Silver Creek EMS plans to join fire department

January 16, 2011

Save | Comments (3) | Post a comment | SHARE

By NICOLE GUGINO

OBSERVER Staff Writer

SILVER CREEK - In an effort to obtain funding through the Silver Creek Fire Department's fire protection contract with the town of Hanover, the Silver Creek Emergency Squad may dissolve into the department.

In the current configuration, the village maintains the emergency squad and the fire department as separate entities, because of this the town is unable by law to fund the emergency squad.

"This has been an ongoing process for two years now," Silver Creek Fire Chief Richard Bartlett said in a phone interview.

In 2009, the village took over the agency's Certificate of Need from the New York State Department of Health and Regional EMS Council in the hopes of gaining funding from the town through its fire protection contract. However, the squad remained a separate non-profit and by law the town was unable to contract with the squad as separate from the fire department.

"We are able to contract with fire departments that have ambulances as an add-on, like Forestville, which I believe is what the village is looking to do," Hanover Supervisor Kathy Tampio said in a phone interview.

Bartlett estimated that half of the ambulance calls the Silver Creek EMS responded to in 2010 were in the town.
"Last time the parties involved didn't get the right information. This time we have the right people involved to get it done. For the first time I feel positive that we can get some funding for the squad," Bartlett said hopefully.

"They aren't really dissolving the squad, they say they have to be a part of the fire department, but we think it is. Lawyers can interpret it differently but to us they are already part of the department," he added.

The town has expressed a wish to negotiate the fire protection contract with the village early, in spring rather than wait until the fall, when fire protection contracts are usually negotiated.

Silver Creek Trustee Amy Romanik, the village board's representative of fire department, had no comment at this time due to pending negotiations with the town.

The town of Hanover has three fire protection districts. The Silver Creek Fire Department protects District 2, the largest fire protection district in the town, along with Forestville, Hanover Hose, Sunset Bay and Irving.