TOWN OF CONSTANTIA

MINUTES –BUDGET MEETING – October 25, 2023

3:00 pm Constantia Town Hall

Present:	Frank Tomaino - Supervisor
	Ronald Chapman, Thomas Moran, John Metzger– Council Members
	Clare Haynes – Town Clerk
	Nancy Butler – Bookkeeper
	Michael Davis – Town of Vienna Supervisor
	Avery Denney and Brandon Morris – North Shore Ambulance
Absent:	Richard Colesante – Council Member

CALL TO ORDER:

At 3:00 pm Mr. Tomaino called the 4th meeting on the 2024 budget order with the pledge of allegiance.

NORTH SHORE AMBULANCE:

Mr. Tomaino, at the request of the board members invited Mr. Denny and Mr. Morris to tonight's meeting to discuss the submitted North Shore Ambulance budget request. The submitted budget is $292,795 which is a 1.8% increase.

Mr. Metzger asked about the Certificate of Need (CON) which is controlled by NYS Health Department. The CON is what gives ambulance services authorization to respond in each area of the State. There has been discussion that North Shore has the CON for Amboy, until this year McFee has responded and has a contract with the Town of Amboy for their ambulance service. The attorney for North Shore has told Mr. Denney not to respond to questions in relation to Amboy.

Another concern is employment of paramedics, unfortunately many of the paramedics that are currently in school have already accepted offers for employment. There is a employment game that is played between hospitals and other ambulances, North Shore will raise their rate a pay, then the other employers will follow suit. The real problem comes with benefit packages, North Shore has made strides in this area, but it is hard when you are a small organization. Mr. Morris is looking into ways to make this more affordable, but it is tough when all parties are competing for the same people.

North Shore is part of a pilot program that allows the EMT under the supervision of the Medical Director to do more than what is normally acceptable. This program has been a tremendous help to patients that need treatment.

Discussion on ALS (Advanced Life Support) vs BLS (Basic Life Support) – North Shore strives to always supply ALS ambulance crew. Again, referring to the discussion above, sometimes it is hard to have enough paramedics to run ALS, in that case the BLS ambulance responds. If needed the ambulance will meet up with another provider to supply the needed paramedic. Mr. Tomaino saw two ambulances meeting the other night, he believes for a transfer, when that happens who gets paid? The ambulance who transported the patient will be the billing ambulance.

Mr. Davis - Supervisor, Town of Vienna is here as his mother lives in the Town. Mr. Davis is concerned that North Shore is running as BLS instead of ALS. Mrs. Davis, his mother, is elderly and if an ambulance is called, she will need an ALS ambulance. Mr. Denney responded that it is the intent of North Shore Ambulance to always supply an ALS ambulance but when staffing is not available, they do run as BLS. Mr. Davis stated that North Shore has been spoiled by the contracts that have been signed year after year, it is time to insist they hold up their end of the bargain. Mr. Davis suggested that the Directors who are paramedics should have to pick up shifts when a paramedic on staff is not available, making that shift the necessary ALS. Mr. Morris responded that he does ride the ambulance when needed. Mr. Davis is suggesting the Town of Constantia board members not approve the

budget as received by North Shore, hold back a portion until they can prove they are running the ambulance to the highest standard.

At 3:57pm Mr. Tomaino thanked Mr. Davis, Mr. Denney and Mr. Morris for attending, they are more than welcome to stay but discussion on the ambulance is concluded. The three gentlemen left the meeting.

Mr. Tomaino biggest concern is the type of service received, does not want to pay more for less. Mr. Tomaino understands there is no easy answer but does not want to drop the ambulance issue. This needs more discussion in 2024, especially when it comes to the contract, Mr. Bader will need to review and give suggestions on possible changes.

Mr. Metzger can see both sides of the issues, they are having a tough time getting the right employees. Then add in the additional burden of medication and equipment that is required in an ambulance. All have shelf lives and must be replaced even if it has not been used this gets costly.

The ambulance requested a 1.8% increase, after discussion the board agreed to leave the requested increase as part of the 2024 budget.

2024 BUDGET DISCUSSION:

Mr. Chapman brought up A1220.1 Supervisor PS, at the last meeting Mr. Tomaino requested an increase. This was never acted upon; Mr. Chapman would like to increase this line to $19,500. All agreed that the Supervisor position has changed over time, especially with sewers coming. Mr. Chapman made the motion to increase A1220.1 Supervisor PS from $13,500 to $19,500., seconded by Mr. Metzger.

Carried: Chapman – Yes Metzger – Yes Moran – Yes Tomaino - Yes

A8810.4 Cemeteries CE needs to be added to the budget, originally $5,000 was allocated to this line, after discussion the board members decided to lower this to $1,000.

PUBLIC HEARING:

The public hearing on the 2024 budget will be on November 9, 2023 at 6pm. Mrs. Haynes will get all contracts ready for review.

All board members want to stay below the tax cap, Ms. Butler will make the necessary changes and stay below the tax cap if possible.

ADJOURN:

At 4:35 pm the meeting adjourned.