

Town of Sandisfield Board of Selectmen Minutes

Meeting of Thursday February 28, 2019 at 3:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Annex.

Those present: The Board: Mark Newman, Brian O'Rourke, George Riley. Other Officials: Town Administrator Fred Ventresco; Emergency Management Director John Burrows.

1. To meet with Randy Hanifen of Hanifen and Associates regarding emergency medical services survey for the Southern Berkshire Regional Emergency Planning Committee.

Chairman Newman opened the meeting at 3:30 PM.

Mr. Hanifen is doing a survey of communities in Southern Berkshire County to ascertain the feasibility and receptivity of region-wide ambulance service. He is trying to hear from fire and ambulance services leaders, as well as from Select Boards/Councils to determine their interest and support of the ideas and to gather suggestions and comment. He is meeting with Fire Chief Ralf Morrison in a couple weeks to do an in-depth survey.

According to Mr. Hanifen the average age in the County is 52. John Burrows briefly gave some other statistics such as in 2018 we had 150 calls and of that 101 were for emergency ambulance calls; through this fiscal year we have had 120 total calls, of this 82 were for emergency services. The Select Board explained that ironically we are at this time discussing whether to create a new Public Safety Officer position, one of the duties of which would be an EMT. Our main difficulty is being able to answer calls between the hours of 6AM to 6PM, the Board explained, and the mandate to have two EMTs on duty. Mr. Hanifen said that the two EMT rule is quite standard throughout the U.S.

Mr. Hanifen explained that they would leave all the volunteer services in a community in place, but build a regional service to supplement. A set up would probably include 3-4 regional units throughout the area covered. The board asked if his job was just as a consultant or if he actually would work on implementing such an endeavor. Mr. Hanifen indicated that he/his firm is primarily a consultant but they have and can implement as well. He will at least issue a report of short- and long-range things that can be done.

The Board asked what they could do for him specifically to assist in his efforts. He indicated that the main thing he was trying to assess is their support for the idea at this time, and that they had already given him what he needs essentially. The fire Chief would be providing him with the specific data for the survey later. The Board reiterated that they are in support of the

idea, of course they would need to see the species of any plan. We need to do something and soon.

Are the taxpayers willing to pay for such a regional service is of course an important question, Mr. Hanifen commented? He is to meet with House Representative Pignatelli tomorrow. Selectman O'Rourke asked if he would remind Smitty for them of the issues with Route 57, and that if we don't get help with this soon we will need a new ambulance every year. The Board also brought up the issue of the condition of Route 57 as a factor in providing ambulance services quickly since the roads are in such bad shape in areas.

2. Topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair
None brought up.

Meeting adjourned 4:35PM

Mark Newman

Brian O'Rourke

George Riley