

MAURICE RIVER TOWNSHIP
Special Meeting
Ambulance Contract
Thursday, February 25, 2016 – 3:00 P.M.

This meeting has been advertised in accordance with the statutes of the State of New Jersey.

Call to Order

Discussion

1. Heislerville and Leesburg Volunteer Fire Companies and Township Committee exchange
Of information regarding the Ambulance Contract for the southern portion of the township.

ADJOURNMENT

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Special Meeting
Thursday, February 25, 2016 – 3:00 P.M.

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Present: Patricia Gross
J. Roy Oliver
Kenneth Whildin
Tom Imbarrato
Bob Whildin, HVFC
Walt Hughes, LVFC
Denise L. Peterson

Purpose of the meeting is to exchange of information regarding the ambulance contract for the southern portion of the township.

Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Gross at 3:00 P.M. and attendance was noted.

Discussion

Mr. Oliver explained the 2016 going to be a bad year for the township's bottom line; Leesburg Volunteer Fire Company was approved to purchase a fire truck in the amount of \$750,000, the township must replace one small dump truck and one large dump truck. The taxpayers can only take so much increase as all of these transactions depend on the taxpayers.

Belleplains service cost for 2015 was \$22,500 and for 2016 they proposed \$75,000. Mr. Oliver stated that the township had been fortunate in the past with the price charged by Belleplains and acknowledged that other municipalities pay more for this type of service. Mr. Oliver stated that he does not favor a bond anticipation note to fund an ambulance for Belleplains because ultimately it is still money the taxpayers must pay.

Mr. Oliver stated the in negotiating the contract with Belleplains a fairness to everyone must be met. The first responders of HVFC and LVFC do a great job and the he is not in favor of purchasing an ambulance. Additionally, Millville supplied a proposal of \$34,000 to do the southern portion of the township but their response time is a concern. Another alternative would be for HVFC and LVFC to input the increase into their budgets for the additional cost to Belleplains.

Mr. Bob Whildin stated that Belleplains has historically provided equipment to HVFC at an estimated annual cost of \$10,000 for bandages, breathing masks, gloves, neck braces, etc. Mr. Oliver reading Mr. Whildin's statement the total donation was \$16,250 which includes CPR training and first aid training. Mr. Hughes stated the approximate cost Belleplains had supplied to LVFC was also around \$10,000. Mr. Oliver stated if Belleplains was being paid \$22,500 annually through the Township contract and they were expending \$20,000+ to the fire companies in donated supplies that this is not anyway to run a business.

Mr. Oliver asked the fire company representatives if the companies would be able to pick up the difference in the cost. Both representatives stated the board of fire commissioners for their districts would have to make that decision. Mr. Oliver also stated that if the tax rate is affected then the northern portion of Maurice River will also be affected which does not present a fair situation.

Mr. Hughes stated that just the other Millville Rescue did not have a second unit available and a unit from Vineland had to be dispatched. The number of ambulances Millville dispatches to a scene is one; this presents a problem if more than one is needed in cases such as multiple car accidents and firefighter emergency situations.

Mrs. Gross stated Belleplains according to William King had supplied the township with the bare-bottom price but would like to regain the ambulance service contract with the prison for transport and 9-1-1. Presently the prison uses Lower Township for all transports and Belleplains for 9-1-1 calls. Lower Township has the most income portion of this scenario with Belleplains receiving payments based on insurance payments; presently Medicaid only pay \$58.00 for ambulance service.

The contract for the southern portion of Maurice River Township has been extended with Belleplain until March 31, 2016. Therefore negotiations with them must be prioritized.

Mr. Imbarrato stated that safety is a priority but giving an increase of this magnitude potentially may place a burden on the taxpayers. Mr. Imbarrato asked if the response time is that important if first responders are on scene first. He further stated that it is not the responsibility of the township to save Belleplain.

Mr. Oliver indicated that the township wants to work with Belleplain but must be fiscally responsible also.

Mrs. Gross questioned moving money from one budget line to another to compensate for the increase requested by Belleplain; this would include removing the ambulance purchase.

Mr. Ken Whildin inquired regarding the fire companies adding this expenditure to their budgets – what is Heislerville says yes and Leesburg says no. How would this work?

Mrs. Gross stated that in 2015 Millville had 184 while Belleplain had 294 calls; wouldn't this present for the extra expense allowance to Belleplain.

Mr. Ken Whildin questioned the many call made to County Route 347 for car accidents. The resources of the township are used and the road belongs to the county. Can the county be accountable for some of this expense? Mr. Oliver stated this was a good question but inevitably it would cause a county tax increase.

It was discussed favorably regarding going with a 5-year contract. Mrs. Gross was not optimistic that Belleplain would accept a counter-offer of \$50,000 this year.

Mrs. Gross asked what would be the repercussions of going with Millville. Mr. Bob Whildin stated that Belleplain would reclaim their equipment that they supplied to the two companies for use and a cost to replace would exist. Mrs. Gross added that Millville will charge for attendance at township special events at a rate of \$75.00 per hour.

Clarification from the clerk was asked regarding the 2015 rates: Millville was \$24,500 and Belleplain was \$22,500.

It was discussed that Port Elizabeth and Cumberland Fire companies pay for the above mentioned supplies out of their budgets.

Mr. Oliver suggested offering Belleplain \$50,000 for the remainder of 2016; then possibly a rate of \$75,000 each contract year thereafter. Mr. Bob Whildin felt Belleplain would not be in favor of this proposal. The clerk elaborated the essentially the 2016 payment would be \$6,250 less than Belleplain's original proposal for the remainder of 2016 ($\$75,000 \times 75\%$ (9 months) = \$56,250).

A brief discussion took place regarding the township starting its own ambulance corps and the cost associated with such an endeavor.

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 4:10 P.M.

Denise L. Peterson, Municipal Clerk