

Selectmen's minutes of Work Session meeting on April 29, 2020

Members present: Mark Newman, Brian O'Rourke, George Riley
Joanne Grybosh by remote, Dolores Harasyko by remote

Called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Remote participation information provided for the public

Fire Chief Ralph Morrison and John Burrows present to discuss the Ambulance Enterprise Account.

George reviewed the information he had on creating the account. The request has come from the Town of Tolland. This is an accounting process. No final budget numbers will change, it is all transfers. All costs associated with operating the ambulance will flow through this account. Ralph responded that he is unsure how to separate the ambulance costs out. It will take a full year to come up with the total costs. George said to treat this as a separate company.

Ralph responded that several years ago he did a survey because they were at risk of losing their license because they were not available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. They surveyed the cost of ambulance service for the town which is about \$300,000 a year. Ralph stated that we have provided ambulance service to Tolland for over 40 years at no cost. He does not feel Tolland has the right to tell us how to spend our money. He reviewed the cost of billing for an ambulance call.

He is not objecting to setting up the account but just not at this time. He is extremely busy with the Covid-19 state of emergency and is requesting a year to set up a spread sheet to start separating all the expenses.

George wants a better handle on the total costs so that we can take the hard data to the nursing home and Town of Tolland.

George and Mark attended a meeting in Tolland, the residents had many questions. They would like specific data for them to present at their annual town meeting.

Ralph would be willing to attend their meeting and answer any questions they have.

Ralph does not have any numbers prepared for tonight. Brian reviewed equipment and buildings, perhaps 50% of the cost of the training facility. He does not want to use the amount of calls as a way of determining the breakout. Ralph reiterated he cannot accomplish this by June 20. Ralph reviewed the many vendors, annual costs, maint. contracts and agreements that go into the total. Brian would like to see a 3 to 5 year average. Ralph responded that he can do this over time but not by June 20. George said the first issue is to determine the cost to Sandisfield, second is to determine the cost to Tolland. Brian reviewed that Ralph is having a hard time quantifying all the costs from the many costs associated to the running of the ambulance when many items are shared with the fire dept. Ralph responded that he could give a better firmer number over the course of a year. They will start on July 1 with a spreadsheet separating all costs out. George would like the budget figures for Tolland's annual town meeting. Ralph reviewed that his accounts are running low now. George does not want an exact figure, he is willing to sit with Ralph and John to come up with the figures.

The estimate Ralph has given Tolland is based on actual calls. George suggested taking half of the total cost and charging that to Tolland. Brian is not comfortable using that formula. He wants a firm number.

Brian is completely in favor of creating the enterprise account but it is evident there is so much more than we were aware of. Ralph was able to point out just one item that they would not have thought about, uncollected costs. He would like to schedule work sessions with lists of questions and data from Ralph. He would like an itemized list of questions from Ralph.

Ralph stated that Tolland agreed to \$15,000 for FY2020 and \$30,000 for FY2021. Mark researched Tyringham and Lee, their costs are around the \$30,000 amount.

Mark stated that there are so many costs associated and intertwined between fire and ambulance. He would like to give Ralph a year to set up his program and start separating out the costs.

Brian said he had a discussion with a Tolland selectman and they want hard data and extensive numbers, they don't feel they will get the support from their Annual Town Meeting.

We will place discussion of articles 23, 24, & 25 on next Monday nights agenda. Ralph and John will attend with data and questions.

Meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

Mark Newman

Brian O'Rourke

George Riley