

Fw: Ambulance assessment

Justin Makuc <justin@montereyma.gov>

Tue 2/27/2024 4:44 PM

To: Susan Cooper <susan@montereyma.gov>; frank montereyma.gov <frank@montereyma.gov>; Town Administrator <admin@montereyma.gov>

For discussion at tonight's meeting.

Justin

From: Donna Brewer <dbrewer@harringtonheep.com>**Sent:** Tuesday, February 27, 2024 4:37 PM**To:** Justin Makuc <justin@montereyma.gov>**Subject:** Re: Ambulance assessment

It would be fair to make assessments based on level of usage but I'll have to see if I can find something that says they can't use this method of assessment. It is certainly something to try to negotiate with SBA before entering into an agreement for FY25. I'll see what I can figure out.

Donna Brewer
dbrewer@harringtonheep.com
(617) 804-2423 dd

From: Justin Makuc <justin@montereyma.gov>**Date:** Tuesday, February 27, 2024 at 4:34 PM**To:** Donna Brewer <dbrewer@harringtonheep.com>**Subject:** Re: Ambulance assessment

Hi Donna,

Please see attached the requests for fy24 and fy25. The annual charge is calculated exclusively with EQV as I understand it.

The issue is that EQV results in a much higher assessment for Monterey than every other reasonable assessment methodology: call volume, population, etc. We pay much much more per call than other Towns. I can have Susan share the details with you if you'd like.

Please also see attached the letter requesting ARPA funds whereby they assessed each Town based on ARPA funds allotted which were based on population as I understand it.

There are alternatives in the form of neighboring Town ambulances, but they only offer BLS rather than ALS services. We want to stay with SBA for a slew of reasons, and we want to support them financially, we just feel pinched by this bizarre assessment methodology. Should not the methodology in some way include a variable for how much the Town uses SBA or the population, rather than just the total value of the Town?

Best,
Justin

From: Donna Brewer <dbrewer@harringtonheep.com>**Sent:** Tuesday, February 27, 2024 4:18 PM

To: Justin Makuc <justin@montereyma.gov>
Subject: Re: Ambulance assessment

Thanks Justin. A couple of things. I see that this agreement expires this June. I expect that they will want a new agreement to be signed for FY25 and that will include an assessment of \$70,122. If we don't agree, SBA will have no contractual obligation to provide service but I want to explore if there is an obligation under law since SBA is a non-profit. Another issue is that the contract doesn't describe how the annual charge is calculated. If there is a writing that explains how SBA arrived at the charge, please send it along. Do we know what it is charging the other towns and whether their assessments are also being raised so much? Are there alternatives to SBA?

Donna Brewer
dbrewer@harringtonheep.com
(617) 804-2423 dd

From: Justin Makuc <justin@montereyma.gov>
Date: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 at 4:10 PM
To: Donna Brewer <dbrewer@harringtonheep.com>
Subject: Re: Ambulance assessment

Hi Donna,

Please see attached the contract between the Town and SBA. This is the version that was signed, but it is not signed itself. The contract is through June 30th. I am not sure if the other 5 Towns have a contract with SBA, I think we may be the only Town that sought one. There was an assessment letter sent by SBA to each Town, but it was not agreed to by any Town per se.

Justin

From: Donna Brewer <dbrewer@harringtonheep.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 4:06 PM
To: Justin Makuc <justin@montereyma.gov>
Subject: Re: Ambulance assessment

Justin, is there a written agreement regarding service or how the towns are being assessed? At a minimum, if we are being assessed we should have the right to review financial records.

Donna Brewer
dbrewer@harringtonheep.com
(617) 804-2423 dd

From: Justin Makuc <justin@montereyma.gov>
Date: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 at 4:02 PM
To: Donna Brewer <dbrewer@harringtonheep.com>
Subject: Ambulance assessment

Hi Donna,

Southern Berkshire Ambulance is a non-profit ambulance that primarily serves the Towns of Great Barrington, Sheffield, Egremont, Alford, Egremont, Mount Washington, and Monterey. Prior to last year, the Town contributed \$5,000-\$10,000 or less per year to SBA, often nothing.

Because of a slew of factors, SBA needs support from Towns to cover operating expenses. Last year, SBA "assessed" Monterey at \$51,670. We resisted the "assessment" methodology, which was based solely on EQV and did not include call volume as a factor whatsoever. Ultimately, we gave in and paid the full amount, which we thought was high compared to other Towns that SBA serves, but not unreasonable for the service provided. One of the reasons we were pressured to pay was because there was a sort of threat that if we did not pay the full amount, SBA would refuse to respond to calls in Monterey.

This year SBA "assessed" Monterey at \$70,122, an increase of 36% over last year. They again used the same methodology, which we still think is unfair.

We want to support SBA financially, but we feel it is unfair to the Town to be "assessed" in this way. If Monterey refused to pay more than a 10% increase, for instance, could SBA legally refuse to respond to calls in Monterey?

Thanks,
Justin