

City of Nashwauk
February 18, 2025
Special City Council Meeting

Mayor Heyblom called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of Nashwauk City Hall.

Members present: Councilor Dave Bruns, Councilor Tom Martire, Councilor Sheila Jensen, Councilor Terry Sullivan, Mayor Greg Heyblom.

Also present: Administrator/Clerk April Kurtock, Police Chief Lee Longoria, Fire Chief Rob Coughlin.

Ambulance Service Considerations

Within the packet was correspondence from the EMSRB regarding a complaint that was filed about the Nashwauk Ambulance Service having a noticeable increase in mutual aid reliance. As a result of the EMSRB audit, a request was made to Itasca County Dispatch for a list of calls. The report from dispatch was in the packet, which listed 13 months' worth of calls.

Administrator/Clerk Kurtock stated that she had discussions with leadership at North Memorial Health regarding a few options, which included a service area coverage agreement (that could be requested of both North Memorial Health and Hibbing Fire), a management agreement in which North Memorial would provide a working supervisor to manage the ambulance service, and at the request of Mayor Heyblom a contract for them to manage the ambulance service altogether. Of all the options, North Memorial stated that providing a working supervisor would be the option they could provide the easiest. Before proceeding though, North Memorial asked Nashwauk to sign a Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement and a Business Associate Agreement. Kurtock stated that she had LMC's contract review attorney review both agreements and he had one recommendation for change within each agreement.

Councilor Martire asked why the focus was just on asking North Memorial Health and Hibbing Fire for help and not others. Mayor Heyblom shared a history on how the City had sent out an RFP for ambulance services to run the service. There were no responses. Now with the current situation, it came down to proximity, as these two services were our immediate neighbors.

Administrator/Clerk Kurtock said she updated North Memorial regarding the upcoming public hearing that Itasca County would be holding for implementation of a Subordinate Service District for the benefit of the ambulance service. North Memorial was aware of the situation and had requested Nashwauk complete a questionnaire that would help them respond to the RFP that Itasca County would publish after the public hearing.

*Motion by Councilor Jensen, seconded by Councilor Sullivan to approve execution of a Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement and Business Associate Agreement with North Memorial Health Care, including the provisions recommended by the LMC contract review attorney.

Ayes: all present. Motion carried.

Councilor Sullivan asked if Hibbing Fire was aware of the process that Nashwauk was working through with the subordinate service district. He stated that if they continue filing complaints, then the City may end up closing the license before a subordinate service district is put in place and Hibbing Fire would be responding to many more calls than the current call volume. Mayor Heyblom stated that he had a conversation with Hibbing's mayor and said he would follow up with him later that week. He highlighted the importance of communication, especially when the service was not staffed.

Itasca County Dispatch

Marnie Chupurdia, Itasca County Dispatch Coordinator, had emailed former Fire Chief Joe Martire asking if dispatch could page out the fire department to assist on medicals when the ambulance was out of service. Martire had denied the request, citing that the department did not have the equipment needed. Chupurdia was present for the meeting and said the email wasn't necessarily a request, but rather an inquiry to start a discussion. She said it would be helpful to have notice provided to the County to know when the ambulance service is not staffed. Councilor Sullivan asked to establish a process to be followed throughout the various staffing level situations.

Interim Fire Chief Rob Coughlin said the department has always been available when needed, and at the request of the ambulance service. He noted that the past EMS Coordinator told dispatch to not page Fire, which should not have happened. Multiple EMS staff present for the meeting confirmed that the Coordinator directed them not to page for fire. Coughlin said there are members of the fire department that are able to respond and/or be on-call for the service. Coughlin said they'll need some jump bags and supplies. 2nd Assistant Chief Kevin Bodin said they could use the monitor from the 152 ambulance. EMT Christian Cappo said the bag from 152 could be used. Administrator/Clerk Kurtz said there were jump bags and supplies in the EMS Coordinator's office that could be used, too. Mayor Heyblom said the Fire Chief and EMS can figure out the arrangement. Mayor Heyblom asked Coughlin if the Fire Department was paged out, would they respond, Coughlin confirmed they would.

Mayor Heyblom noted that there are first responders that work for Mesabi Metallica who are willing to help, too. Fire Chief Coughlin said first responders need to be under someone's service to be paged out and for liability reasons. 1st Assistant Chief Mark Marinaro noted that the department is currently going through their first responder refresher training.

Coughlin asked for communication about when there is no coverage or half-staff on the schedule. He'll communicate with his staff and confirm if anyone will take a shift or be on-call. If there is no one available, then the department will be available by being paged out. Dispatch will be notified when there is no coverage. Councilor Sullivan confirmed that when no one is on the ambulance schedule, Fire will be dispatched as first responders. If someone on the ambulance service signs up for a last-minute shift, they'll need to communicate that to dispatch. Mark Marinaro asked for an updated call list for the ambulance service.

*Motion by Councilor Sullivan, seconded by Councilor Brunns to authorize the Fire Department to purchase an AED, further, ordering the same brand as the Police Department so the pads are the same.
Ayes: all present. Motion carried.

Councilor Sullivan said there should be an AED in each squad. He asked that when the Fire Department gets prices on an AED, if there is a discount for multiple purchases, bring that information to the Council.

Adjourn

*Motion by Councilor Brunns, seconded by Councilor Jensen to adjourn the meeting at 5:52 p.m.
Ayes: all present. Motion carried.

City Administrator/Clerk/Treasurer