

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Mooers held Wednesday May 9, 2018 at the Mooers Office Complex commencing at 7:00 PM

Present: Jeff Menard, Supervisor
Donald Perras, Councilperson
Christopher Bulriss, Councilperson
Eugene "Dickie" Boulerice, Councilperson
Irving Breyette, Councilperson

Recording Secretary: Jessica K. Bulriss, Town Clerk

Others Present: Kris Gilmore, Highway Superintendent
Crystal Bulriss, Town Court
Dan Dumas, Fire Chief

Absent: None

Meeting: Supervisor Jeff Menard called the Meeting to Order at 7:00 PM, then he asked Mrs. Jessica Bulriss to lead them in the "Pledge of Allegiance," which she did.

Supervisor Menard explained the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the proposed EMS building. He explained the various payment and location options provided by Mr. Steve Sample (attached). He said they originally went out for a single bay building which would cost \$33,864.00 per year for ten years. They met again and discussed including overnight accommodations and a second bay. The cost would be \$41,544.00 per year for ten years. He stated that Corey Thompson, Steve Menard, and Roger Favreau were present to answer any questions community members may have. Also present were EMT's Sue Roberts and Tim Miller.

Supervisor Menard asked if anyone present would like to speak. Mr. Steve Sample stated that the payment options included a \$1.00 buyout and the second lease option could be renewed for an additional ten years. Supervisor Menard said they also considered building on a donated piece of land. Supervisor Menard said that he didn't think that option would save much money and he likes the location of the first option better when considering plowing and mowing.

Mrs. Crystal Bulriss asked for confirmation that the building is going to cost almost a half a million dollars. Supervisor Menard replied roughly \$400,000.00. Mrs. Bulriss asked if there were any other quotes obtained. Supervisor Menard replied no only one quote. She also asked if this should go out for a vote because it is a lot of money. Supervisor Menard replied it may possibly have to go out for referendum. She asked if the town had enough funds to cover the cost of the building. Supervisor Menard replied no, and that is why we were looking at the ten year lease option.

Mr. Steve Bulriss asked if the town will foot the bill. Supervisor Menard replied the town will pay the lease payment. Mr. Bulriss asked if Champlain EMS will be paying anything toward the building. Supervisor Menard replied no, the building will be owned by the town. He also said he feels it's better for the town to own the building in case we decide to change EMS providers. Councilperson Boulerice asked what we currently pay EMS. Supervisor Menard replied that they are currently contracted for \$95,000.00. He said that provides coverage Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm.

Ms. Kendra Hawksby asked if the town will be paying the 41,000.00 per year for the lease and paying the \$95,000.00 per year for them to provide coverage how will we pay for it. Supervisor Menard replied that he is not sure yet. He said there are four solar farm coming to the town and they will pay \$19,000.00 per year per farm once they are up and running. He said the problem is they are not running yet so the town doesn't have the money. He also said that property owners have recently been reassessed and their taxes have gone up so he does not want to raise taxes any higher to cover the cost of the building. Mr. Bulriss asked for an update on the wind mills. Supervisor Menard said they are still progressing, but it will be at least another year before they start putting them up. They are also hoping to put solar panels in along with the windmills. Mr. Bulriss asked if there was any guarantee that Champlain EMS will not raise their price since we are putting up a building. Supervisor Menard said

no, they will request an increase every year. Councilperson Boulerville asked if they should be limited to a 2% raise.

Mr. Bruce Bulriss said that this doesn't make any sense. We are spending money that we don't have. Supervisor Menard agreed. Mr. Bulriss said this is the library all over again. We are jumping into a project when there are no funds for it. Supervisor Menard said we are not jumping into anything yet. We are trying to get the information out to see what everyone thinks. Mr. Bulriss said we have been talking about it for three months and you can't spend money you don't have. He also said that he doesn't know why we are making this for them when they already have a nice place to stay. Why are we going into debt? If they want a building let them build it. Their long range plan was to have a building in Mooers. Supervisor Menard said he was unsure. Mr. Bulriss said that's what they have been talking about since they came. Supervisor Menard said they have outgrown their space in the fire station. There are two people crammed in a tiny little office and that is not fair to them. Mr. Bulriss said they have what they agreed to in the original contract. Supervisor Menard asked how old that contract was. Mr. Bulriss said if they needed more room they should have approached us and asked for more room maybe we could have found some. Supervisor Menard said if you are willing to give up more space fine.

Councilperson Boulerville asked about a previous statement regarding money from Mr. Bulriss. Mr. Bulriss replied that it was regarding money for the library. Councilperson Boulerville said most of the money for the library came from grants. Mr. Bulriss asked if we had grants for the EMS building. Councilperson Boulerville said it would be a good idea to look for grants. He also asked who paid for the new Champlain EMS building. Mr. Corey Thompson replied that it was mostly the town. He said since 2002, when they incorporated, the Town of Champlain has been paying \$150,000.00 per year. They are currently paying \$165,000.00 per year. They had saved money each year to go towards the building and the rest was funded by loans. Mr. Thompson explained that the \$95,000.00 that the Town of Mooers pays go towards, but doesn't completely cover, paid staff. He said they have never charged the town for a new ambulance, or a building and that is why they are having these negotiations. He said the town is obligated to provide a space. He said they are the only ambulance company that doesn't force the town to provide a new ambulance. He said the town has to provide a space if they want paid staff in their quarters and right now the space is very small. He referenced the Town of Clinton, who is now working out of 4,800 square foot building because of an addition. He said the same thing happened with the Town of Champlain. They were working out of their fire department, but outgrew the space. They saved for five years and built the new building. He said the Town of Champlain did help build the new building through their contracted fee. Mrs. Crystal Bulriss said because they gave you \$150,000.00 per year like the Town of Mooers is giving you \$95,000.00 per year. She said so we are helping you already. Mr. Thompson replied no the \$95,000.00 is covering paid staff, none of the money is being put away for a building. He said if the town were to hire a new ambulance company they would come in with specific specs for an ambulance, size of a building, size of storage space etc. and the town would have to meet their demands. He said a good case in point is the Town of Altona. He said they went from a volunteer to a paid agency their tax rate went from \$0.00 to \$2.35 per thousand. They went from \$0.00 to \$525,000.00. The Town of Clinton is currently paying \$465,000.00 per year. He said they are very fortunate and can split their taxable income across three districts to try to keep the cost down. He said the town is required to provide them with a space to work out of and the current space is not viable and that's where we are at.

Mrs. Crystal Bulriss asked if the town has ever received a report on how much EMS makes from the town. Mr. Thompson asked what kind of report. Mrs. Bulriss replied a revenue report from calls. Mr. Thompson said a report get sent to the town board monthly. He said the reason our tax rates are so low is because the EMS board has taken the billing revenue and subsidized it to keep the tax rate down. He said if they took all of the billing revenue kept it and charged each town \$500,000.00 then certainly there would be a lot of questions asked. Mrs. Bulriss said she must have missed those reports. Supervisor Menard said the town receives a call report every month and a financial report at the end of each year. According to the contract if they hit a certain revenue in billing they reimburse the town. Mr. Thompson said their budget last year was roughly \$740,000.00 their billing revenue was roughly \$435,000.00. They have not been able to put money away.

Mr. Bulriss asked if we are planning to have twenty four hour coverage any time soon. Supervisor Menard replied that he did not know, he did not think we were in need currently. Mrs. Sue Roberts said we are twenty four seven. Mr. Bulriss asked if it would be paid staff. Mrs. Roberts asked why do you need paid staff we are twenty four seven. Mr. Thompson said the nighttime paid staff is shared between the three municipalities and weekend is shared between Champlain and Mooers. He said their paid staff line item is \$506,000.00. Mooers pays \$95,000.00, Champlain pays \$165,000.00, and Rouses Point pays \$80,000.00 totaling \$340,000.00 which doesn't cover the total cost. They use call

revenue to offset the cost. He said the \$506,000.00 of paid coverage is available to the Town of Mooers for any call that comes out. Last year they had 1,091 calls with an average response time of 3 minutes, and an average on scene time of 10.2 minutes. To have staffing located in the Town of Mooers 24/7/365 the cost would be roughly \$500,000.00. They only dropped one call to the Town of Altona because they were already out on a call. They feel they are covering the calls very well. Supervisor Menard said we don't know what is going to happen in the future. Volunteer may burn out and then we may not have a choice. He said he feels there may be a need in the future for onsite 24/7 coverage. Mr. Bulriss said that's where he was going with his question about 24/7 coverage. He doesn't see the need for it so why do we need so much additional room. Mr. Thompson said they were supplying onsite overnight coverage every third weekend, but they have been moved to Champlain. If the new building goes through they would commit to doing every third weekend again. He said it would also provide a place for volunteers to stay, which allows for a faster response time. There was more discussion regarding 24/7 service.

Councilperson Bulriss suggested waiting at least a year to make sure we have money to do the project. Mr. Thompson said we have been talking about this for 18 months now. They have been very patient particularly with the inmates. What are we going to do in the interim? Supervisor Menard said he understood what he was saying, but he also must understand that we have to know where the money is coming from. Mr. Thompson said they are trying not to change things drastically like Altona, where they went from \$0.00 to \$500,000.00. He said the current plan is not such a drastic plan say if another agency was contracted. He said there is nothing stopping them from coming in next year and asking for \$250,000.00. He said they do not do it because they don't believe in it, but they do need space. They are looking at the \$40,000.00 as not a lot of money compared to what other towns are paying. The town has not bought a new ambulance since 1999, all of the funds have come from Champlain EMS. He stated he is not in favor of waiting another year and a decision should be made soon. Mr. Michael Deneault asked if anyone looked into grant money. Supervisor Menard replied not yet. Superintendent Gilmore suggested looking into redoing station #2. Mr. Thompson said that was brought up about a year ago and he mapped all the calls received in the previous year and 9 of the roughly 900 calls fell within a 7 mile radius of station #2. He said the average response time would be 15 to 20 minutes.

Superintendent Gilmore said that his budget drops every year. The cost of everything goes up. He is working with some antique junk. He doesn't agree with spending \$40,000.00 per year unless we are sure we have the money. Mr. Dan Dumas, Fire Chief, said he is in the same boat. He has been the Chief for four years and had a signed contract and have yet to receive the agreed upon amount. In January 2019 they have to come up with \$5,000.00 for mandated cancer coverage. The volunteers are putting on raffles, organizing Labor Day celebrations, and selling duck tickets to raise money. They are doing all they can. He said they would love to have a place with all the bills paid. They pay the utilities and insurance. They work every Monday night. They are doing, doing, doing, and it's coming to an end. He also said at the last board meeting they were assured that this end of town's taxes were not going to go up. He said his house went up \$9,400.00 and the fame went up \$7,800.00. Supervisor Menard said the state informed the town that we were at 99% and they needed to be at 100%.

Supervisor Menard asked if there were any more questions or comments. Superintendent Gilmore asked if there were any more buildings around. Councilperson Boulerville asked Mr. Steve Sample if he owned the town hall in Mooers Forks. He replied that he did. Councilperson Boulerville asked if that would be a better location. Mr. Sample said that would be a much cheaper location, and the building would be torn down. Councilperson Boulerville asked who does grants. Mr. Tim Miller stated that EMS grants are very hard to find. They are slim to none. Mr. Thompson said they are not eligible for FEMA grants because they are a nonprofit organization. Supervisor Menard said the town would have to hire a grant writer. He said we will check into it. There was more discussion regarding the EMS building. Mr. Sample will prepare a quote for the Mooers Forks location with both a single and double bay.

Councilperson Breyette asked if we will be able to look at the tax line rate for EMS. He said this past year it was .57 per thousand. He said if we did the building next door it would go up to .84 per thousand. He said it would still be under \$1.00 per thousand. To put it in perspective if you own a home worth \$100,000.00 it would be \$28.00. He said he did not think that anyone here has put it in perspective tonight. We have to decide as a board if there is a need. He said he has spoken to several firemen and they would prefer that EMS is out of the building. He has also talked to EMS who do not want to be in the building any longer. He said he has heard from both sides and everybody deserves their own building. He said he has been working on the library since elected and believes that we need to support it as a community. He said this is not easy or not fun but it is something we need as a town.

He does not want to get into a situation where it is going to cost us \$2.00 to \$3.00 per thousand for coverage. When EMS was put into the fire station there should have been an exit plan. He feels that we should have some options with different properties. Mrs. Crystal Bulriss and Mr. Dan Dumas stated there was a plan. Mr. Dumas said as soon as the building was built in Champlain EMS would build another building within five years. Mr. Thompson said that was correct, but the town feels that they would rather own the building so there are more options in the future. There was more discussion regarding the EMS building.

Adjourn: Supervisor Menard made a motion for the meeting be adjourned. All in favor. Thus, Supervisor Jeff Menard declared the motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:45PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

JESSICA K. BULRISS, TOWN CLERK/TAX COLLECTOR



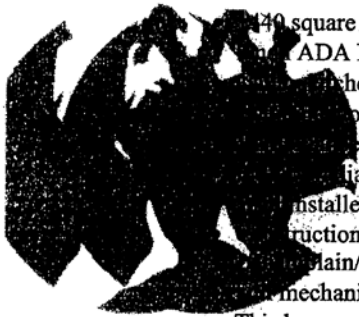
2740 State Route 11
Mooers, NY 12958
(518) 236-4338 phone

Mooers EMS Building Project Proposed by Sample Holding Co.:

Project Consists of allocating property located east of existing Mooers Fire Station and town offices. Location of the building will be in the south west corner of the property lot owned by Sample Holding Co. and known locally as the "Boas House."

This proposal requires consideration that the Town of Mooers will waive the minimum set back requirement for the placement of the building. Also required will be the use of the parking area that is owned by the Town of Mooers. The area required would have to be accommodated for employee and public parking and open access to the ambulance bay.

Building Specification



- 440 square foot wood framed insulated building
- ADA Bathrooms with showers
- Kitchen area space for refrigerator and microwave by owner
- Sinks
- Wash bay with floor drain and DEC approved holding system
- High heat propane boiler
- Installed air conditioner for common area
- Construction and finishes will be high end to account adjoining properties (similar to Champlain/Mooers EMS building)
- Mechanical room and utilities

- This lease and its content are contingent of acquiring tax exempt status for property and sales tax.

- Term Option #1:**
120 month lease with \$1 buyout option at end of term
\$2,822.00 per month (\$33,864 annually) \$1 buyout at end of term \$ 338,640.00
- Term Option #2:**
120 month lease \$1981.00 per month (\$23,772.00 annually) \$ 237,720.00
60 month renewal \$2192.00 per month (\$26,304.00 annually) \$ 131,520.00
60 month renewal \$2,391.00 per month (\$28,692 annually) 143,460.00
- Term Option #3:**
Build and lease this building on owner provided property price TBD \$ 381,311.52

Sincerely,

Stephen Sample



