

Emergency Medical Service Committee Meeting

June 15,2020

Location: Barnes Town Hall

Time: 0900 hrs.

Attendance: Donna Porter, Rose Baldwin, Carl Heltne, Guy Johnston, Tom Renz and Stephane Marshall

Absent: Diane Rupnow

Meeting called to order at 0900 hrs.

Roll was completed and a quorum was established. Verification of public notice was noted.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda and the minutes from the previous meeting. After discussion this motion was carried.

A discussion was held on the topic of a "Police & Fire Commission. This topic had originally been placed on the table at the December 2019 meeting and tabled until further study could be accomplished. Discussion include the roles, responsibility and need of such a commission within the framework of the Town of Barnes governance structure. Such a commission was historically enacted by the Wisconsin legislature to "remove the administration of fire and police departments from city politics and to place it in the hands of impartial and nonpolitical citizens boards." A motion was made by Carl E. Heltne and seconded by Rose Baldwin the reads as follows:

"The Emergency Medical Services Committee recommends that the Town of Barnes Board develop by statute, a Fire and Ambulance Commission consistent with the directives of the Wisconsin Legislature and would have the following scope of authority:

- Appoint, suspend, or remove the chief of police, fire or combined protective services. [Wis. Stat. 62.13 (3)]
- Approve all appointments made by the chief(s), including the promotion of subordinates. [Wis. Stat.62.13 (4)(a)]
- Approve and control competitive examinations used to judge suitability for appointment of subordinates. [Wis. Stat. 62.13 (4)(d)]
- Approve each list of individuals determined to be eligible for appointment. [Wis.Stat.62.13(4)(a)]
- Suspend the chief of the department or subordinates pending the filing and hearing of charges against them. [Wis. Stat.62.13 (3), (5)(a)]
- Initiate charges against the chief of a department or any subordinate. [Wis.Stat.62.13 (5)(b)]
This should be avoided if possible and the Commission should seek legal advice to ensure proper mechanisms are put in place to ensure the person charged receives due process.
- Hear charges filed against the chief or a department or a subordinate, make findings and determinations and impose penalties. [Wis.Stat.62.13 (5)(d)(e)]
- Hear appeals of disciplinary actions initiated by the chief of a department against any subordinate. [Wis. Stat.62.13 (5)(d)]

- Under Wis. Stat. 62.13(6) such commissions in cities and villages can be granted additional authority referred as “optional powers” and the committee would encourage to board to make careful considerations of such authority.

The motion was approved unanimously.

The Emergency Medical Services Committee whose mission is to recommend to the Town Board options for providing Emergency Medical Services to the citizens of Barnes does not see the development of such a commission as noted above to render its work redundant. Efforts to achieve this mission are constantly evolving and a dedicated body to access status and opportunities of the Barnes EMS is of importance in the committee’s view.

The 2019 Annual Report of the Barnes Ambulance Department was reviewed. Discussion centered around the thoroughness to this report and the facts provided. It as noted that this report conveyed information in a more digestible manner than previous attempts.

A review of Barnes EMS preparedness pertaining to COVID-19 situation was undertaken. Information was provided by Tom Renz and Donna Porter. The EMS service is prepared with reference to PPE and there is ongoing review and education at the local and county level. The Town of Barnes has been proactive in communication and providing information to the public with respect to public safety. The committee expressed its appreciation for these efforts.

After this review a motion was made, seconded, and approved to recommend to the Town of Barnes Board that the Town continues to publicize and support the CDC recommendations with refence to COVID-19 to the citizens of Barnes and visitors to this community.

Other outstanding concerns were discussed with the acknowledgement that they could not be acted upon at this time. They included the following:

- Current staffing- information was reviewed that noted this has improved significantly with the addition of staff. The goal is to always have one person available each 12 hours and that there is overlapping coverage. There had been improvement in access to care in a timely manner.
- Communication by the Town of Barnes Fire and EMS departments to the citizens was brought to the table. It was felt that there should be exploration of other instruments over and above the Town of Barnes Website and Facebook page. The sentiment of the committee was that such communication would reveal to the citizens the comprehensive work that these services have been doing and their efforts to constantly improve, supported by the Town of Barnes Board, are to be commended and shared via variety of instruments that are now readily available.
- Community Paramedics and now Community EMT per Wisconsin Statute 256.21 merits further discussion and actions to enhance the quality of life of the citizens to Barnes. This topic was suggested for ongoing consideration by this committee.
- Inquiries were made regarding status of the discussions with Sawyer County EMS and the status of any Bayfield County wide activity.
- Stephane Marshall was introduced and welcomed as the new alternative committee member.

A motion was made, seconded, and approved to adjourn at 1034 hour.

Respectfully Submitted by Carl E. Heltne

