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**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

Special Meeting with Brewster Ambulance  
Wednesday, September 21, 2016 10:00 a.m.  
Town Hall Selectmen's Meeting Room

Professional Services Presentation

**Present were: Mark Brewster, Chris Di Bona, Chairman Cronin, Selectman Goulart and Selectman Zografos.**

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Cronin at 10:00 a.m.

Chairman Cronin said that this meeting is for informational purposes only.

Chairman Cronin stated that the board called this meeting to gain knowledge and seek advice regarding ambulance services. He went on to give some background on the total number of calls received in 2015. Chairman Cronin said there were 889 combined ambulance calls reported in the 2015 annual town report with no information about how many were transported. Chairman Cronin added, based on the quarterly reports recorded by dispatch during the period of Nov 1, 2015 through September 1, 2016 there were 119 mutual aid calls and in that period of 7 months, A2 responded to and transported an additional 21 calls. Chairman Cronin said so we are looking at 119 calls of which we only transported 10.

Chairman Cronin said that after putting on three full time personnel at a cost of \$250,000.00, we are losing money. He added, it is not feasible to run a second ambulance, but yet we need peace of mind. We asked you here to see if there are options.

Mr. Brewster said this was not uncommon. With tremendous industry changes over the last 10 – 12 years the costs of equipment, training, upkeep, inspectional services and licensing services have all risen. Mr. Brewster added, if you throw in mutual aid calls with no revenue, the billing aspects and not collecting all of the revenue, this is essentially the "perfect storm."

Mr. Brewster said a lot of municipalities have migrated from a fire based service to a fire/EMS based service and they felt the squeeze because there is so much responsibility put on the education, training and equipment maintenance. When you take the cost of the ambulance transport at \$2,100.00, you only collect a fraction of that and with the call volume being low, it doesn't balance out.

Selectman Goulart mentioned that this town has full time firefighters, paramedics and EMT's. The town no longer has call firefighters who respond to ambulance calls for A2 because they have become disenchanted and the fire department lacks leadership and control. There is a 10 year old accounts receivable balance that this town can kiss good bye, but can't, because we can't get the information we need. She added that the board has had multiple discussions with the chief and he wants a full time department.

Selectman Goulart said her biggest concern was that when A2 is toned out, no one shows up. There may be someone to drive it, but no one shows up to back them up, therefore no transport is made. This results in cost to the town and all the while the person in distress is still waiting. She added that when A1 is out of town, she wants someone to respond as quickly as possible. The purchase of A2 was sold to the town because it was going to generate income. Not only does it not generate income, it is a constant expense to the town. She added that she was happy with the mutual aid service from surrounding towns, but it doesn't make up for the time gap.

Selectman Goulart said that she and Brett had recently spoken with a couple of chiefs who were able to run ambulances that are self-sufficient.

Mr. Di Bona said the number of calls is 1500 for an ambulance to break even. This town is not even breaking even on its first ambulance. Mr. Di Bona said as far as mutual aid goes, with Somerset and others, we are taxing their services as well. His opinion was that there needs to be a better mutual aid system in place statewide.

Selectman Goulart said if there was a big accident, there is a chance that A2 could not even respond to Rte. 138 which is 500 feet down the road.

Different hypothetical scenarios and options were discussed.

Mr. Brewster said that if Dighton were to give Brewster a heads up when A1 goes out, they would move an ambulance closer to town to give a shorter response time.

Mr. Brewster said he envisioned that Dighton would get a call. A1 goes out and the town lets Brewster know. Then if Taunton gets busy, Brewster would inform Dighton that they would need to pull that ambulance back and then Dighton would know that they have to call mutual aid.

Mr. Di Bona asked if an ambulance goes out, what level of clinician leaves from the fire department on ambulance 1.

Chairman Cronin said it depends. It could be two basics, but if it is chest pain or trauma, then paramedics go.

Mr. Di Bona asked if a basic ambulance for falls and such would be sufficient to backfill and then if paramedics were required, they could be activated at that point.

Selectman Goulart said she was looking for assurance that when a second call comes in, if A1 is out of town, we will know who to call and that someone will show up as quickly as they can get there and dispatch will know who to call.

Mr. Di Bona suggested that the town also keep A2 on the road as a backup only for use if something mechanical happens to A1.

Chairman Cronin thanked Mr. Di Bona and Mr. Brewster for coming.

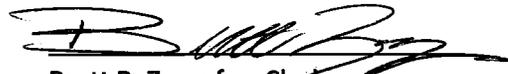
Selectman Goulart motioned, Selectman Zografos seconded and it was **VOTED** unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 11:25 am.

Respectfully submitted,

**Karin L Brady**  
**Administrative Assistant**  
**Board of Selectmen**



**Dean Cronin, Chairman**



**Brett R. Zografos, Clerk**



**Nancy J. Goulart, Member**