

**ARLINGTON CITY COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING WORKSHOP AGENDA
MAY 6, 2019 AT 5:00 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

1. Call meeting to order
2. Roll Call
3. Approve Meeting Workshop Agenda
4. Discussion regarding townships contribution to ambulance services.

ADJOURNMENT

**ARLINGTON CITY COUNCIL
COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES
May 6, 2019**

The Council Workshop meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m., Mayor Richard Nagel presiding.

Members present: Richard Nagel, Michelle Battcher, Adam Cowell, Tom Hatlestad, Jim Heiland and Ben Jaszewski.

Also present: City Adm. Pat Melvin and Enterprise Staff member Kurt Menk.

Motion by Battcher, seconded by Heiland, and passed by unanimous vote to approve the agenda.

The purpose of the Council Workshop meeting was to discuss the townships intent to withdraw from paying ambulance service costs starting in 2020. Administrator Melvin provided the Council with a Township Rates for 2020 Ambulance and Fire Services handout which showed the 2018-2020 costs split out among Arlington, Green Isle and seven townships for Ambulance Services. The costs to townships has increased from \$6,750 in 2018 based on the number of calls received and total households to \$14,815 proposed for 2020. The City is currently researching a merger with Gaylord to address rising costs and staffing challenges.

The City of Green Isle also contributes to Ambulance and paid \$2,284.90 in 2018 and is proposed to pay 4,931.99 in 2020. The City of Arlington pays towards the Ambulance in an annual allocation and an additional transfer from the General Fund to keep operations going. In 2018 the annual contribution was \$28,541.22 and is proposed for 2020 to be \$25,078. This does not include the additional money transferred in from the City's General Fund by the City which totaled \$47,000 in 2017 and \$15,000 in 2018.

The City of Arlington holds the license for ambulance services in the Arlington area and legally there is no way to force a township or City to pay. The license holder has an obligation to provide acceptable service within that area. Acceptable service is defined as a response time within 30 minutes. The majority of ambulance calls are for residents of Arlington and transfers from the nursing and assisted living homes in the area to Ridgeview Sibley Medical Center.

The townships have raised this concern because they became aware that some townships in Glencoe and Le Sueur area do not pay any ambulance fees and they question why they do. Further discussion with Ridgeview and others have led the City to believe that this is because of the increased number of calls in some areas. The City of Arlington had 432 calls in the last year. The number of calls that Glencoe is responding to is approximately 1400. Le Sueur ambulance service was taken over by the hospital as part of a special negotiation when the hospital was sold. When an ambulance service reaches 1,000 calls a year, the charges are able to cover costs.

The City of Arlington is not able to simply increase charges, because the majority of ambulance charges are paid for through medicare and other insurance which has negotiated a lower cost for the service. Therefore making adjustments to the charges will not change what the majority of individuals pay. There was discussion about why the City is not able to go back to the individuals to have them pay the difference between what insurance pays and what the City charges. That additional amount has to be written off by the City as a loss. There was also discussion about being able to put a lean on the individuals property until that full amount is paid which is not an option available to the City.

The City going forward has to be fully aware of all its options, for even with Gaylord working with Arlington, our total ambulance calls will still fall short of the 1,000 calls, at approximately 700 calls. The City Council directed Administration to continue meeting with Gaylord while exploring options to hire Ridgeview and possibly even Allina from Glencoe to contract with the City for operation of the Ambulance Service in hopes that cost can be better controlled and decreased.

Motion by Battcher, seconded by Heiland, and passed by unanimous vote of those present to adjourn the meeting at 5:43 pm.

City Administrator Patrick Melvin

Mayor Richard Nagel