

# **Commissioners & County Council**

## **Joint Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, April 30, 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; Treasurer, Steve Burks; Auditor, Diana Topping; Clerk, Danita Burks; Recorder, Lois Endris and Sheriff, Steve Bush

**Motion to add Southern Indiana Transit to the agenda. Moved by John Schellenberger. Seconded by Jason Sharp. Motion passed unanimously.**

- Southern Indiana Transit

**Motion to approve resolution for ongoing funding for 2025. Moved by John Schellenberger. Seconded by Al Knable. Motion passed 2-1. Jason Sharp opposed.**

- EMS Discussion Continued

Danny Short said the resolutions have been drawn up and available for the Legacy Foundation. Denise Konkle read the letter requesting that the Legacy Foundation look at giving the County \$500,000.00 of the 5% spend rate for 2024.

**Motion that the Council respect the authority of the Commissioners and, at the suggestion of the EMS Board, that we approve funding for Option 1, to be paid for 2024 via Riverboat \$125,000.00, the recorders additional funds, which should be \$126,000.00. The current EMS budget, what's left should be \$128,000.00, that would leave \$442,000.00 ask of the Legacy Foundation. Then Rainy Day \$74,419.00 for the total of \$895,419.00 for the remainder of this year with discussion along with the Commissioners regarding broadband money and continued Legacy funds for 2025 and 2026 plus other grant monies and things like that that may be coming in to us. Opioid funds, we might be getting some of those.**

**Moved by Connie Moon. Seconded by Danny Short. Motion failed 3-4. Tony Toran, Brad Striegel, Denise Konkle and Jim Freiberger opposed.**

**Motion that the Council respect the authority of the Commissioners and approve funding for Option 2, which is not enough ambulances, but the total is \$546,581.00. Funding to come from Riverboat \$125,000.00, Recorders balance of \$126,000.00, the current EMS budget of \$128,000.00. The Legacy balance of \$75,581.00 and Rainy Day would be \$92,000.00. Moved by Connie Moon. Seconded by Danny Short. Motion failed 3-4. Tony Toran, Brad Striegel, Denise Konkle and Jim Freiberger opposed.**

**Motion to approve two resolutions identical to the Highlander resolution in 2023. One for Georgetown Township at \$500,000.00 and the second one to New Albany Township Fire District for \$500,000.00 so they can purchase two ambulances as well to get them equal to Highlander at this point with the money coming from CARES Act. Moved by Connie Moon. Seconded by Danny Short.**

**Motion failed 2-5. Tony Toran, Brad Striegel, Denise Konkle, Dale Bagshaw and Jim Freiberger opposed.**

Al Knable presented Option 6.

**Option 6: Whole County Coverage- Transitioning into Fire-based (or County-based) EMS:**

A 2 year and 7 month contract would be entered into with AmeriPro with the following provisions:

“Option 2” (Two (2) ALS 24/7 units and one (1) ALS Quick Response Vehicle) would be utilized County-wide for the first 7 months of this contract (June-December 2024), allowing adequate time to further explore the possibility of a holistic and unified EMS system whether it be fire-based, county-based, or out-sourced; whether it be county-wide or fire district-centric.

Thereafter, for years two (2025) and three (2026) of this contract with AmeriPro, “Option 5” would be implemented as previously proposed.

Remaining 7 months of 2024: \$78,083.00/month (\$546,581 → 2024)

Years two (2025) and three (2026): \$115,583.33/month (\$1,387,000 annually)

Total through 2026: \$3,320,580.92

Al Knable suggested creating a Task Force, meeting in June so they would know by the end of summer if they are going to get cooperation from all of the departments and whether or not that’s going to be practical or not. He agrees with Connie Moon that they treat all the districts with fairness.

Brad Striegel said when Highlander was asked to put something together and they came forth with \$802,000.00 to run two ambulances. If they are going to be a backup to AmeriPro for seven months, they would need one ambulance which would be ½ at \$401,000.00. You can prorate that for seven months and that would be the amount they need monthly.

Dale Bagshaw said the whole thing, in his opinion, has been driven by emotions and passion and not data driven. The EMS committee put out an RFP with a poison pill for New Chapel that they couldn’t compete because of that pill of proving their financial viability. So they only had one bid, AmeriPro, and at the midnight hour Highlander Fire comes in, but not one person from their administration stood at the podium to present. He said it will cost the tax payers a couple of million dollars more in the next two years than we should have paid.

Denise Konkle said she is driven totally by the numbers not emotions. She said she is not bias to Highlander Fire.

Brad Striegel said Highlander was asked to put something forward by the EMS Advisory Board. They did not come in at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour.

Jason Sharp said the proposal from Highlander incorporated Georgetown and the top part of Franklin. He said in order for them to run an ambulance they would take two people off the firetruck.

Danny Short asked if there is an estimated time where Highlander can stand on their own without a subsidy.

### Public

Dale Mann, Georgetown, said Georgetown had the best system with no problems. He said they keep saying Fire-based is cheaper but no one has ever proved it. If it's run by the government it will cost the tax payers more.

Steve Burks, Treasurer, said, it was his understanding the Commissioners provide a contract and Council pays for it. He also said they are banking on \$500,000.00 from Legacy Foundation. He said he is only one vote.

Tim Harbison, Edwardsville Galena Road, said he was dismayed at the last meeting that the gentleman from New Chapel was invited. He asked if it was ethical for anyone that received money or help with their campaign from Jamie Noel or New Chapel to be involved with this discussion. He agrees with Miss Mayfield that ambulance service should not be political.

### Closing Comments

John Schellenberger said everyone is looking at what AmeriPro wants to charge but they need to remember there are reimbursements for the transports on top of that. He reached out to a gentlemen that does billing for quite a few counties and there's an estimated revenue of \$1.5 million based on our demographics.

Jim Freiburger, said he is biased toward Highlander Fire District because he lives in Lafayette Township. He said their response time times have been far better than the public services. AmeriPro will charge double the rates for the same runs. There will be a lot of additional out of pocket expenses.

Connie Moon is concerned that it is going to cost a lot of money to get Highlander, Georgetown and New Albany Townships up to par to do their own. She is also concerned with the communication between districts.

Danny Short commented on Mr. Harbison's comments. He said he never voted on a New Chapel contract in six years. It has rolled over each time and it is not the Council's function. He said it is off base to bring up New Chapel. He should have gone one step further to see where their campaign contributions came from.

Jason Sharp said they have had 5-6 special meetings and have 30 days left. He feels bad for the people watching this right now. He said they need to recognize that they still have one township, Franklin, which has no fire district at all. He said when presentations come before the Boards that they need to come from the command staff and Chief Klein did not come to the presentation.

Al Knable said, even though the meetings seem ugly, everything is happening here in public and there are no backroom deals going on. There is the beauty of the United States Constitution and Indiana Constitution where there is no executive power vested in one person. He thinks they are close to getting settlement on what they're going to have, not only for the short term but also a plan to get a longer term pathway.

He said the County Clerk encouraged everyone to go out and vote.

**Motion to adjourn. Moved by John Schellenberger. Seconded by Connie Moon. Motion passed unanimously.**

Approved the 25<sup>th</sup> 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 Freiberger  
Jim Freiberger, member

Denise Konkle  
Denise Konkle, member

Brad Striegel  
Brad Striegel, member

Tony Toran  
Tony Toran, member

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