconded by Mr. Bourque, it was voted to table the minutes of the previous meeting.

Approve expenditures

On motion of Mr. Bourque, duly seconded by Mr. O'Meara, it was voted to approve the payroll manifests of March 1, 2018 and March 15, 2018, as well as the Accounts Payable manifest dated March 2, 2018.

Old Business

There was no old business to discuss.

New Business

Mr. Gamache stated that a one percent COLA increase for Tri-Town employees is in the 2018 budget. This would total \$3,661.62, ranging from 14 cents to 37 cents per hour. Adding social security, Medicare and NHRS, the total expense would be \$4,151.10. The current wage adjustment is based on 2014-2015 comparable wages of EMS services in the State. The paramedics have fallen behind others in the State by two to four dollars per hour. Of the 25 employees, 21 do not have benefits. Since 2014, they have been trying to bring wages up to make them comparable to similar services in the State. Half of the staff will have no wage increase at all if no COLA increase is given.

Mr. Jodoin stated that the increase has already been approved via the budget process. However, he added that they need to be consistent in the future. There should not be different rates for Tri-Town versus Pembroke employees, since Tri-Town employees are Pembroke employees.

Chair Paulsen said it is easiest to just follow Pembroke.

Mr. Jodoin said that the Tri-Town service is excellent, but he noted that the Pembroke BOS did not meet with Tri-Town on their budget because they feel they have no control over it. They are agitated and frustrated, feeling that Tri-Town employees are not theirs. He added that Pembroke has generous benefits.

Mr. Bourque asked if Mr. Gamache should meet with the Pembroke BOS.

Chair Paulsen responded that he should not. He said that this Board should have a relationship with the Allenstown and Pembroke boards.

Mr. Bourque said that Tri-Town should have the same COLA increase as Pembroke employees, which is 0.3%.

Mr. Stark said that Tri-Town employees should get a 0.3% increase this year and a two percent increase next year to mirror what Pembroke employees will get. This is not mandatory; it is just 'playing nice.'

Mr. O'Meara asked if the Tri-Town employees had been told they would be getting the one percent increase.

Mr. Gamache responded that they have not.

On motion of Mr. Bourque, duly seconded by Mr. O'Meara, it was voted to grant a 0.3% COLA increase for Tri-Town employees.

Mr. Gamache stated that, according to a per diem line rate adjustment in the budget, beginning in June, an on-call rate of \$2.50 per hour for eight-hour shifts would be instituted.

Mr. Bourque asked if the employee would still receive the \$2.50 per hour on-call pay if called in to work.

Mr. Gamache responded that they would receive their regular hourly rate for the hours actually worked, as well as the \$2.50 per hour on-call pay. An analysis of their call volume indicated that their busiest time is from 9:00 a.m. until 11:00 p.m. They will have two eight-hour on call shifts running from 8:00 a.m. until midnight. These are the hours when they are losing mutual aid as well.

Mr. Jodoin asked about the parameters.

Mr. Gamache responded that employees on call must be within a six-minute radius.

Chair Paulsen said there is an issue with firefighters being on call as EMT's.

Review of 2017 Financials

Mr. Jodoin stated that his numbers are unaudited but he is confident that there will be few, if any, changes. He said that \$30,000 was placed in the Capital Expense Account in 2017 and he will be putting \$180,000 in that account for 2018. Accounts over 120 days placed in the allowance for doubtful accounts total \$416,000. Therefore, true receivables total between \$80,000 and \$90,000. The current surplus of \$580,000 is 50% of the total budget. A reasonable fund balance would be about \$250,000. He recommended returning the excess surplus to Allenstown and Pembroke to reduce the tax rate.

Chair Paulsen said that Tri-Town needs to have a true CIP plan including all items over \$10,000. He instructed Mr. Gamache to prepare a CIP plan for discussion at the next meeting. Regarding Ambulance 3, he recommended having it on the regular replacement schedule, and if it needs to be replaced sooner, the Board could authorize that.

ComStar billing report

Mr. Jodoin reported \$148,000 of billings for February. It was a huge month. Allenstown billings totaled \$68,000; Pembroke billings totaled \$65,000 and all others totaled \$14,000. Collectibles went from \$536,000 to \$604,000, which is a huge increase. Write-offs for the month of February totaled \$44,000.

Director's Report

Mr. Gamache reported 117 runs in February. Historically, this number is under 90. Year-to-date, the service is 52 runs above the same time last year. Of the total runs, 42 were for Allenstown and 68 were for Pembroke. Mutual aid was given seven times and received ten times. The three-year call distribution rate is as follows: 44.36% for Allenstown and 55.64% for Pembroke. There were 73 transports in February, up from 50-60 historically. The average time out the door was 44 seconds.

Mr. Gamache said that during a warm weather spell in February, the Ambulance 8 air conditioning was not working. PL checked it and reported that there was no refrigerant in the unit. The ambulance was taken to Grappone where a leak in the evaporator was discovered. The necessary part has been ordered. A radiator leak was also discovered and that part, which is under warranty, has been ordered.

Mr. Gamache reported that two of the three employees hired in January are up and running. The third will complete ride time in March and will start in April.

Mr. Gamache stated that the Advanced EMT class will start March 19, 2018 and will run through the end of August. A CPR class will be conducted on March 18, 2018 and a course for the Allenstown Police Department scheduled for March 27, 2018 is already full. Of the eleven Tri-Town staff members needing to be relicensed this year, nine have submitted paperwork and the other two are in the process.

Mr. Gamache said they have scheduled two events for manufacturers to present portable vents. Any medic wishing to may participate. Tri-Town checked with Exeter ALS for recommendations for the portal events. The final decision will be based on finances and ease of use.

Mr. Jodoin stated that his yearend numbers don't agree with those of Mr. Gamache.

Mr. Gamache said it might be a dates/timing issue, but he will check his reports and get back to Mr. Jodoin.

Mr. Jodoin expressed concern about the amount of overtime.

Mr. Gamache said that he will review this, but that they are within the budget for overtime. He said that overtime is only ambulance time, not administrative or training time.

Mr. Jodoin said he is concerned about liability. When employees are not at their clinical best because they are working too many hours, problems might occur. He asked if Tri-Town might be taking on too much.

Mr. Gamache said that he carefully monitors the hours employees work for Tri-Town. However, it is a challenge to control their time worked other places.

Mr. Stark said that they could have a policy to control outside employment; they could come up with a number of hours and rely on the honesty of employees regarding their hours worked elsewhere.

Mr. Gamache said that Tri-Town employees are asked not to schedule other work for the two hours after their shifts end, and full-timers are 'subject to holdover.' He said that if you ask someone making \$20 per hour not to work other places, he/she will ask how much more money you are going to pay. He said he has not seen any safety issues in this regard. He has a good staff.

On motion of Mr. Jodoin, duly seconded by Mr. Bourque, it was voted to adjourn at 4:17 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Harold Paulsen', is written over a solid black horizontal line.

HAROLD PAULSEN, CHAIRMAN