

Funding Ambulance Services Workshop 05092022

During our current Hopkinton Town Budgeting process, it has become abundantly clear that Hopkinton cannot fully increase its funding to the Ashaway Ambulance Association and the Hope Valley Ambulance Squad to meet their needs. Both ambulances are requesting \$100,000 grants for the 2022-2023 fiscal year. Hopkinton has tentatively budgeted \$62,000 each, which represents an increase of \$10,000 each. They will still need an additional \$38,000 each to meet their requests.

Therefore, the Hopkinton Town Council has scheduled a workshop on May 9, 2022 at 7:00pm at the Town Hall to find a solution to the ambulances funding shortfalls. We will be addressing the following agenda items:

1. What are the advantages of Fire Districts increasing/beginning to fund ambulances without absorbing them?
2. What are the obstacles that would prevent the Fire Districts from increasing/beginning to fund ambulances by increasing fire taxes?
3. What are the ways to overcome these obstacles?
4. Next steps.

We are asking for responses from the fire districts, ambulance services, Town Councils, and residents. Listed below are possible answers to the above questions.

1. Advantages of the Fire Districts increasing/beginning to fund ambulances without absorbing them are:
 - a. Creates a long-term funding model through the ability to raise fire taxes as needed rather than always increasing Hopkinton property taxes.
 - b. Distributes the responsibility for service funding more directly to the community being served instead of the entire town.
 - c. The end result would be a cap on the amount of the Town's grants to the ambulances and allow other Town's needs to be met.
 - d. Generates more interest on the part of residents in the efficacy and effectiveness of their community's ambulance service.
 - e. Fire Districts can provide additional systems of fiscal management of the funds that they give to the ambulance services.
 - f. Ambulances can remain independent organizations.
2. Obstacles to achieve the new situation:
 - a. Potential resident resistance to paying higher fire taxes.
3. Ways to overcome obstacles:
 - a. Educate the residents regarding the needs of the respective ambulance services.
 - b. Specify the exact fire tax mill rate increases so that the residents will understand that they will be minimum.
4. Next Steps:
 - a. Encourage residents to vote yes for the next Fire District budgets and proposed levels of fire taxes in July for the 2022-2023 year.

We are looking forward to the ambulance services', fire districts', and residents' responses.

Sharon Davis 5/2/2022