

THE

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STRATFORD TIMES



Mayor's Message

STRATFORD AMBULANCE ASSOCIATION INC



This message is being delivered to our community, to reiterate prior announcements regarding ambulance services provided to Stratford Borough. Importantly the Mayor and Council are pleased to confirm that our EMS services are 100% funded by a private, non-government entity, known as the Stratford Ambulance Association Inc.

As you may recall, from prior editions of the Stratford Times, the corporate structure of the Stratford Ambulance Association Inc, has been in place since 1955. Some 67 years later, the operational aspect underwent some necessary changes.

In 2022, the remaining longtime EMT volunteers retired, transitioning the Stratford Ambulance Association Inc. to a new board of volunteers functioning as a Trustee Governance model. For the past three years, the Stratford Ambulance Association Inc. has provided uninterrupted 911 ambulance services, at the same levels and response times that our residents are accustomed to.

Prior to 2022, Stratford and Magnolia Ambulance Association(s) collaborated to form a fully paid Sterling EMS Alliance. Generally, day shifts, some evenings, and some overnights shifts were covered by the paid crews, who were employed by the Sterling EMS Alliance.

For about 20 years, the Alliance provided EMS coverage for Stratford, Somerdale, Magnolia, Hi-Nella and Laurel Springs, for 18 hours a day. To fill the gaps, volunteers and stipend workers from Stratford provided 911 EMS Services as available to Stratford, Hi-Nella and Laurel Springs. Customarily, mutual aid provided EMS responses to jurisdictions requiring coverage.

During that era, (1995-2022) the Sterling Alliance arrangement worked out very well. But, in recent times, nationwide, volunteerism has dwindled; greatly affecting many volunteer fire departments and ambulance corps. Camden County is in no way immune from this ongoing crisis.

With nearly all Camden County Mayors struggling to provide sustainable 911 EMS services to their communities, the Sterling towns worked together and agreed upon the current district wide solution.

In Stratford, the non-profit entity known as the "Stratford Ambulance Association Inc." remains a corporation, which signed a shared service agreement with the Magnolia Ambulance Association Inc. The agreement merged some physical assets / resources to provide 24/7, 365 days a year paid 911-ambulance coverage to the Borough of Stratford.

The agreement requires that the "Stratford Ambulance Association Inc." make annual payments to Magnolia for contracted EMS services. This arrangement expanded our paid coverage from 18 hours a day to 24 hours.

Proudly, the Stratford Ambulance Association Inc. privately funds 100% of the shared services agreement. Because of grants, fundraising and an EMS subscription ordinance (large healthcare facilities only) the Stratford Ambulance Association Inc is now financially self-sustaining. No municipal taxes are raised for ambulance services. This is no doubt welcomed news to our taxpayers. Separately, Somerdale, Hi-Nella, Laurel Springs and Lawnside all have similar contracts with Magnolia Ambulance. While Haddon Heights,

and Runnemedede have also entered into shared services contracts with Barrington Ambulance.

However, Stratford is dissimilar to all those other municipalities as our ambulance association wisely maintained its existence. Consequently, the Stratford Ambulance Association Inc. remains a New Jersey Licensed EMS provider, and owns a fully licensed, inspected and insured 911 (BLS) authorized ambulance. Routinely our ambulance is placed in-service by our Magnolia partners. Importantly, in the future, if feasible, the Stratford Ambulance Association Inc. could resume 911 EMS services at any time.

I hope you find this factual information insightful and please rest assured, that officials from the Sterling District regularly engage, to ensure the safety of all our citizens.

Wishing you all a happy and safe holiday season.



Warmest Regards,

Mayor Linda Hall