

DRAFT

Minutes

Ambulance District Oversight Committee Meeting

December 9, 2010

Committee members in attendance: Dr. Bob Seebacher, Richard Wishnie, Ron Dorneau, Bill Hamilton, Catherine Borgia, Barbara Gerrard, Bill Hanauer

Committee members absent: none

Also in attendance: Chief Sam Lubin, Richard Leins, Sue Donnelly, Jerry Faiella, OVAC Medical Director Dr. Nigro, OVAC Captain Loreen Mettler, OVAC Treasurer Alex Beck

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 by Dr. Seebacher.

Dr Seebacher began by announcing that the special meeting had been called to complete the budget discussion for 2011, as the Towns of New Castle and Ossining needed resolution of the amounts for passage of their budgets by the state-mandated Dec 20th date. He emphasized that the service provided to Ambulance District residents was very high quality, and that the community was pleased with the service. The next step is to enhance the financial reporting compliance, so that there is transparency for the municipality and the residents.

Dr. Seebacher said that the increase in the operating budget for 2011 was partially due to the fact that OVAC had not correctly accounted for Workmen's Comp and health and dental insurance when they made their projections for 2010. The additional costs for those items was paid by OVAC in 2010, and the anticipated 2011 costs reflect the new amounts. Dr Seebacher and Captain Mettler reviewed how staff is allocated when a call comes in to OVAC – they send a volunteer EMT, a per diem EMT paid for by OVAC, or one of the paramedics paid for by the Ambulance District, Captain Mettler said that the corps is very cost-conscious about use of overtime, and that the nature of the emergency often drives the decision about whom to send. Captain Mettler also reminded the committee that OVAC raises another \$500,000 to cover their own expenses.

Dr. Seebacher recounted that he had a productive meeting with Captain Mettler, Chief Lubin and OVAC board president Judge Ray Barlaam, where he asked that more attention be paid to reducing overtime costs and where a system of additional management scrutiny be put into place.

Dr. Seebacher reminded the assembled that this regional Ambulance District model was ground-breaking, and that systems were still being worked out. We are also trying to expand the services by expanding the district, which will further benefit the resident of the mid-Hudson valley.

The amount requested for the 2011 is \$542,930. The additional amount requested will be used to pay for personnel time, worker's comp insurance, and health insurance. The revised budget does not include raises for the paramedics.

Richard Wishnie commented that we need to set up a regular reporting system with the OVAC treasurer so that we monitor the 2011 expenditures against the district's budget. There was a conversation among those present about the need to see all of the OVAC books. Mr. Wishnie clarified that the Oversight committee is only concerned with the expenses paid by the tax district levy, not all of the OVAC expenditures. Mr. Wishnie praised Dr. Seebacher for his leadership in working with OVAC to ensure the correct information is being shared with the Oversight committee. The committee agreed to the new amount on the condition that OVAC provide regular financial information, beginning in the first quarter of 2011. OVAC treasurer agreed to provide additional financial information to the group in February. The committee agreed that OVAC would be paid 2010 rate until the financial information was forthcoming.

There was a general conversation about the issues that arise when paid professionals and volunteers work side by side. Several OVAC members said that there were some occasions of differences, but in general the relationship between the paid and volunteer staff worked quite well. Chief Lubin concurred with that opinion. Bill Hanauer commended the volunteers and commented that Ossining was fortunate to have such dedicated residents.

Chief Lubin updated the group on the insurance recovery efforts and commented that these efforts allow the Ambulance District to provide top-quality services at a very reasonable rate to taxpayers. Lubin estimated a strictly commercial ambulance service would cost taxpayers twice as much, or over \$1 million. Bill Hamilton asked how much of the billed amounts are uncollected. Chief Lubin estimated it at 20%.

There was a discussion about purchasing excess police cars from the Town of Ossining once the Town signed the police contract with Westchester County. Dr. Nigro and Richard Wishnie agreed to lead a fundraising effort to cover the cost of the vehicles.

The committee agreed to meet quarterly in 2011, and settled on March 17 as the next date.

Richard Wishnie made a motion to adjourn; it was seconded by Bill Hanauer. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Borgia,
Secretary Ambulance Oversight Committee.