

**MINUTES OF A FINANCE, FEES, AND SALARIES COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE COUNTY OF
HANCOCK, STATE OF ILLINOIS, HELD IN THE COUNTY
COURTHOUSE IN THE CITY OF CARTHAGE ON FEBRUARY 10, 2022.**

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Bollin at 9:05 a.m. Board members present were Wayne Bollin, Janet Fleming, Tom Bergmeier, Mark Hanson, and Delbert Kreps. Absent were Mark Menn, Harry Douglas, Dennis Castlebury. Visitors present were Jennifer Meeks, Kris Pilkington, Keith Krohe, and Patsy Davis. Holly Wilde-Tillman and Stephanie Swisegood were present to take the notes from the meeting.

Ms. Meeks proposed an increase in sales tax to help with ambulance expenses. Ms. Meeks had brought numbers for a sales tax proposal. She would like to make a resolution to increase the sales tax for public safety. She would then go through Ms. Wilde-Tillman to get the proper info on the ballot for the public to vote on. The current sales tax rate is 6.25% with 1.25% coming back to the county. This amount over 3 years equals around \$525,445. Ms. Meeks states we can start this tax increase twice a year, either July 1 or January 1. Realistically she thinks putting it on the November 2022 ballot would be best rather than June 2022. This way it could start on January 1, 2023. She would propose a 1% increase the first year and then 0.25% for 2 years equaling 1.50% by 2025. She proposes that 80% stay within the Hancock County EMS with 10% going to LaHarpe EMS, and 10% going to Nauvoo EMS. Ms. Meeks states this is becoming more of a medicaid district. Revenue is down this year, their runs are down. A lot of hospitals are packed so nobody is being transferred. This money could be used for the aging ambulances, cover payroll, etc. Union contracts are going to be negotiated again in 2023. Mr. Bollin asked if there are only to be 0.25% increases, can we even do a 1% increase? Ms. Pilkington states there is a formula and that she would need to talk to Ms. Mast or someone from the state to see what we can do as far as the percentages. Ms. Pilkington suggested Ms. Meeks speak with Adams County and see what their rate is on safety. She states we had tried to raise the sales tax before to supplement the sheriff's office and it failed on the ballot. Mr. Bollin advised Ms. Meeks to find out more details and get as much information as you can. Ms. Meeks asked if we can shoot for November. Ms. Wilde-Tillman suggested she try to get this on the spring 2023 ballot. Ms. Pilkington states that Ms. Meeks needs to be prepared to go door to door and educate people and try to convince residents to get this passed. Ms. Fleming stated it is obvious that the EMS needs to be funded and is this the way we want to go? Ms. Meeks states the ambulance is having difficulty with keeping employees. She is down 2 paramedics and 3 EMTs. She cannot get anybody hired. They are working overtime to get all of the shifts filled. Ms. Fleming asked at what point do you go to 1 ALS ambulance? Mr. Bollin told Ms. Meeks to find out more information and we will go from there.

Mr. Krohe stated after our meeting last month he talked with Ron on the group Air Evac contract. If we eliminate air ambulance from our plan, Air Evac group may not pay. This could

make the contract null and void. Mr. Krohe states we need to go the individual route rather than a group contract. This way the employee comes in and signs a contract for Air Med Care, they pay for it, and will get reimbursed. Ms. Roberts can come and help get people enrolled. She can take all of the receipts to Ms. McDowell and she will send these receipts to Medical Mutual, and the employee would get their reimbursement right away. Ms. Pilkington asked do they decide if they do 1 or 3 year contracts? Ms. Fleming asked if our plan would pay first. Mr. Krohe stated air ambulance will not be covered once we change the plan. Ms. Wilde-Tillman asked if we are just taking the air evac coverage out of our health care plan? Mr. Krohe stated we need to change the wording of the contract. There is no problem in changing the plan, its your plan. There will just not be a group contract with Air Evac. Mr. Krohe states if an employee is on this health plan then they do not have to buy this if they have it on another plan. Mr. Bergmeier was concerned about this, what if an employee gets flown out of Burlington and it is not in Air Med Care. Mr. Krohe asked if this happens could the money come out of the reserve? If an employee chooses not to get the Air Med plan and then uses Air Evac they will need to pay for that Air Evac flight. Insurance will not pay.

Ms. Pilkington asked if this would be for the MRP plan also. Mr. Krohe stated we would not discriminate against either plan. Mr. Bollin stated if we have the treasurer's office set this up then we need to have a checklist for people to understand what it will do for them. MRP will be covered, all the family will be covered, and they will be reimbursed. The board feels that Ms. Pilkington needs to explain employees the benefits of signing up for Air Evac and the liability of not obtaining this. Mr. Krohe stated this is the employee's choice. Tell them here is the plan, highlight that air med is not covered, and when they sign this they get reimbursed up to \$100 per year. Let them decide if they would like a 1-year or 3-year contract. Mr. Krohe stated if you take 1 ambulance ride in 5 years that it would pay for itself. This is putting a leverage in the plan for if it would happen. Ms. Wilde-Tillman stated it is an insurance policy to protect your insurance policy. Mr. Bollin asked if this wording suits the insurance company. Mr. Krohe stated that McDonough County has this wording, and there are over 15 different groups that are using this language. Mr. Bollin asked if an individual who does not sign the contract needs to sign a waiver? All employees must see the Hancock County Treasurer's office. Ms. Pilkington asked if an individual could have 2 different air ambulance coverages? A motion was made by Ms. Fleming that Hancock County agrees to provide Air Evac to individual membership for 1 or 3 years and will reimburse all employees up to \$100/year. Mr. Hanson seconded this. All members present voted "aye".

A motion to amend the Hancock County health plan effective April 1, 2022, to exclude air ambulance coverage was made by Ms. Fleming with Mr. Hanson seconding. All members present voted "aye". Mr. Krohe left at 10:05 a.m.

Ms. Pilkington gave a budgetary status report. Ms. Pilkington was asking about the Bellwether