

DISTRICT 7 – Suffolk County

CENTRAL ISLIP-HAPPAUGE VAC, Suffolk County, ambulance 3-26-19, a Braun Type III on a Ford F450 chassis, was involved in an accident about 1:21 AM on 10/25/12. A Newsday article reported several police statements: “Police said the ambulance was traveling in the right-hand lane on Veterans Memorial Highway when the driver attempted to make a U-turn and collided with a Toyota in the left-hand lane. The ambulance overturned.” “Police said the ambulance driver and an assistant suffered minor injuries and were taken to Southside Hospital in Bay Shore.” “No charges were filed, police said.” CI-H VAC is the second busiest ambulance service in the county, operates five ambulances and responds to over 5,000 calls annually.

MASTIC AMBULANCE, Suffolk County, to expand headquarters. Approval has been received from



Brookhaven Town Board for a \$6.1 million 15 year bond to fund the expansion of the ambulance squad's 27 year old facility at 1640 Montauk Highway. The structure currently has three vehicle bays and was built when there were 700 calls a year. Problems include leaky ceilings plus outdated air-conditioning and electrical systems. The squad now has five ambulances, a van and two SUV 1st responder vehicles and its 78 members respond to over 2,600 calls annually.

The renovated and expanded 12,000 square foot structure will add a second floor, have three drive-through bays, making room for six ambulances, a workout room, training room, mechanical and storage space. Construction may start as early as December.

RIVERHEAD TOWN, Suffolk County, is considering an ambulance fee plan. Town officials, however, are learning the complications of ambulance billing while complying with Medicare, Medicaid and state regulations. A Request for Proposals was sent to a number of medical billing companies but several came back with questions about town plans. In addition, the town attorney pointed out that the Town Board would have to establish a fee schedule, monies collected would belong to the town's Ambulance District and could not be tapped to offset the town's general fund and what would happen to individuals without insurance. The Riverhead News-Review indicated Riverhead VAC resisted the billing proposal when it was raised citing the possible need to hire someone to handle billing issues as well as unspecified privacy issues. An editorial suggested that someone might be discouraged from calling 911 if they knew a bill would be forthcoming at some point and that with the average annual Ambulance District tax of \$95 being a small part of total local taxes (fire, school, library, etc.) ranging from \$700 to \$1,200 a small increase would be a better way to fund ambulance service.