

Vermillion County Council & Commissioners Joint Meeting Minutes

February, 18, 2020

6:30 P.M.

Commissioner's Court, 2nd Floor Courthouse

- I. **Call to Order.** The Council & Commissioners convened in a joint meeting on February 18, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. in the Commissioner's Courtroom.
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.**
- III. **Roll Call.** Council Members present were President Ashley James, Vice President Robert Spence, Neil Costello, Ronald L. Dunavan Jr., John Michael Major, William Brent Bush, Randy Dreher. Commissioners present were President Tim Wilson, Vice President, Tim Yocum, Harry Crossley, Attorney, Jon Spurr, Auditor, Amy Tolbert, Deputy Auditor, Annie Wickens & First Deputy, Stephanie Simpson.

IV. **Ambulance**

Ambulance Run time sheet for January 2019 were handed out to the Council and Commissioners.

President Ashley James started the meeting by thanking everyone for coming to the meeting and she addressed some issues that she felt was confusing and miscommunicated. James noted that at no time was there any discussion of reducing contracted hours with the ambulance service, nor has any discussion been made for going away from Paramedic level ambulance service. She stated that the Council has not been upset with the services provided by Illiana EMS Services. They have provided excellent services to the County. The average run time stated in the Commissioners meetings from August 2018 to March 2019, and August of 2019 were under the 8-minute national average. Illiana EMS has not been reprimanded for their run times. Illiana EMS should be complimented for their efforts that they have provided, including educational opportunities at the high schools and the local EMT classes that they have been doing.

She also stated that the appropriation is for 2020 only, and that any further funding for future years would be considered as part of budget hearings later this year. Denying the request does not automatically reject the extension.

Commissioner Yocum requested that they go over the details of the current contract for more clarification. Parts of the Contract were read and it was stated that we have 1 ambulance in Clinton and 1 in Cayuga staffed 24/7 with a Paramedic and EMT staffing at each location and a secondary ambulance is staffed 8-5 Monday through Friday at Clinton and an ambulance on call within 15 minutes after hours. There was some confusion on the secondary ambulance in the contract. James questioned should each Primary have a back-up? The wording in the Contract needs to be clarified and stated exactly what we are staffing and when.

Eric Shaughnessy stated that he was asked by the commissioners to give them a price on adding another 24/7 ambulance to help get the response times down. That was the price that was asked for in the additional appropriations. The response times were reduced from 2018 to 2019 due to having the secondary ambulance 24/7 instead of just Monday thru Friday 8-5. Shaughnessy explained the money for adding the third ambulance and the reason for the amount of the additional appropriations.

James stated that when the Council received the first additional appropriations it was for a new station, so it was assumed that since a new station was not warranted

then the cost would go down and the Council was under the impression that they would just be increasing on what the ambulance was doing now, adding the extra 16 hours, plus the weekends and the cost was still the same. Then the cost was the same when asked to add an additional 24/7 ambulance.

James stated the contract needs to have definite details on what the County wants and Shaughnessy said he could work out the details and the pricing and get back with the Council and Commissioners. The Council also stated this needs to be turned in at budget time. Budgets have to be in by July 1.

Wilson stated that they would get together with Illiana EMS and Jon Spurr to work out the details and get back with the council.

Shaughnessy stated that run times decreased from 2018 to 2019 because of the additional crew and that he cannot continue to fund it out of his pocket. If this funding isn't done, I will have to fall back to the contract. He said if you wait until budget time for next year, times will increase, because I'll have no other choice.

Kim Hawkins questioned where the funding was coming from. It was stated that it was coming from the General Fund. It has been out of both Public Safety and General Fund in previous years. Hawkins wanted to know why it was coming out of the General Fund and not the Public Safety Fund.

James stated they use the Public Safety Fund for several different things including the Fire Departments and the Jail. It's a fluctuating budget.

Dean Strohm asked to clarify that there was no problem with funds, and the money was available.

James stated the funds were there from excess money left over from previous years or from public safety taxes, but we've funded a lot of extra things already this year and it's only February.

Stephanie Laws from Union Hospital, thanked the Council and Commissioners for their leadership in addressing this and that the County and surrounding counties have one goal to provide and strive for quality service to all County residents.

Paul Lee questioned why the Commissioners were not bidding this out to see if we could get the services for cheaper.

James stated that bidding was up to the Commissioners not the Council.

Costello stated that the Commissioners haven't always bid it. Sometimes they have taken proposals. He stated that he thought that the Commissioners have a good working history with the ambulance contract, extensions and proposals.

Spurr stated that the Commissioners are not under any obligation to solicit bids or proposals for the contract per State Statues.

XII Adjourn

Motion to Adjourn made by Spence and 2nd by Bush.
Meeting Adjourned.

AYE



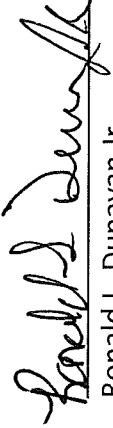
John Michael Major

NAY

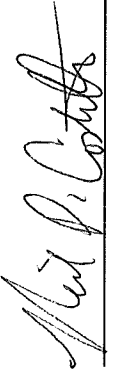
Ashley James

William Brent Bush

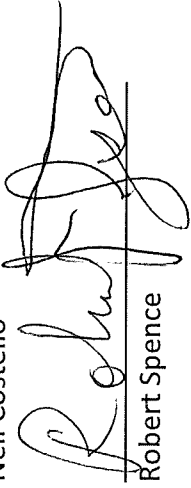
Randy Dreher



Ronald L. Dunavan Jr



Neil Costello



Robert Spence



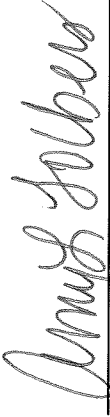
Tim Wilson

Tim Yocum



Harry Crossley

Attest:



Amy Tolbert, Auditor