

Eleanor Russell

2
From: "PeterTrono" <TronoVt@TronoFuels.comcastbiz.net>
To: "Ed Sulva" <e.sulva@cvfrs.org>
Cc: <eleanorrussell@gmavt.net>; <cdegr@yahoo.com>; <mary@townofcharlotte.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 16, 2014 1:35 PM
Subject: RE: Collections
 Ed,

Thank you for sending Patient Billing Policy Procedure documents. Obviously I am interested for the Towns concerns but also personally for my business. Accounts receivables is a huge part of my business which I personally oversee. Over the last twenty years I have purchased ten fuel businesses to merge with mine. Almost all of those businesses sold because they had lost control of their accounts receivables. Its always nice to see how others are managing this aspect of their business. I am sure that I will learn something.

On another note; yesterday I received an email subject "Charlotte Final Amended Contract Price." There was an email from Meg Modley to you regarding the purchase of tires and rims for the new ambulance. Obviously this is an upgrade in tires and rims because the vehicle would have come through with them on it. It appears that this upgrade is to be covered by the \$3,400.00 rebate from Ford. The selectboard had previously indicated the rebate would go back to the Town. Could you please send me the information or option list for rims and tires. Zachary has a Dodge one ton dually truck which I just ordered tires for, that were specked by Rouse Tire to handle loads that would surpass that of an ambulance. The tread is winter for maximum traction. My concerns for my son were the same as rescue concerns. Safety foremost and reliability. My quote does not approach \$3,400.00. It seems then that rescue is ordering fancy expensive rims that are not important to the before mentioned concerns.

Following Chris Davis's promise I look forward to reviewing the requested information. Thank you in advance.

Peter Trono

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From: Ed Sulva [e.sulva@cvfrs.org]
Sent: Wednesday, January 15, 2014 10:09 PM
To: PeterTrono
Subject: Collections

Hi Peter. Attached is the procedure you requested. Please disregard the draft watermark.

Ed

Eleanor Russell

From: "Eleanor Russell" <eleanorrussell@gmavt.net>
 To: "PeterTrono" <TronoVt@TronoFuels.comcastbiz.net>
 Cc: <d.stewart@cvfrs.org>; "Ed Sulva" <e.sulva@cvfrs.org>; <mary@townofcharlotte.com>; <cdegr@yahoo.com>; "Christopher W. Davis" <cdavis@meachcovefarms.org>
 Sent: Friday, January 17, 2014 3:00 PM
 Subject: Re: Collections

The ambulance tires and rims were purchased based on recommendations of Mike Gill, who is highly respected for his knowledge of emergency service vehicles and who works with Shelburne in their vehicle purchases and repair and maintenance. I spoke with Mike (who dealt with Rouse Tire and Marshall Tire and purchased through Rouse) and Mike tells me that there are only two companies that make a tire the size required for the ambulance, Michelin and another dealer who Mike does not think well of. They were able to obtain VT. State pricing which involves a considerable discount. The tires are large (19.5), carry a heavier weight than a pick-up truck and have a heavier ply. Mike says he would like to know if you can find a tire of this size at a cheaper price. The size is 225-70 R19.5. They are snow tires.

The rims were shopped for best price and purchased through Fleet tires who have a reputation for low prices.

In future, please channel your questions to CVFRS through me, as the selectboard appointee to the CVFRS board. Thanks, Ellie

----- Original Message -----

From: PeterTrono
 To: Ed Sulva
 Cc: eleanorrussell@gmavt.net ; cdegr@yahoo.com ; mary@townofcharlotte.com
 Sent: Thursday, January 16, 2014 1:35 PM
 Subject: RE: Collections

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Peter Trono

Eleanor Russell

④
From: "PeterTrono" <TronoVt@TronoFuels.comcastbiz.net>
To: "Eleanor Russell" <eleanorrussell@gmavt.net>
Sent: Monday, January 20, 2014 12:29 PM
Subject: RE: Collections
 Ellie,

I am happy to pass my concerns relating CVFRS through you, although I find that often times content is distorted when translated through multiple sources.

I know of Mike Gill's reputation and he comes with high praise. As I stated, sometimes facts are lost in translation. The truck that I recently bought tires for, because it is dual wheeled and used for trailering up to 25,000 GVW the requirements surpass those of our new ambulance. Please forward copies of invoices to me for the tires and rims. Obviously the ford chassis came with tires and rims therefore there must be a credit that was issued. Please send that credit memo as well.

Monday evening Ed Sulva commented that I knew nothing about specing an ambulance. I have more trucks in my fleet of oil trucks than CVFRS. My trucks need to meet Department of Transportation regulations as well as HAZMAT concerns as we transport hazardous materials. Setting these trucks up to meet safety and reliability concerns is not entirely different than CVFRS trucks and ambulances. The huge difference being that I alone am paying for these trucks contrary to Fire/Rescue personally spending taxpayers dollars. So I equip my trucks to meet all regulations without the shiny chrome, fancy decals, gold leaf, and all the glitter. As an example all of my lighting including emergency lights is done not with expensive upgrades in LED but with traditional lights. The rims and bumpers are steel not expensive fancy chrome. Not unlike Fire/Rescue it is necessary to identify ourselves through lettering on our trucks. We identify who we are, where we are located, our phone number, and advertising all for \$2,000.00 less than the 6" accent stripping on the new ambulance. Our lettering is exposed to damaging fuel oil and diesel fuels. Obviously my trucks wouldn't look as nice in the Vergennes July 4th parade. They are safe, functional, provide reliable service and done within a tight budget.

I would like you to consider the upgrades in the accent stripping and the upgrade in tires and rims as they are easy to understand their function versus cost. Accent stripes could have been done for as little as \$1,500.00. I will comment further when I get tire and rim invoices and credit memos. In the meantime start noticing the glitter on other rescue services. You will find that the privately owned services do not spend money the way our corporation does. Perhaps you might want to call Lamoille ambulance and ask them what it cost ti equip their last ambulance. We all agree that we need this equipment to serve our taxpayers. My point is that it does not have to cost nearly as much!

I look forward to receiving those invoices.

Peter

~~From: Eleanor Russell [eleanorrussell@gmavt.net]
 Sent: Friday, January 17, 2014 3:00 PM
 To: PeterTrono
 Cc: d.stewart@cvfrs.org; Ed Sulva; mary@townofcharlotte.com; cdegr@yahoo.com; Christopher W. Davis
 Subject: Re: Collections~~

Eleanor Russell

⑦
From: "PeterTrono" <TronoVt@TronoFuels.comcastbiz.net>
To: "Eleanor Russell" <eleanorrussell@gmavt.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 21, 2014 8:47 AM
Subject: RE: financials & minutes
 Ellie,

It appears that CVFRS is falling behind in fulfilling their obligations of prompt reporting to our Town Clerk / Treasurer. This was the problem that CVFRS experienced when Mary and members of the community began inquiring about their accounting practices. Things were not getting done in a timely manner. Since then promises have been made but the performance is not satisfying those promises.

Peter

⑥
From: Eleanor Russell [eleanorrussell@gmavt.net]
Sent: Monday, January 20, 2014 11:29 PM
To: Mary Mead; David McNally; John Snow; John Howe
Cc: Patrice Machavern; e.sulva@cvfrs.org; Charles Russell; Lane Morrison; John Owen; Winslow Ladue; PeterTrono; nwood@gmavt.net
Subject: Re: financials & minutes

As I believe I have mentioned to you, financial reports are released at the CVFRS corporate board meeting following the end of the previous month. The board will meet this coming week and at that time I expect to receive the financial reports through December. As you note, you have the report through November. I have also told you that in August CVFRS lost their secretary. I have unapproved draft minutes dated in error as October that are for September and nothing from October and minutes that are not approved by the CVFRS board for November. December minutes should be available at the board meeting this week. When the other minutes are approved I will give them to you. I will check on the October minutes.

The detailed transaction report is an internal CVFRS report.

----- Original Message -----

⑤
From: Mary Mead<<mailto:Mary@townofcharlotte.com>>
To: Ellie Russell<<mailto:eleanorrussell@gmavt.net>>
Cc: Ed Sulva (e.sulva@cvfrs.org)<<mailto:e.sulva@cvfrs.org>> ; Charles Russell<<mailto:CRussell@townofcharlotte.com>> ; Lane Morrison<<mailto:lmorrison@gmavt.net>> ; John Owen<<mailto:jrowen1@gmavt.net>> ; Winslow Ladue<<mailto:whl@gmavt.net>> ; PeterTrono<<mailto:TronoVt@TronoFuels.comcastbiz.net>> ; Nancy Wood (nwood@gmavt.net)<<mailto:nwood@gmavt.net>>
Sent: Monday, January 20, 2014 2:05 PM
Subject: financials & minutes

Still waiting Ellie-you have given me minutes through August only and financials through Nov. 30th. I would like the monthly meeting minutes for Sept., Oct, Nov. & Dec. along with the December budget to actuals. I still would like the detail transaction report from July to date and if there is some "personal identifiable information" on that report it can be redacted I'm sure. Keep in mind, I am HIPAA certified as well. Thanks-Mary

Eleanor Russell

From: "Eleanor Russell" <eleanorrussell@gmavt.net>
To: "PeterTrono" <TronoVt@TronoFuels.comcastbiz.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 21, 2014 1:36 PM
Subject: Re: financials & minutes

Peter, you may recall that Mary's inquiries regarding CVFRS accounting practices found no wrong-doing and led to an almost \$40,000 expense to taxpayers. I am willing to cut CVFRS some slack for not being up-to-date on minutes, given their loss of a secretary. They could, I suppose, hire a minute-taker at additional cost to taxpayers. That, however, would not resolve the issue of minutes not yet approved. The problem results in part from CVFRS because board members are also sometimes on-call as EMT's or fire-fighters and have had to leave meetings because of an emergency call, leaving the lack of a quorum. When the missing members return much time has been lost and weightier matters than approval of minutes take precedence.

I should also add that CVFRS is under no obligation to promptly report to the Town Clerk/Treasurer. CVFRS reports the agreed upon financial reports and minutes to the Selectboard through me and at that time those reports become public documents. We intend to soon put these on the Town website. I cannot report documents to the Selectboard that have not been approved by CVFRS or that I do not have.

With regard to the ambulance, the ambulance will be delivered with all-weather tires and rims. These will be used during three seasons of the year. The snow tires and rims are an added cost and their need is obvious in our climate when roads must be negotiated in adverse weather conditions. In fact, all of the upgrades to the ambulance are for safety reasons. The cost of the ambulance is within the dollar amount approved by the voters and I believe the decisions made by the ambulance experts are more informed than those that might be made by non-experts.

Thank you for expressing your concerns.
 Ellie

----- Original Message -----

From: PeterTrono
To: Eleanor Russell
Sent: Tuesday, January 21, 2014 8:47 AM
Subject: RE: financials & minutes

Ellie,

It appears that CVFRS is falling behind in fulfilling their obligations of prompt reporting to our Town Clerk / Treasurer. This was the problem that CVFRS experienced when Mary and members of the community began inquiring about their accounting practices. Things were not getting done in a timely manner. Since then promises have been made but the performance is not satisfying those promises.

Peter

From: Eleanor Russell [eleanorrussell@gmavt.net]
Sent: Monday, January 20, 2014 11:29 PM
To: Mary Mead; David McNally; John Snow; John Howe
Cc: Patrice Machavern; e.sulva@cvfrs.org; Charles Russell; Lane Morrison; John Owen; Winslow Ladue; PeterTrono; nwood@gmavt.net
Subject: Re: financials & minutes

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Eleanor Russell

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From: "PeterTrono" <TronoVt@TronoFuels.comcastbiz.net>
To: "Eleanor Russell" <eleanorrussell@gmavt.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 21, 2014 3:11 PM
Subject: RE: financials & minutes
 Ellie,

Thank you for your response. Your assessment of the \$40,000.00 audit finding no problems is simply not accurate. Please go back and read Batchelders findings and recommendations. They found twelve different areas of concern that needed to be corrected. The audit was not a forensic audit by the boards choosing so it would not be expected to find any serious problems. Because of the audit there have been many promises made by F/R corporation to do a better job of accounting hence the hiring of Patrice. There has also been a promise of openness between the corporate board and the community. In fact Chief Davis reminded us last Monday evening that there should never be an unanswered question proposed to CVFRS. We were also told that certain documents would be sent to Mary in a timely manner thus my earlier email. These were all promises made in spirit of openness and transparency. They were volunteered CVFRS not demanded by the public. So they can not hide behind the shield of privacy afforded by their corporate privileges. The MOA was the result of the concerns brought up in Batchelders twelve recommendations. So in your view if the \$40,000.00 audit was a waste you are frankly blind to its benefits.

Regarding the ambulance and the options chosen you are simply naive to the necessities of safety and response time. Your so called experts are EMT that are trained in emergency care not in specing ambulance. I challenge you to tell me how the upgrade in the 6" accent stripping is any safer than a less flashy stripe of the same width and reflective material. How do the fancy chrome rims on the tires effect safety and response time? Were all the upgrades time and safety? Frankly and with all due respect the EMT ambulance drivers are not the experts that should be ordering the ambulance. I would never give my fuel drivers the authority to spec a truck knowing the result would be the same as F/R. Lots of bells and whistles with a disregard for pricing.

Finally and again respectfully you are not the person that should be part of the process for approving ambulance purchase. You simply have not had experience in this area.

I continue to wait for the tire / rim invoice.

Thank you

Peter

From: Eleanor Russell [eleanorrussell@gmavt.net]
Sent: Tuesday, January 21, 2014 1:36 PM
To: PeterTrono
Subject: Re: financials & minutes

Peter, you may recall that Mary's inquiries regarding CVFRS accounting practices found no wrongdoing and led to an almost \$40,000 expense to taxpayers. I am willing to cut CVFRS some slack for not being up-to-date on minutes, given their loss of a secretary. They could, I suppose, hire a minute-taker at additional cost to taxpayers. That, however, would not resolve the issue of minutes not yet approved. The problem results in part from CVFRS because board members are also sometimes on-call as EMT's or fire-fighters and have had to leave meetings because of an emergency call, leaving the lack of a

Eleanor Russell

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From: "PeterTrono" <TronoVt@TronoFuels.comcastbiz.net>
To: "Eleanor Russell" <eleanorrussell@gmavt.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 22, 2014 2:23 PM
Subject: RE: financials & minutes
 Ellie,

As the liaison to CVFRS that heard first hand "no question would go unanswered" I am disappointed to have not gotten a response to my request for tire/rim statements. I now understand that we will not be looking for a credit for the all season tires which are going to be put on the ambulance during the summer months. That in itself is a luxury that not many can afford. Certainly my company doesn't run winter and summer tires nor does Moe Harveys. Unfortunately we do not have a bottomless pit of money. I would be interested in seeing the credit for the standard rims that are being upgraded as well as the invoice for the upgraded rims and tires. I have gotten prices from my supplier so I can make the comparison.

I also proposed a number of questions that you have neglected to answer. They are specific and to the point. I look forward to invoices and answers. I also made some comments in response to your mention of the \$40,000.00 audit. I would be interested in your response.

Thank you

Peter

From: Eleanor Russell [eleanorrussell@gmavt.net]
Sent: Tuesday, January 21, 2014 1:36 PM
To: PeterTrono
Subject: Re: financials & minutes

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~~I should also add that CVFRS is under no obligation to promptly report to the Town Clerk/Treasurer. CVFRS reports the agreed upon financial reports and minutes to the Selectboard through me and at that time those reports become public documents. We intend to soon put these on the Town website. I cannot report documents to the Selectboard that have not been approved by CVFRS or that I do not have.~~

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2/4/2014

Eleanor Russell

10
From: "PeterTrono" <TronoVt@TronoFuels.comcastbiz.net>
To: "Eleanor Russell" <eleanorrussell@gmavt.net>
Sent: Thursday, January 23, 2014 3:18 PM
Subject: RE: financials & minutes
 Ellie,

Another day is sliding by us without you providing the requested information. This is a perfect example of how the transparency that CVFRS and you promised actually works. It seems to me that you would like to provide this information to me via the privacy of email rather than at your next open selectboard meeting. As you know Ed Sulva made a public comment that I knew nothing about specing an ambulance. I am prepared to go to the company that does my oil trucks and also does ambulances using the invoice I have for our recent ambulance to prove that I can spec an ambulance. I assure you that an ambulance can be built that is four wheel drive, meets all regulations, provides safety and response time concerns for thousands of dollars less. It might not have all the shine and glitter but it will serve the taxpayers true needs not just as display in local parades.

Be reminded that it is at your request being the liaison between selects and CVFRS that I go through you; because I was directed by you to follow this path I expect timely response from you.

Thank you

Peter

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Subject: Re: financials & minutes

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Eleanor Russell

From: "Eleanor Russell" <eleanorrussell@gmavt.net>
To: "PeterTrono" <TronoVt@TronoFuels.comcastbiz.net>
Sent: Sunday, January 26, 2014 5:28 PM
Subject: response
Here are responses to your requests.

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1. The Chevrons are required for safety. They are larger because large chevrons with increased reflectivity are considered safer and less expensive were there to be a collision accident.
2. The rims are not chrome.
3. I do not have invoices for the tires and rims. These are being purchased from CVFRS special funds.
4. The audit was an "agreed upon procedure" audit, designed to look for wrong-doing, such as fraud.
5. The people who spec'd the ambulance were Dave Stewart, a paramedic who has 23 years of experience in ambulance service, Mike Gill, who you know, and three or four others from Shelburne and Charlotte.
5. It can only distribute documents that are approved by the CVFRS board and given to me as the Selectboare representative on the CVFRS board.

As you no doubt know, the ambulance will come in under the \$185,000 approved by the voters. The sale is final.

Eleanor Russell

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From: "PeterTrono" <TronoVt@TronoFuels.comcastbiz.net>
To: "Eleanor Russell" <eleanorrussell@gmavt.net>
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2014 12:48 PM
Subject: RE: response
 Ellie,

Thank you for your response. Unfortunately it does not really answer my concerns.

I understand the Chevrons are required although I have recently observed two ambulance services that do not have them. I also understand that the larger variety were selected. With that in mind Dave Stewart had four choices of 6" Chevrons. The price range went from \$700.00 to \$3,100.00. Although the invoice is not clear it appears that Charlotte's ambulance will have double or two \$3,100.00 orders thus equaling a total of \$6,200.00. Please don't insult me with the notion that this choice was made based on safety. Any one of the lesser expensive 6" stripes would provide the same reflective qualities. Furthermore the upgrades in the warning and intersection lights and numerous upgrades in LED lighting along with the most expensive choices of siren and speaker will light up the ambulance so it will be safe to the crew and anyone within several miles. Obviously the two concerns are safety and response time and we all agree to their importance. Your comment that the 6" 3M Diamond Grade Chevrons with alternating colors were selected over, lets say the 6" 3M Reflective Chevron, one color for safety to avoid collision accident is foolishness. Is it your sense that Diamond grade alternating colors which cost twice as much are going to deter accidents? Again it will only look better at the parades.

I hope we are not playing games with the name of the material of the rims. I have been referring to them as chrome when in all likelihood they are aluminum. I know that they are not the basic steel wheels. Please let me know the material of the new upgraded rims. It would be deceitful if your answer to number 2 is what I have suggested.

I do not agree that the tire and rims are coming out of special funds in its entirety. I have seen a trail of emails that indicate that the Ford GPC rebate will pay the bulk of this expense with remainder coming out of special funds. This is the same rebate that had been previously promised to be sent back to the Town. Please clarify this for me and let me know how much is being paid out "CVFRS special funds."

You are correct that the audit was "an agreed upon procedure audit." That was the choice of the board. Certainly the depth of this audit looking into wrong doing does not reach nearly as deep as a forensic audit. I share Charles Russell disappointment with the audit, that it was too superficial. Be reminded that much of the concern over the accounting when it was turned over to Mary could have been alleviated by Mrs. Foote and Mr. Curtis spending several hours with her explaining a number of her questions. The cooperation that we saw was Curtis leaving the department and Foote offering her help only through her attorney. Regardless I stand by my perception that there were many positives that resulted from the Audit. Your recent email made it seem that its expense of \$40,000.00 was a waste to the taxpayers. I would be interested in hearing more from you in this regard.

For such a young man as Dave Stewart to have been a paramedic for 23 years is astonishing. I have heard many wonderful things about his abilities as a paramedic. We are lucky to have such an experienced person serving Charlotte. As I have previously said Mike Gill is spoken highly of. My point of commenting on the specs for the Town's new ambulance have all been related to extravagance at the tax payers expense. I have been specking trucks for my business since mid 1980's. I understand safety and reliability very well as would Mike Gill. Obviously Dave Stewart's input is valuable especially in equipping the medical options. But someone that is used to paying for equipment out of

their own pocket with their own money should have been on the committee making the cosmetic choices.

Finally it is concerning that often times you talk about documents that can only be distributed with the approval of the CVFRS board. Numerous times we have heard board members say that CVFRS wants to be "open and transparent we have nothing to hide." Two weeks ago Chief Davis said that he wants no questions to go unanswered. The reality that we are seeing is that whenever the board does not want to divulge information they hide behind their corporate shield and they use you as their puppet to say that documents are not approved for distribution. My request over ten days ago to see invoices for the tires and rims is a perfect example that even the smallest insignificant request of this sort will not be turned over. Openness and transparency? What a joke!

Actually the ambulance and associated expenses will not come in under \$185,000.00. Without knowing all the final goodies the actual cost will be at least \$183,039 plus Ford rebate \$3,400.00 plus unknown amount out of special funds.

Peter

From: Eleanor Russell [eleanorrussell@gmavt.net]
Sent: Sunday, January 26, 2014 5:28 PM
To: PeterTrono
Subject: response

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From: "PeterTrono" <TronoVt@TronoFuels.comcastbiz.net>
To: "Eleanor Russell" <eleanorrussell@gmavt.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2014 2:09 PM
Subject: RE: response
 Good Afternoon Ellie,

Well you folks have got your MOA. I was disappointed to see Charles lean towards John Owen and tell him to "call the question." It confirms the observation that many have made that Charles manipulates his fellow board members as if they were his puppets. Certainly something as important as this agreement should not have been pushed down our throats in its final moments. I would urge that your final draft be reviewed thoroughly by the Towns attorney before both sides sign.

Often Charles criticizes Bob Mack for things he did twenty years ago that continue to haunt us today; ie the agreement or rather lack of agreement with Fire/Rescue when the firehouse was built. The legacy of Charles and your stint on the board could very well be remembered by the function of the MOA. As we move into the inevitable step towards a regional rescue service with Charlotte as the hub we will see how your agreement serves the Charlotte tax payers and residents. I remind you that according to this new agreement you are bound that your "first duty of loyalty is to the Town." This sometimes has been questionable and I assure you it will be closely scrutinized in the future. The tapes and minutes of the recent meetings will be kept and brought out to remind not only you but also the public as to certain statements that you have made. Be assured that the first time Fire and Rescue requests more money to cover deficits you and what remains of the present board will be reminded of the discussions that went into your agreement. The MOA only strengthens the corporate status of Fire/Rescue. The disillusioned thought that their being a corporation protects the Towns liability in the case of a lawsuit is wrong. The repeated answer that the selectboard has given to the public regarding the rationale for F/R being a corporation is not supported by law. The downside to the taxpayers is not transparent and goes unaccounted for under the protection of privacy afforded by their corporate shield. This has been proven by recent purchases such as \$12,000.00 door locks and a \$10,000.00 washing machine. My experience in regards to not being provided with an invoice for tires and rims is an example of lack of openness or transparency.

Lets try an experiment on "openness." Please tell me what the "No Bid Allowance" of \$550.00 on the Purchase Contract from Cromwell Emergency Vehicles means. Also let me know what the actual cost of the "Final Inspection" of the vehicle is and how it compares to the \$450.00 allowance. These are both simple questions that I as a tax payer would like to know. Let me know how you are coming on your response to yesterdays email from me.

On another note; I have been told that both Thomas Mack and Pete Mack have been taken off the roster at Fire and Rescue. I understand that it is due to their limited amount of time that they have to put towards F/R. Both of these young men have recently had an added demand for their time with their family owned businesses. As you know the Mack family have been involved as volunteers with the fire department for many years. The future of Charlotte Fire Department falls in the arms of these young men. Chris, Thomas, and Pete have a number of young friends on the department that watch closely to see how their friends are treated. As I understand they were not notified and could have shown up for a call without insurance coverage. Certainly it would be good if you could look into the matter and be sure that these young men were treated fairly and respectfully because these actions will effect volunteerism more than anything else including politics and the St. George mentality.

Peter

2/4/2014

Eleanor Russell

15
From: "PeterTrono" <TronoVt@TronoFuels.comcastbiz.net>
To: "Eleanor Russell" <eleanorrussell@gmavt.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2014 2:37 PM
Subject: RE: response
 Ellie,

I am still waiting for information that I have been requesting. To add to the list. Evidently the Town was over charged \$3,100.00 by Cromwell for the new ambulance. Has the money been returned and if so to whom?

I had the opportunity to talk to both Pete and Thomas Mack this morning. As of this moment neither of them have received any notice from anyone of authority at CVFRS that they have been removed from the roster. So in theory their pagers could go off, they could respond to a call and while fulfilling their duties could be injured or worse. This could be a huge liability to CVFRS service and to the Town contrary to the belief that the corporate status is protection. Obviously for this reason changes should be made to the notification process. Furthermore morale would be better served with a more sensitive approach. Remember these young men are the future of our Fire Department and as we know as commitments change these volunteers come and go.

Look forward to your comments and information I have requested.

Thank you very much.

Peter

From: Eleanor Russell [eleanorrussell@gmavt.net]
Sent: Sunday, January 26, 2014 5:28 PM
To: PeterTrono
Subject: response

Here are responses to your requests.

1. The Chevrons are required for safety. They are larger because large chevrons with increased reflectivity are considered safer and less expensive were there to be a collision accident.
2. The rims are not chrome.
3. I do not have invoices for the tires and rims. These are being purchased from CVFRS special funds.
4. The audit was an "agreed upon procedure" audit, designed to look for wrong-doing, such as fraud.
5. The people who spec'd the ambulance were Dave Stewart, a paramedic who has 23 years of experience in ambulance service, Mike Gill, who you know, and three or four others from Shelburne and Charlotte.
5. I can only distribute documents that are approved by the CVFRS board and given to me as the Selectboare representative on the CVFRS board.

As you no doubt know, the ambulance will come in under the \$185,000 approved by the voters. The sale is final.

Eleanor Russell

(17)
From: "PeterTrono" <TronoVt@TronoFuels.comcastbiz.net>
To: "Eleanor Russell" <eleanorrussell@gmavt.net>
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2014 11:40 AM
Subject: RE: response
 Ellie,

Thank you for your response. Do you know where the \$3,100.00 was sent or how the credit was applied? Obviously it should go back to the Town not CVFRS. Mary has not received the credit. Could you track that down for me? Thanks for looking into the Pete and Thomas Mack issue, I really appreciate that. It could create a huge liability issue if God forbid one of them got hurt on a call while not covered by insurance. I appreciate how busy you must be. I will look forward to the answers to my other questions by this time next week.

Thank you.

Peter

(16)

From: Eleanor Russell [eleanorrussell@gmavt.net]
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2014 3:54 PM
To: PeterTrono
Subject: Re: response

Regarding the \$3100, CVFRS was notified one or two weeks ago that \$3100 had been credited. I have forwarded your concern with regard to Peter and Thomas Mack to the CVFRS leadership. I am not able to respond to your remaining questions until late next week.

Ellie

----- Original Message -----

From: PeterTrono<<mailto:TronoVt@TronoFuels.comcastbiz.net>>
To: Eleanor Russell<<mailto:eleanorrussell@gmavt.net>>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2014 2:37 PM
Subject: RE: response

Ellie,

I am still waiting for information that I have been requesting. To add to the list. Evidently the Town was over charged \$3,100.00 by Cromwell for the new ambulance. Has the money been returned and if so to whom?

I had the opportunity to talk to both Pete and Thomas Mack this morning. As of this moment neither of them have received any notice from anyone of authority at CVFRS that they have been removed from the roster. So in theory their pagers could go off, they could respond to a call and while fulfilling their duties could be injured or worse. This could be a huge liability to CVFRS service and to the Town contrary to the belief that the corporate status is protection. Obviously for this reason changes should be made to the notification process. Furthermore morale would be better served with a more sensitive approach. Remember these young men are the future of our Fire Department and as we know as cownmmitments change these volunteers come and go.

Eleanor Russell

From: "PeterTrono" <TronoVt@TronoFuels.comcastbiz.net>
 To: "Eleanor Russell" <eleanorrussell@gmavt.net>
 Sent: Friday, January 31, 2014 1:29 PM
 Subject: RE: response
 Ellie,

The information from Cromwell is that the \$3,100.00 check for over payment on the ambulance was sent out a week to ten days ago. It appears that CVFRS requested that it be sent back to them even though the check for the final payment came from the Town of Charlotte. It is extremely unusual that a credit for overpayment to a vendor be returned to anyone other than the source of the check. I want to be sure that the check gets returned to the Town (taxpayers) before it gets applied to something else for CVFRS. There does not have to be a replay of what happened to the Ford rebate with these funds.

I have talked to several business owners that own fleets of trucks regarding the bizarre credit item on the purchase contract from Cromwell titled "no bid allowance." None of us have seen this in our truck purchasing experience because without exception none of us have made a purchase without first getting at least three bids. Exactly what this no bid credit means is not a difficult question to answer. Nor was the request for the invoice for tires and rims difficult to generate. Someone at CVFRS has the answers to each and every question that I have asked you since you volunteered to be my conduit to them. For the simple reason of satisfying the spirit of openness and transparency could I please once and for all get the answers to all of my questions.

Thank you.

Peter

From: Eleanor Russell [eleanorrussell@gmavt.net]
 Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2014 3:54 PM
 To: PeterTrono
 Subject: Re: response

Regarding the \$3100, CVFRS was notified one or two weeks ago that \$3100 had been credited. I have forwarded your concern with regard to Peter and Thomas Mack to the CVFRS leadership. I am not able to respond to your remaining questions until late next week.

Ellie

----- Original Message -----

From: PeterTrono<mailto:TronoVt@TronoFuels.comcastbiz.net>
 To: Eleanor Russell<mailto:eleanorrussell@gmavt.net>
 Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2014 2:37 PM
 Subject: RE: response

Ellie,

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2/4/2014

Eleanor Russell

19
From: "PeterTrono" <TronoVt@TronoFuels.comcastbiz.net>
To: <eleanorrussell@gmavt.net>
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 2:18 PM
Ellie,

It was on your instruction that all CVFRS questions be addressed through you. As you know I have a number of outstanding questions all of which are simple answers. At this point I would say that I am being ignored. Perhaps its time for me to write a letter to the local papers which will be supported by facts! Or would it be better to address the subject at the next selectboard meeting during public comment?

I am way to busy running a fuel business, rental properties, construction, and small farm to be playing games to get information that should be accessible to all tax payers. Is this your idea of openness and transparency? Each question I have asked has an answer that is being sat on by either you or management at CVFRS. Instead of playing games with questions like the rims on the new ambulance why not answer the question rather than play with the terminology of their material description being aluminum versus chrome. Is someone pulling your chain and deceiving you or are you part of this ploy? Whatever it is lets stop it immediately. As you know I have questions that remain unanswered regarding the new ambulance. I also want to know where the \$3,100.00 over payment refund is. Cromwell claims that it was credited well over a week ago. What does a no bid allowance mean? Please go over my list of unanswered questions and do your job as my elected representative whose mission is to serve the public interest first before serving CVFRS agenda.

New additions to my list of concerns that I would like you to address are explanation of Patrice's pay raise after being employed by CVFRS for less than a year. Is Patrice an hourly employee or salaried? Is it true that the unfilled full time firefighters position has qualified for a pay raise? This is the position that the Chief talked in length at Town Meeting as to the urgency to which it must be filled. Ten months later they have not hired anyone although money is being sent from the Town to CVFRS monthly to pay for this position. With the new MOA they are able to keep this surplus. It appears that an unfilled position is the recipient of a pay raise. Wouldn't it make sense to give the taxpayers back this monthly payment and start the new person when hired at the first agreed upon rate. How can you with clear conscience give an employee with less than a years experience and another unfilled position raises at a sizable increase over that of our Town Clerk / Treasurer who has been serving us exceptionally well for almost twenty years? Hopefully she is not being scolded for publicly expressing her opinions regarding the foolish spending practices of the selectboard and those of CVFRS. You would be well advised to take this criticism as being constructive and follow it best serving the interests of those that elected you to protect and spend our tax dollars wisely.

I look forward to your renewed effort in keeping the promise of Town Government being open and transparent.

Thank you

Peter =

Eleanor Russell

20
From: "PeterTrono" <TronoVt@TronoFuels.comcastbiz.net>
To: <eleanorrussell@gmavt.net>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 11:03 AM
Subject: Questions
Ellie,

Wouldn't it be a lot easier without playing games with providing information when requested by Town residents and our Town Clerk Treasurer. I have asked as well as Mary where the \$3,100.00 credit from Cromwell was. That check was written and mailed on January 23rd why did it take twelve days to get to the rightful owner. Are you not in the loop as the selectboard liaison with CVFRS. Is this something that they have determined that is not important for you to be aware of? Could it possibly be that it is a further example of how and what causes friction from that side of Ferry Road?

I am still waiting for answers to my questions. Although I am following your direction to go through you to answer CVFRS questions and concerns do you think it would be fruitful for us to set up a meeting with Charles. I need some direction in how this process of openness and transparency that I hear so much about from CVFRS management works. Clearly it is my opinion that simple questions are not being answered in a timely manner. I would like for my frustration to be satisfied as privately as possible not by news paper articles and public comment. I am open to your guidance in this matter.

Peter

Eleanor Russell

21
From: "Eleanor Russell" <eleanorrussell@gmavt.net>
To: "PeterTrono" <TronoVt@TronoFuels.comcastbiz.net>
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 12:41 PM
Subject: answers

Peter, I will remind you that I told you I would be unable to answer your last set of questions until later this week. Yesterday I was able to get the last question answered.

The specific answers with regard to the ambulance follow:

1. The tire rims and covers are stock items and are stainless steel.
2. The chevrons use alternate colors because that is recommended by the NFPA.
3. The paramedic, who was a part of the team that spec'd the ambulance, has 23 years of experience in ambulance service.
4. The ambulance will come in under the \$185,000 of taxpayer money approved by the voters.
5. The \$3100 refund was mailed in error to CVFRS. It has been delivered to the Town.
6. At the special Town meeting in June a townsperson asked about a bid process. The response was that there are no spec sheets for ambulances. Two quotes were received for two similar ambulances, both being the safest in the industry. The voters approved the ambulance understanding this.
7. The \$450 allowance is for travel expenses for the trip to St. Louis to pick up the ambulance.

Peter, my job was answering your questions with regard to CVFRS. I researched the facts and reported them to you. As far as the ambulance is concerned, it is a *fait accompli*. Perhaps there is a lesson to be learned here by all involved parties, but for now, our time can be better spent on more important issues. I am not committed to answering any more of your emails on this topic.

With regard to the MOA, the Selectboard and CVFRS have spent nearly ten months working on the MOA with inputs from the community and extensive legal reviews. We have an agreement that services the intended purpose of defining the relationships between the parties and protects the interests of the Charlotte tax payers. For now, the MOA is also a done deal.

If you, as a taxpayer, have serious questions with regard to CVFRS you are well aware that you are free to take them to the Selectboard. If CVFRS members have issues with the management procedures at CVFRS, they should take these up with the CVFRS leadership.

Thank you for your interest in assuring that taxpayer money is spent responsibly, an interest we all share.

Ellie

Eleanor Russell

22
From: "PeterTrono" <TronoVt@TronoFuels.comcastbiz.net>
To: "Eleanor Russell" <eleanorrussell@gmavt.net>
Sent: Wednesday, February 05, 2014 3:16 PM
Subject: RE: answers
 Ellie,

Thank you for your response prior to the date promised. Why don't you take the next several days to actually prepare the answers to what was asked? Lets address your non answers;

- 1.) What is the cost in the upgrade in tires and rims. Invoice from Rouse Tire and the wheel company that you previously mentioned as being the most competitively priced will suffice as the answer. Obviously these are not stock items as CVFRS is using the \$3,400.00 Ford rebate and special funds as explained to me in an earlier email.
- 2.) The Chevrons are a requirement of NFPA. The 6 inch stripe is required. As I have mentioned before it does not have to be the diamond alternate colors to meet requirements. There were three other variations for drastically less money. As another observation with the numerous upgrades in LED lighting consideration for being seen. Furthermore the upgrade in the siren will assure that they be heard.
- 3.) As mentioned before Stewart must have started as a teenager. Obviously he should have been a part in the process but only a part. Trucking firms do not their drivers order trucks for the obvious reasons. We will see it in the chrome and glitter as well as the total expense.
- 4.) It will cost the tax payers \$185,000.00 of their money. How much in addition will be out of special funds and the Ford rebate. The total cost of the ambulance will exceed \$190,000.00. Wouldn't it be nice if special funds could be used to reduce the budget requests of CVFRS each year? Couldn't the tax payers use a break?
- 5.) The credit check was delivered to Mary twelve days after it was sent. A lot less aggravation would have resulted had Patrice walked across the street when it was improperly received at CVFRS. The stamp on the envelop indicating received date makes no sense.
- 6.) Hopefully the new consideration for the bid process and RFP which the selectboard, auditors and league of Cities and Towns will be working on will improve the process. Assuming CVFRS uses the same process (which I doubt) this will not be an issue in the future. It is absurd to think that spec sheets for ambulances don't exist. If you believe that, understand that they could be developed in an afternoon with three phone calls. Isn't it interesting to that the company selected as the provider of the ambulance awards the purchaser a \$550.00 "no bid allowance." I assume that to mean that this is in return for not having to compete in the bid process against someone else. A bit ridiculous perhaps? I always have found that competition in the bid process is good for the consumer!
- 7.) I know the \$450.00 allowance is what Cromwell extended as final inspection allowance. It seems to me that if I were buying a \$190,000.00 piece of equipment I would have negotiated for delivery to my garage. Thats what I and other oil businesses do when we receive delivery of a new truck. The question is what was the total cost to pick up the new ambulance.

I appreciate your job description towards me. With all do respect you did a less than adequate job. Your facts are off target which indicates to me that your sources were not honest with you or possibly ill

2/5/2014

informed. As happens too often with our current selectboard a less than adequate job is done or mistakes are made and the response that the taxpayers have become accustomed to is lets move on. Your assessment that "perhaps there is a lesson to be learned" is less than convincing. Evidence is that the board does not learn from previous blunders. That is whats so frustrating from the taxpayers stand point. It seems that the boards feeling is of nonchalant, easy come, easy go attitude. Maybe you have lost contact with the taxpayers concerns which is supported by your assessment to move onto "more important issues." Many in Town think that the most important job that you and your fellow board members have is to be fiscally responsible. Your commitment to me and all those that you represent is to answer our questions. I hope that you will sensibly do so and do it in a manner that displays both honesty and accurately!

Your take on the MOA is spot on. It will be this current boards legacy. Your suggested remedy to me as a taxpayer with concerns regarding CVFRS is a joke. As you know for the last year I have come to your board on a more regular basis than some members with concerns for all aspects of Town Government. I have been elected to the board of auditors because I am concerned with Town matters almost exclusively in relation to spending. Often times I feel that I am beating my head against the wall. Decisions like the St. George matter run against the grain of reasonableness. Irresponsible spending at CVFRS has not improved between the purchase of the \$500,000.00 plus heavy rescue to the new \$190,000.00 ambulance (accurate actual costs). Getting accountability for the spending and handling of funds continues to be a laborious job. Your recent assessment that the Batchelder audit was a waste of money disregards the twelve recommendations. It shows me that you just don't get it. But I think my very best selectboard moment in the last year was when the chairperson after listening to my concerns told me that, "if you don't like it, move out of Town." That really makes me feel like the process is working for me. My personal observation is that if CVFRS members have issues with managerial procedures of the St. George Fire Department rather than going to CVFRS leadership they move on to Shelburne, Hinesburg or North Ferrisburg Departments. You continue to mention and write about loosing CVFRS members due to politics in Town. I will match your list one for one with those that have left for what is described as lack of management and unhappiness with the St. George influence.

Enjoy the winter weather.

Thank you

Peter

From: Eleanor Russell [eleanorrussell@gmavt.net]

Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 12:41 PM

To: PeterTrono

Subject: answers

~~Peter, I will remind you that I told you I would be unable to answer your last set of questions until later this week. Yesterday I was able to get the last question answered.~~

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- ~~1. The tire rims and covers are stock items and are stainless steel.~~
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Peter, my job was answering your questions with regard to CVFRS. I researched the facts and reported them to you. As far as the ambulance is concerned, it is a fait accompli. Perhaps there is a lesson to be learned here by all involved parties, but for now, our time can be better spent on more important issues. I am not committed to answering any more of your emails on this topic.

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Thank you for your interest in assuring that taxpayer money is spent responsibly, an interest we all share.

Ellie

From: **PeterTrono** TronoVt@TronoFuels.comcastbiz.net
Subject: RE: Correcting the Record
Date: January 29, 2014 1:41 PM
To: Charles Russell cdegr@yahoo.com

Charles,

Thank you for taking time out of your busy day to respond to my concerns. I appreciate your clarification on John's motivation to call the question. The conversation between you and John was not clear to the audience I suppose because he did not have the floor. Certainly those that I talked to that were spectators could not and did not see this interaction between you and John. thanks for the replay of events.

I appreciate the time and effort put into the MOA. Even though I do not agree with parts. In fact I don't agree with its need. Aside from Batchelder's comments in that regard. My disagreement centers around the stance that there is no need for CVFRS to be a corporation in the first place. The idea that the Town is free of liability related to Fire and Rescue is not completely correct. What the reality is is that they are simply one more layer for a complainant to go through. This could be best remedied through insurance increases for F/R as well as the Town. As I often remind Robert many of these problems were seeds that he planted. I would rather have seen time spent dissolving the corporation and efforts put into setting up the necessary committee structure to support F/R. Then all these wonderful volunteers could spend their time on what they really enjoy doing, responding to the Town's fire and rescue needs not corporate issues.

Just as I remind Robert of his screw ups of 15 to 20 years ago I put you on notice that either my sons or myself will be around to remind you of yours. Hopefully there's not too much more material for us to work with.

Thanks again.

Peter

From: Cdegr [cdegr@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2014 10:18 AM
To: PeterTrono
Subject: Correcting the Record

Peter,

Just so you know, I did not tell John Owen to Call the Question. He indicated that he felt the discussion had reached it's useful end and I suggested that he could call the question. He didn't realize he could do that. Considering that all four others voted to end the discussion tells me that it was time to end it and that if I had instigated the end by asking the board if they were ready to vote, there would have been unanimous support. But note that I was not trying to be heavy handed with the board and the discussion, or I would have asked for a calling of the question earlier on if that were my style. We tried and I think succeeded in listening to the many constructive comments made by you and others with respect to the MOA. Assuming that Robert was going through his list in the order of importance and relevance, when he started to bring up non-germane issues I think it was probably time to end the discussion. We will never probably agree on the MOA in it's entirety, but I appreciate your input and point of view.

Charles