

TOWN OF BARNES
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, October 13, 2015

3:30 PM in the Barnes Town Office

Meeting Minutes

1. Call Emergency Medical Services Committee (EMSC) Meeting to Order

Guy Johnston called the meeting to order at 3:35 pm. He handed out the 2016 EMS budget worksheet for our review and discussion later in the meeting.

2. Roll call to establish quorum and verification of public notice

Present: Bill Pence, Guy Johnston, Rose Baldwin, Tom Renz, Dr. Heltne, Tom Krob, Chris Webb. Absent: Kara Foat. We clarified what constitutes a quorum for this meeting to occur. It is a simple majority or 4 members.

3. Approve the agenda

Guy asked for approval of the agenda. Tom R. requested that we move the tour of the EMS services facility earlier in the meeting to accommodate his work/call schedule, and that we finish the meeting in the EMS facility conference room. Motion was made by Bill and seconded by Carl. All were in favor to approve the revised agenda and move to the EMS facility.

4. Tour Barnes Emergency Services Facility

Chief Renz conducted a very informative and comprehensive tour of what is contained in and on one of the town's 3 fire trucks, the ambulance, and other equipment within the facility. He noted that all 3 fire trucks are similarly equipped. The one we reviewed carries 2100 gals. of water. A truck goes on all calls and ice rescues in the winter. The ambulance was newly purchased and equipped in 2014. It is dispatched to all EMS calls as well as fire/emergency calls. 911 calls are dispatched from Bayfield County in Washburn. In addition to the budget, the ambulance dept. does fundraising and has raised about \$30,000. Some of this money was used to purchase state of the art equipment, including the EKG monitor on the new ambulance. Also of note is that the town of Highland uses the Barnes ambulance service. They pay us \$4,000/year for this service. While touring the facility we learned that the plan Tom R. presented to the board and that was approved is for one of the 4 vehicles to be replaced every 5 years. This means each vehicle is expected to have a useful life of twenty years before replacement is necessary. Currently, our oldest fire truck is close to replacement. Tom said a new, fully equipped fire truck can cost between \$500-\$750,000.

5. Approve the minutes from the previous meeting

Motion made by Tom R. and seconded by Bill to approve the distributed minutes. Clarifications and additional questions by Guy were answered by Tom R. and Chris as follows:

- Is it correct that current EMS members on the department have to sign up, via computer, each month for a total of 72 hours of availability/staffing for potential calls? Currently of the ten members only six are doing so leaving four members who are not participating. The 72 hrs./mo. is correct; however there are not repercussions if they do not sign up. Not all EMS members are able to comply with the recommended call schedule due to a variety of personal reasons which Tom addressed for the committee.
- EMS personnel were given the option of becoming part of a statewide pension plan but turned down this opportunity and took an hourly wage instead? Chris confirmed this and said that the EMS staff voted to be paid \$10 for monthly meetings attended and \$10 for training sessions which are generally held in conjunction with the monthly meeting. A training session does not occur every month.

6. Approval of the committee mission statement—discussion and possible action

Motion made by Tom R. and seconded by Guy to approve the mission statement distributed for review at our first meeting. It read, "The Emergency Medical Services Committee assists the Town Board in providing and continuously improving emergency medical services for the citizens of Barnes." The motion did not carry. Discussion occurred regarding the word "continuously" as several members do not feel this committee should exist longer than 6 months to a year. While it is too late to make recommendations to the board for any budgetary action in 2016, we agreed that we should have information and recommendations ready for the April Town Meeting. We spent time re-writing the mission statement which now reads, "The Emergency Medical Services Committee recommends to the Town Board options for providing EMS services to the citizens of Barnes." Motion made by Dr. Heltne and seconded by Tom R. to approve the newly written mission statement. All were in favor and motion passed.

7. Committee goals and objectives, including a proposed timeline for achieving them—discussion and possible action

Guy distributed the list of Bayfield, Douglas, and Sawyer counties EMS providers for our information. Paramedic support has been a question and concern especially where certain drugs like narcotics need to be administered. Dr. Heltne asked where paramedics are dispatched. Tom R. stated that there are 3 areas that assist us-- Sawyer County, Gold Cross, and Ashland. He added that Sawyer County has been especially responsive to our requests. Should air transport be required, the fire service sets up the landing pad while the ambulance is in route. We learned on our facility tour that we have state of the art equipment and protocols. The main issue continues to be EMT staffing.

Bill suggested we decide 3-4 areas to gather comparative data from other services such as Sawyer County, Gold Cross, Great Divide, etc. Collecting data and identifying the players will give us a baseline of current services in addition to our own. Bill will draft the major categories to address this objective at our next meeting.

Another objective we identified is to put together a list of data points to help us get a better understanding on the current service level. This would include data on transport time, intercept time, how many transfers happen/run, whether there are seasonal variations, etc. Tom referenced the WARD data system that is common to us and other emergency service areas. Tom will provide information on what we can pull from the system. Dr. Heltne and Guy will collaborate on the questions for review at our next meeting. All committee members are welcome to give Bill or Dr. Heltne input on their action items as well as to Bill on major categories.

Guy summarized and suggested that categorically there are three areas of exploration moving forward:

- Continue as is
- Consolidate and/or partner with other services
- Provide a new service

Working on collecting data will enable us to better evaluate and make recommendations on current and future EMS services.

Discussion and decisions were made about future meeting dates and times. Our next scheduled time of Oct. 20th does not work for most committee members. We established the following schedule:

- Monday Oct. 26th at 7 pm
- Monday Nov. 9th at 7 pm
- Monday Nov. 30th at 7 pm

Guy distributed an article for our review on design and response challenges in EMS systems.

8. Review and Discussion of 2015 budget documents presented by Tom Renz and Chris Webb

This item was tabled to our next meeting

9. Adjourn

Motion made by Bill and seconded by Carl to adjourn the meeting at 6:10 pm. Motion carried with the comment that we will make a better effort to adhere to our agreed upon 1- 1 ½ hours max./meeting.