

Minutes of Selectmen's Meeting, Town of Freedom, NH 03836
Monday, August 13, 2018

Present: Leslie R. Babb and Alan G. Fall, Selectmen; Ernest Day Jr. was absent. Fire Chief Rob Cunio; Police Chief Josh Shackford; Karen Hatch, Town Adm.; Bill Elliott, Darwin Moulton and Larry Claveau.

Meeting was called to order at 6:30pm at Town Hall. Manifests were signed and mail was reviewed.

The board had called a meeting with CarePlus our ambulance provider regarding complaints and invited the area towns included in the regional contract. Those Selectmen present were Steve Grey and Will Farnum from Tamworth; Mike Cahalane from Effingham and Dick Fortin from Eaton.

Present from CarePlus was President Eric Damon; Marianne Beauparlant, Director of Business Development; John Poirier, Director of Strategic Development; Chris Bachand, EMS Manager and Dan Conger North Conway Area Manager

There were approximately 18 others present which included several Fire Chiefs, EMTs and Daymond Steer of the media.

Babb stated that the board had several concerns with response times and single providers on responding trucks. He also stated that the focus was to be on the contract and what corrections will be made to no longer be in violation of the contract.

Eric Damon President of CarePlus spoke to the concerns and admitted that there were serious violations.

Damon first addressed the response time and agreed that they did not meet the 3 minute sign in. He was met with employees to review this policy. Improvements are also being made at the station to have the whole house light when a tone is received to ensure everyone is aware of the tone. These response times will also be monitored from the quality assurance reports.

Next discussed were trucks responding with just one provider. Damon explained that they have personnel which have made it tight to have no "extras". Coverage will also be made by a supervisor or assistant supervisor if a local EMT is not available and one is being dispatched from Concord. Also more part time staff is being hired now to resolve the issue.

Babb asked for any comments from the attending Selectmen and the Eaton Selectmen stated that they had meet with them and are comfortable with his proposed resolution.

Damon also said that they are making changes on how they control and deal with issues and there will be more company visits to the towns.

Fall stating he had trouble with excuses but he expected these corrections to be made.

Babb shared from an email that had been received from State Rep. Ed Butler who will be on a study committee to look at the reimbursement problems that ambulance services are experiencing. Babb's hope is that if the reimbursement is increased that when our contract renews in a year and a half we won't pay more.

Effingham Fire Chief asked about the age of the trucks and Damon reported that a new one would be in service in 30 days. He didn't realize that the covering ambulance of a primary responding ambulances had to be less than 10 years old. So after the arrival of the new truck there will also be a 2 year and an 8 year old. He also stated that the backup ambulance would be 8 years old as well.

The Effingham Selectmen inquired about how the uninsured are covered and Damon explained and about the subsidies received from municipalities.

Madison's fire chief asked if there was a written protocol for employees when all 3 ambulances are out and Damon said that he is working on that policy and it will get corrected.

Babb thanked all for attending and stated that communication is so important. At this time most of the attendees left.

Babb continued with the agenda and asked for public comment. Mark McConkey stated that he was here for the Cormack issue but that had been cancelled. McConkey did go on to another issue which was how hard it was to do business in the Town of Freedom. He felt the deadlines were difficult to meet when not all assessing information was available online and the limited hours kept by the Zoning Officer.

Babb responded that there will be a warrant article for the funds to have the assessing data online; the town is trying to go the electronic route.

As far as the zoning officer hours they are Thursday office hours from 9am until 2pm and there are other tasks he has that he does those outside of those hours. McConkey felt there should be more hours as it was at times putting people off 30 days. Fall stated that that was part of doing business. McConkey said that having the cards electronic will take care of 90% of his concerns.

Department head updates were next and Chief Shackford reported that he had signed up for a class sponsored by Primex. Shackford also reported that the juveniles that had done the recent burglaries had hit 11 houses in 2 days. Restitution was already being paid.

Fire Chief Cunio said that things had slowed with 3 medical calls, a fire alarm, smoke investigation and a standby for the Police Dept. The F550 has been stripped and ready to park at the town garage. The lobster supper was sold out and went very good.

There was a brief discussion regarding a letter of intent for Ms. Watts; Fall to work on the draft.

Geraldine Lippincott had joined the meeting and voiced her frustration with the ambulance and advice given. She questioned the training of EMTs and did not want her tax dollars supporting this.

Meeting adjourned at 8:05pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Karen Hatch
Town Administrator

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Leslie R. Babb

Ernest F. Day, Jr.

Alan G. Fall