

DRAFT
Emergency Services Committee Meeting
February 2, 2010
7:00 PM

Meeting called to order by Chairman Boyd at 7:00 PM.

Present: Boyd, Kuncaitis, Goss, MacLean, Emerson, Galligan, Blakeslee, Miller – absent and 3 members of the public.

Emerson introduced Roy Meis from North Flight. The North Flight repost from 1994 is severely outdated. At this time, North Flight provides ALS for Whitewater, dispatch determines whether North Flight is deployed, our BLS is deployed or both based on the 911 call. Backup and standard mutual aid has been provided since 1984. Backup mutual aid is considered assisting others if large scale emergencies and standard refers to aid when a municipality has all of their fleet in service and another is needed.

Boyd asked about an accident that recently happened in front of the Casino.

Meis advised that 3 Mile and Garfield is similar in that it is no man's land due to the culmination of three townships at that intersection. Acme Township has made the decision that North Flight services their boundaries.

Kuncaitis asked how we stop this bureaucracy.

Meis stated that this developed piecemeal. At the time the decisions were made it probably worked and made better sense. Jim Reinhart, director of Medical Control for the seven county region deals with quality assurance, but his powers are limited.

Boyd stated that the committee is evaluating what to do next with regard to ambulance service. Should we upgrade to ALS? Procure a second ambulance? Commission a new building(s)?

Emerson asked what were North Flight's plans for the future in the Whitewater Township/Williamsburg area?

Meis stated that they have about 8 runs per month in Acme. They currently have two locations, Hastings and Garfield. They currently utilize a tiered system with Metro. Within the first 10-15 minutes at an incident, ALS would perform the same functions as BLS. A patient must first be stabilized before ALS can be performed. All metro firefighters are cross trained (as are ours) as firefighters and BLS. ALS requires 24/7 schedules for ALS staff. He budgets 8.6 employees to cover this schedule. BLS has come a long way since its inception as basic first aid.

Emerson asked about the Advanced BLS courses and if this might be the next logical step for us.

Meis feels that the upgrade is so minimal and that he is surprised that the certification is still available. He supports the Township in securing a new ambulance. Further, he is a proponent of municipalities

stepping up to the plate and taking care of its residents. There is also a certain amount of pride associated with this.

Kuncaitis asked about financials as he likes to look at things from a business standpoint. He understands that there is revenue to be generated from runs. ALS hospital runs command about \$200 more than BLS + Mileage.

Meis stated that many intercepts are non-collectable. Further he added that 75% of runs are daytime. An ALS program cannot run without 24/7 coverage unless you are under the Bennett Bill – which is a two-year study program to make the jump from BLS to ALS. There is then a possible two-year renewal of the program. Glen Arbor and Beaver Island utilize one person on call for a week or more at a time. At one point, Suttons Bay contracted with North Flight to cover daytime hours. They are also currently involved in a management contract with a municipality in which North Flight is given the staff, building and equipment to manage. His preference in a perfect world is to work with volunteers as they tend to be more committed. Emergency services are a luxury and the question becomes, “How much insurance do you want?”

Kuncaitis asked about what the threshold for a second ambulance. We currently have a population of 3300.

Meis stated that in his budgeting and management, an ambulance is depreciated to zero every seven years.

MacLean asked for clarification on the Bennett Bill. Do you need just the staff or the staff and the equipment? Meis responded that you need both.

General discussion took place regarding the arbitrary line between Whitewater and Acme. It was the consensus that we need to work with Inman, Acme, Metro, Rural and Whitewater.

Due to his absence, Pat Miller’s report was tabled.

Ambulance discussion – do we need a new ambulance? Since our current ambulance is 12 years old, it was the consensus that a new ambulance is necessary. Cost of a new ambulance was determined to be between 80k and 100k plus 50k to equip it.

Galligan added that an ambulance replacement fund was part of the Township budget when he was on the Board. He is not sure if the fund still exists. The cost of a new ambulance cannot come directly out of the budget.

Goss added that if the funding of a new ambulance could come without a millage, it would bring back confidence to the people.

Consensus of the committee was that there is a need to continue BLS and secure a new ambulance, not a second ambulance. The current ambulance will serve as a spare.

Discussion then continued regarding where to store a new ambulance. A new building that would serve as an ambulance hub at the Cram Road location with the ability for expansion of other emergency services was debated. This would allow for expansion over the next 20-30 years. If we added on to the

existing fire station, we would be in the same position in a few years – a need to build new somewhere else as the space to expand at the current location is limited.

Goss asked if we need a new building first. He is of the opinion that we need the new ambulance now. We don't have three plus years to wait for a new vehicle.

Emerson doesn't believe that separating the fire and ambulance is a good idea.

It was the consensus of the committee that fire and ambulance should be kept together until new facilities are available. Also, ALS should be readdressed in the future. It could be conjunction with a new ambulance and when facilities are available in the future. Negotiations should begin with the Band for mutual aid.

MacLean added that she is aware that Supervisor Lake is working toward this goal above and beyond the 2% monies.

Boyd concurred and further suggested the possibility that the tribe step up and provide the facility on their property.

The consensus was overwhelmingly NO!

Kuncaitis stressed the importance of marketing of the Township's emergency needs. The facts must be presented and it must be stressed that we need a new ambulance not a second ambulance. Further, we need an emergency services building not a fire barn.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 22, 2010 at 7:00 PM and Rural Fire will present to the committee.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM.