TRI-TOWN AMBULANCE

West Tisbury • Chilmark • Aquinnah

Chief Ben Retmier, Tri-Town Ambulance Chief
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Tri-Town Ambulance Committee
September 9th, 2026 Meeting Minutes
Approved by the Committee on- October 21st, 2026

- **Call to Order**

Committee Chair Jim Newman called the Committee Meeting of September 9th, 2026, to order at 12:02 p.m.

In attendance

Committee Chair Jim Newman, Committee Member Cindy Mitchell, Committee Member Matt Poole, Chief Ben Retmier, and Administrative Assistant Samantha Bunker.

- **Approval of the April 8th, 2026 Meeting Minutes**
- **Approval of the June 3rd, 2026 Meeting Minutes**
- **Approval of the August 12th, 2026 Meeting Minutes**

Committee Chair Jim Newman motioned to approve the April 8th, June 3rd, and August 12th, 2026 Meeting Minutes, and Committee Member Cindy Mitchell seconded the motion.

1. **Jim Newman-aye**
2. **Matt Poole–aye**
3. **Cindy Mitchell-aye**

- **TTA Chief Report**

Chief Retmier presented a three-month report.

Chief Retmier reported that from June 9th, 2026, through today, September 9th, 2026, Tri-Town Ambulance responded to 150 incidents, compared to 222 during the same period in the prior year. Year to date, there have been 290 incidents, compared to 402 during the same period last year. Overall, these figures represent a significant decrease in reported incidents compared to the previous year.

Chief Retmier reported a decrease in call volume may result in reduced revenue this fiscal year. However, call acuity has increased compared to the previous year, potentially due to more complex medical needs among the elderly population.

Chief Retmier commended EMS personnel for their response to the Long Point drowning and LVB near-drowning incidents. He plans to submit a letter to the Select Board recognizing the efforts of the LVB lifeguards.

Chief Retmier further reported that EMS operations continue to run smoothly, all emergency vehicles remain operational, and the newly hired full-time EMT has been a valuable addition to the department. Most third-rider EMTs have been cleared for independent duty, and the department remains in good standing with Dr. Casper.

Chief Retmier informed the Committee that Cape and Islands EMS ceased operations in July, resulting in the loss of third-party Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement (QA/QI) services. Although Chief Retmier and Deputy Chief Montanile conduct internal reviews, Dr. Casper requires additional third-party oversight.

Chief Retmier reported that Tri-Town Ambulance has been accepted into a 90-day pilot program with Proverity, an AI-based QA/QI platform developed by the founders of AmbuPro. Dr. Casper expressed support for the program. The pilot will evaluate its effectiveness and suitability for Tri-Town Ambulance before determining whether to continue with the service at an associated cost. Implementation is anticipated for late September or early October

- **FY26 Short Fall Discussion with Chilmark Town Administrator, Timothy R. Carroll**

Chief Retmier informed the Committee that Mr. Carroll and Town Accountant Sarah Smith have developed a proposed plan to address the FY26 budget shortfall. Supporting documentation will be provided to Committee members for review, with a vote anticipated at either a special meeting in September or the regularly scheduled October meeting.

Chief Retmier identified overtime, vehicle maintenance, and special event expenses as the primary contributors to the FY26 budget overages. Vehicle maintenance costs increased due to necessary repairs to the aging fleet, while overtime expenses resulted from staffing shortages, scheduled vacations, and coverage during two major snowstorms.

Chief Retmier acknowledged deficiencies in the previous year's special event billing procedures and reported that an improved invoicing and tracking system has since been implemented. All outstanding special event invoices have been issued.

Chief Retmier stated that overtime expenditures will be closely monitored throughout FY27 to minimize future overages. He also plans to meet quarterly with Mr. Carroll to review budget performance and determine whether additional funding requests to the three towns may be necessary.

Further discussion regarding the budget and potential adjustments is anticipated at the October meeting.

The special meeting will take place on September 23rd, at 12:00 p.m.

- **Comstar Update**

Samantha reported that collections are processing well and shared the following update:

"Collections for the billing period of July 1, 2025 through July 31, 2026 are still ongoing. Since my previous report, emailed last month, which summarized collection activity through June 30, 2026, collection percentages have changed based on the most recent report received yesterday.

The updated collection rates are as follows: BCBS increased from 57.61% to 70.96%; Medicaid decreased from 73.38% to 55.46%; Medicare increased from 72.24% to 79.80%; Other Insurance decreased from 45.15% to 35.92%; 100% Self-Pay (Insured) decreased from 13.45% to 9.34%; and 100% Self-Pay (Uninsured) increased from 0.00% to 6.69%

According to the most recent collections report for the billing period of July 1, 2025 through July 31, 2026, the total collections stand at 61.71%, with a 53.99% collection rate."

"The final CPE reimbursement received by Tri-Town Ambulance for FY25 totaled $15,349.00. This represents a substantial increase from the FY24 reimbursement of $5,079.00, reflecting an increase of $10,270.00."

- **New Business**

Committee Member Matt Poole informed the Committee that Michael Van Valkenburg expressed interest in donating a small oak tree to the Tri-Town Ambulance property. Chief Retmier welcomed the donation. Mr. Poole agreed to obtain a proposed planting location sketch for the Chief's review to ensure the placement would not interfere with future property use.

- **Old Business**

Committee Member Matt Poole requested for an update on water quality at the Chilmark Station. Chief Retmier reported that water quality has remained satisfactory with Clear Water replacing filters every 12–14 days. However, discoloration and clay sediment return when filter replacements are delayed. Mr. Poole expressed concerns regarding the frequency of maintenance and its long-term sustainability. Chief Retmier noted that alternative solutions may require additional testing or significant expenses.

Mr. Poole and Chief Retmier agreed to meet on Monday, September 14th, before 2:00 p.m. to discuss the matter further.

- **Next Meeting Date**

The next Committee Meeting is anticipated in October, with the exact date to be determined following the special meeting scheduled for September 23rd at 12:00 p.m.

- **Adjournment**

Committee Member Cindy made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:23 p.m., and Committee Member Matt Poole seconded the motion.

1. **Cindy Mitchell– aye**
2. **Matt Poole- aye**

Prepared by: _____

Samantha Bunker, Administrative Assistant