

# Preston Emergency Services Advisory Committee

January, 29<sup>th</sup> 2019

Special Meeting Minutes

Preston Town Hall- Conference Room

## **1. Roll Call:**

Co-Chairman Dave Paige called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

Members Present: Jim Bell, Tom Casey, Dave Paige, Russ Holland, and Jarred Harris.

Members Absent: None

American Ambulance representatives: Greg Allard, Vice President, Damian Rickard Dir. of Emergency Management & Operational Support, and Kyle Ridenour Dir. of Operations.

Also Present: Robert Congdon 1<sup>st</sup> Selectman, Melissa Lennon BoF Chair, Ruby York Poquetanuck Ambulance Rescue Captain, Andrew Bilodeau, and Andy Depta.

## **2. American Ambulance Presentation & Discussion**

Representatives from American Ambulance presented options their company could offer the town. AA is currently providing ALS (advanced life support) to Preston and is interested in providing BLS (basic life support) ambulance services. American is currently providing BLS services for many of the surrounding towns such as Ledyard, Griswold, Jewett city, Norwich, Baltic, Franklin, and Foxwoods/Mashantucket.

The proposal included the following:

- A dedicated ambulance to the town
- A dedicated regionalized ambulance (Preston could share a dedicated ambulance with a surrounding town)
- Provide supplemental EMTs
- Provide supplemental cross trained (fire and ems) staffing
- Provide dual-toned ambulance services
- Utilize predictive software to better serve the town
- Be involved in community events and sponsorships
- Assist with local outreach programs
- Provide monthly reports and make adjustments to contracts if necessary

Dave Paige asked what the potential cost savings to the town would be? Greg Allard stated the town would no longer need to purchase new ambulances. Preston would see a reduction in cost of supplies. He explained that our liabilities would reduce and Poquetanuck Ambulance would no longer need to pay for billing services.

Jim Bell asked if there were any state or federal grants available to encourage regionalization of services. No members or guests knew of any at the time.

### **3. Public Comment**

1<sup>st</sup> Selectman Robert Congdon asked if there are any standards for ambulance numbers or response times. Greg Allard answered there are recommended time standards. Chief Casey noted there are different standards between volunteer and a paid service response times.

Mr. Congdon asked if American would agree to a long-term contract. Greg answered yes, American is flexible with contracting.

Mr. Congdon asked if AA or any other agencies have been able to begin billing for non-service calls. Greg stated there has recently been legislation passed that will allow for more of this type of billing.

Mr. Congdon pointed out that Preston would be a benefit to AA given its centralized location to AA's current contracted towns.

Andrew Bilodeau asked if there is a time in which American could be deficient of ambulances? Greg answered last year less than 1% of AA calls went to a mutual aid service.

Andrew Bilodeau asked what the benefit of absorbing paid staff would be if American were to take over BLS service for the town. Greg noted that American would not absorb the paid staff but that they would instead allow them to apply to be American employees. The benefit to hiring these people would be their knowledge of the town.

Andy Depta stated he read in a 2016 report of 14,000 EMS calls, the average on-scene time was 8 minutes. He asked how AA's times would compare. Damien stated that AA strives to have a less than one minute responding time.

Melissa Lennon, BoF Chair, asked where mutual aid would come from when AA needs to utilize it. Greg said that mutual aid typically would come from Mohegan Tribe.

Melissa Lennon asked if Poquetanuck's ambulances would be absorbed by AA if they were to be contracted for BLS services. Greg stated that typically they would not use the ambulances as part of their own fleet.

Melissa Lennon asked about the augmentation program that AA has currently contracted with Franklin. Greg described the program as a dual-toned response. Franklin still has the ability to respond and has priority patient care, but if no ambulance crew responds, American is already en route. This option does not cost the town, but AA does control the billing for these calls.

Andrew Bilodeau noted to the group that if AA took over the BLS transports, all funds currently being generated and being used to assist with paying for current paid staff would no longer exist.

Andrew Bilodeau asked if AA has provided fire fighters into a community yet and asked if there are any legal issues that would need to be addressed before Preston was to utilize this option. Greg stated they have not provided fire fighters and that all legal aspects would be researched prior to any contract being signed.

Ruby York, PQVFD Rescue Captain, noted the cost to outfit a large number of AA supplied firefighting staff with proper gear.

#### ***4. Adjourned***

The motion to adjourn was made by Tom Casey, seconded by Russ Holland, and approved by the members at 7:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Jarred J. Harris*

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PESAC Secretary