



The City of New York

Queens Community Board 11

Serving the Communities of Auburndale, Bayside, Douglaston, Hollis Hills
Little Neck and Oakland Gardens

Michael Budabin Chairperson / Joseph Marziliano District Manager

TO: All Board Members

**FROM: Eileen Miller, Health Committee
Chair**

DATE: September 8, 2020

**RE: Glen Oaks Volunteer Ambulance
Corp. expansion**

On Tuesday, September 8, 2020, a meeting of the CB11 Health Committee was convened. The meeting was conducted via Zoom teleconference. Present during the meeting were Eileen Miller, Committee Chair, Christine Haider, 1st Vice Chair, Henry Euler, 3rd Vice Chair, Board Members Susan Cerezo, Carmen Collado, Allan Palzer and Gunjan Rastogi. CB11 District Manager, Joseph Marziliano and staff member Jane Bentivenga were also in attendance. Representatives from our local elected officials joined the meeting as well: Susan Seinfeld from CM Grodenchik's office and Dave Fischer from AM Braunstein's office. Henry Ehrhardt, Jerry Gelbard and Dave Meketansky represented Glen Oaks Volunteer Ambulance Corp. (GOVAC).

Mrs. Miller began the meeting by explaining GOVAC is seeking a letter of support from Community Board 11 (CB11) regarding an application to expand their service area to include the following boundaries within the confines of CB11: 26 Avenue on the north, the Long Island Expressway on the south, Francis Lewis Blvd. on the west and the Cross Island Parkway on the east. A power point presentation was screen-shared for all which included the background of the organization which has been operating since 1973. The Bayside Volunteer Ambulance Corp. ceased operating about two years ago. Mr. Gelbard stated that GOVAC has a lower response time than 911, three to five minutes, due to their vehicles proximity to the communities they serve. The application process was also described.

Mr. Euler commented that he feels this is a great idea. He asked how GOVAC receives funding. Mr. Gelbard replied that volunteer NYC EMS organizations are independent, self-funded and not-for-profit. They receive charitable donations, funds from yearly appeals and federal and state grants they apply for. They do not base their response on anyone's ability to pay. They accept whatever Medicare, Medicaid or commercial insurance allows for ambulance transport.

Ms. Collado asked what their budget is and inquired about their two main funding streams. Mr. Gelbard said their two main funding streams are their annual fund drive and cost recovery through an individual's insurance coverage. Mr. Meketansky said their typical budget is between \$120,000 and \$130,000 and gave a rundown of categories and their related expenses.

Mr. Palzer posed several questions. The responses were as follows: they have more than 75 volunteers (had a little over 100 during the height of Covid-19); this is slightly higher than last year. Taking on this expanded area will increase their call volume approximately 50% which equates to an additional 250 responses. However, after reviewing volunteer and financial data the cost is virtually zero. Any increase will be offset by contributions and other revenue. They are a participant in the 911 system in addition to operating direct. They operate 24 hours per day. If they are occupied, the call is redirected to the 911 system. Their fee structure is dictated by what Medicare, Medicaid and commercial insurance allows. They do not collect the "patient responsibility" after insurance pays. There are no pre-qualifications for service or ability to pay. They look forward to restoring a service that was provided to this community for many years as well as providing different community training classes such as CPR.

Mrs. Haider asked what happens if a person is outside the service area. If any individual is not able to contact their covered area volunteer ambulance organization, GOVAC would be able to take that call. Mrs. Haider asked if they transport to a hospital a patient requests. The condition of the patient would dictate or allow where they are safely able to travel to.

Mrs. Seinfeld added that CM Grodenchik met with GOVAC and has written a letter of support of their behalf. AM Braunstein has also written a letter.

Mr. Euler made a motion to write a letter of support for the expansion of the Glen Oaks Volunteer Ambulance into the Bayside area. Mrs. Haider seconded the motion. All were in favor, no one was opposed and there were no abstentions. The letter will be sent.

Respectfully submitted September 9, 2020