

**TOWN OF DEERFIELD  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
December 5, 2022  
MINUTES**

**Public Hearing: Ambulance Proposal**

**Call to Order**

5:30 – Chairman McGarry called the meeting to order

**Present:** Fred McGarry, Chairman, Richard Pitman, Vice Chairman, Cynthia McHugh and Will Huebner, Selectmen.

Chairman McGarry: All right, we will proceed with the public hearing. I'll read the notice. The Board of Selectmen will hold a public hearing on Monday, December fifth two thousand and twenty-two at five thirty PM. This hearing will be held to discuss the proposal to purchase an ambulance for the town of Deerfield as well as a discussion of other possible uses utilizing federal funds as part of the American Rescue Plan Act, ARPA. Town of Deerfield was awarded four hundred seventy-five thousand three hundred ninety-five dollars and seventy cents (\$475,395.70). The board of selectmen invites all interested residents to attend. The hearing will be held in the downstairs conference room of the George B. White Building. Um, just a little background, on the initial ARPA funding was released the limitations with regard to the money for this was based primarily on public health issues and some of the guidelines they had given were for water and sewer projects as well as other projects related to public health and certainly, the board, at that point in time looked at, um, the money to be expended, possibly, for the use as an ambulance. Uh, one of the things the money can't be used for is for, excuse me, since that point in time the federal government has relaxed the requirements with regard to use of the money and, uh, John, correct me if I'm wrong but, basically, the money can be used for any municipal projects, uh, and not specifically limited to those related to public health. Is that correct?

John Harrington: That's correct.

Chairman McGarry: One of the things the money cannot be used for is to reduce taxes. So, we have to use the money for projects and not to take and turn around and reduce the taxes. So, um, the intention to night will be to have the presentation by the fire department and; Chief Fisher, will you be doing the presentation?

Matt Fisher: I believe... I see Chris up there. Chris will be doing the same presentation we did a number of weeks ago.

Chairman McGarry: Okay. So, we'll make a presentation by the fire department and then we will open it up for, primarily input with regard to other projects that the citizens of Deerfield feel would be better spent rather than using it on an ambulance or if you feel that use of an ambulance would be the best, uh, you could certainly make that statement as well. We would like you to be able to go to the table where the microphone is to make your comments once the fire department is completed and we'd like you to take and limit your comments to about three minutes. Uh, we have quite a few people here tonight and if everybody's going to be taking ten to fifteen minutes to make a presentation, we'll be here a *long* time so, uh, without further ado I'll turn it over to Chief Fisher.

Matt Fisher: Thank you. Chris, you online?

Chris Gallant: Evening. Sorry I couldn't be there in person. Can you hear me now?

Chairman McGarry: Yep.

Chris Gallant: All right. So, uh, Mr. Harrington, is the presentation present?

Chairman McGarry: Turn the volume up.

John Harrington: It's up.

Selectman Huebner: Chris, can you increase your volume from your microphone? You're a little faint.

Chris Gallant: Yeah. Let me check on that.

Selectman Huebner: Or sit closer to your mic maybe.

Chris Gallant: Is that better?

Chairman McGarry: Not much.

Chris Gallant: Not much better?

Selectman Huebner: Is there volume the remote, John?

Chris Gallant: Does that work? Can you hear me now?

John Harrington: Nope, that's not it.

Selectman Huebner: Maybe it's more about the TV.

Chris Gallant: all right. I can start... can you hear me now? How's that sound?

John Harrington: Will, there's no volume on that.

Selectman Huebner: Okay. Just speak up really loud, uh, Chris, there's a lot of people.

Chris Gallant: Here we are. So, uh, welcome to our presentation. We have found that we have some apparatus that is out of service as our R1. That's a rescue. That's a non-transport, um, apparatus that we have here in Deerfield. If you're not familiar with the apparatus we have is a non-transport. It's a rescue. It's a van. A two thousand and four. It's now expired. It will not pass inspection and now that's two thousand and twenty-two it seems that we need to jump up to that time and age. Uh, I made a quick presentation on the screen in front of you. You guys can read through that. I'm not gonna read it verbatim just do to the fact that it will bore you. Uh, two thousand eleven we were slated to replace our rescue one. It is now two thousand twenty-two. That truck has outlived its means. Um, with going forward with a replacement vehicle, this presentation was to prove that we needed to step up to an ambulance. Now an ambulance is just the vehicle, right? I'm looking to make a business. I'm just looking to help out... or we... not I, we are looking to replace the rescue with an ambulance in further means to transport later down the road. So, let's look at it that way. So, this is just a vehicle replacement currently. Um, I've had a lot of questions, comments, emails and phone calls with people throughout the town for the last couple weeks which has been great correspondence. Hopefully I've answered a lot of those questions and, uh, again, I look forward to answering them tonight. Um, so, with an ambulance with our town, it will give us the opportunity to, uh, better serve the community. Get people out of the weather when they need to as in let's say you get into a car accident and, uh, we need to get you inside the vehicle to make our assessments and use our interventions more properly verses using the side of the road. Currently we can't put you inside of our rescue one or our rescue two which is taking place. We can't get you inside out of the elements, out of the rain or if there's multiple patients, we can't work effectively to help that situation. I'll use an example, say I have to do an IV or we have to do IVs on you, we're doing it outside in the elements. Um, it's not very sterile or clean. It's like you working on your computer outside in the sun where you can't get out of the sun, you can't see your computer. So, our ambulance or, you know, whatever you want to call this vehicle, gives us our office space to work. All the essential tools are in there. Um, it's climate controlled. It's well-lit and once you're familiar with your area you succeed in your tasks that needs to be done. Currently we've been working, um, doing very well at our job but it just seems like we're little behind times. So, instead of boring you with this slide let's jump to slide number four, I believe. John, uh, that's the next slide, John. So, this is a picture of what the ambulance would be. Uh, it's a... it would be the Ford, Dodge, or Chevy four-wheel drive. Uh, four-wheel drive, I say, due to the fact that we...

Selectman Huebner: Try it again Chris.

Chris Gallant: Oh, all right. So, this is, uh, a picture... actually let me scroll down again. Let's go to slide number six, I'm sorry John. All right, so, currently, uh, on the left of your screen is currently what we use and on the right of the screen is what we were looking to purchase. Left is an all-wheel drive two thousand four Chevy van. It's a utility van that we had custom made kinda, sorta. It's worked but it has expired. It's...

Selectman Huebner: Hold on Chris.

Matt Fisher: Hey Chris, I'll just take over the presentation.

Chris Gallant: Thank you.

Selectman Huebner: All right chief Fisher.

Matt Fisher: So, just as a recap for what you may or may not have heard, uh, Chris say, um, Chris is the deputy chief for the fire rescue. Um, he was tasked by myself when we came to the board of selectmen about a year and half ago, two years ago, looking for approval to start researching an ambulance and possibly setting aside some of the ARPA money for the ambulance. Um, through that past year and a half Chris worked with, um, himself, EMS Captain Cindy McHugh, Jason Rapsis and Raymond Bushey. Four of our members, um two of which, well and Chris, work full-time on different services between, uh, a joint full-time fire rescue or just strictly EMS. All have experience in the community and with other communities. Through this presentation looking at our rescue one, as Chris alluded to, is a two thousand four Chevy van that's on the left that does not have transporting capabilities. We currently, town of Deerfield, is licensed to the state of New Hampshire as a non-transporting EMS license. We looking for an ambulance. We are not looking to take over EMS transporting today, tomorrow, or three days after the ambulance comes in. This is a stepping stone for our community. This is going to be a in order when we get the ambulance if we were to pursue transporting it's going to be a lot on the department and the community. We're going to need to pool our resources, get more people, have staffing around the clock. This is not what this presentation or a desire to get an ambulance is for. We're looking at apparatus replacement. The vans, like I said, two thousand and four. As Chris alluded to its currently out of service. It needs six thousand dollars of body work which has been scheduled, let alone the past year and a half spent another several thousand dollars chasing electrical issues. Now the reason why we're pursuing an ambulance instead of just getting the same type of vehicle we have now, a non-transporting unit, is looking forward for the community. Right now, our ambulance come from Raymond. We're in the middle of a five-year contract. We get a very good deal from Raymond ambulance financially. I know that not in here for a second. Um, their contract with us goes up about five hundred dollars a year which is very moderate. So, right now for twenty twenty-two we're at fifteen thousand five hundred dollars. When our contract expires April first twenty twenty-five, we'll be looking at about seventeen thousand dollars a year. There's no way the town of Deerfield would ever be able to staff an ambulance for seventeen thousand dollars. I get that and that's not what we're looking to do, is staff an ambulance. We're looking for apparatus replacement. This ambulance will allow us, when we have staffing available, if Raymond is not available, to take the patient, transport them to the hospital. Get them out of the elements instead of sitting on the side of the road in snowstorm for forty, forty-five minutes. Keep them somewhere nice and warm while we wait for the ambulance. Raymond's not available our current system, depending on where you are in town, relies on Epping, tri-town, Nottingham, Northwood, Epsom and whatever other community, Candia now that they have an ambulance, is available to come help us. If any of those towns aren't available, we start reaching out to the next further town. So, in theory, if by not having this ability to transport if we have the staffing and people are available, I can't tell you when you call 9-1-1, we could get you to a hospital. It's probably going to be, if this goes through, a year and a half two years out, just how as everybody knows things are incredible lead times these days. It's not something we're looking to do, as I keep going back to, you know, I know there's been a lot of comments Facebook about staffing and costs and all this and it's true, if we pursue as a community, taking over our ambulance transport is going to be a dramatic shift. There will be more costs getting people to be on call 24/7. It's not what we're looking to do. We're looking to replace an eighteen-year-old vehicle which will probably be twenty years old, um, by the time, let's say, we order an ambulance tomorrow and it comes in. Um, the rest of the presentation, if John wants to flip through some of the slides, I'll guide you through it. One hit the next one John? These are just different pictures, um, basically a standard ambulance, the demo ones we had stopped by our station and the committee looked at this. This is basically totaling and looking at our current contract with Raymond ambulance and looking at what if we do move into transporting, right? what would we be looking at annual revenue coming back. This information is directly from Raymond ambulance. When you do EMS billing there's different levels of billing between what care you're given by the attendant in the back of the ambulance and then obviously if you're insured or your self-pay or you have Medicare, depends on what type of funds the town would recoup. So, if we're looking at this from a business standpoint, right, if in twenty twenty-one Raymond ambulance and seventy-five BLS, a hundred and twenty-seven ALS level one and six ALS level two that's, like I said, different, stub tow, broken arm, cardiac arrest, stroke, everywhere over the gamut depending on what type of care you're given that's what the bill's gonna be. So, if all the calls were Medicare it would have been ninety-six thousand dollars. If all the calls were, all the patients all had their own insurance self-pay about three hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Rule of thumb, I'd shoot in the middle. So, even that would be about a two- hundred- and fifty-thousand-dollar swing. So, I don't know, let's say, two hundred thousand dollars the town might recoup every year from taking over all our transports. Next slide, John. And this slide actually gets into what ALS level one, BLS as such were going to be. Also, bill mileage and, you know, there's a path forward if we were as a community decided yes, we're gonna start transporting then, you know, there's... I don't personally feel town departments are there to make money. We're there to provide a service. So, I would never say that, with the smaller call volume that we have, we would be a money maker, if you will, for the town. We'd offset costs if anything. Next slide. And this was when we did our original presentation to the selectmen this is where we were, um, with the information from Raymond. We had ninety-two... Raymond ambulance had ninety-two transports from the town of Deerfield at the time and it was that twenty-six thousand about ninety-three-thousand-dollar swing for the first quarter. That's more than the first quarter. Next. A little more into EMS response and billing. Any 9-1-1 call that's over their system that breaks down codes of response, uh, paramedics are atomically started out of the Exeter Hospital. When they come out there is very limited charges to the service that uses them. If we didn't intercept with a town, we'd be looking at our cost to pay. ALS would be about seventy-three dollars or two hundred and seventy-nine

dollars. So, if we would bill out six hundred and seventy dollars and we didn't have our own paramedic or advanced depending on the skill set we would be looking at a cost of about two hundred and eighty. So, we would make four hundred dollars on an ALS level too... without mileage as everybody knows we're not right next door to a hospital either so there is some revenue from mileage. Next slide, John. Alluding back to the new or used ambulance that's certainly something the committee's looked into. Um, lead times about eighteen to twenty-four months, as I mentioned earlier. There's a real shortage of used ambulances and aftermarket vehicles currently in the EMS and emergency vehicle field because of extended lead times and we'd be looking at spending, you know, hundred fifty to a hundred seventy thousand for a used ambulance at that point. Next slide. Training, right, as I mentioned we are not a transporting service now. We have a handful of members who do have a full-time or part-time transporting experience with our other services, departments, what have you, um, let alone being to take over day one when the ambulance shows up not being realistic when someone calls 9-1-1 but just the change in, you, know, average EMS call now could be an hour, hour and a half changes to three hours a member, let alone, you know, our average on scene time with a patient, you 9-1-1, Deerfield shows up, we're probably one-on-one contact with that individual fifteen, twenty minutes until Raymond shows up or another transporting service shows up. During that short amount of time there's very limited things, for the most part, we are able to do for a patient. When we transfer care to the ambulance service now, they have twenty-five, thirty-minute ride to the hospital, they're able to do that much more care so that our changing from... we have, you know, patient X for fifteen minutes to now our patient contact could be forty-five minutes to an hour. So, that's just another avenue the department's going to have to go through if we decide to transport, just training and how our roles will all change. Next slide, John. So, what we... where we left the presentation looking at... we were finalizing an RFP an ambulance spec, we were gonna go out to bid and make our recommendation to the board of selectmen when that bid came back. Moving forward our needs of discussion with the community, future staffing, warrant article, funding, where are the funds gonna? Are funds from the revenue from the ambulance going to go in just the general fund or are they going into a fund to replace that ambulance? There's a lot of different things that other towns do. I would look for us to kind of find what's right for Deerfield and make our mold. Uh, example mentioned would be, you know, night and weekend on call staffing, ambulance replacement, equipment replacement, billing, that's a big one, um, I would certainly look to hiring a service. They do about a seven to ten percent fee on what we bill they claim is a bunch of different companies, um, but these are all further discussions if we move forward with the ambulance, you know. What are our next steps and that's all going to have to be ironed out and that was the end of the presentation.

Chairman McGarry: You have a question? Go to the microphone please.

Barry Brown: My name is Barry Brown. I live at ninety Middle Road. Thank you for the presentation and it's nice to hear about the nice contract that we have now for ambulance service. Uh, I can appreciate ambulances since I had, uh, needed one not too long ago and it's uh, the ambulance, uh, ambulance attendants are paid well because of their professional training. They're able to communicate with the emergency room with the doctor and give a shot, if necessary, of the medication that the doctor prescribes. The service costs a lot of money I don't believe you've come close to the amount that would be needed, uh, for an ambulance and a place for the ambulance attendance to stay in and for the vehicles to be in. Uh, maybe in the future at some point but, uh, if you're going to have twenty-four seven, a hundred and sixty-eight hours a week of ambulance service that's a lot more than you mentioned and, uh, so right now, uh, I don't think it's the right time. I don't agree with buying an ambulance used or otherwise that we can't use. Thank you for the time.

Alex Cote: Alex Cote, five James City Road. Matt, you guys did a good job, um, but you left out some numbers that would help make it, make us feel a lot better as taxpayers and citizens. What are you going to be able to do in an ambulance that you can't do in a rescue vehicle now?

Matt Fisher: So, like I mentioned before, um, kind of hitting on your part, Mr. Cote, and the gentlemen before you, we are looking... we are proposing this as, plain and simply, apparatus replacement. Using these funds to buy an ambulance to replace rescue one. What we can do in the back of the ambulance that we can't do on the side of the road or in rescue one, well, we can't put anybody in rescue one so we can't get anybody out of the elements. But we'd be able to sit them down on the cot, sit them on the bench in a heated, cooled environment, put them on the life back fifteen and other medical procedures and if we have people capable of transporting, we don't need to wait for Raymond. We could transport. We do have another vehicle, rescue two. That has a big box in the back. We've used that in the past. It's a warm environment the same type of idea, take people out of it. That vehicle is also sixteen years old. That is also gonna be needing replacement. Right now, with rescue one being out of service rescue two has been running first due for basically every call we have.

Alex Cote: Okay. Um, that answers that question. Um, where would a new ambulance be housed?

Matt Fisher: Central fire station.

Alex Cote: is it gonna fit?

Matt Fisher: Yes.

Alex Cote: Where the existing rescue one is now?

Matt Fisher: Yep. In the front row. Rescue one has not been out back in about five years.

Alex Cote: Did you just not receive, um, a grant for seven hundred thousand plus dollars?

Matt Fisher: Seven hundred fifty thousand dollars for a pumper truck replacement.

Alex Cote: Okay, um, with that seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars and there's gotta be somewhere around three hundred thousand dollars in apparatus money that we've been putting in every year, why can't you get a rescue vehicle out of that?

Matt Fisher: That is certainly part of the discussion. When we started this whole process there was no grant coming our way...

Alex Cote: Okay, well, now you have a grant...

Matt Fisher: ...and I would also...

Alex Cote: ...and the other thing... I'm sorry, go-ahead Matt.

Matt Fisher: So, one thing I would caution is preliminary estimates as we're working with manufacturers on that truck that seven fifty-thousand-dollar price tag for the pumper tank which is separate from the engine probably won't be enough. So, add that three hundred thousand on, um, certainly the money is there. We will also have to see when those bids come in what that price is.

Alex Cote: So, in listening to what it's going to cost to get rescue one up and running, seven thousand dollars?

Matt Fisher: Moving forward from today I would say that's probably a fair estimate.

Alex Cote: Um, well, the money that's left over on this grant here that we're talking about tonight, I mean, you've got, we've got some infrastructure issues that have come up. Now you've got a culvert on Hayes Road and you can't put a culvert in. You've got to put a box culvert in. I think you're probably looking at a substantial amount of money there. You've got the bridge on Blake's Hill Road. You're looking at another substantial amount of money there. I would think that you would want to take this money and use it for that because if the road isn't any good, you can't get there, what goods an ambulance?

Matt Fisher: That's certainly for the board of selectmen.

Alex Cote: Thank you.

Chairman McGarry: Now, the handouts that we have we... although we have received the grant of four hundred seventy-five from, uh, the ARPA funds, uh, we've expended a hundred and thirty-six almost a hundred thirty-seven thousand thus far on thirteen projects in town and, uh, so that we currently have available three hundred and thirty-eight thousand four hundred and eighty-six dollars and forty-five cents. Uh, so that's just to give you an idea of what the available money that we have currently. Any others questions for Matt?

Bernie Cameron: Yes. Bernie Cameron. Mountain View Road. Matt, do all of the towns that abut Deerfield, um, have their own ambulance right now?

Matt Fisher: Yes, if you look at Allenstown and Pembroke what is called Tri-town is a shared municipal service between the two towns.

Bernie Cameron: Okay, but Candia, Raymond, Northwood, Nottingham... does Nottingham?

Matt Fisher: Yes. Uh, Candia just started their ambulance service last year after their contracted provided kind of fell off the...

Bernie Cameron: Are they all full-time twenty-four seven?

Matt Fisher: No. Raymond's not, uh, Candia is not, Nottingham last I knew had filled some positions and was trying to be. Northwood is not and, um, I think Epsom's going through some, just like everybody, some staffing issues.

Bernie Cameron: So, this was my thought, if we did get our own ambulance I wonder if it would be possible to form some sort of a cooperative staffing program with all of our surrounding towns so that we wouldn't be in a position of having to come up with our own staff twenty-four seven.

Matt Fisher: Sure.

Bernie Cameron: Um, it's just an idea of something to think about.

Matt Fisher: Thank you.

John Leslie: Hi Matt, John Leslie from Meetinghouse Hill. Um, a couple questions. So, that one sixty number, that was the estimate for a used ambulance?

Matt Fisher: Correct. At the time, yes, that was some numbers that we found.

John Leslie: Okay. Did we... it said the bid was the twenty-nine, twenty-six I think was closed, ended, have we gotten bids back?

Matt Fisher: We have not gone out to bid. Things were put on hold.

John Leslie: Okay. So, those slides weren't really accurate?

Matt Fisher: I would have to look at what slides. At the time that was our plan, we were going to bid, we have received quotes. Preliminary as the committee was working on finding out what ambulances. We were looking at meeting with them, what do you think this ambulance would cost, that sort of thing. So, we do have some preliminary numbers that the number in the presentation reflected that but we have not gone out to bid.

John Leslie: Okay. Gotcha. Um, so, you mentioned we don't have a transport license, correct?

Matt Fisher: Correct.

John Leslie: So, would we... does that mean... and then you mentioned several times that if we weren't able to get coverage and we got there quicker we could transport. How does that work without a transport license?

Matt Fisher: It's, basically, filling out another sheet for the State of New Hampshire. They come out; they inspect our ambulance. It's not, um, a big deal. Correct.

John Leslie: Okay. Cool. Um, and then do we have preliminary, like, what was that you said you got some rough kind of numbers. Would you guys feel comfortable sharing those numbers at this point cause we have the, you know, the limited grant money left but we have no idea how much money we're actually talking here? Is it, like, all of it, close to all of it?

Matt Fisher: So, the latest quote, if you will, that we had received from one of the manufacturers was three hundred sixty-seven thousand dollars six hundred ninety-nine, no, three sixty-seven thousand six hundred and ninety-nine dollars.

John Leslie: Okay.

Matt Fisher: Now that includes some equipment to come with the ambulance. We don't have a stretcher, that sort of thing, that we would have to buy. It's a fully equipped. Some equipment we can transfer that we have now and repurpose on the device. We also have, um, I believe, around sixty thousand dollars in a capital reserve fund for equipment so my plan to the board of selectman would be to use that to buy the stretcher, buy that stuff. So, even though this price is all inclusive, three hundred sixty-seven thousand, that will be brought down from using the funds that we do have, where appropriate.

John Leslie: Okay. And then you mentioned rescue two has the ability to get people out of the cold and treat them in a...

Matt Fisher: It's a bench in the back. It's also with our air packs and all our other equipment.

John Leslie: Okay. So, would... is there anything in between an ambulance and say, like, a rescue two level where we could still get people out of the cold but wouldn't be spending three hundred and sixty-thousand dollars? Like, something, a mid-tier kind of, is there any option on that level.

Matt Fisher: I think we'd still be sticking with a non-transporting unit at that point.

John Leslie: Okay, yeah, but we wouldn't be transporting so... So, there are other options above rescue one and potentially rescue two but below an ambulance?

Chris Gallant: No. There's no options. Can you hear me?

John Leslie: Yes.

Chairman McGarry: Yeah.

Chris Gallant: Yeah, so, unfortunately, so if you use rescue two right, say you have a broken leg, we can't put you in rescue one, uh, rescue two, right, cause it's a couple steps. So, we could an ambulance which you can put someone in the back and get them out of the elements, right, so there's not really any in between. I know you're asking other than getting a pickup truck, really.

John Leslie: Right, okay, so there's no other potential options of something that we could get between those two levels?

Chris Gallant: I would say no.

John Leslie: Okay. Thank you.

Chris Gallant: And also on the used comment, you had a used comment, uh, the problem with the used ambulances is, uh, we only have so much room in our fire station height wise, there are doors, um, the one that we would have to have built, excuse me, is only so high. So, unfortunately a lot of the used ambulances won't actually fit in our fire station.

John Leslie: Okay. I wasn't super concerned about use since you guys were saying there's a, kind of a short supply anyways but I was just asking if the price on there was used or not used but that's good information to know as well. Thank you.

Rebecca Hutchinson: Uh, Rebecca Hutchinson. Thirty Lang Road. Um, so, I actually don't have any idea what I think about this and I'm really here, honestly, to try to figure it out. Um, but I also wanted to say two quick things, um, before my questions, one is, I, you know, think it's really easy to be cynical about government and elected officials and, uh, they never do anything right and so it feels really good here today, this is like old time town meeting where we're actually here and we're really, um, have an opportunity to share our ideas. I love the fact that this money came back, you know, everybody should realize that the ARPA... some of the ARPA money came back to us for us to decide what to do with and I'm just grateful for that. Um, second thing I have, our family has been the recipient of ambulance care and the EMTs and this me a good opportunity to, um, thank, uh, you were there that night Matt. John, um, Dubianski and Ernie with our granddaughter so, um, I know the importance of ambulance. So, but o t m y questions, um, do I understand... did I understand that you're saying it would take seven thousand to get rescue one usable or did I... was that off?

Matt Fisher: Yeah, so, right now rescue one has about six thousand dollars' worth of body work that has to be done to it to pass inspection along with a few other, let's say, minor repairs that go along with it when we get the body work done, um, for it to pass inspection and get back in service.

Rebecca Hutchinson: And if that were fixed would you be able to put people inside that vehicle?

Matt Fisher: So, as an illustration if you will, rescue one's a fifteen hundred Chevy van. There's aluminum cabinets on both sides. So, I'm not the biggest person, I'm not the smallest person, I can fit on my back laying down. You can't stand around me to do any sort of medical care. So, there really is no room to do... we can get somebody out of the weather, sit them in the back. Kind of get them out of the rain to hook them up to the life pack, do some medical kind of check your blood pressure, that sort of thing but we can't really do medical procedures or EMS care well on anybody in our vehicles.

Rebecca Hutchinson: Okay. And I guess my second one and I'm formulating it as I speak cause I don't quite, I'm confused, um, is your proposal to... I guess I understand, your proposal is to get this vehicle to replace rescue one and to give you more capacity for, um, calls. Um, but even if we don't have any additional... you would recommend getting it even if we don't have any additional staffing to actually use it for transport... you... that didn't make sense to me when I came here? Why are we gonna only look at the vehicle without the staff that it's gonna take?

Matt Fisher: So, we have our staff now. So, Monday to Friday we have ninety hours of part-time help allocated. That's six to six so there's two people on, basically, eight to four or one person on six to eight and four to six in afternoons when staffing allows. So, let's say we have an ambulance and it's two o'clock on a Wednesday afternoon, Raymond ambulance has to medical calls going, they're not available to fill our needs. Other towns aren't available, if we have that medical call, we have the people there, they're able to transport, we can. But if it's just Matt showing up on a Saturday morning Raymond's still coming to transport for us as they're our contracted service.

Rebecca Hutchinson: So...

Matt Fisher: So, get the ambulance and work towards that staffing and building the service.

Rebecca Hutchinson: And, and in the, in the, um, proposal... the example you just gave, so there would be sometimes when you could actually use it with, for staffing, excuse me, for transporting if it's for those hours you happen to have multiple staff available.

Matt Fisher: Yep. Or if Raymond's not available and Cindy and I go on a call and we're able to transport, it's a basic level call we could, in theory if we wanted to, cancel Raymond ambulance and transport ourselves or any if, let's say, when the contract expires with Raymond it's ABC ambulance out of somewhere else, you know, it's... that would be the short-term process.

Rebecca Hutchinson: Okay. Thanks.

Josh Cresswell: Evening. Josh Cresswell. Range Road. Um, chief, I have a couple of questions on some of the things that you discussed earlier. Um, we have a contract with Raymond ambulance which we've had for quite a while. What do we actually get from that contract?

Matt Fisher: What are you shooting for, Josh? They're our primary transporting service.

Josh Cresswell: So, essentially, we pay them currently sixteen thousand dollars just to show up.

Matt Fisher: Correct.

Josh Cresswell: Okay, so, they still bill the individual patients at the level of care that they need, that's how they make their money, correct?

Matt Fisher: Correct.

Josh Cresswell: Okay. So, that's just sixteen thousand just for them to show up. Um, do they have any requirement or is there any, uh, stipulation in their contract as a percentage of how often they have to show up?

Matt Fisher: I'd have to review their contract to say with a hundred percent accuracy but I do not believe so.

Josh Cresswell: Okay. So, they could terminate tomorrow would there be any...

Matt Fisher: I believe both parties have thirty days.

Josh Cresswell: Okay. Well, I meant like, you know, within the time allowed in the contract they could terminate their service with us, um, at any point and not provide the service of just showing up?

Matt Fisher: Yes. If they're not available they could just stop showing up.

Josh Cresswell: Right, um, why did Candia move forward with getting their own ambulance?

Matt Fisher: My understanding is they had a very similar issue with their contracted service, which is AMR, stopped showing up. Uh, they were relying heavily on Hooksett, Raymond and Derry Mutual Aid and those towns were



exhausting their resources and were no longer able to provide. Mutual Aid one even refused to return to Candia with an ambulance from Mutual Aid.

Josh Cresswell: Okay. You mentioned earlier that there's some time that it takes for an ambulance to arrive in Deerfield on average, um, how long does it take, and I think you might have mentioned this but just for clarification, how long does it take Raymond ambulance to arrive on a scene after they've been dispatched?

Matt Fisher: I'd have to pull those numbers. I... it all really depends on where you live in town, right? if you live toward the Raymond town line...

Josh Cresswell: So, if I live on 107 near the town line it could be ten minutes.

Matt Fisher: Yep.

Josh Cresswell: If I'm on... up by Pleasant lake or out by Bear Brook, thirty-five?

Matt Fisher: Yeah.

Josh Cresswell: Nottingham Road.

Matt Fisher: Certainly, that potential. We do have automatic aid with our surrounding town for those long-distance areas to come in and provide that service but also all depends on if they're available.

Josh Cresswell: And if, and if they're also relying on Exeter ALS to respond, uh, cause I would say the majority of their responses they do not have a paramedic available on their ambulances. Um, how long does it take that additional time for Exeter to show up?

Matt Fisher: Exeter is probably thirty-five forty minutes from time.

Josh Cresswell: Okay. So, if you need life-saving intervention that needs to be done by a paramedic or somebody of higher-level care it could be at least a half hour before somebody shows up and is able to provide that care for you.

Matt Fisher: That's a possibility.

Josh Cresswell: So, would having an ambulance in our town, staffed by people that we already pay, would that better the chance of survival for the majority of people that need those services.

Matt Fisher: Yes.

Josh Cresswell: Okay. Thank you.

Claudia Libis: Claudia Libis. Maple Avenue. Um, you had said near the beginning of when you took over this presentation, um, you were saying that there's not any guarantee that, that if Raymond gets call, they're going to be able to come. That they are going to take care of their own needs first and on down the line. How often does that happen?

Matt Fisher: So, Raymond...

Claudia Libis: Do you have some figure on that?

Matt Fisher: So, Raymond ambulance covers... has... contractually it's a private organization, um, covers the town of Raymond, Fremont, and Deerfield. Monday to Friday they have two ambulances staffed then at night, nights and weekends they have a primary crew, primary crew home on call with one member at the station and the rest are call back from their members. Um, I don't have those numbers with me. I would say, shooting from the hip, um, four out of five times their able to answer the call. So, twenty percent we may use a different ambulance service and we do about two hundred and sixty or eighty medical calls a year plus or minus a little more.

Claudia Libis: Okay but have you ever had the actual situation where nobody could come?

Matt Fisher: Nobody from Raymond or ...

Claudia Libis: No, nobody period.

Matt Fisher: ...altogether?

Claudia Libis: So, you called Raymond, Raymond said, oh sorry we're out straight, um, you called Nottingham and they said okay we'll come.

Matt Fisher: Yes, that does happen quite rarely. Before I... (inaudible, someone starts talking over)

Claudia Libis: But has it ever happened that Nottingham, in my scenario, also says said, sorry we're out straight too.

Matt Fisher: Yes.

Claudia Libis: Okay. So, how far down the road have you ever had to go?

Matt Fisher: I have heard we've called Concord before.

Claudia Libis: Okay, so it's gone to the third level.

Matt Fisher: I would say that's about fifth or sixth.

Claudia Libis: Okay, so it is, I mean, that is a real thing. Um, was it not somewhere in the voting last spring to buy an ambulance? Now, I understand this a different kind of money but does anybody remember that this was...

Matt Fisher: Not that

Claudia Libis: ...something that was, that was brought to the voters whether they wanted to buy an ambulance?

Selectman Huebner: You mean in the March election?

Claudia Libis: Yeah. Either it was, either in the budget or as a warrant article.

Matt Fisher: So, historically the town supported a fifty thousand dollar a year warrant article for a fire apparatus and equipment. Ten thousand dollars a year for EMS equipment, um, vehicle repair, that sort of thing but we have not gone out with a warrant article to purchase an ambulance before.

Claudia Libis: Okay. I guess I just feel as though the voters generally say no to this kind of thing and I get it, this is free money, but I'm also looking at some of the other things like, Mr. Cote saying, you know, we've got some big-time road problems, um, we've got no drinking water at the town hall. We've got no drinking water or septic at the transfer station. I think it's a tough call whether or not we should take three hundred thousand dollars, I mean, personally, yes, I voted. I voted for rescue materials and rescue vehicles and I vote for a full-time fire and rescue staff but I'm not the majority of the voters in the town so I guess I just feel like that has to be considered.

Jeanne Menard: Jeanne Menard. Mountain Road. Like the last speaker I think I'd be more inclined to, um, go back to funds that we as a community have voted every year to put into accounts for vehicle replacement. You know, twenty-five thousand dollars for repairs for rescue, you know, I can't quote the various numbers that we've been accumulating over the years for exactly this type purchase. So, I think I'd be more inclined to want to use monies that have been accruing to be maintaining rescue one. To be looking ahead and purchasing whatever vehicles are needed to maintain service. If Raymond was, if there was any threat that Raymond was not going to be available to continue to serve Deerfield then at that time I think it would make sense to be looking for an ambulance type vehicle as opposed to, let's say we buy an ambulance type vehicle now and ins... you know, we run out the rest of this term and we go for another five year contract with Raymond so we're now seven, seven and half years down the road that rest... that ambulance is gonna be aging and, you know, it seems to better to get an ambulance type transport vehicle at the time we are truly on that track. I'm having a hard time, um, believe... not believing but I think there can be a, uh, solution to getting people off the street, you know, as far as the R one, the current R one having limitations and R two is better but it's a vehicle that is, was a fire department vehicle that's serving as a R one replacement. So, I think maybe a little bit more thought and planning for that and maybe the ambulance... maybe that is the best solution but I feel the expenditure of this monies that have been granted may be better used for those items that we as a community have had a hard time, um, coming up to maintain road projects and other types of projects and use our saved money for your initiative, uh, or the initiative for an ambulance. Um, thank you.

Chairman McGarry: As I mentioned earlier, one of the other things we're... would be interested in hearing is any other projects that you feel the board of selectmen should be under taking rather than proceeding with an ambulance.

Bill Bilodeau: I have one for you. Bill Bilodeau. Nottingham Road. I'm a member of the cemetery committee and I would give just a brief, um, town of Deerfield alone there are a hundred and nine or, I don't how accurate that number is, but a hundred and nine, over a hundred cemeteries in the town of Deerfield. Twenty-eight or twenty-nine are actually owned, deed, simple recorded at the registry, belong to the town of Deerfield. Deerfield presently maintains six of those twenty-nine, twenty-eight or twenty-nine. By law we're obligated to take care of them all. The cemetery committee if you've noticed the past has put down warrants and put down interest of moving forward to take of those remaining cemeteries, those remaining twenties that aren't maintained by the town. Um, so, I would ask that some of that ARPA money could be put aside to take care of the cemeteries that the town of Deerfield is obligated to take care of. Thank you.

Chairman McGarry: Thank you.

Dick Boisvert: Dick Boisvert. Church Street. Um, I need to get some more information about how it works cause I'm little confused, uh, by the terminology just because I've never had to ride in an ambulance as a patient. As I understand it, the vehicle that is being proposed gives, um, the first responders the opportunity to begin to treat somebody out of the elements. That they can be in that, uh, vehicle but normally they would wait there until the ambulance from Raymond or whatever shows up to transport them but there may be circumstances where that vehicle can be used to transport somebody. Do I understand that correctly because it seems to be very contingent? I don't understand how the process works.

Matt Fisher: So, currently, the example of being out in the elements is, let's say it's a car accident or someone's found on the side of the road and it's a snow storm, rain, what have you, that would be where, you know, we could put somebody on the stretcher or put them in the back of the ambulance and if we were able to transport, you know...

Dick Boisvert: Back up to the ambulance, are you referring to equipment that we have now?

Matt Fisher: No.

Dick Boisvert: What you're proposing, because that's where I'm getting a little bit lost.

Matt Fisher: What we would be proposing...

Dick Boisvert: Okay.

Matt Fisher: So, typically, right now between rescue one and rescue two they're non-transporting. We don't have a cot or a stretcher in the back to put you in and hook you up to the cardiac monitor, do some blood pressures, that sort of thing. So, example one with rescue one rescue one would be we can open up the two back doors, sit you on the bumper, basically, and then you're still kind of exposed to the elements where we could hook you up to the monitor, do some things, try to protect you with a blanket or whatnot until Raymond ambulance shows up to transport you. Rescue two is similar. It has a bench in back, um, but there is a probably a couple steps to get up so Chris's... you know, thought if someone had a leg injury probably got to put them on a backboard to put them in there or something along those lines and it's not the place to really be performing any real medical procedures or services on somebody who needs that care.

Dick Boisvert: Okay, so, with the vehicle you're proposing you would be able to put somebody in there and give them that care, correct?

Matt Fisher: Yes.

Dick Boisvert: Okay. Now what are the circumstances that vehicle will be used to transport somebody to a hospital or emergency or whatever because it sounds to me like, and again correct me if I'm wrong, that if Raymond is able to respond the new vehicle is there, the person is waiting in it being treated, maybe there's more than one person, and then the Raymond vehicle arrives and takes them too wherever, is that correct?

Matt Fisher: yes. If the person's stable enough to wait for Raymond and we don't have the staffing to take them, Raymond would still provide that transportation to the hospital.

Dick Boisvert: And staffing to take them is number of people, qualifications of people...

Matt Fisher: So, great point. Uh, in the state, pre-covid, in the state of New Hampshire in order to have an ambulance and take someone to the hospital you needed a minimum of two licensed EMS providers. One could be an emergency medical responder which is the lowest level. The other one had to be a basic, advanced or paramedic.

Due to covid that's changed a little bit where, I believe, there's still emergency protocols in act where it's one medical provider and someone with a CPR card but, eventually, it's probably gonna go away and it's back to two EMTs basically have to be on the ambulance for it to transport anybody to the hospital.

Dick Boisvert: Okay, so, it may transpire that if they go back to the original qualification standards that we would have this vehicle when it wouldn't be, uh, we would not be able to use it to transport somebody because we don't have, uh, at hand the qualified people?

Matt Fisher: Present date and time, yes, if the ambulance showed up today or, you know, without building the roster and trying to generate more people and more licensures and people able and willing to transport, yes.

Dick Boisvert: So, I'm still unclear as that you said, if they couldn't make it and does that mean make it at all, make it in time, what are the criteria for deciding that, uh, the vehicle that Deerfield owns will be used to carry somebody to where they need treatment? What is... is there a specific set of guidelines for that, uh, I, you know, I really don't understand?

Matt Fisher: Sure. So, the easy example would be, if I show up just by myself, I can't drive the ambulance and take care of someone in the back at the same time or if it's, without these relaxed protocols if you will, if it's just myself and just someone who's a firefighter by state protocol, law if you will, we can't transport that person. You have to have two licensed members.

Dick Boisvert: So, we would, potentially, be in a situation where we have a better vehicle for, you know, short-term treatment but is still not, uh, available to be used for, uh, taking somebody to the emergency department. That it would be an improved waiting room until, uh, Raymond gets here or whoever. Is that the case?

Matt Fisher: Yeah. The other hurdle with this moving forward would be staffing and making sure we would have two people around to answer that medical call and provide that transport. So, the...

Chairman McGarry: Is this your last question? We've got to move on.

Dick Boisvert: Okay. Um, the last thing is, um, to what extent has the board considered, uh, giving a portion of the money for the ambulance and another portion to another project? Is that that something that's been considered? Can it be considered?

Chairman McGarry: It certainly can be, yeah, and that's, in part, what we're looking for tonight for feedback as to what other projects...

Dick Boisvert: Okay.

Chairman McGarry: ...that the citizens feel, uh, worthy.

Dick Boisvert: Thank you for your time.

Harriet Cady: Harriet Cady. Old Center Road. I would like see us have the equipment that is necessary in the highway department. Our, uh, two tucks are having to have very expensive repairs. A backhoe and loader that could be at the highway department rather than the dump having to drive the one there up to the highway department for use and then it has to be driven back to the dump and I just thank that's really wasteful. I also feel there are some other things in town that definitely need the money. I'm not against an ambulance but I am against buying something that can't have the full use until we can hire as Nottingham, or Epsom, or Candia has done. Candia is presently four hundred thousand, um, I'm sorry, forty percent out of what they predicted they would earn so they've got to make up that money this year. I called around today to various towns and departments and found out some very interesting things but I think the fact is, we're going to, at some point, staff an ambulance when we feel we can afford it but this town needs to fund a firehouse and a police station. This town needs to fix roads that are deteriorating. We have not done anywheres near the repair on the roads to keep them up to standards. I remember, probably, twenty years Epping took that in hand and borrowed a million dollars, fixed all the roads that needed to be fixed. Paved roads and then paid back that bond. Um, but I don't want to see an ambulance sitting empty when somebody needs help and I personally was hit by a dump truck up by the apple orchard in nineteen eighty-eight and had my jaw cut open and had to wait approximately thirty minutes for the Raymond ambulance to get there. Had very good care. Um, the guys from our town rescue came, helped were very good. I will never take away from them. They're great guys to volunteer and all that they do but as a taxpayer I see us having to take care of our highway equipment. Take care of getting a backhoe and loader for that department so that we won't be driving it from the dump back and forth. A very expensive road trip. I would like to see us have an ambulance at some point but I'd like more planning from the town to see how

we're going to employ the people such as what Candia has done. They didn't... they overestimated their income so they're going back on that. The, uh, cost is Epsom for the personnel is over four hundred thousand not counting benefits and federal withholding and so on and so forth. So, all I'm saying is, we've haven't studied this enough to figure out, are we going to hire staffing and I really think that's part of that package. I don't want to see an ambulance sitting at the fire station when somebody is dying because we don't have staffing. Thank you.

Chairman McGarry: More comments.

Suzanne Steele: Suzanne Steele. Eight Harvey Road. Um, I want to first say thanks for the comments. Harriet, I have a similar story and Bernie I like the idea of having a cooperative coming together with towns. Um, I too was in an accident. I don't remember all the details like Harriet remembers hers but I was upside down in my car and an off-duty EMT person found me in my car. I don't remember how long we waited for the ambulance but I was grateful for that service. I feel like what we're talking about is a cart before the horse. So, we don't have the horse yet meaning the staff and I think it's important aspect that we do need to address. Um, so, I think that both things need to be addressed and I also... other options, other way to spend money. I was speaking to someone who isn't here tonight and their comment was, we've had conversations about having an elevator at the town hall, um, and that could be something that could be useful for using a building and our community might really benefit by having that so... that was my comments. Thank you.

Greg Whitmore: Greg Whitmore. North Road. So, if I were to prioritize, um, what is really needed over what is nice, uh, I'm looking at roads and culverts all the way. Uh, I mean, it's absolutely something that has to be taken care of, um, out, just out of curiosity with the ambulance so, if we had our own ambulance would that be sent out to other towns just like they send them to us?

Matt Fisher: If we were staffing the ambulance and able to transport, if someone called from Mutual Aid, we would respond and help them as they help us, yes.

Greg Whitmore: Okay. So, what we, what we're really doing is adding an ambulance to the, to the pool. So, you know, we're just one more for all the surrounding towns, right?

Matt Fisher: If we were available, yes, just as they respond to us, yes.

Selectman Huebner: Well, except that it's stationed much closer.

Matt Fisher: Absolutely.

Greg Whitmore: Absolutely. All right, um, yeah, that's really all I wanted to say. Thank you.

Aaron Cady: Aron Cady. Old Center Road. So, as background, I ran the rescue for about twenty years so I can give you perspective, all of you, perspective on where we're going. You're being sold a wolf in sheep's clothing here with a never-ending rabbit hole. This will turn into a boondoggle that will cost this town financially substantially. Now, money aside, money is not the biggest issue. You want to burn up somebody as far as a volunteer... now I've done this or did it for twenty years, in fact, I provided a lot of the advanced care so I ended up going with the ambulance to the hospitals. You're going to send the crew of two that we currently keep in town, regardless rescue call or fire call, unless they go Mutual Aid in town, put them on an ambulance, you're going to lose them for three hours. That was the minimum time it took us to go to the hospital, collect equipment and turn and burn back. Three hours. You have a staff on for ten hours, I guess, I don't know, I'm not exactly sure, twelve. So, you may get three runs out of them. Once they're gone, they're gone. Volunteers, how many of you can afford to take three hours out of your paycheck for no money or little money to take somebody to the hospital as good as it was. It cost me a lot of money over the course of time. This isn't the way to go but as a suggestion, I would encourage you to open the town website to suggestions. Leave it open for some time. You may get some very good suggestions submitted to the town for your review. I'm dead set against an ambulance. Fixing the rescue right now and looking for its replacement in kind, absolutely. For twenty years we had nowhere to put people. It wasn't a big concern. It... was it inconvenient, absolutely. Was it the end of the world, not by a long shot. And fifteen minutes that you think you're going to save on site by having an ambulance is the same fifteen minutes it's going to take to do an evaluation. To dress them, package them and load them in the ambulance. You're gaining nothing. You've had a service provided to you from Raymond since eighty-four. It's been an exceptional service and I would challenge Matt's four out of five. I don't think it's that high. Very seldom did they ever, ever not show up. In fact. I can't tell you the time they didn't show up in twenty years. Just didn't happen. Thank you.

Linda McNair-Perry: Linda McNair-Perry. Fourteen Range Road. Um, two things. Um, you're obviously looking for where I'd like to see the money spent and I am all for roads and highway, uh, department. Both of them, I mean, I

think they kinda go hand in hand. Um, but I did want to share my experience. We had the ambulance at our house at the end of a good chunk of the height of the covid at the end of twenty twenty and, um, like he just mentioned actually, uh, our EMT's were rolling at the same time Raymond ambulance was. They came in ten minutes, Raymond ambulance showed up at my house on Range Road ten minutes after, uh, EMTs showed. So, we were really in a position of, we just gotten the basic about what's your name, what's your age, how are you doing, where does it hurt, you know, we got the basics down so that when Raymond showed up, we were, we were ready and several of those were lift assists and I never got a bill from Raymond. They came and it was a lift assist and there was no bill. Um, and then there were times we had to transport my husband so, um, it was not a half... not... it's not like the EMTs showed up, spent a half hour there and then called Raymond ambulance. They were rolling at the exact same time. So, there was like a ten minutes lag between the ambulance and the EMTs. Um, so, I just don't think that we're gaining a whole heck of a lot and I was appreciative, by the way, of everybody that was ever showed up, um, and I think that they do an awesome job right now, personally. Thank you.

Erroll Rhodes: Erroll Rhodes. Church Street. Um, Mr. Chairman, I hope you might be able to give me an extra minute or two, um, because I do have an idea that I got from Eversource, uh last Friday. I met with them on the tree issue and, um, as you, I think, mentioned in your last meeting, um, they had sent out a, um, crew of actually a, an assessor to figure out ha the ash problem in town looks like this year. They had done an analysis in twenty twenty and they'd found that there were six hundred trees on their eighty-eight miles of loop in town that threatened their lines. Um, so they were updating that. They did a sample in the northeast section of town and, um, they shared with me on Friday the figures that, uh, they got. They looked at six point eight miles of road that was threatened by their loop, um, and they found, um, three hundred and fourteen trees, um, that were a threat. That's, uh, what's the average, forty-six trees per mile. Which, for eighty-eight miles of loop comes out to about four thousand trees just on their loop. Now, their loop is eighty percent of, um, the town roads. Towns got a hundred and ten miles of road so if you look at that way there's five thousand trees in town that are a hazard. They didn't just sort of drive by and look at them. They created a very detailed list, uh, by tree, uh, the kind of issues that were going on with the tree. The vast majority are standing dead and, uh, and, um, are a threat to their lines. Uh, they're also a threat, uh, to the land owners who have them, if I understand it correctly, because under law if you have a tree that's impaired and it causes damage, um, you might have some liability for that. Um, Eversource like the idea of, if they can, of working with the town, uh, and they need... and they would provide the tree service, uh, to take down as many of there trees as possible on as expeditious, uh, schedule as could be done. Um, but they're hoping that the town can, perhaps, use some of these funds to help them be more efficient in their, uh, in their, in their, uh, program. Um, they need help in three areas. Traffic control, um, removal and permissioning. Uh, I don't think permissioning... it probably requires some work but, um, given that there's, there's a liability to the, uh, to the landowner and the possibility of taking the excess Ash and, um, getting it contributed to the wood bank, particularly since we've got a high fuel cost winter coming up. Um, if you, um, work out a program where Eversource and the town work together, which they would be open to, um, they would be able to expedite as much as their, uh, they, they could. The process of removing those trees or taking them down and making the roads and their power and communication lines, um, safer for the town. Um, that's, um, and I've also, I guess, I've spoken to the, uh, the people who run the wood bank and they're open to this idea as well. I think logistically it can work out... how this would work but, uh, with a little bit of money from the town for, um, traffic control and removal, uh, and permissioning and an agreement between the town and Eversource to, to move this forward, um, I think that would be a terrific benefit to everybody in town, um, all the way around. The, um, just one side note, um, is that their current contractor is Asplundh who does not work with a log truck but starting on December, uh, January first they'll be working with Northern Tree which does have a log truck so that would make the removal piece a little but easier. Um, this, and finally, uh, and one other item, um, in the figures that we all saw in terms of the ambulance presentation, I'd have to back up Mrs. Cady on her comment about, uh, the, uh, the Candia situation. They bought an ambulance in the belief that it was a self-funding kind of operation. They are forty percent below right now, uh, as their selectboard, uh, said to me the other day. Um, the figures that we saw are pre, uh, collection discount figures. I think those numbers need a lot of looking at because every fire department I've talked to that talks about collections from private pay, um, thinks that twenty to forty percent is, is closer to what you actually get. Not even the fifty percent that you were hypothesizing in your presentation so that's a... there's a lot of money that, uh, is going to end up, uh, not appearing if we don't do our homework properly. So... Thank you very much.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Thank you.

Jeanne Menard: Jeanne Menard. Mountain Road. Uh, just a historical comment. We have in our midst here this evening one of the founding members of the rescue squad, Don Smith, and his first rescue vehicle that he and the other, uh, responders went to calls in a station wagon. So, we have come a long way with our equipment and our departments and I have every confidence that we are going to continue to move forward in a good way. Continuing to serve the residents of Deerfield so, Thank you all.

Harriet Cady: I just want to say, the station wagon was donated from some friends of mine.

Ed Cross: Ed Cross. Thurston Pond Road. So, it looks like we're looking to spend about three hundred seventy thousand dollars potentially on this ambulance and so as a business owner when we're looking to spend that kind of money, having answers from the people who's looking for us to spend that kind of money saying I don't have those numbers but let me go shooting from the hip. That's a challenging statement to say a people or to a board that would be looking to spend that kind of money. There's no reason why you shouldn't have accurate numbers cause you knew that this was coming up. You that we were having a public hearing. You knew that people were going to be talking about the numbers. I would have thought that you would have had better numbers to prepare instead of shooting from the hip. The other question I have is, did anyone actually look at an intermediate vehicle? I know that if was said that in an opinion that they didn't think it was an option. Did anyone actually look at an intermediate vehicle?

Matt Fisher: For replacing rescue one?

Ed Cross: Yes.

Matt Fisher: So, an intermediate vehicle, my stance would be, that'd be another no-transporting vehicle.

Ed Cross: Yep. Correct. Did anybody look into it?

Matt Fisher: We have not. Our proposal was looking at an ambulance.

Ed Cross: So, we just went for the top and didn't look at any options between the bottom which is our current vehicle and the top which is the ambulance. There was no consideration for anything in the middle.

Matt Fisher: We looked at moving forward and expanding our possibilities of services to the community.

Ed Cross: But I think it was stated by Mis Menard that you that kind of spending money on an ambulance that could potentially sit for ten years or be used for ten years before we even get to that point and by the time, we get to the point it would be then outdated, potentially.

Matt Fisher: I don't believe that's a realistic potential but potential, I guess.

Ed Cross: Well, I'm shooting from the hip too.

Matt Fisher: Okay.

Chris Gallant: Yeah... (inaudible, cut off)

Ed Cross: Using our existing savings, by the way I'm sorry I don't have that number, but we have some money that has been being put aside for updating the equipment in this town correct.

Matt Fisher: Yes.

Ed Cross: How much is that?

Chairman McGarry: Why don't we.... What do we... I'm trying to get further input on other projects...

Ed Cross: Then I'll do my next thing.

Chairman McGarry: Let's do that.

Ed Cross: My last thing on my item is that the highway department is in terrible need of equipment to upgrade the systems that they have. To upgrade the equipment that they have. They can't get anyone to take the job. It's been very challenging and from what I've been told and I will say it could be hearsay that that challenging part has been because the department's equipment is in such bad condition and there are no funds to work with to upgrade those equip... that equipment or even put into the road systems itself. That I certainly think that an infrastructure amount of money like we have potentially to use has a way better opportunity to be used, used in just that one department alone. Three hundred and seventy thousand dollars would go like that to address the major problems that we have in our roads so I would recommend that it looks... that the, that the select board would look at the potential for upgrading the road systems and our current highway department.

Chairman McGarry: Thank you.

Chris Gallant: Excuse me, hold on one second. Nope, well, my apologies again. Sorry I couldn't be there but the figures you were asking about, what figures were you saying were not correct?

Ed Cross: No, I was wondering as far as the... well when it... when they were talking about what is the, you know, the actual cost and what contributes, they were going back and forth and I'm... and I wasn't paying attention to the specific numbers they were talking about but I know that the answer was, shooting from the hip, because there was no actual numbers to go by...

Chris Gallant: So, was...

Ed Cross: What I'm talking about, it's the comment not the amounts.

Chris Gallant: Oh, my apologies, the, all the amounts on the slides were correct and up to date.

Joe Cartier: Hi. Joe Cartier. Blakes Hill Road. Um, so not to beat a dead horse but I am curious about, because somebody else mentioned that sort of like maybe a match, right, which we usually see from grants, um, so what it... and I don't mind if it's shooting from the hip whatever the round estimate is, do we have money in the fire rescue that could towards the ambulance in a match or is that... do we have any?

Chairman McGarry: There's no requirement on this money for a match on anything. This is, it was mentioned before, free money so there's no requirement by the town to match any of the money that's being expended.

Joe Cartier: Okay. Perfect. Yeah. No, I was thinking like kind of a match between any of those projects and this of splitting the funds. Fair enough. And so, um, I guess the other point I would like to make just from some of the things that I've heard is, uh, all great ideas, right, uh, as like I get roads. I grew up on Nottingham Road, it's like driving by braille going down Nottingham Road, um, but it's also like everybody in the room is going to agree on roads we well. I think that is a really good voter issue, um, we can get people behind. We have around three hundred calls annually in Deerfield. On average, you know, we talk about numbers, you're right about the reimbursement. Maybe seventy percent of calls usually get reimbursed and then the other thirty percent are self-pay which gets into this nasty road I won't go down but, um, point being, it's three hundred calls and then if we're honest five to ten percent of those are probably true emergencies. So, that's really a small subset of our population that's going to be using it but when they do it's going to be life and death for five to ten percent of them. So, we say ten of three hundred, that's thirty people, fifteen to thirty people that's a life-or-death scenario that could be changed by this. Um, and it's not always life or death either although the point is, is this is less a matter of saving money than it is saving lives because this is a service that gets provided to the town. Um, you know, a couple numbers that I think are useful are that in the next three months there's a mobile integrated healthcare classes that are being put on by the state that are free and grant funded. For the next three months they're free or I mean they're full rather, um, but after that it's going to be expanded and available to all providers in the state from the EMT Level and up and the importance of that is that we can use this ambulance to transport people not to the emergency departments, um, by the way I can tell you I can't name names but you guys can all call or look, I mean, I don't think it's; super secret but, um, you know, the emergency departments that Raymond is bringing us to, the only one that they can go to are six to ten hour waits for patients even the ones that can't wait that long. Um, I know three patients died in the waiting room last week at one of the hospitals that we go to in the emergency department that didn't get care yet and that's part of why they don't have people so, um, you know, point being is alternative destinations can also be used for ambulances. They don't have to go to emergency departments. They can hook people up with physicians' offices. They can transport to urgent cares. Um, you might have suspected I am an EMS. I'm a paramedic and we, uh, in one of my services we transport to the urgent care in the town and we take some of those patients who can go to there and don't take them to the ED. They get the case they need then the person having a stroke that needs treatment within three hours can get to there. Um, so, I think that the, the savings that we get here is certainly not fiscal, I mean, I can't disagree, I have to agree with that but, uh, there is a very compelling savings that I think also sets us up for a healthy future in the town. Thank you.

Chairman McGarry: Thank you.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Thank you.

Roger Marquis: Roger Marquis. Perkins Road. Um, first of all I want to thank the volunteers. I've used the Deerfield rescue and the Raymond ambulance and it was great having those services and all the volunteer work that everybody puts in. Um, it's just tremendous. Um, secondly, in terms of, uh, budgeting for the... for some sort of a rescue vehicle to replace the existing ones, I guess I'm echoing other speakers but, um, I would encourage going through the town budget for that rather than using this money for that, um, because there are so many other needs that aren't being attended to and for a project, Fred, we had, in terms of trees, it's been brought up here, but we all heard, young lady in, think it was Keene, twenty-two year old got killed by a tree that fell on her car when she driving



down the road. Um, all within that time frame, I was coming home one day and a large ash tree had fallen across the road just before getting to my driveway on 107 there and I don't know, I didn't hear anything so I assume no one was hurt and it was all great but it was a massive tree and it was mostly the crown that landed in the road, um, and within another... all within, like, two weeks or so, um, recently I was going to the dump. Turned up the road to get to the dump and came to a stop. Cars lined up. There's a big tree that had fallen across. A tree that had been dead for years standing on the edge of the road but just waiting to fall and nothing got done about it. It fell across the road and this is everywhere... it's not... it's all over the state but this is how we... what we do but this tree was a massive tree. Landed across the road again. No one got hurt, thankfully, and it was removed and we went on our way but there's a real hazard with trees, you know, we like our trees. We like them growing close to the road and all that but there's a hazard associated with that and I would encourage looking at spending some money towards trying to mitigate some of those hazards. Thank you.

Dennis Kuczewski: Dennis Kuczewski. Pleasant Hill Road. What's the time limit on spending our money?

Chairman McGarry: I think it's twenty twenty-four.

Selectman Huebner: Well, I believe it's twenty twenty-four for allocating it to a project and then it's into twenty twenty-six actually to actually have the full project completed.

Dennis Kuczewski: Okay, so it seems like we have ample time to...

Selectman Huebner: Right. We're not in a rush.

Dennis Kuczewski: Uh, on of the tings that really worked well when I was a chairman of the school building committee was questionnaires. Uh, I recall the first time we went to the school district meeting. It was something the school board put forward and it was a close vote but we went for the second time and that's when we really got the public involved. We sent out a questionnaire and, uh, I think the town pretty much spoke and for what they wanted. Uh, I'm all for sending a questionnaire out and possibly putting, maybe, ten questions items on the question and let people prioritize. I was surprised to see on my way here how many people were still coming home from work and probably would have enjoyed coming to this meeting tonight but aren't able to come and I think it did a lot of good when we built that school that we got the entire town involved. I can't tell you how many meetings I went to and many homes I went to, you know, to put on, you know, the reasons why we needed a new school. Uh, the other thing is. I used to be known as the tree guy at a public service company of New Hampshire. Uh, I was the one responsible and managed that entire program throughout the system and one gentleman mentioned that if the town could help out, especially with, uh, traffic control. That was always a thorn in my side, you know, how much we'd have to pay extra which most of you people probably didn't realize that we picked up the bill for that and that makes a big difference if the town can get involved and, uh, provide us with, uh, traffic control. The other thing too is, uh, if you can get somebody with a log loader, you know, public service will be very... Asplundh tree company is very good at dropping the trees and bucking them up but if you can get somebody with a log loader who's willing to take them, I mean, they're still very... some of them can probably be used as boards and certainly as firewood. Okay, so again some very, uh, valuable assets that are still standing out there, okay, and I think, again I didn't realize we had that many ash trees in town until I was driving around last summer and see how many were dead and I think that's a real concern.

Chairman McGarry: Thank you.

Josh Cresswell: Josh Cresswell again. Range Road. Um, I think some of the clarification... well, I think there needs to be a couple things of clarification that, uh, that have been said, uh, tonight and I think one of the things is that the department is looking... the fire departments looking for this as a long-term plan not a tomorrow plan. Um, I am not currently a member of Deerfield fire or rescue but I do work in this industry. I have for almost... well I have for twenty-two years. Um, I've worked one of the busiest ambulance systems, private ambulance systems in the state which is now defunct. Um, the company that took over their stead can no longer staff their contracts because of lack of personnel which is why Candia had to make the decision that they made in getting their own ambulance regardless of what the cost was or the revenue shortage was. There was a need that needed to be filled. Um, we're looking at a two-year-ish plan id something is ordered tomorrow which we know that's not going to happen. At any point in time Raymond ambulance could become defunct. They could shut their doors or they could just say, hey we can't provide your service anymore because we don't have enough staff to staff the three ambulances that we have. Um, if that happens, we're looking at roughly two years before we can get our own service in place. Just to get the vehicle. We have an opportunity to get a vehicle, whether we get a new one or a used one or we can modify something that works great. Uh, we have staff now that are certified to operate it if that need became forefront there are people that could operate it. Um, it would not take three hours to do a turn and burn to the hospital. I do hospital transports every day that I work. Um, an hour and fifteen minutes is a long time for us to be out of service. Regardless of what the call is, the two people that we have on staff during the day, if they're committed to a call they're committed to a call and

somebody else has to come in, either off duty or for Mutual Aid to service that second call which would happen if in the event that the ambulance were out of town. Um, so again, whether the selectboard decided to move forward with this or puts it to a vote, um, I think everybody needs to know and have, uh, accurate information and not conjecture and from someone who works in this industry, has worked in this industry full-time for almost twenty years, does this every day for a job. Um, I can tell you that the industry is hurting because the lack of staffing in the bigger services is becoming a bigger problem. We go Mutual Aid to other communities in the town that I work in every day. We've had to limit our responses to Manchester which is the biggest city in the state to one response per twenty-four hours because we can't keep going there as often as we were going Um, as far as some of the other comments about having infrastructure changes and things, I would ask the selectboard, how many years has the town of Deerfield voted down the proposed budget?

Chairman McGarry: Seven years.

Josh Cresswell: Seven years in succession. So, for seven years the citizens and residents of this town have voted down infrastructure improvements, vehicle improvements, staffing improvements. Seven years and now it's a problem and now we want to fix things that we couldn't fix because we didn't want to spend the money seven years ago. It's a little bit of planning moving forward. It's a little bit of planning in the right direction in the event that this is going to happen eventually and being prepared for it and being put in the right place for it is going to help us rather than having to make a jerk reaction of, oh suddenly the ambulance can't show up anymore because they're not available. Now we've got to order an ambulance. We've got to get people trained and staffed, which already do have them, um, and we're already paying them for the daytime coverage. They're already here. The insurance is already here. I mean, the only difference is a change in our license status which is a paperwork thing that takes a couple weeks in the state. Um, I guess that's about it. I mean, just, there's been some things said which, uh, I think needed a little bit of clarification. I do appreciate everybody's input on this. It's certainly been eye opening for me, um, and if anybody has any questions, I'm free to answer them.

Chairman McGarry: Thank you.

John Leslie: John Leslie. Meetinghouse Hill Road. Um, chief we were talking... we've talked about staffing quite a bit, right, how many EMT qualified personnel do you guys have on staff?

Matt Fisher: Between the part-time staff and the call members there's twenty-four I believe.

John Leslie: Twenty-four EMT qualifying. Okay. Um, so, the last couple years we're approved several warrant articles for approximately a hundred thousand dollars for road improvements. Um, that shows that we as taxpayers want to improve the roads. Um, I understand the ambulance is something that we could potentially get long term but roads is something that affects the town now. Um, as... I forget who said earlier, you know, if the road collapses we can't get an ambulance there anyways. Um, you know, the bridges, culverts that sort of thing are expensive upfront investments. Um, as Miss Cady said earlier, you know, the highway department needs to improve their equipment. We've been having issues getting a road agent which, I forget who mentioned it earlier, um, saying, you know, the road agent... this is hearsay obviously, but because of infrastructure issues, because of spending that's been a position that's been very difficult to fill. I think we've gone through four a year. Is it three road agents?

Chairman McGarry: Uh, yes.

John Leslie: So, I mean, obviously that's a problem. Um, and, you know, an ambulance definitely... if it saves one life it's worth it but there's other things to consider as well as the long-term an ambulance and I don't disagree that it's something the we need to approach but there's potential for setting some aside like you said, we don't have to fund it for another two years where we don't have to spend. We could potentially set some aside for future and see if the taxpayers will fund the rest of it. You know, there's options here. We don't have to spend the whole shebang on the ambulance and that's it. Thank you.

Chairman McGarry: All right, what I have for lists right now of, uh, I guess it's kind of like a Christmas list here, uh, the, uh, obviously the ambulance. We have cemetery maintenance. I have, uh, equipment, uh, replacing or repairing equipment in the highway department. Uh, police station was mentioned once. Uh, elevator for the town hall. Roads, roads, roads and tree removal and assisting Eversource. That, uh, that's what I've got thus far. Mr. Bilodeau.

Bill Bilodeau: Parking is a problem, um, I'm barreled in all the way around. I can't get out. I'm parked right by the sign there's a big white pickup truck and then there's another sedan. I would just ask as a courtesy; I'd like to go.

Chairman McGarry: Do you have a plate number for the pickup truck that's blocking you?

Bill Bilodeau: The pickup truck that's parked right here by the sign on this side.

Chairman McGarry: All right, do we have any other suggestions for projects?

Rebecca Hutchinson: Can I just put another vote in for the police station. I think our police station is a serious problem and has been for years and, uh, and I would like to support that but I also would like to... I kind of like Dennis's idea of having some kind of survey where you could prioritize and I would suggest trying to have another public meeting before that thing goes out that... where you could list all things and you could have people speaking in favor, you know, one person or a spokesman on each item so we could get some information out. The wonderful thing about this evening is there's been a lot of good information and that's great.

Pam English: Hi. Pam English. Deerfield. Uh, I don't have any suggestions but I do know that ARPA money is abundant that state and I would recommend, if at all possible, you once again apply for more.

Christine Grega: Christine Grega. Mount Delight Road. So, we currently have rescue vehicle one and two. Which was the more decrepit of the two? They're both twenty years old?

Matt Fisher: Yeah, one is eighteen and one is sixteen.

Christine Grega: So, the twenty-sixteen, what make and model is that?

Matt Fisher: It's a Ford F-550.

Christine Grega: So, if you have to go out if you wanted to replace it... go out and buy a new Ford F-550 and then how many modifications on top of that?

Matt Fisher: So, the vehicle basically has a box on the back that has compartments all the way around and compartments inside to house all our, jaws of life, stabilization...

Christine Grega: So, on a F-550 with upgraded toolboxes?

Matt Fisher: Yes.

Christine Grega: So, a person could, uh, certainly use the AARP funds because you obviously need one of those vehicles to be new vehicles. You shouldn't be driving around in twenty-year-old vehicles but I would suggest... the cost difference between an F-550 and an ambulance... and I realize you cannot transport in the F-550 but how much is an F-550, just for...?

Matt Fisher: That vehicle, um, rescue two, was purchased, uh, by donated funds and it was brand new. Um, I don't recall the... it was, I want to say, a hundred and fifty to a hundred sixty thousand. I'm shooting from the hip. Um, it was all donated funds.

Christine Grega: Correct. So, a person could...

Matt Fisher: Nowadays, yeah, it would be several hundred thousand dollars.

Christine Grega: Okay. But easy to look up. So... All right, that was my question. My suggestion would be to use the money to update one of those rescue vehicles to get you something that is safe and reliable and then presumably live along the other one and fix it up to standard. Thank you.

Erroll Rhodes: Erroll Rhodes. Church Street. Um, your list didn't include the letter you got from the heritage commission last week.

Chairman McGarry: Oh, no it didn't.

Erroll Rhodes: So, I wanted to, uh, get that on the list as well.

Chairman McGarry: The water supply for the...

Erroll Rhodes: Potable, potable water system.

Chairman McGarry: Yes. Right.

Erroll Rhodes: Yes, thank you.

Selectwoman McHugh: New Window.

Chairman McGarry: And windows too?

Erroll Rhodes: Everything.

Alex Cote: Alex Cote. James City Road. One quick question, Matt. Um, Nottingham transporting on their own now?

Matt Fisher: Nottingham?

Alex Cote: Yeah.

Matt Fisher: Yes.

Alex Cote: And Candia?

Matt Fisher: Yes.

Alex Cote: So, if there's an issue with Raymond could it be possible to renegotiate the contract with Raymond and have Raymond staff that side of town. Candia Staff this side of town and Nottingham take care of that side of the town if there's that big of an issue of Raymond not showing up.

Matt Fisher: We would look at all our Mutual Aid partners...

Alex Cote: Okay.

Matt Fisher: ...to see what we could do.

Alex Cote: Yeah. I just, yeah, yup.

Chairman McGarry: Any other comments or suggestions to add to our Christmas list here? All right. Thank you all for coming. Uh, certainly provided some additional... plenty information for us to consider, uh, and, uh, I think we'll have to discuss amongst ourselves whether it be, uh, of value to be able to send out a survey which may in fact have some merit. So, again, thank you very much.

*The Minutes were transcribed and respectfully submitted by Randi Long, Recording Secretary  
Pending approval by the Board of Selectmen*