

1 3/2/2026 - North Country E.M.S. - Harrisville, N.Y.

2 STATE OF NEW YORK

3 NORTH COUNTRY REGIONAL

4 EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

5 Proceeding on an Application for a Certificate of
6 Need For Expansion of Operating Territory, for
7 Natural Bridge Volunteer Ambulance, Inc.

8 C.O.N. PUBLIC HEARING

9 DATE: March 2, 2026

10 TIME: 7:00 p.m. to 7:37 p.m.

11 LOCATION: Harrisville Central School

12 14371 Pirate Lane

13 Harrisville, New York

14 BEFORE: DANIEL BROEDEL, Hearing Officer

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20 Reported by Kristen Lawler

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2 APPEARANCES:

3 DEBBIE SINGLETON, Chair
4 JAMES BARR, C.O.N. Committee Member
5 RON SMITH, C.O.N. Committee Member

6 BRAD PINSKY, Natural Bridge Attorney
7 STEVE SHAHAN, Opposing Counsel

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2 (The hearing commenced at 7:00 p.m.)

3 CHAIR SINGLETON: Good evening. As we
4 convene this public hearing, I should like to read an
5 opening statement. This hearing is being convened in
6 accordance with the appropriate provision --
7 provisions of the New York State Public Health Law.
8 It is being convened by the North Country Regional
9 Emergency Medical Services Council. This council is
10 also referred to by the acronym N.C.R.E.M.S.C.O., and
11 will be designated today.

12 My name is Debbie Singleton. I am the
13 North Country REMSCO chair. Dan Broedel, to my left,
14 is our public hearing officer. Other members present
15 from the REMSCO include James Barr and Ron Smith, who
16 are on the C.O.N. Committee, along with Bobbi Simpson
17 and Dottie Suiter.

18 North Country REMSCO has received a
19 C.O.N. application from Natural Bridge Volunteer
20 Ambulance, Inc. in which they seek approval to expand
21 ambulance services within St. Lawrence and Loney --
22 Lewis Counties, to include town of Diana in Lewis
23 County, including the Village and Hamlet of
24 Harrisville, and the town of Pitcairn, St. Lawrence
25 County. The application is found to be complete by

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2 the North Country REMSCO Committee and the New York
3 State Fitness and Competency ruling has been received
4 and the ruling is positive.

5 Legal notices as required by the
6 Public Health Law have been published in the
7 Watertown Daily Times, Boonville Herald Weekly and
8 Lowville Journal and Republican as part of the
9 established North Country REMSCO policy for such
10 places of publication. The legal notice reads as
11 follows: This notice is being published in
12 compliance with recurrence of Section 3008 of the
13 Public Health Law.

14 Public hearing notice. A public
15 hearing and public input to Natural Bridge Volunteer
16 Ambulance, Inc. expansion of territory application,
17 town of Diana, Lewis County, including the Village
18 and Hamlet of Harrisville and the town of Pitcairn,
19 St. Lawrence County, will be Monday, March 2nd, 2026
20 at seven p.m. at Harrisville Central School, 14371
21 Pirate Lane, Harrisville, New York 13648.

22 Natural Bridge Volunteer Ambulance,
23 Inc. must prove need for this request for an
24 expansion of operating authority. Public need is
25 defined as "the demonstrated absence, reduced

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2 availability or an inadequate level of care in an
3 ambulance or emergency medical service available for
4 -- to a geographical area which is not readily
5 correctable through the reallocation or improvement
6 of existing resources."

7 Registration upon arrival at the
8 hearing location will be necessary for permission to
9 speak at this hearing and speaking time may be
10 limited. A copy of the C.O.N. is available for
11 public viewing at the North Country REMSCO office and
12 at the public hearing. The full C.O.N. document is
13 available on the program agency website,
14 <https://www.fdrhpo.org/north-country-remac-remSCO>. Be
15 advised that this document is very large, it may take
16 a few moments to load. If you require a copy of the
17 C.O.N., contact the North Country REMSCO Office in
18 Watertown at the address below.

19 Written co -- comments regarding this
20 application may be submitted to the North Country
21 Regional Emergency Medical Services Council, Inc.,
22 120 Washington Street, Suite 200, Watertown, New
23 York, Attention C.O.N. committee. It must be
24 received by the close of business January 20th, 2026.
25 A certified mailing was also made on -- on February

1 3/2/2026 - North Country E.M.S. - Harrisville, N.Y.
2 6th, 2026 to all appropriate ambulance agencies,
3 hospital facilities and municipalities also as
4 required by law. The letter reads as follow:

5 February 6th, 2026, To whom it may
6 concern. Natural Bridge Volunteer Ambulance has
7 submitted an amended application to expand their
8 territory to the North Country Regional Medical
9 Emergency Services Council. The request is for
10 approval to expand their ambulance service to include
11 town of Diana in Lewis County, including the Village
12 Hamlet of Harrisville and the town of Pitcairn, St.
13 Lawrence County.

14 In order for the North Country
15 Regional Emergency Medical Services count -- Council
16 to approve this application, Natural Bridge Volunteer
17 Ambulance, Inc. must meet the definition of public
18 need, which can be found in New York State Department
19 of Health Policy 0 six 0 six. Public need is defined
20 as "the demonstrated absence, reduced availability or
21 an inadequate level of care in an ambulance or
22 emergency medical service available to a geographical
23 area, which is not readily correctable through the
24 reallocation or improvement of existing resources."

25 The policy can be reviewed online at

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2 the entirety by going to
3 www.health.state.ny.us/newyorkstatedoh/ems/pdf/06-06.
4 Public Health Law Article Thirty, Section three zero
5 zero three states, "The regional council shall have
6 the responsibility to make determinations of public
7 need for the establishment of additional emergency
8 medical services and the ambulance services and to
9 make the determinations of public need as provided in
10 Section 3008."

11 There will be a public hearing on
12 Monday, March 2nd, 2022 -- 2026. The public hearing
13 will begin at seven p.m. at the Harrisville Central
14 School, 14371 Pirate Lane, Harrisville, New York
15 13648. If you plan to speak at the public hearing,
16 you will need to register upon arrival at the hearing
17 location. Please be advised that there may be a time
18 limit put in place for those wishing to speak.

19 If you wish to make written comments
20 on this application, you may do so by sending them to
21 North Country Regional E.M.S. Council, 120 Washington
22 Street, Suite 230, Watertown, New York 13601,
23 Attention C.O.N. Committee. The North Country
24 REMSCO must be in receipt of all written
25 correspondence by the close of business on Friday,

1 3/2/2026 - North Country E.M.S. - Harrisville, N.Y.
2 February 20th, 2026.

3 A copy of the C.O.N. is available for
4 public viewing at the N.C. REMSCO Office and at the
5 public hearing. The full C.O.N. document is
6 available on the program agency website. Please be
7 advised that this document is very large and it may
8 take a few moments to load. If you require a copy of
9 the C.O.N., contact the North Country REMSCO Office
10 in Watertown at the address below. Sincerely, Debbie
11 Singleton, North Country REMSCO chair.

12 A final vote of this council on this
13 matter has been scheduled for the annual meeting,
14 North Country REMSCO meeting on April 6th, 2026. The
15 purpose of this hearing is to provide a technical
16 review and objective evaluation of the Applicant's
17 statement in need, as well as to hear from anyone who
18 wishes to comment on the issue. At this time, I
19 would like to turn the hearing over to the hearing
20 officer for the evening, Dan Broedel.

21 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Welcome and
22 thank you. My name is Daniel, Dan, Broedel. I will
23 be the public hearing officer tonight for this public
24 hearing concerning Natural Bridge Volunteer
25 Ambulance, Inc. application submitted to the North

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2 Country Regional E.M.S. Council to expand their
3 ambulance service territory to include the town of
4 Diana in Lewis County, including the Village of
5 Hamlet of Harrisville, and to the town of Pitcairn in
6 St. Lawrence County.

7 I will be an impartial adjunct --
8 tonight. I will listen to testimony and listen
9 objectively. I ask those all in attendance to please
10 sign in. I hope you have. And for those who wish to
11 make a verbal statement tonight, please sign legibly
12 on the speaker sign in sheet. Those sign in sheets
13 are at the entrance of the auditorium. I ask for all
14 cell phones and pagers, please place them on mute for
15 the entirety of this hearing.

16 The purpose of the public hearing is
17 to provide technical review, objective and
18 evaluation, and a public need of fact finding for the
19 Applicant's statement of need. Tonight's rules or
20 format; speakers please speak clearly and loud enough
21 for this stenographer to hear and capture your
22 statement. At the beginning of your statement,
23 please say and spell your name. Five minutes will be
24 allotted for tonight's speakers. I will raise one
25 thing -- I will raise my finger to denote one minute

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2 left to speak.

3 The North Country REMSCO
4 Ambulance/C.O.N. Committee will be the only ones
5 allowed to ask the speaker of their concerns,
6 questions, clarifications of the speakers' verbal --
7 verbal statement. The restrooms are located out that
8 exit. You can recognize the fire exits here. Be
9 aware up front that there are wires on the floor that
10 could be a trip fall hazard.

11 And lastly, I will assess, evaluate
12 tonight's testimonies, review factual evidence,
13 review the written comments to this application to
14 ultimately produce a recommendation to the North
15 Country REMSCO for the approval or denial of this
16 application. So let's begin. This hearing is now
17 open. Are there any written statements to be
18 presented to be read into the record?

19 CHAIR SINGLETON: There are.

20 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Then I'll
21 hand it back.

22 CHAIR SINGLETON: Town of Watertown
23 Fire District submitted a letter in support of
24 Natural Bridge Volunteer Ambulance service, as did
25 Canton Rescue Squad, a letter in support of the

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2 service. Question to Taddeo and Shahan, do I need to
3 read all this or will you be covering this in your
4 statement?

5 MR. SHAHAN: I'll be covering it in my
6 statement and it's enough to just include it in the
7 reference for the hearing officer to review.

8 CHAIR SINGLETON: Absolutely. It'll
9 become part of the hearing record and it'll be
10 available to Dan to review as well.

11 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Very good.
12 Has everyone who -- who intends to speak signed in?
13 Let's begin. We're going to start with Mr. Brad --
14 Pinsky, who was here remotely.

15 MR. PINSKY: I signed in.

16 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Go ahead.

17 MR. PINSKY: Yep, thank you. Well,
18 first of all, I very much want to thank the REMSCO
19 for accommodating me. I cannot be there in-person,
20 so really thank you very much for letting me do this
21 remotely. So my name is Brad Pinsky. I am the
22 attorney for the Applicant. Many of you know me, I
23 represent about five hundred fire departments
24 throughout the state, which a hundred -- there's
25 probably another almost a hundred ambulance services.

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2 I've been representing ambulance services for about
3 thirty years now. And I've done, I'm sure, well over
4 fifty C.O.N. applications; some of them very strong,
5 some very weak, and this is definitely on the very
6 strong side.

7 So I will be brief. First, with
8 regard to the town of Diana, in 2025 Natural Bridge
9 Volunteer Ambulance responded to ninety-nine calls.
10 And in 2024, they responded to one hundred and ten
11 calls. They have a one hundred percent response
12 rate. Now, the call volume is significant and is a
13 significant reason to grant the application and
14 define need. However, the stronger reason as well is
15 the simple response time and the proximity to the
16 area. Natural Bridge Ambulance is approximately ten
17 miles to the town of Diana. The travel is straight.
18 It's through one road being Route 3. So travel is
19 direct and expedient.

20 Now, Lewis County Search and Rescue,
21 who also has a C.O.N. for the territory, is located
22 twenty four point seven miles from the town of Diana.
23 I am told that on some occasions, they may -- might
24 be able to staff a satellite station with an
25 ambulance, but they then have to go back to their

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2 area as well. Natural Bridge staffs out of the same
3 station all the time and is constant in their
4 response. They don't deviate from where they staff
5 from.

6 In Pitcairn, they -- in 2025,
7 responded to seventy-four calls, and in 2024, they
8 responded to ninety-eight calls. Travel time there
9 at the speed limit is fifteen minutes or less. And
10 obviously, both of these are average response times
11 when a call does not justify traveling any faster,
12 they don't. So that factors into the average, but
13 the response signs are expedient. Natural Bridge is
14 fourteen miles to the town of Pitcairn. And again,
15 it is one road, three miles to Gouverneur Rescue
16 Squad, who has the C.O.N. for that area, is located
17 nineteen point seven miles away. And we traveled it,
18 it was about twenty-three minutes, so it's about nine
19 minutes longer and five minutes farther.

20 With regard to the town of Pitcairn,
21 there's been a number of letters in support of this
22 application. The town of Pitcairn supervisor
23 submitted a letter in support. He stated that the
24 certificate for Natural Bridge is "vital to our
25 town's needs and the services we provide for our

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2 members." The supervisor's letter stated that they
3 attempted to meet with other interested providers,
4 but no one stated that it had any intent. One
5 provider, who I won't mention, failed to show up at
6 the meeting and Natural Bridge was the only attendee
7 who showed interest in serving that town.

8 With the town of Diana, there is an
9 August 13th, 2025 letter. I won't go through it all,
10 but I -- it's a support letter, a strong support
11 letter. I'll read a portion of it. It says that the
12 history of this, the volunteer ambulance service,
13 stopped services in 2024. And I quote, "Without the
14 Natural Bridge Volunteer Ambulance Inc. Services, our
15 community would be left without ambulance services
16 and medical assistance in times of emergency.
17 They're vital to the wellbeing and care of our
18 residents in times of medical need. Without their
19 services in the Hamlet of Harrisville and the town of
20 Diana, residents would be without ambulance service
21 that could reach us in a timely manner."

22 So the supervisor and the town focuses
23 on response time. We suggest that both the call
24 volume justifies our additional services and our
25 services, and the response times significantly

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2 dictate that need exists.

3 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Brad, one
4 minute.

5 MR. PINSKY: That's all I have.

6 CHAIR SINGLETON: He just said that's
7 all he has.

8 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Is that it,
9 Brad?

10 MR. PINSKY: That's it. Thank you
11 very much.

12 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Any
13 questions from the clarification? You guys are all
14 set?

15 CHAIR SINGLETON: Not from Brad.

16 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Very good.
17 Our next speaker, Molly. Can you come up please?

18 MS. MANUEL: I'll pass. Can I pass?

19 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Okay.
20 Molly's going to pass.

21 CHAIR SINGLETON: Well, we have
22 questions for Molly.

23 MS. MANUEL: Okay.

24 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Okay. Can
25 you come up, Molly?

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2 MS. MANUEL: Absolutely.

3 CHAIR SINGLETON: So Molly, one of my
4 major concerns is, I asked Jonathan to run how many
5 calls you did last year.

6 MS. MANUEL: Yes ma'am.

7 CHAIR SINGLETON: And you did two
8 hundred and seventy.

9 MS. MANUEL: Yes ma'am.

10 CHAIR SINGLETON: And you and Ron
11 responded to ninety-nine percent of that.

12 MS. MANUEL: Yes, ma'am.

13 CHAIR SINGLETON: So if you're not
14 around and Ron's not around, is that why we're seeing
15 the high scratch rate? For February, your scratch
16 rate is twenty-five point seven percent, which was
17 the highest in our county. January, it was eighteen
18 point five, which was the second highest in the
19 county. So is this scratch rate associated with -- I
20 mean, you can't be expected to be on twenty-four
21 seven.

22 MS. MANUEL: Of course.

23 CHAIR SINGLETON: Is that what that's
24 associated with?

25 MS. MANUEL: Myself and Ron are the

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2 faces that you do see with Natural Bridge Ambulance.
3 That is not a lie. Of the reason why I'm the face of
4 Natural Bridge Ambulance is because we staff our
5 station Monday through Friday from eight a.m. to four
6 p.m. We do go on ninety-nine percent of the calls
7 after that because I only live a quarter of a mile
8 down the road from our station and it's convenient
9 for me to go on those calls. If I'm at a family
10 function or something, yes, obviously I'm going to
11 miss a call. But we do have other providers, it's
12 not just myself.

13 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Gentlemen,
14 any questions?

15 MR. BARR: No, that's fine.

16 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL:
17 Clarification? Thank you, Molly.

18 MS. MANUEL: Absolutely.

19 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Herb Frost.

20 MR. FROST: Good evening. My name is
21 Herb Frost. I am a Lewis County legislator for
22 District One. I'm here to -- tonight to strongly
23 support Natural Bridge receiving a certificate of
24 need to provide ambulance services in the towns of
25 Diana and Pitcairn. This is about filling a real gap

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2 in emergency coverage. The dissolution of
3 Harrisville Rescue Squad did not happen overnight.
4 It developed over years.

5 During that time, Lewis County Search
6 and Rescue has held the countywide C.O.N. and
7 authority. So it is fair to ask, where was the
8 proactive intervention when the cracks began to show.
9 Where was the structural support before the situation
10 reached this point? If Lewis County Search and
11 Rescue now opposes the C.O.N. application that raises
12 serious questions, they've held the countywide C.O.N.
13 for years. The responsibility to ensure stable
14 coverage across these towns has not been new.

15 Towns of Diana and Pitcairn cannot
16 afford uncertainty. When a resident calls nine one
17 one for cardiac arrest, serious injury or another
18 life threatening emergency, response time is not an
19 administrative detail, it is a difference between
20 life and death. Natural Bridge has stepped up and
21 filled a gap where we needed it. They -- they are
22 the volunteer agency. It's been part of the solution
23 from day one. They provide -- they have provided
24 mutual aid to our community for years. They're part
25 of our community and they're significantly closer

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2 than the alternative.

3 Supporting the C.O.N. is about
4 recognizing the agency that has already been showing
5 up. It's about backing people who have consistently
6 answered the call and demonstrated the commitment to
7 our residents. I respectfully urge the decision
8 makers to approve the certificate of need for Natural
9 Bridge and provide the towns of Diana and Pitcairn
10 with the dependable emergency medical service they
11 deserve. Thank you for your time and consideration.

12 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Gentlemen,
13 any questions or concerns? Thank You, Herb.

14 MR. FROST: Thank you.

15 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Josh.

16 MR. LEVESQUE: Good evening. My name
17 is Josh Levesque. I am the chief of operations for
18 Lewis County Search and Rescue. I think tonight, as
19 we speak, the -- the one concern that we had
20 significantly, Molly -- Molly spoke to. Molly and
21 Ron had run almost every single call and we know
22 this. We hear it. My concern has been
23 sustainability, how long they can continue. The
24 C.O.N. is transferred to Natural Bridge and if
25 something, heavens to Betsy, were to happen to them,

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2 who then picks up the slack?

3 Search and rescue always picks up the
4 slack. And we can talk about where was search and
5 rescue before, we look at dispatch policies. Who's
6 dispatched? Who's not dispatched? Why they're
7 dispatched. The search and rescue has never ever not
8 answered a call in this area that we were dispatched
9 to. We will acknowledge, we would come. Are we
10 further away? In some instances we are.

11 CHAIR SINGLETON: Stop tapping.

12 MR. LEVESQUE: Sorry, sorry.

13 CHAIR SINGLETON: I'm afraid we won't
14 be able to record.

15 MR. LEVESQUE: Sometimes we are
16 further away, but we will always answer. When it
17 comes down to it, it's support. We look at long-term
18 sustainability, Natural Bridge being a B.L.S..
19 agency. More and more calls in an aging community
20 are going A.L.S. They have cardiac arrest, the chest
21 pain, the shortness of breath, they require the
22 paramedics. Search and Rescue has those paramedics
23 to provide the support to Natural Bridge.

24 That's why, in this room, I want to
25 make sure that people understand that we are not

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2 opposed to Natural Bridge coming in and servicing the
3 Harrisville area. We are opposed to the C.O.N.
4 transfer. We are in support of Natural Bridges'
5 mutual aid agreement that we sent them, allowing them
6 per public health law to have jurisdiction into this
7 area while Search and Rescue still maintains the
8 C.O.N. We're not opposed. We're looking for a long-
9 term sustainability plan and I don't think two in the
10 rig, one driver, one provider is long-term
11 sustainability. That's why we oppose. That's all I
12 have.

13 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Josh, for
14 clarification, it's not a transfer of authority, but
15 it's a --

16 MR. LEVESQUE: Application?

17 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: --
18 application.

19 MR. LEVESQUE: Originally it was a
20 transfer, right?

21 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Okay.

22 MR. LEVESQUE: So originally it was
23 going to be a transfer, but --

24 CHAIR SINGLETON: No, they -- they
25 never -- they never did it in time. Yeah.

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2 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: This is
3 going to be a new --

4 MR. LEVESQUE: Correct. orrect.

5 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Gentlemen,
6 any questions for Josh?

7 MR. BARR: Yeah, the satellite --

8 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Hold on.

9 MR. BARR: -- station -- the satellite
10 station that you run, what is the coverage for that?

11 MR. LEVESQUE: Coverage goes from
12 Croghan then Croghan -- as far south as New Bremen
13 clear to the -- to -- I guess it would be the
14 northern portion of Diana.

15 MR. BARR: And time of day?

16 MR. LEVESQUE: Difficult, but we
17 switch staff at twenty-four seven, depending that the
18 -- the caveat is, inter-facility transports other
19 calls that are out.

20 MR. BARR: So what -- what's your
21 coverage from nine one one out of the satellite
22 station?

23 MR. LEVESQUE: As far as availability,
24 seventy-five percent.

25 CHAIR SINGLETON: There aren't any

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2 questions.

3 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Great.
4 Thank you, Josh.

5 MR. LEVESQUE: Thank you.

6 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Rick. Rick
7 Honkins.

8 MR. HOWKINS: I'll pass.

9 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Going to
10 pass? Bob Bellinger.

11 MR. BELLINGER: Good evening. My name
12 is Bob Bellinger and I'm with Harrisville Fire
13 Department. I was an E.M.S. for twenty-six years. I
14 know the ins and outs of the whole deal here. I am
15 here to voice my support for Natural Bridge Ambulance
16 to continue to do what they do. They do it very
17 well. And this whole snafu thing with the Lewis
18 County Search and Rescue, I don't understand. Time
19 is of the essence when a person has a true medical
20 emergency.

21 At my age of seventy-two, I still
22 respond as manpower with Harrisville. Natural Bridge
23 is in there and a very quick response time to
24 Harrisville. Lewis County Search and Rescue was also
25 in the statute at the same time and in lots of

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2 moments, Natural Bridge has the patient already
3 loaded and en route before Lewis County Search and
4 Rescue gets there. Time is of the essence when
5 there's a medical emergency.

6 I don't see why Lewis County Search
7 and Rescue would want to even consider getting
8 involved, responding twenty-five to thirty miles in a
9 medical emergency. Apparently, they don't understand
10 what we used to call the golden hour, where you have
11 to get that patient to the hospital within an hour.
12 Maybe that's not in the books anymore, I don't know.

13 But in my experience, patient care is
14 of the utmost in time. So I say to you, Lewis County
15 E.M.S. Council, use common sense. Use your heads
16 when it comes to a medical emergency. People need to
17 respond quickly and get to the hospital quickly. We
18 don't need agencies out of the area coming in. That
19 takes a great deal of time, especially in the winter
20 time. So like I said, use your heads. It's common
21 sense. Thank you.

22 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Thank you,
23 Bob.

24 CHAIR SINGLETON: Do you have a
25 question?

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2 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: For -- for
3 clarification, it was -- it's the North Country
4 REMSCO, not -- not the Lewis County E.M.S.

5 MR. BELLINGER: Oh, I'm sorry.

6 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Okay.

7 CHAIR SINGLETON: That's okay.

8 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Bryant.

9 MR. O'MEARA: Good evening. I -- my
10 name's Bryant O'Meara. I'm councilman for town of
11 Wilna and behalf of our whole township, we -- we
12 support Natural Bridge Ambulance a hundred and ten
13 percent.

14 CHAIR SINGLETON: Get closer to the
15 mic. We just got to make sure that it gets recorded.

16 MR. O'MEARA: Bryant O'Meara,
17 councilman for town of Wilna. We support Natural
18 Bridge Ambulance a hundred percent. They're fairly
19 providing for our township and they have been for
20 years. They do a wonderful job. We are more than
21 happy with what they do for us when they can do it
22 for us. And we think that for the time we have them
23 with us and when they can respond, it's better than
24 having nobody and they've never let us down in all
25 the years that we've had. So we support them a

1 3/2/2026 - North Country E.M.S. - Harrisville, N.Y.
2 hundred percent. Thank you.

3 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Any
4 questions for Bryant? Thank you. Paul. Paul
5 Jackson.

6 MR. JACKSON: I'd like to approach
7 this from two different angles. I'm also a
8 Harrisville Fire Department member. I've been for
9 forty-four years. I've worked side by side with
10 Natural Bridge many times. They get a call, they
11 need some help, we're there even on the ambulance
12 when -- when we can help them out with that. I'm
13 also a councilman in the town of Pitcairn. I've been
14 there for thirteen years.

15 We've had a contract two years now
16 with the Natural Bridge Ambulance Squad. I have
17 personally had no calls or complaints from any of the
18 residents in the town of Pitcairn and I can't speak
19 for the board, but I go to every meeting and I've
20 never had anyone come to a meeting with any concerns
21 on our ambulance coverage since we went with Natural
22 Bridge.

23 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Gentlemen,
24 any questions or concerns? Thank you very much.
25 Jennifer.

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2 MS. JENNIFER: I'll pass.

3 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Going to
4 pass? Carl.

5 MR. CARL: I'll pass.

6 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Steve.

7 MR. SHAHAN: Good evening. My name is
8 Steven Shahan. I'm with the law firm of Taddeo &
9 Shahan. And I'm here representing Lewis County
10 Search and Rescue and I'd like to talk to you a
11 little bit about the legal aspects of the
12 application. On behalf of Lewis County Search and
13 Rescue, we oppose the application. Three reasons;
14 one is that the applicant is not fit and competent.
15 Two, the applicant fails to demonstrate a need as
16 that term is defined by policy six - 06-06 that
17 cannot be met by existing services. And three, the
18 revised application does not contain a new form three
19 seven seven seven signed and notarized after making
20 the submitted revisions or redactions to the
21 application as required by policy statement 06-06
22 six.

23 So to cut to the chase here,
24 Harrisville and Natural Bridge -- originally
25 Harrisville was going to transfer their C.O.N. to

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2 Natural Bridge. That did not occur. And therefore,
3 Natural Bridge has to seek a -- an expansion or a new
4 C.O.N. into the -- into Lewis County because they
5 don't currently have a C.O.N. for Lewis County. They
6 don't currently have a C.O.N. for the town of
7 Pitcairn, which makes them -- makes their contract
8 with the town of Pitcairn actually illegal. But I'm
9 not here to talk about Pitcairn because I don't
10 represent any -- Lewis County does not have a C.O.N.
11 for St. Lawrence County

12 The mutual aid agreement that Josh
13 mentioned, okay. Originally Natural Bridge offered a
14 mutual aid agreement to Lewis County that did not
15 comply with the law. Lewis County Search and Rescue
16 revised the mutual aid agreement, submitted it back
17 to Natural Bridge and Natural Bridge has yet to sign
18 that agreement. They have not signed the agreement.
19 They have not submitted it to the emergency
20 management and they have not made it part of this
21 application.

22 Mutual aid is how the system works.
23 Okay? Natural Bridge is a B.L.S. agency. Yes, they
24 should be first responders on a mutual aid basis.
25 But you need an A.L.S. provider for some of these

1 3/2/2026 - North Country E.M.S. - Harrisville, N.Y.
2 calls that people are talking about. Cardiac arrest,
3 respiratory distress, diabetic emergencies are not
4 B.L.S. calls. Lewis County provides advanced life
5 support. And what I'm hearing here tonight is that
6 there are really only two reliable providers from
7 Natural Bridge. So they're getting a pretty
8 significant misrate over the last two months.

9 Now, all -- additionally, it's a
10 violation of -- of Public Health Law Article 30, to
11 actually have an agreement to respond into the town
12 of Diana where they don't have a C.O.N. for the town
13 of Diana. So to the extent that Natural Bridge has
14 entered into contracts with the town of Diana, which
15 their application indicates they have, those
16 contracts are actually illegal and Natural Bridge
17 knowingly took subsidies for services it was not
18 legally allowed to provide.

19 Furthermore, in their application, all
20 they did was black out the name of one person and
21 then resubmit it. Only they didn't black it out
22 entirely, so the individual whose name is blacked out
23 still appears as a member of the board of directors
24 on page -- I believe it's one twenty-six of the -- of
25 the application. So there's also an error in their

1 3/2/2026 - North Country E.M.S. - Harrisville, N.Y.
2 application and the revised application did not
3 contain a new form three seven seven seven.

4 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Steve, one
5 minute.

6 MR. SHAHAN: Okay. With regard to the
7 -- the calls that were responded to in 2024, 2025,
8 it's my understanding that by agreement by -- with
9 the Emergency services, Lewis County was not even
10 dispatched to many of those calls. So that is one of
11 the reasons why Natural Bridge had such a good
12 response rate on those calls.

13 Finally, Molly Manuel signed a form
14 three seven seven seven and attested to it on August
15 27th, 2025. She did not provide a new form three
16 seven seven seven with regard to the -- this current
17 revised application, and that's actually a violation
18 as well. The status of the board of director, Ronald
19 R. Ward, is unclear based on the fact that in some
20 portions of the application, his name is blacked out
21 and other in portions, he still remains there.

22 That's all I have.

23 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Any
24 questions for Steve?

25 CHAIR SINGLETON: No.

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2 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Okay.

3 MR. SHAHAN: Thank you.

4 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Thank you
5 very much.

6 MR. SHAHAN: Thank you.

7 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: We've read
8 the written statements. We've heard the testimony.
9 Does -- we have a little time. Does anyone have any
10 additional comments they choose to make? Go ahead.
11 Give us your -- step up and give us your name.

12 MR. JACKSON: Paul Jackson. I just
13 want to --

14 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Nope, you
15 got to step up.

16 MR. JACKSON: I just wanted to
17 clarify. Lewis County said that they wanted to take
18 it over and let Natural Bridge be their mutual aid.
19 Why don't they just reverse that role because they're
20 so much closer to us, let Natural Bridge be the main.
21 And if they need help, mutual aid at the Lewis County
22 Search and Rescue.

23 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: And you are
24 Paul Jackson, right?

25 MR. JACKSON: I am, sorry. Paul

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2 Jackson.

3 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Thank you.
4 Any questions for Mr. Jackson? Any other comments?

5 MR. PINSKY: May the Applicant have
6 rebuttal time when everybody is done for two minutes?

7 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: You're free
8 to make a comment now.

9 MR. PINSKY: Thank you. Very, very
10 quick comment. All of the opposition, whether it's
11 an allegation about the application or whether it's
12 about how many providers they have, I just want to
13 share because I just had this issue in court.
14 Affirmations -- the -- the determination of fitness
15 and competency is not a REMSCO issue. And while
16 people may have concerns about it, that was a state
17 issue for the law. The Department of Health has
18 deemed the Applicant competent and fit. So I just
19 want to help -- be helpful to make sure the council -
20 - to ask the council to focus on the one question
21 before them, which is need and not fitness and
22 competency. And I thank you very much.

23 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Any
24 additional speakers or comments? State your name
25 please.

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2 MR. PIERCE: Matt Pierce.

3 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: How do you
4 spell your last name, Matt?

5 MR. PIERCE: P-I-E-R-C-E.

6 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Okay.

7 MR. PIERCE: I would just like to know
8 if there's anybody in the room that opposes Natural
9 Bridge to service our community. Just a question.

10 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: Okay.

11 That's the -- that's the --

12 MR. PIERCE: Yep.

13 HEARING OFFICER BROEDEL: -- after the
14 North Country REMSCO -- if there are no additional
15 comments, does the ambulance committee have any --
16 request any time, clarification? Chair? This public
17 hearing is considered closed at seven thirty-seven
18 p.m.

19 (The hearing concluded at 7:37 p.m.)

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1 3/2/2026 - North Country E.M.S. - Harrisville, N.Y.
2 STATE OF NEW YORK
3 I, KRISTEN LAWLER, do hereby certify that the foregoing
4 was reported by me, in the cause, at the time and place,
5 as stated in the caption hereto, at Page 1 hereof; that
6 the foregoing typewritten transcription consisting of
7 pages 1 through 33, is a true record of all proceedings
8 had at the hearing.

9 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto
10 subscribed my name, this the 18th day of March, 2026.

11

12 KRISTEN LAWLER, Reporter

13

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