

**Board of Selectmen Minutes
Meeting – November 14, 2012**

Present: Selectmen: Elizabeth Clarke, Carolyn Shores Ness
Mark Gilmore appeared later during EMS discussion
Town Administrator: Bernie Kubiak

Meeting called to order at 6:20 PM.

Minutes: Minutes of the October 24th meeting were approved in a motion made by Ms. Ness and seconded by Ms. Clarke.

Public comments: none

Selectmen's Comments/Announcements: Ms. Ness announced:

1. Complete Streets charette will be held at town hall on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday (11/15,16,17). There are plenty of opportunities for persons to participate in the planning process.
2. CodeRed is continuing to accept sign-ups.

Board of Health Comments/Announcements: Continue to check for ticks.

Appearances before the Board/ Hearings:

Hearing on the Transfer of Liquor License: MRKT Restaurant - Present: Atty Al Albano, Amee and Josean Jemenez (new owners), and Shelly DeJordy (floor manager)

The purpose of the hearing was to consider the transfer of a liquor license from the former Alina's restaurant to MRKT Restaurant, a new restaurant at the same site. Ms. Ness opened the hearing by asking what experience the management had. All of the persons present had several years in the restaurant business. All employees are TIP trained and the average years of experience is 35 years. Ms. Ness closed the hearing following **which Ms. Clarke made a motion, seconded by Ms. Ness, and voted, to approve the transfer of license.**

Joint meeting – Cable TV: Present: Atty Bill Sullivan, Joyce Fortune and Doug Finn (FCAT), Tom Fydenkevez and Margaret Nartowicz (Sunderland), Scott Bergeron (Whately) ,and Bob Armstrong (Conway)

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss and plan for a future contract with Comcast. The 10 year contract is due for renewal/ renegotiation in 2015. Attorney Sullivan said it was in the Towns' interest to prepare for contract negotiations now. He suggested a series of 3 to 5 meetings to consider the current situation and plan for future needs to avoid the pitfalls of changing technology. Some methods for determining future needs included: petition, internet survey, letters, and public hearings. Two items discussed were: expanding cable area and providing some sort of discount for home-bound elders. A great negotiating tool is doing it publicly on TV. Atty. Sullivan will put together an outline detailing the process going forward. The goal is to be ready to meet with Comcast in March.

Regional Emergency Medical Service: Presenters: Matt Russo (Deerfield EMS Director) Bob Ahearn (Sunderland Fire Chief/Ambulance Director), Gary Stone (Whately EMS) and Bruce Baxter (consultant)

Mr. Russo began the meeting by saying that the emergency personnel of Deerfield, Sunderland, and Whately have been meeting twice a month for a year to develop a sustainable plan for providing emergency services. Mr. Ahearn added that it's clear that the towns can't afford to do nothing. Mr. Stone noted volunteers are just not available any longer.

Mr. Baxter, CEO of New Britain EMS and a consultant, congratulated the towns for undertaking the study. He said the current system of on-call volunteers is the most cost-effective system there is. However, since the inception of the system, the environment has changed leaving it no longer viable. Without change the liability for the towns will increase.

The issues necessitating change are global in scope. The availability of the required human resources is shrinking for a number of reasons; people are more mobile, and employers cannot afford to let workers to leave two or three times a week. The younger generation has different values. The constantly increasing requirements and time that must be devoted to training discourage volunteerism.

Statistics about the time that lapses between the placing a 911 call and the time help actually arrives at the scene was presented. Of interest is the fact that 77% of calls occur between 9: am and 9: pm, working hours for most volunteers. 75% of those calls are within five miles of the station.

To solve the most problems, Mr. Baxter recommended Regionalization. Such a system would require two class 1 transport ambulances and one class 5 SUV. The primary class 1 ambulance would be staffed 24/7; the second class 1 ambulance would be housed next to it, staffed by on-call personnel. Deerfield already has the equipment to provide paramedic service. Ambulances would be housed at the S. Deerfield Fire station.

Information about the cost to provide service and how it is paid was presented. Mr. Baxter identified four "buckets" of insurance money: two government programs- Medicare, which has a fixed fee that is about 35% of cost, and Medicaid that pays 50%. Other sources include Insurance Companies that average 85% of the cost and Self-payers who generally pay 2 to 5 cents on the dollar. In FY'11 Deerfield had 750 transports, 626 were managed by the town at an average charge of \$738. 46.7% of those responses were paid through Medicare; 7.7% were Medicaid. Collections for that year were \$284,000, a 56% collection rate averaging \$423 per transport. This is not sustainable.

A discussion period followed. In addition to the many thoughts voiced were two thoughts that the need to be addressed:

1. What do people expect when they call 911?
2. What is it going to cost them?

Mr. Baxter advised that everyone study the report which he had presented and to take the time to think it through. A follow-up meeting date was set for December 10, 2012 @ 7: pm in Sunderland.

Following this discussion, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Priscilla Phelps