

**Joint Selectboards (Jay, Troy, Westfield & Lowell) Special Meeting  
Regarding Ambulance Service  
Wednesday, February 15, 2023 at the Westfield Town Office**

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**In Attendance:**

**Westfield:** Jacques Couture, Selectboard; Richard Degre, Selectboard; LaDonna Dunn, Town Clerk; Niki Dunn, Selectboard Clerk; Roger Gosselin (Via Zoom), Ambulance Representative

**Troy:** Gaston Bathalon, Selectboard; Anne Quirion, Selectboard; Robert Langlands, Selectboard

**Jay:** Tara Morse, Selectboard; David Sanders, Selectboard; Le-Ann Tetrault, Selectboard

**Lowell:** Jennifer Blay, Selectboard; Wayne Richardson, Selectboard; Darren Pion, Selectboard, Christy Pion, Town Clerk

Jeffrey Johansen, Newport Ambulance Service (NAS); Scott Griswold, Newport Ambulance Service (NAS); Matthew J. Wilson, The Chronicle

**1. Call Meeting to Order:** David Sanders called the meeting to order at 5:59pm

**2. Public Comments:** None

**3. Additions or Adjustments to the Agenda:** Jacques Couture would like to discuss making a joint Selectboard statement regarding why this change is being made and get the statement out to the media.

**4. Approve 2/1/23 Minutes (emailed in advance):** Christy Pion pointed out that Calvin Allen needs to be corrected to being from Lowell, not Troy. Jacques Couture motioned to approve the February 1, 2023, minutes with that correction made, Gaston Bathalon seconded. Motion carried.

**5. Review Revised Newport Ambulance Service Contract (emailed in advance):** Scott Griswold went through all the changes that have been made to the contract since the group last met.

1. Nature of Services – No changes

2. Organization and Oversight –

2.1 - Changed for dispatch purposes - Troy Rescue Division of Newport Ambulance Service

2.3 – The board was changed to a liaison committee

2.4 – The election of officers for the board has been taken out as it is now a committee.

There are no actions that will need to be taken so a board does not need to be formed. The wording in this copy of the contract still says board and will need to be changed to committee.

3. Equipment – No changes

4. Personnel – No changes

5. Insurance and Indemnity – No changes

6. Financial and Other Records - No changes

7. Exclusivity –

7.1 – The wording here was changed from providing services to the citizens of the towns to providing services within the towns. This is to clarify that service will be provided to anyone within the towns whether a citizen of the towns or not and that service will not be provided to citizens of the towns when they are out of the service area.

8. Sub-Contracting – No changes

9. Funding and Option to Renew –

9.3 – This section was added. Since a five-year contract cannot be signed this gives the town the option to renew each year for four additional years.

9.6 – This section was added. All four towns' budgets will need to pass at town meeting, and it clarifies what happens if they don't all pass. Jennifer Blay questioned what would happen if the budget did not pass and the towns are still required to provide ambulance services. Scott Griswold explained that the budget process would have to continue as usual, the budgets would need to be amended and re-voted on. Troy and Jay have an appropriation for their ambulance services and Gaston Bathalon questioned what would happen if the appropriations did not pass. Darren Pion noted that this is why Lowell put their ambulance costs into their budget instead of having an appropriation. Scott Griswold said that all the other towns they provide service for have it in their general budget.

10. Default – No changes

11. Term – The term for the first year will run from April 1st to December 31st. David Sanders thought Missisquoi Ambulance should be made aware of the April 1<sup>st</sup> start date as they were originally told service with them would be ending in mid-March. Scott Griswold let everyone know they would start earlier if need be. Jennifer Blay noted that budgets are not voted on until town meeting day in March, and if the contracts run from January through December how would that work. Jeff Johansen said they usually meet with boards in November and December to go over the budget and they sign contracts in good faith that the budgets will pass at town meeting. If this causes problems down the road, they could amend the contracts to run a fiscal year instead of a calendar year.

12. Amendment – No changes

13. Notices – They added the section regarding sending notices to both the Town Clerks and the Selectboard Chairs.

14. General Provisions – No changes

15. Signing – Contracts will be sent out individually to each town. David Sanders did not think that legally they could all sign one together. Scott Griswold noted that it does say it's a collective agreement though.

**Troy** – Gaston Bathalon motioned to sign the contract with the correction made to section 2.4 to change the word board to committee, Anne Quirion seconded. Motion carried.

**Jay** – Le-Ann Tetreault motioned to sign the contract with the correction made to section 2.4 to change the word board to committee, Tara Morse seconded. Motion carried.

**Westfield** - Jacques Couture motioned to sign the contract with the correction made to section 2.4 to change the word board to committee, Richard Degre seconded. Motion carried.

**Lowell** - Wayne Richardson motioned to sign the contract with the correction made to section 2.4 to change the word board to committee, Jennifer Blay seconded. Motion carried.

Gaston Bathalon asked if each town should do their own minutes. David Sanders said these minutes should cover each town.

**6. Subscriptions:** Jeff Johansen received the list of subscriptions from Jen at Missisquoi Ambulance and there are 189 active subscriptions that run out the first of August. There is no way to know how many people use it or how often and costs can vary based on people's insurance coverage and deductibles. There will be about 4 months left on the subscriptions once NAS takes over. David Sanders wondered if the pro-rated amount could be returned to the subscribers. Returning any money for the subscriptions would be up to Missisquoi Ambulance, not the towns. Roger Gosselin noted that the subscriptions are between Missisquoi Ambulance and the subscribers and Newport Ambulance should have no responsibility to uphold them. Jennifer Blay motioned to not continue the subscriptions once Newport Ambulance Service takes over and to make Missisquoi Ambulance responsible for returning any money to subscribers, Le-Ann Tetreault seconded. Motion carried.

**7. Possible Housing:** Scott Griswold explained that they have been talking to a business owner in Troy and the building owner is willing to do the renovations needed, but he is looking for a 5-year contract. They are looking at land also, but that would require subdivisions and securing funds which will take some time. It's a minimum 2–3-year process if they bought land immediately but they also don't want to rent for a long time. Jennifer Blay questioned whether the building owner was willing to do rent to own. Scott Griswold said that is a possibility. He was willing to give a first right to purchase but how many years until then is unknown. He thinks the building could be ready by April 1st or a couple weeks after and it would include living quarters where two employees could stay 24 hours a day. Jacques Couture asked who holds the lease, the towns or Newport Ambulance. Jeff Johansen clarified that Newport Ambulance Service holds the lease. Jeff Johansen said they will let the towns know about any changes to the housing situation. Jennifer Blay asked if they would be moving forward with a 5 year lease and Scott Griswold said they are and will also be looking for property for a long-term solution.

**8. Joint Statement:** Jacques Couture would like to get a person from each town to help come up with a joint statement to explain what is going on and why. The committee to create the joint statement will include Roger Gosselin for Westfield, Tara Morse for Jay, Anne Quirion for Troy and Jennifer Blay for Lowell.

**9. Sign Contract:** Each town signed two contracts with one original for Newport Ambulance Service and the other for the town records. See motions/seconds on page 2.

**10. Executive Session (if necessary):** None needed

**11. Other Business:**

A. Next Meeting Date: No next meeting date was set at this time.

**12. Adjourn:** Richard Degre motioned to adjourn at 6:51pm, Darren Pion seconded. Motion carried.

Minutes Submitted by: Niki Dunn, Westfield Selectboard Clerk