

Special Meeting - **MINUTES**
LOCH ARBOUR VILLAGE HALL
June 4th, 2014 – 6:30 PM

The Meeting of the Board of Commissioners was held on the above date at the Loch Arbour Village Hall. Mayor McLaughlin and Commissioner Bolan answered the roll call. Also in attendance were the Borough Clerk, Fire Chief Mike Powers and First Aid Captain, John Hansen. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 P.M.

Present from Loch Arbour were Mayor Paul Fernicola, Commissioner Alfred Cheswick, Attorney, Guy Ryan, Village Clerk, Dan Mason and Deputy Village Clerk, Marilyn Simons.

Mayor McLaughlin announced that the notice requirements of R.S. 10:4-18 had been satisfied by delivering the required notice to the Coaster, posting the notice on the board in Borough Hall and filing a copy of said notice with the Borough Clerk.

DISCUSSION ON NEW AMBULANCE

Mayor McLaughlin stated that the Fire Department is in need of a new ambulance. It is at the end of its life expectancy.

Captain John Hansen stated he has been on the Allenhurst First Aid Squad for 30+ years and has gone through three ambulances. The ambulance they are hoping to replace is a 1988 Collins ambulance with 53,000 miles. Fifty-three thousand miles may not sound like a lot of miles, but there is a lot of time on the engines as they run while they are on a call. He stated that a lot of departments have gone to paid and as the paid departments don't do mutual aid with volunteer departments, they need to be more self-sufficient. They need a good ambulance. Their primary ambulance is a 2000 and that will become their back-up ambulance. They are looking at a Horton diesel ambulance.

Chief Powers stated that they were looking at ambulances three years ago. Costs have risen since then due to safety factors. This ambulance will have air bags in the back to protect the squad members. Captain Hansen added that the cost will be around \$194,000.

Loch Arbour Commissioner Cheswick asked whether that price included equipment and Captain Hansen stated it includes a stair chair and a new gurney, worth about \$11,000. The rest of the equipment will be transferred from the old ambulance and that is about \$20,000 worth of equipment.

Commissioner Cheswick asked how many calls per week did the squad answer, and Captain Hansen stated they had 350 calls last year between the three towns. Interlaken had the most calls, then Allenhurst, then Loch Arbour. They had a lot of non-emergency transportations.

Comm. Cheswick asked if the squad is reimbursed for any of their calls and Captain Hansen answered, no.

Comm. Cheswick asked how many back to back calls are answered, requiring both ambulances. Captain Hansen stated they had four calls where they needed more than one ambulance at the same time.

Comm. Cheswick asked if each ambulance only held one patient and Captain Hansen responded that they can hold two patients, but they prefer to only carry one at a time. They have to be able to carry two.

Loch Arbour Mayor Paul Fernicola asked if there was a regulation requiring two ambulances. Captain Hansen answered no, but they have to be able to handle the load. They do not have the backups they used to have. They need to be more self-sufficient. Wanamassa has a paid squad from 6 AM to 6 PM and they will not respond to mutual aid for Allenhurst during those times.

Allenhurst Commissioner Terry Bolan asked why not and Captain Hansen stated that he really didn't know except that it had to do with billing. They would have to bill Allenhurst if they responded here.

Captain Hansen stated that he lives in Ocean and pays a separate tax for fire and first aid. However, if he needs an ambulance, it will cost him another \$800. They will charge his insurance, but it is still a lot of money.

Mayor Fernicola asked if they have looked at used instead of new. Captain Hansen stated that by the time an ambulance is put up for sale, it is done.

Allenhurst Mayor David McLaughlin added that they only got \$5,500 for their old fire truck.

Mayor Fernicola asked if the back-up ambulance was only used for four calls. Captain Hansen answered no. They rotate them and when they send an ambulance for mutual aid or transport, it is usually the backup.

Comm. Bolan asked what would happen if there were multiple injuries and Captain Hansen stated they do have other volunteer towns on their mutual aid plan.

A Loch Arbour resident asked if the County or State contributed or regulated the vehicles. Captain Hansen stated that they do have strict regulations for the vehicles, but they do not contribute financially.

Captain Hansen stated that two years ago, they put in for a grant, but did not get it. They apply for grants every year. This year, they received a grant for SCBA equipment.

A Loch Arbour resident asked about donations and Captain Hansen replied that they do get donations which are used for equipment. They don't receive enough donations to purchase an ambulance.

Mayor Fernicola asked if the old ambulance was having mechanical problems and Captain Hansen stated he has worked on the suspension, tie rods, transmission, and other areas. He has managed to keep up with the maintenance, but at some point, they will need a new vehicle.

Comm. Bolan stated that Captain Hansen does a lot of the work on the vehicles as the paid man. Allenhurst pays for his services as a paid man. Chief Powers added that John Hansen has saved a lot of money for the three towns as he repairs most things himself.

Mayor Fernicola asked what formula was used for the three towns and Ms. Osborn, Allenhurst Borough Clerk, stated that Allenhurst pays 45%, Interlaken 41% and Loch Arbour 14%.

Mayor Fernicola asked how the ambulance would be purchased. Mayor McLaughlin stated it would go out to bid and the Borough would pass a ten-year bond for the money. They would then bill the three towns the portion of the payments, similar to what they do with the fire truck.

A Loch Arbour resident asked about fund-raising and Captain Hansen stated they do several fund raisers each year. The same resident asked about the dinners the Fire Department used to do and Captain Hansen stated that attendance was down and it ended up costing them more than they made. They are, however, doing a fund raiser at Porta in Asbury Park. Porta is letting them use the restaurant at no charge and there will be food and local bands.

Captain Hansen also stated that they have a water rescue dive team that has been completely sponsored through donations. The Department purchased a rescue truck through donations. They purchased \$90,000 worth of extrication equipment with donations. He thinks they do need a new ambulance.

Mayor Fernicola asked out of the 350 callouts, how many did the old ambulance go on? Captain Hansen stated he would have to get that information.

A Loch Arbour resident commented that it would cost the Village about \$20,000 and Mayor Fernicola stated it would be closer to \$27,000. Comm. Bolan clarified that the amount would be spread over the course of the bond.

Mayor Fernicola read a letter from Gerry Kamber and Tony Gandal urging the village to deny the request for a new ambulance.

Village Clerk Dan Mason asked about statistics, stating they should talk about paid versus non-paid service.

Captain Hansen stated that the Department is having no problems with their response time. They are getting out within three minutes. They have 12 EMTs on the squad and in the summer, they pick up four more.

Mayor McLaughlin stated the Borough offers free membership to the Beach Club as an enticement.

Captain Hansen added that even if he is there by himself, an Allenhurst Police Officer will act as a driver.

A Loch Arbour resident stated he has had personal experience. About four years ago, he needed an ambulance at four in the morning. The response was immediate. They did a fantastic job.

Captain Hansen stated he runs the EMT program at Monmouth Medical Center. He stated that both volunteers and paid personnel go through the same training. The only difference is that volunteers love their job. They get up at three in the morning because they love it. To paid personnel, they get up because it is their job. Their skills are identical.

A Loch Arbour resident stated that his son worked with Captain Hansen and has nothing but good words and confidence in John. Everything he said is right and more. He never met a more dedicated guy.

There being no further discussion on the ambulance, Mayor McLaughlin moved, seconded by Comm. Bolan that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was carried and the Commissioners, Chief Powers and Captain Hansen left the room.

Lori L. Osborn, RMC
Clerk-Administrator