

Commissioners & County Council Joint Meeting Minutes

April 18, 2024

4:30 p.m.

Pineview Government Center
Commissioner Meeting Room, Suite 104
2524 Corydon Pike

Al Knable called the meeting to order and led the *Pledge of Allegiance*.

Present: Commissioners – Full quorum

Council – Full Quorum

Also Present: Attorney, Rick Fox; Attorney, Steve Langdon; Recorder, Lois Endris; Treasurer, Steve Burks; Auditor, Diana Topping and Sheriff, Steve Bush

Topic:

1.) EMS

County Attorney, Rick Fox, stated he reviewed the transcripts from the last Council meeting. The first motion was made to support fire board in the EMS and the second motion made was that they will not fund a full County funded EMS Service with AmeriPro. Both motion failed. He reviewed the job of the two bodies. The statute cited at the last meeting IC 16-31-5-1 is clear. That statute is under the Emergency Medical Services Statute. The Commissioners are responsible for the emergency medical services, the ambulance services and implementing the ambulance services. The County Council's responsibility is that of appropriation, the funding. Passing money off to Highlander Fire Board, in terms of EMS, is inappropriate for a number of reasons. The local Ordinance for Highlander Fire District does not provide implementation of EMS. To pass the money off to a body that does not have the authority to do EMS makes no sense. They are setting themselves up for each of the bodies, legally. The Commissioners are looking at ambulance service for the whole County. If \$800,000.00 gets passed off to Highlander Fire District does nothing for the full county. It excludes a majority of the county.

Attorney, Steve Langdon, he agrees with some of Mr. Fox's comments. The statute does state the county can establish EMS but so can a city, town or township. He thinks if Lafayette, Greenville or Georgetown wanted to establish an EMS, they could do so legally but probably not get it up and running by June 1.

Al Knable summarized a letter from the Health Department. It stated the Reisz Building does not fit their future needs and it's their contention that they hope that whatever money was earmarked for the future home of the Health Department is in some way, if not truly kept as an earmark, someday allocated for how we're going to return to them in the future.

He received questions about asking for a continuance of New Chapel contract for a year. Dr. Knable said he would only consider it if they got clearance from SBOA on the audit. Also, Jamie Noel still has access to their credit cards.

Denise Konkle suggested to ask the Legacy Board take \$350,000.00 of the spend rate to grant out and give the County the other half million dollars to put toward the first year of the ambulance service. She thinks they need a resolution to go directly to the Legacy Foundation to ask for that.

Connie Moon reviewed the four options.

Option 1 and 2 are for the entire county

Option 1 is 3 ALS and one quick response vehicle, \$1.535 million

Option 2 is 2 ALS and one quick response vehicle, \$936,996.00

Option 3 & 4 are Georgetown and New Albany Townships only

Option 3 is New Albany, Georgetown and Franklin Townships 2 ambulances and one quick response, \$1.343 million

Option 4 New Albany and Georgetown, including Franklin Township is 2 ambulances \$987,000.00

Al Knable stated he would only agree to using the Legacy Foundation money if it is for coverage for the entire county.

Brad Striegel said he needs to know what the Legacy Board would recommend based on what their request is, he needs more data.

Jim Freiberger said he would like to see the county get part of that money for a long term. Just the interest, not the principle.

Dale Bagshaw said the Commissioners has dipped in to the principle.

Danny Short said he thinks it is something they need to consider at budget time. But not dip into principle.

Denise Konkle said she would like to create a resolution for the Legacy Board to take up the issue and see what they are willing to do. She doesn't see any other way to sustain this over even a 2 year period with having an EMS tax. She wants to ask Baker tilly what their suggestions are for funding EMS.

Al Knable is in favor of option 2.

Danny Short is in favor of option 2. \$546,000.00 for the next seven months. \$125,000.00 from Riverboat, approximately \$100,000.00 budgeted, leaving \$325,000.00 could easily be done with Legacy or part of what the Recorder is returning that is not going toward Sheriff's repairs, Rainy Day and maybe some from the Commissioners.

John Schellenberger said the ordinances need to be at the same level for all Fire Districts. With option 2 AmeriPro will have to have backup from Georgetown and Highlander.

Jason Sharp reminded them that Franklin Township does not have an established Fire District. He isn't sure what the plan would be to provide them EMS in accordance to the plan.

Jim Freiberger is concerned on what the billed runs will cost the taxpayer with Ameripro.

John Schellenberger said the Fire Districts' Ordinance would have to be amended to include EMS for him to agree to any kind of Fire-Based EMS.

Dale Bagshaw would recommend Option 2 because it does include a 24 hour chase vehicle. He said local government job is to provide services for the community and at the end of the day someone has to pay for it, even if by a tax increase.

Brad Striegel said that he wants to review all the options and present an option 5 at a later date.

Denise Konkle said she thinks they worked well tonight and is anxious to see what Brad has to present.

Connie Moon said it is hard for her to come up with a funding source for future years when they don't know where they are headed. She thinks the more information and the more they drill down on what's going to happen in three years, a much better educated decision on how to fund going forward.

Danny Short asked if the Highlander plan includes billing department. Al Knable said he thought they allowed for 7% for billing. He said Baker Tilly's information will be a big piece.

Jason Sharp reminded everyone that the current contract expires in 43 days.

Public

Dan Smith, Starlight, asked if City of New Albany fits into the plan. Al Knable said the City has their own EMS contract.

Dale Mann, Georgetown, said what Georgetown Township has is the best you can get.

Tim Harbison, Georgetown, said he trusts honest politicians and not crooked politicians. He is disappointed how New Chapel keeps coming up in conversation.

Michael Moody, Georgetown, Chairman of the Georgetown Township Fire Protection District Board, said at their meeting the night before they passed a motion in support of the Commissioners negotiating with Ameripro to accept their proposal for two years. Georgetown

stands by to continue the conversation on what EMS is going to look like in our county in the future. He said Georgetown is the largest Fire Department on the hill and do a really good job fiscally.

A Citizen said he is sad to consider anything other than option 1. He said one day there will be a very bad outcome because they didn't have quick response and didn't have a paramedic.

Diana Mayfield, Brent Drive, Floyds Knobs, asked what would happen to the two new ambulances that Highlander is getting if they go with Ameripro? She said there is no excuse to not cover Franklin and New Albany Townships. She mentioned that John Schellenberger did not want to touch the internet money, but sometimes you have to do things that you do not want to do.

Motion to adjourn. Moved by Brad Striegel. Seconded by Jason Sharp. Motion passed unanimously.

Signed on 25th day of June, 2024

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Al Knable
Al Knable, President

John Schellenberger
John Schellenberger, Vice President

Jason Sharp
Jason Sharp, Commissioner

FLOYD COUNTY COUNCIL

Danny Short *virtual*
Danny Short, President

Connie Moon *virtual*
Connie Moon, Vice President

Dale Bagshaw
Dale Bagshaw, member

Jim Freiburger
Jim Freiburger, member

Denise Konkle
Denise Konkle, member

Brad Striegel
Brad Striegel, member

Tony Toran
Tony Toran, member

Diana M. Topping
Attest: Diana M. Topping, Auditor