



**Town of Hopkinton  
1 Town House Road  
Hopkinton, Rhode Island 02833**

Dated: January 10, 2018

**Subject: Town of Hopkinton Response to Recent Mailing from the Ashaway Ambulance Association, Inc.**

Contact: Kevin J. McAllister, Esq., Hopkinton Town Solicitor; tel. (401) 453-2300; e-mail: [kmcallister@brasm.com](mailto:kmcallister@brasm.com)

First and foremost, the Ashaway Ambulance Association, Inc. (“AAAI”) headline accusation that the Hopkinton Town Council is “Jeopardizing Lives and Safety” is patently false—nothing could be further from the truth. Town officials acted immediately upon receiving credible reports of certain irregularities and shortcomings within the operation of AAAI, acting prudently and decisively in protecting the lives and safety of all Hopkinton residents, with regard to the availability of adequate, timely, and qualified emergency medical response services.

In the Spring of 2017, Town officials were informed of credible and serious allegations of inadequacies and public safety concerns involving the daily operation of AAAI, including the use of unlicensed and/or unqualified personnel on ambulance runs, the use of date-expired medications for patients being serviced from AAAI vehicles, and excessive and repeated failures to respond on a timely basis for emergency medical response service calls. An investigation was commenced to determine the accuracy of these allegations and to protect the health and safety of residents and visitors to the areas of Hopkinton serviced by AAAI. While the Town’s investigation proceeded, the Rhode Island Department of Health’s Center for Emergency Services was briefed by the Town on the allegations, because the Center is the State regulatory body that licenses and oversees emergency medical response services throughout Rhode Island.

Shortly after that briefing, a State field inspection occurred. AAAI's Advanced Life Support (ALS) license was subsequently suspended by the State because it found one or more violations of applicable State regulations, including at least one violation that originated with the Hopkinton-reported allegations. During this license suspension, AAAI was prohibited from responding to any ALS calls.

In the meantime and following reinstatement of AAAI's ALS license, Hopkinton ensured that ALS emergency services were provided by the Hope Valley Ambulance Squad and the Westerly Ambulance Corps. within the geographic areas of Hopkinton served by AAAI. This alternative coverage functioned seamlessly during the time of AAAI's ALS license suspension and thereafter, and Town officials have been in continuous communications with these providers to ensure this emergency medical response coverage.

The Town's investigation also determined that AAAI's normal response rates appeared to be inadequate and that the use of alternative emergency medical services by other ambulance services in the area was grossly excessive. AAAI only staffs the first shift Mondays through Fridays. There are no AAAI paid emergency personnel working during the second and third shifts Mondays through Fridays. Additionally, there are no paid emergency personnel working any of the three (3) shifts on Saturdays and Sundays. Out of the twenty-one (21) shifts each week, only five (5) are staffed by paid and licensed personnel. Consequently, AAAI was and is currently staffed by paid and licensed personnel less than twenty-five percent (25%) of each week.

In calendar year 2017, because AAAI had no emergency medical response personnel available to respond, the Westerly Ambulance Corps. responded to sixty-nine (69) calls for emergency medical service and the Hope Valley Ambulance Squad responded to seventy-nine (79) calls for emergency medical service in Ashaway.

A meeting requested by Town officials with representatives of AAAI to discuss these concerns was arranged for August 2, 2017. Shortly before the meeting was about to take place, AAAI cancelled the meeting and hired a lawyer to represent its interests. The Town's Solicitor arranged for and then met with AAAI's attorney and presented him with a list of ten (10) Town requests<sup>1</sup> for documentation and for future financial accounting measures in order to allow the Town to better monitor and oversee AAAI's utilization of the Town's discretionary financial aid that had been provided to AAAI in order to help defray its operating costs. AAAI resisted these requests and did not comply with the Town's efforts to obtain a reasonable degree of transparency and oversight regarding AAAI's use of Town funds. At the same time AAAI has consistently failed to provide the Town with any useful information or any degree of cooperation with the Town's investigation of the allegations against AAAI.

During this entire time, the Town has continued to ensure that alternative emergency medical services are available to all areas of Hopkinton. Discretionary Town-appropriated funding has been withheld from AAAI and instead is being given to alternative emergency medical service providers-- those who are able to respond to medical emergencies when they occur, day or night.

The Town of Hopkinton has consistently acted to protect the public health and safety, and ensure that its tax dollars are being used appropriately and in the best interests of the Town's residents. In fact, since 2007, the Town Council has worked closely with past AAAI board members and staff when AAAI had financial and record-keeping issues that AAAI itself had brought to the Town's attention. These past cooperative efforts and problems were addressed without the current need to withhold discretionary funding from AAAI. When these more serious new issues with brought to the Town's attention, the Town reacted quickly and

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<sup>1</sup> For future reference, these 10 requests will be posted on the Town's website in the near future.

appropriately to insure the public safety, to address these issues, and determined it had no choice but to withhold further discretionary financial aid from AAI.

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# **Document, Record and Action/Policy Requests**

## **Ashaway Ambulance Association, Inc. (AAAI)**

As a condition for continued financial assistance to Ashaway Ambulance Association, Inc. (AAAI) from the Town of Hopkinton, it is required that the following categories of documents, records, information, and financial reporting be provided by AAAI to the Town of Hopkinton, as described below. All such documentation, records, information, and financial reporting should be provided to the Hopkinton Town Manager William A. McGarry within thirty (30) days of the date of this written request and ongoing, as set forth below.

### **1. Personnel Records**

Provide a current and complete list or roster of all of the following categories for all individuals affiliated with AAAI, including in each case, their name, address, position held, qualifications, and professional licensure status with the Rhode Island Department of Health, as applicable:

- a. All AAAI paid staff and employees;
- b. All AAAI officers and directors; and
- c. All AAAI per diem personnel and volunteers.

### **2. Changes in Personnel**

Provide, in writing, any and all changes in the personnel lists or rosters, with all information required in Request No. 1, to the Town Manager within ten (10) days of each and every such change in personnel.

### **3. Reason(s) for Recent Separations of Paid Staff from AAAI**

Provide, in writing, the reasons for the recent past and all future personnel separations from employment and provide copies of any and all related records, correspondence, and/or other documentation concerning any and all respective separations from AAAI.

### **4. Financial Reporting**

Provide all financial records of AAAI that afford the basis for a financial audit of AAAI for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2017, including but not limited to, all revenues and expenditures by AAAI during the reporting period, including the names and addresses of all personnel who received any financial compensation (e.g. wages, benefits, etc.) from AAAI, the total amounts of such compensation received by each and every such person, the reason(s) each received compensation from AAAI, and all related withholdings and reporting records, such as Forms W-2, 1099, and W-9.

### **5. Ongoing Financial Reporting**

Effective July 1, 2017 and ongoing, monthly financial reporting shall be required and provided by AAAI to the Town Manager. Such reports shall be due on or before the 15<sup>th</sup>

of the next successive month with copies to Brian Rosso, Hopkinton Finance Director. Such monthly reporting shall include all of the information and documentation identified in Request No. 4.

6. **Records of AAI Call Logs, AAI Runs, Mutual Assistance Runs, AAI Response Times and AAI Missed Calls**

Provide AAI historical documentation records for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2017, for call logs, AAI runs, mutual assistance runs, response times, and missed calls. The reasons for all AAI missed calls shall also be furnished.

7. **Ongoing Records of AAI Call Logs, AAI Runs, Mutual Assistance Runs, AAI Response Times and AAI Missed Calls**

Effective July 1, 2017 and ongoing, monthly reporting of all of the information and documentation identified in Request No. 6 shall be required and provided by AAI to the Town Manager, due on or before the 15<sup>th</sup> of the next successive month.

8. **Copies of All AAI Reporting and Correspondence to and from the Rhode Island Department of Health, Center for Emergency Medical Services**

Effective July 1, 2017 and ongoing, copies of any and all documentation, communications, correspondence or other records generated, received or transmitted between AAI and the Rhode Island Department of Health, Center for Emergency Medical Services, shall be provided to the Town Manger within ten (10) days of their receipt or transmission.

9. **Anti-Nepotism Policy**

The AAI shall develop and promulgate an Anti-Nepotism Policy which prohibits relatives supervising a relative, working in the same agency as a relative or exerting influence over a relative's hiring, salary or promotion. A relative is defined as a member of an individual's family, including wife, husband, son, daughter, mother, father, brother, sister, brother-in-law, mother-in-law, father-in-law, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, grandmother, grandfather, stepparents, and stepchild.

10. **Business Plan**

AAI shall develop and implement a comprehensive Business Plan aimed at effectively and efficiently eliminating or, at the very least, significantly reducing the number of calls for services missed and/or referred to other ambulance service organizations.

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