

Proceedings of the Special Meeting

Clark County

February 15, 2022

The special meeting of the County Board met February 15, 2022 at 7:00 P.M. at the County Board Room and was called to Order by Chairman Rex Goble. County Clerk Laura Lee led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

7:00 P.M.

Rex Goble	District #1
Brandon Burkybile	District #2
Jim Bolin	District #3 by phone
Randy Stephens	District #4
Susan Guinnip	District #5
Todd Kuhn	District #6
Mike Parsons	District #7

Chairman Goble started the meeting by introducing Ben Lueken with Dimond Financial. Lueken prepared a spreadsheet with actual number for the 2019-2020 fiscal year and the 2020-2021 fiscal year for the ambulance. He did look back at the last five years but there was not a significant difference in Ambulance costs and revenue. Then, there were two proposed columns. One was for On Call Proposed and the second was for Full Time Proposed. He worked with the County Auditor and Treasurer for the numbers. In his proposed Full Time Ambulance, the staffing would be 4 FT EMT's, 4 FT Paramedics, and 1 Coordinator based on the salaries discussed at prior meetings. Variable expenses are the operating expenses and equipment needs. The bottom line two lines of the proposed FT and On Call is if the public health safety tax is increased by .25% and helping to fund the Ambulance Service.

Page two of the spreadsheet refers to the Marshall Ambulance Service and page three is looking at a combined service for Marshall and Clark County. Board Member Kuhn asked if the County service goes full time, is there ways to increase the revenue. Ambulance Coordinator Wimbley stated that there could be but no guarantee. Currently, the ambulance service is having to turn down transfers due to staffing shortages. Medicare and Medicaid pay better on transfers.

The Board had also asked Ben Lueken to contact Horizon Health regarding contracting the ambulance service through them. They are definitely interested in contracting. There are having a strategic planning meeting in April and would like to have more information on the current operation. They can't commit at this time but would like to know the direction the County is going to go. The numbers that Lueken is hearing is above half a million. Their primary interest is the Marshall Ambulance but would look at the whole County. Lueken stated that if the County contracts out, then the County loses control. Also, at the end of the contract, the price for renewal could increase substantially.

Board Member Guinnip stated that the County wouldn't be able to move forward unless the voters approve the sales tax increase or levy more at budget time. The Board Members felt that the sales tax increase would be easier to explain than to increase taxes. The idea is to hold town halls to explain how the sales tax increase would work. Lueken felt that with the increase in sales tax, the reserves could be built up for equipment purchases, etc. The question then becomes, what is the plan if the sales tax does not pass, then how does the County move forward with a full time service. State's Attorney Hutson stated that if the referendum does not pass, that at budget time, the levy can

be increased. There was much discussion on disadvantages and advantages of going full time or contracting the service. Board Member Parsons asked about leasing the ambulances to Horizon and just contracting for labor. Chairman Goble stated that Horizon would take all the income and there wouldn't be funds for new ambulances. Parsons stated that if they won't renew in three years, it wouldn't be starting with nothing.

On Friday, the Board's plan is to vote to add a referendum to the June 28, 2022 ballot to increase the safety tax by .25%. Board Member Bolin said that the County run service wouldn't be running on creating a profit and with a good manager, the costs could be kept down. Chairman Goble stated that his goal is to know a direction and need to start looking for a new full time coordinator. Board Member Burkybile felt that this is a good thing and that the coordinator can help with grant writing also. Karl Ellshoff stated that if the public health safety tax is increased, then the Marshall residents are double taxed with the levy increase and the tax increase.

Chairman Goble also said that he talked to Fitch and Associates which is a firm that would design and tell the County exactly what type of service was affordable. Board Member Guinnip stated that Ben Lueken has done a lot of work and knows our community better than any other company. Next step would be how to find a qualified coordinator. Chairman Goble's research indicated that a lot of time, a burnt out nurse or paramedic would apply for this type of position.

At the regular Board meeting on Friday, February 18, 2022, the Board could approve the referendum to add to the ballot. After that, start the process of looking for a full time coordinator. Board Member Stephens said that the citizens would like to see a plan for what the ambulance service will look like in the future. The plan could be presented at the town halls. Lueken stated that if the County doesn't go to a full time service, the potential to continue losing employees is very real. Chairman Goble is working with the fire districts to train first responders and feel that this is vital to cover the County. Board Member Burkybile had received information from 911 on number of calls in each area. Casey - 948; Martinsville - 159; Marshall - 1022; West Union - 135 from January 1, 2021 to December 14, 2021.

Public Comments: Dave Taylor said that as his wife and he get older, he is concerned about things and feels so much better living in Marshall that has a full time ambulance service. Interstate 70 is a life blood to the County and helps with the sales tax revenue. He also stated that timing is essential for putting the referendum on the ballot. Not as many voters turn out at the primary. Warren LeFever said that he is concerned with the sales tax money. He wants the money to be earmarked for the ambulance only. The statute reads that it is to be used in a specific manner.

Motion by Mike Parsons and second by Randy Stephens to approve One Day and Mileage Claims. The Chairman put the question and upon the roll being taken all members present voted "aye". Whereupon the Chairman declared the motion adopted.

Motion by Susan Guinnip and second by Mike Parsons that the meeting be adjourned until February 18, 2022 at 8:00 A.M. for the regular Board meeting. The Chairman put the question and upon the roll being taken all members present voted "aye". Whereupon the Chairman declared the motion adopted. The meeting adjourned at 8:32 P.M.

IN ATTENDANCE: Ben Lueken – Dimond Financial; Karl Ellshoff- Marshall Ambulance; Pam Brandenburg-Courthouse; Jason Wimbley - Clark County Ambulance; Lisa Richey – Clark County Assessor; Laura Lee -County Clerk; John Hasten – MFPD; Kyle Hutson – State's Attorney; Warren LeFever – City Council; Dave Taylor - Resident

