PENINSULA AMBULANCE CORPS

This year Peninsula Ambulance Corps (PAC) turned 50 years old! That longevity is due to the dedication of staff and management and also to the steadfast support of our town governments and those many private citizens who respond to our appeal every year. Thank you all!

It was also the year in which the Town of Surry selected Peninsula Ambulance to service their entire town, adding the Northwestern half to our coverage area.

We hired a new manager, Alan Henschke, and promoted our long-serving Paramedic/Administrative Assistant, Theresa Cousins, to EMS Coordinator. The management team is currently reorganizing our business model to improve efficiency and match our staffing model with call volume patterns. This will increase the availability of ambulances to serve the community.

We are proud of our five full-time and 27 part-time staff—the Paramedics and EMTs who make the program work. We continue to provide staff with continuing education for federal and state mandated classes. Our employees like their jobs and provide real benefit to the communities we serve.

We replaced our 2010 ambulance this year. It was unlikely to give another full year of reliable service but, given its low resale value, we kept it for intermittent service and backup. The cost to maintain and insure at that level is remarkably reasonable and means that it is available for service as a local backup if one of the primary units is on a long transport or being serviced. It also provides scheduled service for special events like football games and the Blue Hill Fair. In sum, it is another valuable tool in a program to provide better service and improve the bottom line at the same time.

Our largest customers remain Medicare (federal government) and Medicaid/ MaineCare (state government). Together, they represent 71% of our billing. However, for every $1 of that billing, we are paid only $0.70 at best. Medicaid reimbursements are often less than 50%. This accounts for most of our operating deficit. The remaining shortfall is the result of running a service in a large territory with a small population.

Call volume—the basis upon which we are reimbursed—was 1078, an increase of 10 calls from 2017. Totals by towns are given in the chart below. Inter-hospital patient transports, which were 29% of call volume, are also included in call totals. We identified another 69 calls (all non-emergency) which we could have completed if we had had proper staffing. By improving staff coverage in the second half of this year, we have already experienced a reduction in the denial of calls. This increase also improves our income and our ability to provide services to all residents of the Greater Blue Hill Peninsula.

2018 Calls by Town

Blue Hill	543	Penobscot	76
Brooklin	42	Sedgwick	91
Brooksville	54	Surry	78
Castine	99	Other Towns	92

We decrease our deficit in three ways: with the support of our town governments, by individual donations to our annual appeal, and by using volunteer board members to accomplish administrative and fund-raising tasks.

This year we are asking for $18.50 for the operating budget and $4.43 for the ambulance reserve fund per capita. Next year, in addition to increasing our call volume, we will be further invigorating our annual campaign.

Staff and ambulances are the visible aspects of PAC, but community loyalty and the funds provided by the towns are its lifeblood. Our annual appeal to the public provides an essential and remarkably consistent source of support, but we must rely to the greatest extent on the common sense of town governments and citizens to understand the necessity for an ambulance service, and that, if we don't hang together and make it work, no one else will.

Thank you for your support.