

Town of Wilton

Board of Selectmen

Joint meeting with the Towns of Lyndeborough, Temple, and Wilton to discuss the contracted Ambulance Service.

September 7th at 6:30 P.M. at the Wilton Fire Station:

Members of Select Boards from Wilton, Lyndeborough, and Temple were present along with members of the public.

The towns were brought together regarding concerns about paramedic coverage. The questions of concern: Is there proper coverage and is it 24/7? What are the daytime holes in the schedule? How do any holes in full time coverage effect response times?

Previously Ambulance Chief Gary Zirpolo would cover the gaps in all calls for a medic on the first truck to respond. Karen Artemik is now calling EMT level, non-paramedics to be sent on the call. An ALS paramedic is on as many calls as they can cover. Milford came for medic intercepts for the first week after Mr. Zirpolo left. Wilton acknowledges that this is not a sustainable model. Mutual aid is more of a Band-Aid and the current system of goodwill response without a formal agreement (for many towns in the Monadnock region) will also not be sustainable.

Assistant Ambulance Chief Karen Artemik explained that, in the event of a chest pain patient, she has automatic safe guards are in place for MACC Base to be informed.

The towns would like to see the written procedure from Karen to ensure that there is a standard practice in place. To be noted that an intercept and first responses are different from each other.

(Intercept will pick up medic in route, if one is not available to respond on the ambulance)

(The towns are asking for a clarification on the "real-time" process.)

As of now the dispatch center will call out for a medic if one is not on the schedule for that shift.

An update was given on the selection process for the open Chief's position: There are two weeks left with 6 resumes submitted so far. Wilton agrees to circulate the resumes to the Ambulance Captain and Assistant Ambulance Chief as well as the member town's select boards. The Wilton Board of Selectmen reassured the group that all three Select Boards will have the opportunity to assist with the selection process. Everyone should note that there will continue to be a gap in staffing levels even after this full time position is filled. Wilton has eight new on-call positions but these staff also have other fulltime jobs.

The towns of Temple and Lyndeborough acknowledged that they want to be involved at a higher level. It was noted that the three town advisory committee went away when the Town of Wilton took over the Ambulance service. The Wilton Select Board agreed that an advisory committee is welcomed but everyone needs to remember that Wilton will be in charge and have final decision on the Ambulance Service management.

A second fulltime person needs to be considered and Wilton wants Temple and Lyndeborough to stay open to the additional expenses that may be necessary. There are currently 40 people on the Ambulance Service. Employee retention is fairly good and recruitment is up.

There was a discussion about weekend rotation schedule changes due to fairness to the employees.

Next, there was a discussion regarding better collections for services rendered. Collection agencies have been consulted but nothing has improved the amounts collected. For reference, Peterborough goes to small claims court for collections. This group has looked at other options used by other towns. The collection agencies do note that collection of the revenues needs to happen to balance increased costs, and once a claim goes beyond 90-100 days the chances of obtaining the money rapidly diminishes.

Public Comment:

Tom Schultz stated that he thinks there is a management transparency problem. He continued by saying that when the public is told that a 10 year Ambulance Chief suddenly departs for compensation issues, it's hard for the public to believe the rational and this creates a bigger rumor mill.

The Wilton Selectmen's comments were that these personnel meetings were held in nonpublic sessions. The nonpublic sessions are used to protect employees and their personal rights. It is not a transparency issue.

There was a further discussion about the steps taken to collect patient information to use for billing purposes.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 P.M.

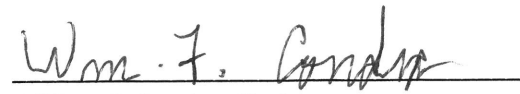
These minutes were adapted courtesy of Gretchen Rae, note taker for the Town of Temple. The Town of Wilton's minutes were unrecoverable due to a bad thumb drive.

Respectfully submitted;

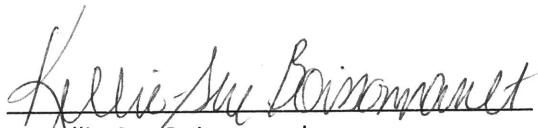


Pamela L. Atwood,

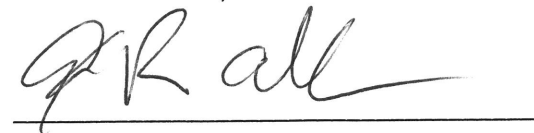
Recording Secretary



William F. Condra, Chairman



Kellie-Sue Boissonnault



Kermit R. Williams

1-2-18

Date Signed