

PATTERSON TOWN BOARD MEETING
SPECIAL EMERGENCY MEETING
PATTERSON TOWN HALL
1142 ROUTE 311
PATTERSON, NEW YORK 12563
FEBRUARY 29, 2016

MINUTES

PRESENT: RICHARD WILLIAMS, SR., SUPERVISOR
KEVIN BURNS, COUNCILMAN
CHARLES W. COOK, COUNCILMAN
SHAWN ROGAN, COUNCILMAN
ANTOINETTE KOPECK, TOWN CLERK

ABSENT: PETER DANDREANO, DEPUTY SUPERVISOR

Salute to the Flag and Roll Call.

Supervisor Williams called the Special Emergency meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. with 0 in attendance.

Mr. Williams stated as you are all aware, last Friday at 5:30 p.m. the people that were providing ambulance coverage to the Town of Patterson, started notifying everyone that they were ceasing all operations and staffing for the ambulance service. The Town received notice at 6:45 p.m. I have been scrambling over the weekend on a couple of different alternatives to provide coverage on Monday morning. Patterson Fire Department was gracious enough to step up with volunteers for the whole weekend, but as of 6:00 a.m. Monday morning, they weren't going to have anyone to staff the ambulance. At the end of the day, I worked out an agreement with EMStar, which you have in front of you. They will provide the same service we were receiving from TransCare for a slightly higher cost. TransCare was \$19.00 per EMT per hour and EMStar is providing that service now for \$21.00 per hour, which is down from their original proposal. I was able to work out some details with them so, we could get a better price. The original price was \$28.00 per EMT per hour.

Mr. Cook stated we didn't have to hire anyone or any of these folks over the weekend, because Patterson Fire Department stepped up and provided the coverage.

Mr. Williams stated correct. I did bring in the former TransCare employees. Six (6) came in, two contacted me and I picked up a third. To staff this ambulance for the hours we need to cover, will probably take about twenty (20) part-time people. I didn't have enough to provide long term coverage, but we were getting there. At the end of the day, this was a better option because of the insurance issues and having the employees. I will tell you, in talking to everyone long term, it was everyone's opinion that the Town should be hiring the staffing and not going private for a number of different reasons. One is, we have insurance with the staff, but primarily talking with a lot of the people that worked for TransCare, have the same opinion that there were good employees and bad employees. Working for TransCare sometimes we didn't have a choice in Patterson whether it was a good employee or a bad employee riding that ambulance. There was one in particular that was transferred out of Putnam County that was recently transferred back in, that everyone was very concerned about. That individual was putting lives at risk, rather than saving. Going forward, we may want to rethink how we are doing this.

Mr. Cook stated this resolution covers us through the end of 2016.

Mr. Williams stated correct.

Mr. Cook stated so we have time to think about what we want to do.

Mr. Rogan stated and it allows us to break the agreement upon thirty a (30) day written notice.

Mr. Williams stated one of the problems we had when they gave us the proposal for \$28.00 per hour, was it was a short term solution. By extending it out, they were willing to give us a better price. There are more assurances that they will staff up to accommodate Patterson. If they do it

for thirty (30) days and we all of a sudden drop the contract, they are left holding the bag. They still have to pay these people or they have to let them go.

Mr. Burns stated the insurance is on us or them.

Mr. Williams stated on them.

Mr. Burns stated so, they provide liability insurance for the acts of their employees.

Mr. Williams stated yes.

Mr. Burns stated if they are riding with shirts that say, "Town of Patterson", even though it is EMStar, do we have a layer of coverage above us.

Mr. Williams stated I am currently working out those issues to make sure that we are covered. I sent Brian Miles an email, he is getting us a proposal and checking to make sure we are covered. I have given him the full story about what is going on.

Mr. Burns stated what do we think the impact is going to be.

Mr. Williams stated it may increase the amount of calls that they will have to respond to.

Mr. Burns stated but the County doesn't have a time frame as to when.....

Mr. Williams stated I haven't talked to Tony about when they are going to set up the LS4's. I don't know why they didn't put BLS4 back on. EMStar is coming in to take over the County program, but not only the County program. Brewster is using TransCare, they are not going to use EMStar. Pawling was using TransCare. This was many communities that all of a sudden they had to ramp up. Now they can go after TransCare's employees, which is exactly what they did and actually, I encouraged some of their employee's to go over and work with EMStar to get them there. Having the equipment is a whole other thing, until TransCare puts their equipment up.

Mr. Burns stated if we bought the Putnam Lake ambulance, is there any way that could figure into.....

Mr. Cook stated we didn't do that yet.

Mr. Burns stated we have to buy it. Did we pass a resolution.

Mr. Williams stated we have not passed a resolution to buy it yet. We just acknowledged our interest.

Mr. Burns stated is there any reason we should look at doing something for that or seeing if EMStar would staff that, as well. Why help the County out, if potentially, we want to use the ambulance ourselves.

Mr. Williams stated there is a lot to go through if the Town is going to run that ambulance. We have to get a certificate of need, approval from the State Health Department to run it and we have to make sure it is all set up the way it needs to be set up with the drugs and paraphernalia. There are a lot of steps before we can put that out in the field.

Mr. Burns stated do we waive our interest in the ambulance and tell EMStar to go buy it from Putnam Lake and put it on the road with their personnel as BLS4.

Mr. Williams stated we could, but I would imagine what they are going to do is pick-up TransCare (inaudible). They are in bankruptcy court. Patterson's ambulance is over at Highway and I'm waiting to get a written report from Highway on the condition of the ambulance so, we can talk about it further.

Mr. Burns stated a lot of times the calls that were covered by the Patterson Fire Department, they had BLS4 going with them. They would put people on and TransCare Paramedic would show up in their own unit and then Patterson ambulance would show up separately. How does that impact Patterson.

Mr. Williams stated usually when they have that happen, most of time the Patterson ambulance would do the transport. BLS was a transport vehicle, as opposed to Medic One, which was just a fly car with ALS.

Mr. Burns stated I guess what I was wondering, is this going to impact the ability of Patterson Fire Department by not having Medic One. Is it going to impact the ability of Patterson Fire Department to respond to some of these calls that they have been covering.

Mr. Williams stated it is difficult to say. If you look at the numbers, we are responding to about 2.2 to 2.4 calls a day. It is only when you get two calls coming in at the same time that you have the problem of dispatching. What they typically do right now, is dispatch Patterson on the first call and on the second call they will go to a mutual aide. Either they will call for Kent, Lake Carmel or Pawling to respond. After ten minutes they go to the next person.

Mr. Burns stated a lot of times the people who respond from the Patterson Fire Department were not EMT's, they were paramedics. Do I have it backwards.

Mr. Williams stated no, they were EMT's. Paramedics are the ALS.

Mr. Burns stated it shouldn't impact Patterson Fire Departments ability to respond to calls and coverage.

Mr. Williams stated no.

Mr. Cook stated in reading this, the coverage is from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. and then it's the Patterson Fire Department.

Mr. Williams stated its 10:00 p.m. at night until 6:00 a.m., twenty days per month.

Mr. Cook stated the other ten days, the Patterson Fire Department will cover.

Mr. Williams stated correct. They have been doing that. They said they would do it for a limited duration, but they continued. At some point, they are going to start faulting.

Mr. Cook stated ok. With us having EMStar, will we continue to be part of mutual aid activity.

Mr. Williams stated yes.

Mr. Cook stated none of the community get involved with charging back.

Mr. Williams stated no, they don't, but because other communities have been paying per staffing before we are, there have been some back-and-forth about withholding service on a mutual aide. There are different levels of calls. Brewster or New Fairfield, if they dispatch their ambulance into Patterson, it's not available to their residents. There have been some talks about not responding to the lower ranking calls.

Mr. Cook introduced the following **Resolution for Acceptance of Agreement for Ambulance Staffing:**

R-0216-06

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Patterson was notified by Patterson Fire Department and Putnam Lake Fire Department of their intent to cease twenty four (24) hour a day, seven (7) days a week ambulance service as of July 1, 2015 due to the lack of available volunteer personnel; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Patterson determined that providing 24 hour, 7 day per week ambulance services was critical to the safety and welfare of Town residents and others; and

WHEREAS, by agreement dated July 13, 2015, the Town of Patterson contracted with TC Hudson Valley Ambulance Corp. ("TransCare") to supplement the volunteer ambulance service provided by the Patterson Fire Department by providing two Emergency Medical Technicians

("EMTS") at a cost of \$19.00 per EMT per hour; and

WHEREAS, on February 26, 2016 at approximately 6:45 p.m. the Town received notification that TransCare had ceased its operations as of approximately 5:30 p.m.; and

WHEREAS, cessation of the TransCare operation would leave the Town of Patterson without 24 hour, 7 day per week ambulance service beginning as of 6:00 a.m. on February 29, 2016, thereby threatening the safety and welfare of Town residents and others; and

WHEREAS, Empire State Ambulance Corp. d/b/a EMStar Ambulance ("EMStar") has offered the Town of Patterson a contract in the form annexed hereto to provide supplemental volunteer ambulance staffing with two (2) certified Emergency Medical Technicians to supplement the Patterson Fire Department volunteer ambulance staffing at a cost of \$21.00 per EMT per hour; and

WHEREAS, a number of the former TransCare employees previously assigned to the Patterson Fire Department ambulance are now employees of EMStar, thus promoting increased efficiency and reducing the time needed for orientation and training necessary to utilize the Patterson Fire Department ambulance; and

WHEREAS, EMStar Ambulance has the necessary qualifications, experience and insurance to provide the services requested.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Patterson finds that entering into the EMS contract annexed hereto to provide for EMT staffing to supplement the Patterson Fire Department volunteer ambulance service is in the best interests of the Town since it will provide for extended ambulance service, so as to promote the continued safety and welfare of Town residents and others; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Patterson hereby approves the proposed contract dated February 29, 2016 by and between the Town of Patterson and EMStar to provide two certified Emergency Medical Technicians to supplement the volunteer ambulance staffing at a cost of \$21.00 per EMT per hour; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Patterson hereby approves and ratifies the execution of said contract and all other actions heretofore taken by the Town Supervisor in connection with said contract, and further authorizes and directs the Town Supervisor to execute any and all other documents, in a form satisfactory to the Town Attorney, and to take any and all other necessary or appropriate actions, to give effect to this resolution.

Seconded by Mr. Rogan. All In Favor: Aye. Carried.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Rogan made a **motion** to adjourn the Town Board meeting at 4:50 p.m.

Seconded by Mr. Burns. All in favor: Aye. Carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Antoinette Kopeck, Town Clerk