

North Greenbush Ambulance Commission

February 23, 2021

Attendance: Johanna Flanigan, John Sroka, Jack Rogers, Kevan Seiden, Ryan French,
Kathy Allen

Meeting convened at 6:05 pm.

Discussion of top issues affecting ambulance service in the Town of North Greenbush:

Financial: Jack Rogers indicated that he had a meeting with Tony Germano, Town Comptroller, to discuss possibility and requirements of the Town bonding for the construction of a new ambulance station. Hypothetical bonding currently for \$3 million would be for 30 years at 3.5%. This would equate to \$161,652 per year to repay bond. The current 2021 Ambulance taxing rate is .90 cents per \$1000. With bonding it would increase to \$1.36 per thousand. For the average house costing \$223,448 and assessed at \$48,600 this would create an annual increase from the current \$43.66 to \$66.10 per year.

In reviewing the Ambulance annual revenue and expenditure report, Kathy Allen reported that the end of 2020, the Ambulance had a negative revenue of \$43,000. This was created as a result of higher payroll costs due to quarantine of staff, higher PPE expenditures and the reduction in call volume for several months. Fortunately, the Ambulance was successful in obtaining a Payroll Protection Grant in the amount of \$96,300. This more than covered any losses and was entirely forgiven. There will be no repayment. In addition, the Ambulance applied for Round 2 of the PPP program and was successful in being granted another \$101,000 for 2021.

Call volume/location: Statistics from EMS calls indicate in the Wynantskill area (12198) have an average response time of 6.29 minutes. Call response for Rt 4 – Williams Rd – Winter St area (12180) has an average response time of 7.85 minutes. Call response in the Defreestville area (12144) has an average response time of 10.72 minutes. From the period of 2017 through 2020 calls in the 12198 area totaled 2,131. For 12180 the call volume was 1,384. And for the 12144 area the call volume was 1,492. Statistics were also provided that show volume of calls per month, per day and per time of day. Print outs attached.

Medical Facilities: North Greenbush currently has two medical facilities within the district. The Kidney Care at 16 North Greenbush Rd and the medical facility at 101 Jordan Road. Currently under construct are two WellNow urgent care facilities. The WellNow located on Rt 4 in Defreestville is scheduled to open on March 17, 2021. The second facility located on Rt 4 across from HVCC is scheduled to open May 12, 2021. Both facilities anticipate having operating hours from 7am until 11pm when fully operational. These facilities could seriously increase call

volume for the Ambulance. Conservative estimations from their current facilities indicate a minimum of 250 additional calls per year.

New Building/location: In reviewing statistics for call volume and time of response, Commission Members concur that a more centrally located station is needed. Commission members discussed options for obtaining funding for construction. Kathy Allen indicated that, on behalf of the Ambulance, she sent letters to Senator Schumer, Senator Gillibrand, Congressman Tonko and Assemblyman McDonald to request assistance in finding possible grants to assist with funding. No response has been received to date. John Sroka provided information about all of the new construction in the Defreesville area, including commercial, townhouses, condominiums, senior apartments, and banks. In addition to the already existing churches, banks, schools, shopping plaza's and the RPI Tech Park.

Staffing: Currently NGAA has paid staffing 24/7 with one paramedic and one EMT. In addition, there is a second paramedic 5 days per week. Volunteers help to fill in for second duty calls when available. In discussions concerning the two new WellNow facilities, concerns were expressed that current staffing levels may not be adequate to handle the additional volume. Especially with the recent increase in calls to Van Rensselaer Manor to take over missed calls from Mohawk Ambulance. Information with costs was provided for different options that could be put into place to meet the demand. The next best option over current staffing would include one crew 24/7 and a full second crew for day time house 7 days a week. This option would create additional payroll costs of approximately \$120,000 per year. All additional options with cost are attached.

Town of Poestenkill: An update was given on the status of providing service to the Town of Poestenkill. The Town will be holding a referendum vote in March for the possibility of creating a taxing district to fund ambulance service. Regardless of the outcome of the vote, the Town of Poestenkill is not obligated to take any action. A district may be created, but no funding may be provided. It was noted that the Poestenkill FD appears to be opposed to changing their current ambulance service.

Future planning: The longterm goal of the Commission is to try to obtain funding to construct a new ambulance station closer to the Defreestville area. The shorter term more immediate goal is to evaluate call volume from the new WellNow facilities, VRM and town wide call volume to determine the need for additional staffing and what option may best meet the needs of the Town.

Meeting ended: 7:35 pm