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An Act To Establish the Central Aroostook County Emergency Medical Services Authority

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, beginning in April 2020, Mars Hill, Bridgewater and Blaine will be without emergency medical services; and

Whereas, this situation places the entire population of those towns at enormous risk; and

Whereas, it is imperative that this situation be rectified immediately; and

Whereas, in order to secure emergency medical services for Mars Hill, Bridgewater and Blaine it is necessary to create a quasi-municipal corporation to provide such services; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. Establishment. The Central Aroostook County Emergency Medical Services Authority, referred to in this Act as "the authority," is established to facilitate the provision of emergency medical services to the citizens of Mars Hill, Bridgewater and Blaine.

Sec. 2. Board of directors. The authority is governed by a board of directors, referred to in this Act as "the board." The board consists of 9 members:

1. Three from Mars Hill, selected by its municipal officers;
2. Three from Bridgewater, selected by its municipal officers; and
3. Three from Blaine, selected by its municipal officers.

For the purposes of this section, "municipal officers" has the same meaning as in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 30-A, section 2001, subsection 10.

The members of the board are appointed for terms of 2 years, except that one of the initial members from each municipality is appointed for a term of 3 years. The members may be reappointed at the pleasure of the appointing authority.

Sec. 3. Powers. The authority may:

1. Employ and compensate personnel, consultants, technical and professional assistants and an emergency medical services medical director;

2. Make and enter into contracts and agreements and, pursuant to the bylaws of the authority, purchase or lease all vehicles and equipment necessary to provide emergency medical services to members;
3. Hold public hearings and sponsor public forums;
4. Sue and be sued in its own name;
5. Accept funds, grants and services from federal, state, county and municipal governments or any agency thereof, gifts and stipends from its member towns and private gifts from individuals and entities; and
6. Apply for and accept loans and allocate and disburse funds received to carry out the purposes of the authority.

Debts of the authority authorized under this Act do not constitute or create any debt or liability on behalf of the State. Debts incurred under this Act do not directly, indirectly or contingently obligate the State to levy or to pledge any form of taxation or to make any appropriation for their payment. This section may not be construed to prevent the authority from pledging its full faith and credit to the payment of loans or other debts authorized pursuant to this Act.

Sec. 4. Duties. The authority shall:

1. Prepare an annual budget and require an annual audit that is made available for public inspection;
2. Follow uniform standards provided in the Maine Revised Statutes insofar as they relate to Department of Public Safety rules;
3. Make provisions for emergency medical services in Mars Hill, Bridgewater and Blaine and, on a contract basis, other areas where new services are to be provided; however, where emergency medical services are already provided by existing services, they are not abolished by this Act without the express consent of the governing body of the area where services are being provided and vote of the existing medical services' board;
4. Implement a subscription membership program unless otherwise prohibited by law; and
5. Set and annually adjust an approved cost-basis schedule that is uniform throughout Mars Hill, Bridgewater and Blaine.

Sec. 5. Organization; conduct of business. The board must be organized and its business must be conducted in accordance with the following.

1. The board shall elect a chair, vice-chair, secretary and treasurer from among its members.
2. The secretary shall keep a record of the board's meetings. These records are public records as defined in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 1, section 402, subsection 3.
3. The treasurer shall keep records of the board's transactions. These records are public records as defined in Title 1, section 402, subsection 3.
4. The treasurer must be bonded in an amount to be determined by the board.

5. A quorum of the board is established in the bylaws of the authority and must include the chair or vice-chair and the secretary or treasurer of the board.

6. The board shall adopt such bylaws and mission statements as are necessary for the legal operation and proper management of the authority.

Sec. 6. Meetings. The bylaws must establish the annual meeting of the board. Additional meetings may be scheduled at the call of the chair or at the written request of any 5 members of the board.

A member who fails to attend board meetings 5 consecutive times may be replaced by the appointing authority. Notification of such absences from the secretary of the board to the appointing authority is sufficient to trigger the appointment of a replacement board member by the appointing authority.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this Act takes effect when approved.

SUMMARY

This bill establishes the Central Aroostook County Emergency Medical Services Authority to facilitate the provision of emergency medical services to the citizens of Mars Hill, Bridgewater and Blaine. The bill includes an emergency preamble and an emergency clause.