



THE EXPRESS-TIMES

Rescue squad restart?

Forks EMS looks to revive itself soon.

Friday, January 19, 2007

By COURTNEY LOMAX

The Express-Times

FORKS TWP. | The township emergency squad can be back in business as early as March, pending supervisors' approval and a provisional license from the state.

Forks Emergency Medical Services board President William Keifer asked supervisors Thursday for their support in restarting the squad.

The squad in November applied for a provisional basic life support license from the state.

The squad suspended operations in July after several months of mismanagement. Suburban Emergency Medical Services has been providing service to Forks and Stockertown Borough residents.

Former squad Director Cory Dailey waived her right to a preliminary hearing early this week. She is charged with stealing more than \$21,000 from the squad over five months and using the squad's credit card to make personal purchases.

"We're not worried about that now," Keifer said. "We need to look to the future."

Keifer said the squad is chipping away at its debt and looking to get grants to pay for new equipment. About 13 employees said they were interested in returning to the squad.

The squad made \$72,000 in a subscription drive with Suburban EMS.

"I think we've come a long way," Keifer said.

Supervisor C. David Howell told Keifer he wants the squad to reopen, but he wants more information on the squad's finances to ensure Dailey's actions won't be repeated by someone in the future.

"I like business plans," Howell said.

Keifer said the squad will rewrite the bylaws and to provide safeguards to make sure finances are secure.

Howell said he will not approve the plan until a business plan and budget are presented to the board.

Once approved, the squad will provide full-time basic life support, but advanced life support services will remain with Suburban EMS.

"(An advanced life support) license is not in the foreseeable future in Forks," said Dr. Everitt Binns, executive director for the Eastern Pennsylvania EMS Council.

Binns said there are not enough calls in Forks to support the advanced life support license. When reopened, Forks EMS will continue to pay Suburban EMS to provide advanced life support.

Suburban Executive Director Barry Albertson Jr. said the Suburban squad will move out of the Forks building and work out of Tatamy where they will have quick access to Forks Township.

Keifer said he will come back to the board in February with a more detailed financial plan.

Reporter Courtney Lomax can be reached at 610-258-7171 or by e-mail at clomax@express-times.com.

© 2007 The Express Times

© 2007 PennLive.com All Rights Reserved.