

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
TRI-TOWN EMS  
Wednesday, August 12, 2020  
Pembroke Town Hall  
311 Pembroke Street  
Pembroke, New Hampshire 03275

The August 12, 2020 meeting of the Tri-Town EMS Board of Directors was called to order by Chairman Harold Paulsen at 3:30 pm.

**Roll Call**

Present on the Board: Harold Paulsen, Dave Jodoin, Bob Bourque, Mike O'Meara, Paul St. Germain  
Derik Goodine and Will Amos arrived late.

Present on the Staff: Chris Gamache, Director; Craig Clough, Deputy Director

**Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Mr. Bourque made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 08, 2020 public session. Chief St. Germain seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken on the motion.

Paul St. Germain - Aye

Dave Jodoin – Aye

Bob Bourque – Aye

Mike O'Meara – Aye

Harold Paulsen – Aye

Motion carried unanimously.

**Approve Expenditures**

Mr. Jodoin presented the following Payroll Manifests for approval: August 13<sup>th</sup>, July 30<sup>th</sup>, and July 16<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Bourque made a motion to approve the Payroll Manifests dated August 13<sup>th</sup>, July 30<sup>th</sup> and July 16<sup>th</sup>. Chief St. Germain seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken on the motion.

Paul St. Germain - Aye

Dave Jodoin – Aye

Bob Bourque – Aye

Mike O'Meara – Aye

Harold Paulsen – Aye

Motion carried unanimously.

**Old Business**

None.

## **New Business**

None.

## **Comstar Billing Report**

Mr. Jodoin reported billings for July in the amount of \$104,940; income totaling \$41,362; write-offs of \$57,552; and an uncollected balance at the end of July totaling \$827,000.

Mr. Clough said that many people are holding off going to the hospital because of the pandemic.

## **2021 Budget Discussion**

Mr. Gamache began his 2021 budget presentation, saying the new, proposed budget is up \$99,624, compared with 2020. The big change, he said, is an increase of \$60,838 for health insurance. For the 2020 budget, there was one family plan, one single plan and two buyouts. For 2021, there will be four family plans. Without this change in health insurance coverage, the increase is only \$30,000. Continuing, Mr. Gamache explained the difference between the gross and operational budgets; namely, the gross budget includes the CIP portion and the operational budget does not. He said that there were plans to purchase an intercept/service vehicle in 2020, which did not happen. It may be revisited later. There are no plans for CIP spending this year or next. Looking at operational trends, he reported a trend showing Allenstown having more calls than Pembroke; in fact, the percentages may flip within a year or two. Although this is trending to be the service's second busiest year, transports are decreasing. While 65% or transports traditionally involve a transport, the average is now about 50%. This is attribute to COVID-19. Both towns, he said, are looking at more elderly housing and assisted living facilities. The service, he said, has experienced a lot of public assistance calls, especially to elderly facilities.

Mr. Gamache next addressed a format change for this year's budget: Expenses are listed before Revenue. The columns for Expenses include three for the past three years' expenses, followed by the current year (2020), then the budget proposed for 2021, the difference between 2020 and 2021, and the percent difference.

Mr. Gamache stated that the Full-time Salary line is for a fixed, 40 hours per week. The budget amount includes a 1.6% COLA and a 1.5% estimated merit increase. No new employees are budgeted in the Per Diem Salary line, which also includes a 1.6% COLA and a 1.5% merit increase.

Mr. Bourque asked about the vacation coverage amount of \$10,255.

Mr. Gamache explained that this is for per diem coverage of full-time employees on vacation, out sick or with time off.

Mr. O'Meara said it should be clarified that this is for coverage by per diems when full-timers are out.

Mr. Gamache said there is a change in the Overtime line because the two non-administrative employees are on 48-hour shifts. This is to maintain competitiveness with other services in order to keep Tri-Town employees.

Mr. Jodoin said that Mr. Gamache should be ready to explain this before the budget committees of the towns, given that the goal has been to reduce overtime.

Mr. Gamache continued, saying that he is estimating a 10% increase in Health Insurance Premiums.

Mr. Jodoin, when asked about the breakdown, said that the town pays 85% and the employees pays 15%.

Mr. Gamache said that he lowered Dental Insurance a bit based on historical trends and because there are no staff changes.

Mr. Jodoin reminded Mr. Gamache that when a child turns two years old, he/she is added to a family plan.

Mr. Gamache said that Life Insurance is stable and Disability is up slightly. Social Security and Medicare are simple calculations. State Retirement is up a bit. Uniform expenses are reduced a bit because it has been based on five new hires each year. They will be fully staffed at the end of this year and should not need to hire any new employees. Looking at Training and Certification, he said they would like to replace the training mannequin, which was purchased in 2016 and has endured a lot of wear and tear. The cost would be about \$12,000. It could be put in the CIP budget or put off until 2022, if necessary. He said that two paramedics will be going to Concord in 2021 for two-year refresher training. There is some money budgeted for seminars; none for tuition reimbursement.

Mr. Gamache next stated that Legal Services remains at \$10,000. He added \$200 for criminal and driving record checks. Contracted Billing Services has a slight increase because it is based on four percent (4%) of projected revenue. Accounting Services are provided by Pembroke for payroll, expenses, and portions of audits. Liability Insurance and Unemployment are increased, based on 2020 actual expenses. Workers Comp is decreased, based on this year's expenses. Mr. Gamache said that he increased Supplies because actual expenses have been exceeding the budget amount recently, being supplemented by balances in other lines. This line, he said, includes oxygen. The budget for Fuel is level. About one-third of the Office Supplies budget, Mr. Gamache said, is a monthly fee for the printer/copier/fax machine.

Mr. Gamache continued, saying that the Medical Equipment Maintenance and Replacement line is mostly for service agreements or payment for service on the equipment. The Radio Equipment and Communications line has been reduced from \$2,500 to \$1,000. There are no plans to purchase equipment. The Medical Evaluation line is mostly for pre-hire physicals, which run between \$500 and \$600. It also includes evaluation of on-the-job injuries. Computer Maintenance and Software covers the service's Window Works program and IamResponding, the dispatch information app.

Mr. Gamache concluded his presentation of the expense budget by reporting that \$75,000 will be added to the CIP, as usual.

Mr. Gamache next presented Tri-Town's Revenue budget. As with Expenses, columns display three years of history, the current year and the 2021 budget proposal, with columns for the change and the percent

change from 2020 to 2021. The revenue is budgeted at \$508,464. He said that there are no more offsets for the towns' portions via transfers from the Fund Balance. Allenstown's portion is \$225,081 (44.27%) and Pembroke's portion is \$283,383 (55.73%). He said that they hope for more transports in 2021. Interest revenue of \$1,000 is from the CIP.

Mr. Jodoin asked what it would do to the Tri-Town budget to level-fund. the towns.

Mr. Gamache said they could remove the mannequin and the \$10,000 for insurance premiums increase. They could cut the legal line and the \$75,000 for CIP.

Mr. Jodoin said that if this comes up, Mr. Gamache should be ready.

Mr. Paulsen said he would not like to see the CIP contribution cut because they have worked so hard to build that up.

Mr. Gamache said he does not yet know where the wiggle room will be. He said he was directed to budget each line as accurately as possible, which he did.

Chief St. Germain asked Mr. Gamache when they last looked at their rates.

Mr. Gamache said it was in 2018 and he has plans to look at this issue as a fall project. He said that COVID-19 has been driving down the transport volume and they are hopeful that it will come back. Both towns have housing plans. However, he said, one-half of their calls are Medicare/Medicaid patients and the next 20% are self-pay patients. Any rate change will only affect 40% of their revenue sources. Also, legislation has been introduced which would effectively allow the insurance companies to set the rates for emergency services.

Chief St. Germain said this will drive the private companies out of business and everyone's taxes will go up.

Mr. Bourque made a motion to approve the 2021 budget of \$956,964. Mr. Goodine seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken on the motion.

Paul St. Germain - Aye

Dave Jodoin – Aye

Bob Bourque – Aye

Mike O'Meara – Aye

Harold Paulsen – Aye

Derik Goodine – Aye

Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Goodine said that Mr. Gamache did a good job with the budget. He said that he liked the format and the presentation was informative.

Mr. Jodoin said they have come a long way with the CIP.

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

Mr. Gamache reported 103 calls in July. There were 55 transports – a 53.4% transport rate.

Mr. Gamache said they have performed three (3) RSI's this year, and all were successful.

Mr. Clough said that only three (3) services in the area perform RSI's: Concord Fire, Hopkinton Fire and Tri-Town. Concord Fire has done eight (8) this year and Hopkinton has done none.

Mr. Jodoin asked about PPE supplies. He said he gets nervous with schools opening.

Mr. Clough said they get their supplies from State Reserves and have had no problems.

Mr. Gamache presented Tyler Bannister as a per diem EMT applicant. He said he would like to bring him on as an employee at \$15.10 per hour.

Mr. O'Meara made a motion to approve the hiring of Tyler Bannister as a per diem EMT at \$15.10 per hour. Mr. Bourque seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken on the motion.

Paul St. Germain - Aye

Dave Jodoin – Aye

Bob Bourque – Aye

Mike O'Meara – Aye

Harold Paulsen – Aye

Derik Goodine – Aye

Will Amos - Aye

Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gamache presented the application of Seth Chidister, an experienced full-time paramedic with excellent references. He said he would like to hire Mr. Chidister at \$25.00 per hour.

Mr. Bourque made a motion to approve the hiring of Seth Chidister as a full-time paramedic at \$25.00 per hour. Mr. O'Meara seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken on the motion.

Paul St. Germain - Aye

Dave Jodoin – Aye

Bob Bourque – Aye

Mike O'Meara – Aye

Harold Paulsen – Aye

Derik Goodine – Aye

Will Amos - Aye

Motion carried unanimously.

**Non-Public Session**

Mr. Jodoin made a motion to enter non-public session at 4:29 pm in accordance with the provisions of RSA 91-A:3, II (c). Mr. O'Meara seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken on the motion.

Paul St. Germain - Aye

Dave Jodoin – Aye

Bob Bourque – Aye

Mike O'Meara – Aye

Harold Paulsen – Aye

Derik Goodine – Aye

Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Jodoin made a motion to return to public session at 4:40 pm. Mr. O'Meara seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken on the motion.

Paul St. Germain - Aye

Dave Jodoin – Aye

Bob Bourque – Aye

Mike O'Meara – Aye

Harold Paulsen – Aye

Derik Goodine – Aye

Motion carried unanimously.

Chief St. Germain made a motion to adjourn at 4:41 pm. Mr. O'Meara seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken on the motion.

Paul St. Germain - Aye

Dave Jodoin – Aye

Bob Bourque – Aye

Mike O'Meara – Aye

Harold Paulsen – Aye

Derik Goodine – Aye

Motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned.