

**TOWN OF BARNES
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday, Nov 9, 2015
7:00 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 7:02 pm.

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

Present: Bill Pence, Guy Johnston, Rose Baldwin, Dr. Carl Heltne, Chris Webb, Kara Foat, Tom Krob.

Absent: Tom Renz

3. Approve the agenda

Guy asked for approval of the agenda. Motion was made by Rose and seconded by Bill. All were in favor.

4. Approve the minutes from the previous meeting 10/26/15

Motion made by Chris and seconded by Dr. Heltne to approve the distributed minutes.

Approved with the following clarifications:

- Item 5: EMT pay is \$25/hr. (instead of per call) and \$15 when they are on standby for a fire run, parade duty, etc.
- Cost of operating the ambulance/year (equipment) is \$8,100.
- Item 6: Added North Memorial to our list of service providers; they are a complete ambulance service.
- Item 7: changed "Watson" to full name of "Watson Analytics."

5. Review EMS Provider list and finalize for visitation-discussion

Guy distributed a list of EMS Providers in Bayfield, Douglas, Sawyer, and Burnett Counties. Chris also distributed a map with Bayfield County Ambulance Jurisdictions. This will help us to identify contacts for each area. Dr. Heltne asked that we clarify our purpose. Benchmarking is one reason to talk with other county contacts about their EM services. He also wants to know what questions we will ask them. Bill has put together a list of criteria we can work from. Many of the questions we can ask of all of them whether we get answers back or not. We agreed that we cannot ask age or gender related questions. What we ask higher level providers, however, will be different from what we ask contacts who have services similar to TOB. Dr. Heltne suggested we approach the questions as a mini RFP. Action Item: He will work with Bill on refining the questions and send a rough draft to the rest of the committee members for review/input. There was a motion by Bill seconded by Dr. Heltne to approve the provider list. Tom Renz will be asked to put names to all the contacts and Chris suggested that Guy also contact Jan Victorson in Washburn as she has this information for Bayfield County.

6. Review Ambulance run data YTD - discussion

Dr. Heltne reported that Tom Renz has finished all of 2015. He gave examples of how data is categorized--from the 911 call to arrival at the ambulance bay, from time at the scene, time to transfer, time to final destination, etc. Action Item: He will continue

working with Tom to get data into Watson Analytics and this agenda item will be revisited in a future meeting.

7. Review billing process – discussion

Chris presented information on the contracted service we use for billing. They are called Life Quest (LQ) and we have a 5 year contract with them. They have 3 separate phases to their process:

Phase I—initial billing work up to 75 days and 4 letters: LQ receives 14%

Phase II—is work they do from 90-120 days and then the bill is turned over to a 3rd party debt collection agency. LQ gets 22% of what is collected.

Phase III—the account is greater than 180 days and goes to the credit bureaus. LQ receives 33% of anything collected on these accounts.

As Chris looked at the last 3 months of statements, all were coming in at phase I. If we interface with Gold Cross, for example, they would take over this billing process.

Payments are also coming into the town directly from residents. She will look into this further and wants to find out what is current and what is old. Guy would also like to know specifically what services LQ is charging so we know if they are charging for services appropriately. The billing is done by our assistant director and Tom R. would have to get this information for us. Action items: Chris will get further detail from LQ so we can know if they have a coding process. She will also follow-up with Tom.

8. Review and discuss pension system

Chris reviewed the WI Service Award Program which is intended to assist municipalities and counties in retaining volunteer fire fighters, first responders, and EMT's. State funds annually match up to \$316.38 per year of service to the town. People are vested after 10 years of service. If they are inactive for a year and then become active again, they must start over. At retirement, a volunteer with over 20 years of service collects the full amount in their account. Volunteers retiring with more than ten years' experience (but less than 20 years) collect a portion of their account. In 2005 the TOB started to contribute to this program. YTD we have paid in \$46,233. The value of the Barnes account with matching state funds is \$95,412 including interest. Only the fire dept. staff does this program. Our EMS staff is missing the state matching fund since they elected not to do the program but to take the money up front for meetings and training programs attended. People who are both firefighters and EMT's can do both—pension and payout. When asked why this difference, Chris explained that our EMS staff is an older group with a few forceful people who wanted the money instead of the pension. It was also noted that any money not paid out is dispensed to all people in the pension fund. This is important recruitment information.

Bill asked Tom and Chris as board members if they were satisfied with the current level of spending. Tom said finding an answer is part of the work of this committee. Dr. Heltne said that it appears we are "capital equipment rich and personnel poor."

Statistically we know that the number of people 65 and older is growing at a rate of 20% and many of them have chronic health issues. Rose referenced an article she reviewed that talked about a paramedicine program in small town communities. There are pilot projects in Colorado and Minnesota. In an effort to bring paramedics into jobs in rural America, paramedics are hired into a community with an expanded role. When they are not on emergency runs they check on elderly and infirmed people with chronic health

issues. There are many benefits to this especially in helping to keep people out of the hospital, safely living in their homes, monitoring meds, and other health related issues. She will send this information to all committee members as it speaks to futuristic trends and potential changes that warrant our review.

9. Propose a timeline for completion of project – discussion

We agree that we want information and an update to be ready for the April Town Meeting. We need to talk further about what finished looks like. Meanwhile, we set the following dates:

Monday, Nov. 30th at 7 pm is our next meeting. We will finalize EMS provider questions. It was suggested that perhaps this be a 2-4 page packet with a fill in the blanks format. Dr. Heltne and Bill will present this for final review and completion.

Tuesday, Dec. 15th at 3 pm is also scheduled for us to meet.

10. Adjourn

Motion made by Dr. Heltne and seconded by Bill to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 pm.

Motion carried.