

## Office of the Town Administrator

**DATE:** Friday, January 14, 2022  
**TO:** Boxford Select Board  
**FROM:** Matt Coogan, Town Administrator  
**RE:** Medical Response Pilot Report

The 4-month Medical Response Pilot Program concluded in December, and the Public Safety team has been meeting throughout the last few weeks to review the call and response times and measure the overall efficacy of the program. Overall, the Public Safety team deems the pilot to be successful, based on decreases in medical response times and positive reception both from residents and the Boxford Fire Department.

The pilot program creates a new shift for a firefighter dedicated to respond directly from their home to a medical call during hours not covered by career firefighters (evenings and weekends). The weekday shift hours are overnight from 5PM to 7AM, and there are 2 shifts both on Saturday and Sunday to cover weekends. Firefighters working these shifts are paid a stipend in addition to their regular compensation when responding to a call. The weekday stipend is \$100 per shift and the weekend stipend is \$150 per shift. Chief Geiger launched the pilot program at the beginning of September.

Communications Director Warren Gould has provided monthly medical call response reports for the duration of the pilot, as well reports for the same months in 2020 for comparison. Response times from the call being received by the dispatcher in the Communications Department to the Fire Department arriving onsite appear to have decreased. From September to December 2020, the Fire Department arrived at medical calls under 11 minutes from the time of the initial emergency call to dispatch 62% of the time overall. During the same months in 2021 during the pilot, the percentage of Fire Department arrivals to medical calls under 11 minutes increased to 77%. This data is encouraging, and indicates the pilot is contributing to improved medical response times. The following chart shows the percentage of arrivals times under 11 minutes by month.

	September		October		November		December	
	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021
<b># of medical calls</b>	40	46	42	41	39	38	49	36
<b>% of responses under 11 minutes</b>	60%	74%	79%	76%	62%	87%	49%	72%

In addition to the data, included with this submission is a memo from Chief Geiger with his analysis of the success of the program. Based on the data collected so far on response times, his ability to fully staff and execute the program to date, and the overall reception of the program by residents and the Fire Department, he recommends extending the program.

Upon review and consultation with the public safety departments, it is my recommendation that the Select Board authorize the extension of the pilot program through Fiscal Year 2023, with an end date of June 2023. Extending the program would ensure that there is always a member of the Fire Department on duty to respond to calls. The additional months would also provide the Town more call data and allow the team to further analyze the success of the program, as well as make adjustments and recommendations on whether to budget for this program in future years.

The extended pilot program would be funded with the \$150,000 of ARPA funds appropriated by the Select Board in August 2021. For the 4-month pilot, the personnel costs are approximately \$22,000. In addition, there were medical supplies purchased for the department vehicle of \$2,000. Based on these expenses, it is estimated the total personnel costs going forward through June 2023 would be \$100,000. The extended program would not require an additional allocation of ARPA funds to continue as designed.