



Kabetogama EMS

2022

We had an eventful year with 28 medical calls. Everything from fall assists in homes to vehicle accidents with minor to fatal injuries. Our service has proven very beneficial to the surrounding communities, with the closest ambulance service 25 miles away, and hospital services at least the same. We have been thankful for the local helipad on many occasions.

We were able to add a LUCAS device to the department equipment this year. This is the newest automated CPR device on the market. We are a long way from assistance with minimal medical manpower to do CPR and we cannot do it manually while transporting, without an automated device. This allows us to maintain good quality CPR in transport, to a higher level of care. This equipment came to us through extremely generous donations from the local communities and past patients.


We were also able to add a new dependable snowmobile and tracks for the side-by-side and the accessories to attach to the Voyageurs National Park Snobalance or our Rescue Boggan, to transport patients through the woods and frozen water, while administering care. This equipment is also available due to the generous donations from the surrounding communities, because of the trust that they put in our personnel.

We ended 2021 with 11 members on the EMS and 2022 with 8. We have 4 members that live in Kabetogama, 1 in Ash River, 2 in Ray and one summer resident. All but 2 work out of the community, which means that we currently have less than optimal coverage.

We have 3 EMTs, 2 RNs and one EMT on the International Falls Department. We have the additional support of the Voyageurs National Park staff which includes more EMTs.

The reasons for leaving, are from attrition, time commitment, guilt andthis one is the toughest on me, benefits that do not align with other agencies- especially incongruent with the commitment.

Medical personnel require education annually for licensure, equipment, supply and administration upkeep and commitment to calls when available. We do not have the relief association or retirement benefit of the fire department and with the minimal commitment for fire training and calls, that service is more attractive to those that want to help.



2023

How does this look going forward?

Ellen was not sure how to address this except to say, she retired in 2020 and is a figment of your imagination today.

She is not sure how many more will leave in the future...Volunteers and the workforce in general has changed greatly since COVID.

We are extremely blessed to have the volunteers that we have and have had on the EMS department, and working with our team has been wonderful.

Ellen has been on this department for 23 years and has fought for some form of compensation in every way she knows how. She has talked to an attorney group at the EMS Conference, networked with other departments, tried to work with the fire department and came to the township to ask for help. She says she is just short of getting on her knees and she has not been successful. She has been humiliated over the years on several occasions because she has been told that she does not do enough and yes, she does take that very personally. The volunteers we have on the department, work just as hard as they can, and it is not fair to them, to be told they need to do more, they are volunteers. These situations have highly discouraged those that have seen these events, from ever stepping up, and thus here we are....

Ellen is generally challenged by problems, always wanting to fix 'it'. Whatever 'it' may be... but she is currently at a loss. The only suggestions that she has left, are to separate EMS and fire and have the EMS supported by the township, have EMS and fire together but have additional township support for EMS relief association or require all fire fighters become EMS to maintain the ability to respond.

This needs to be turned over to the township and fire department at this time, because we, cannot answer the questions that need to be answered.

We do need help to maintain this service in the community. This is on a different level than the taxing district, but we need to do something here in our community as well.