

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dated: April 2, 2018

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SUBJECT: Town of Hopkinton's Response to Repeated False and Misleading Claims by Ashaway Ambulance Association, Inc., Regarding Financial Support by the Town of Hopkinton

Following the recent and repeated false statements made on behalf of Ashaway Ambulance Association, Inc., ("AAAI") that were published in the March 28, 2018 editions of the *Providence Journal* and the *Westerly Sun*, the Town of Hopkinton feels the need to once again correct the record by setting forth the indisputable facts explaining why the Town is withholding financial grant-in-aid, pending AAAI's agreement to adopt necessary accountability measures and policies.

The Town's recent concerns with AAAI's operation began in the spring of 2017, when Hopkinton Town officials received credible reports and allegations concerning certain irregularities and shortcomings within the operation of AAAI and the adequacy of its emergency response medical services to the residents of Ashaway. These reports included the alleged use of unlicensed and/or unqualified personnel staffing AAAI ambulance runs, the use of date-expired medications for patients being transported in AAAI vehicles, and the excessive and repeated failures to respond to calls for emergency medical service on a timely basis. Statistical documentation of the frequency of mutual aid provided in the form of back-up ambulance coverage by the Westerly Ambulance Corps and the Hope Valley Ambulance Squad in the Ashaway area verified the consistent and ongoing inadequacy of AAAI's emergency response medical services during 2017 and 2018.

Acting immediately upon these reports and allegations, the Town reported to and briefed the Rhode Island Department of Health's Center for Emergency Services on the allegations because that is the regulatory body that licenses and oversees all emergency medical response services in Rhode Island. Shortly after that briefing, the Department of Health advised Hopkinton officials that an unannounced field inspection of AAI had subsequently occurred, and that AAI's Advanced Life Support (ALS) license had been suspended by the State because of one or more violations of State regulations, including at least one basis that originated with the Hopkinton-reported allegations; namely the use of expired medications, and the absence of other required medications on the ambulance vehicles. During its ALS license suspension, AAI was prohibited from responding to ALS calls.

During its ALS license suspension and in the weeks and months that followed, the Town of Hopkinton made sure that ALS and other emergency services were being provided to the Ashaway area by the Hope Valley Ambulance Squad and Westerly Ambulance Corps. This alternative emergency medical response coverage has functioned seamlessly during the time of AAI's license suspension and thereafter. In addition, Town officials have been in continuous communications with these alternative providers to insure continuous coverage to Ashaway.

Town officials requested a meeting with AAI representatives to allow them the opportunity to provide answers to these concerns. This meeting was arranged for August 2, 2017, but before the meeting took place, AAI cancelled the meeting and stated it was hiring a lawyer to represent its interests. The Town's Solicitor subsequently met with AAI's attorney and presented him with a list of ten (10) requests for documentation and future accounting measures to allow the Town to monitor and oversee AAI's use of the Town's discretionary

financial grants-in-aid. These written requests were posted on the Town's website several weeks ago and are still posted.

These efforts by the Town have been intended to maintain public safety and to achieve a reasonable degree of transparency from AAI, as well as to provide Town oversight over AAI's use of the Hopkinton taxpayer funds. In other words, the Town has been seeking to protect and improve the safety of the public that is supposed to be served by AAI, and to bring about much needed accountability by AAI for its receipt and use of taxpayer funds. These efforts have been consistently resisted by AAI. AAI has been unwilling to provide the Town with the necessary degree of accountability regarding their use of taxpayer funds going forward, nor have they agreed to measures designed to achieve necessary assurances that AAI can provide adequate emergency transport services to the Ashaway area going forward.

Based upon all of these facts, the Town suspended further financial aid to AAI and has administratively directed that the appropriated funds earmarked for this purpose be redirected to other emergency medical response providers, who are currently providing emergency response coverage to the Ashaway area.

The Town is hopeful that ongoing negotiations will ultimately reach an agreement that provides the accountability needed to resume the distribution of discretionary grant-in-aid funding to AAI and serve to insure that the interests of public safety are properly maintained. Continued false and inflammatory statements made on behalf of AAI are counter-productive in terms of achieving these two essential Town goals.

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 15th 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 AAAI Call Logs, AAAI Runs, Mutual Assistance Runs, AAAI Response Times and AAAI Missed Calls**

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

7. **Ongoing Records of AAAI Call Logs, AAAI Runs, Mutual Assistance Runs, AAAI Response Times and AAAI 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 AAAI to the Town Manager, due on or before the 15th of the next successive month.

8. **Copies of All AAAI 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 AAAI 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 AAAI 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**

AAAI 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.
