Good afternoon all. Since we did not have agenda review yesterday due to the holiday, I thought I would take a moment to give you a breakdown of this year’s write offs for the ambulance enterprise fund. We typically conduct these write offs once or twice per year. This is the first, and only one for this year. The total amount we are requesting to be written off is $790,207.06, which as you know is a lot of money. A lot of people don’t understand these write offs. I thought I’d take a moment and shine some light on them. The total amount represents 1,190 ambulance tickets (bills) spanning from 2005-2019. Here is the breakdown of those:

- 827 are due to the six-year statute of limitations has expired and the debt is uncollectable according to the debt collection agency
- 316 are due to the patient being deceased with no estate
- 21 are mandatory write offs per Medicaid
- 18 are due to bankruptcies
- 5 are due to the patient being incarcerated
- 3 are due to mandatory write offs per private insurance.

Many times in the past, these write offs have gained the attention of the media, as well as the keyboard warriors on social media who don’t understand why we perform them, and spread their love of negativity. It has nothing to do with our ability to manage the ambulance operation effectively; it has everything to do with zero ability of the patient to pay the bill due to the aforementioned reasons. Once it is confirmed that we will never be able to collect this money, removing it from the books eliminates us thinking that we may receive money. It also keeps us from spending any more time or resources in trying to collect it. By performing these write offs, we are following generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP), which is set forth by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASP) and used by state and local governments in the United States.

Many times we hear that the reason patients can’t pay the bill is because it is so expensive. One of the reasons it is so expensive is because many don’t pay their bill, so it is a vicious cycle. I’d also like to remind you that the ambulance is an enterprise fund, which means no tax money has been used to fund it to date. We will continue to explore all avenues of our debt collection process and any improvements as we progress, but to put it into perspective, we send out over 14,000 ambulance tickets (bills) annually. I will be available for any questions or concerns at tomorrow’s Legal & Finance Committee meeting.