

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING HELD IN THE COUNTY OF HANCOCK, STATE OF ILLINOIS, HELD IN THE COURTHOUSE IN THE CITY OF CARTHAGE ON MARCH 16, 2022

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Delbert Kreps at 6:30 p.m. Members present at the meeting were Pat Cramer, Mark Hanson, Delbert Kreps, Tom Rodgers, Gary Stansbery, Tom Bergmeier, Patsy Davis, Andrew Asbury, Katherine Phillips, Steve Finney, Wayne Bollin, Mark Menn, Jan Fleming. Absent were Dennis Castlebury and Harry Douglas. Visitors included Ryan Weeks, Lisa Weeks, Doug Diprima, Rachel Barnes, Chad Stewart, Deborah Whitaker, Kris Pilkington, Adam Doellman, Rachel Mast, Joy Swearingen, and several other members of the community. Holly Wilde-Tillman and Stephanie Swisegood were present to take notes of the meeting.

Mr. Hanson gave the invocation and the County clerk led the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll call was taken with 13 present and 2 absences.

Deborah Whitaker let us know that the first Saturday in May has been designated by Governor Pritzker as Veteran's Garden Day. At the Hamilton Community Center they will have over 5000 packs of garden seeds, fertilizer, and plants. Everyone is welcome.

Chad Stewart spoke about the intergovernmental agreement between Hancock County and Adams County. He stated this should have been done in the eye of the public, and should have been done in the health and miscellaneous committee. He feels Adams County are foreigners who are going to take over Hancock County. He states the public feels that this board's relationship towards the EMS is hostile, they have failed the EMS and that the situation will only get worse.

Ms. Davis stated that the IGA is to assist our EMS, not take over. The Hancock County EMS will continue to be the Hancock County EMS. The County board has been addressing staffing and financial issues for months. She introduced John Simon from the Adams County EMS. He stated it was the unanimous action of the Adams County Board to offer relief to the citizens of Hancock County. He respects the comments about the process and public concerns. He takes those concerns seriously. He stated we have his commitment that this is not a foreign government takeover, but a neighbor helping a neighbor. Adams County had been in the exact same spot with being \$2.5 million in the hole. Through the collaboration of his team they have built it back up for the better. Their service can provide assistance to our ambulance. The Hancock County Ambulance will continue to be the Hancock County Ambulance. They will abide by the Hancock County Union contractual agreement. Lisa Weeks asked him what would occur at the end of 6 months. He stated no one can say with any certainty what will happen at the end of the 6 months, it can be terminated or extended. It is up to this board on how they

want to proceed within the interest of Hancock County. Their approach is not to leave us high and dry but provide a moment of opportunity to stabilize the circumstances and get going in the right direction. Ms. Weeks asked if they would be making any recommendations as far as to the board to take over administration. He stated they just want to make sure they bring some stabilization, the future would require some public level attention and this board. Anything we entertain beyond November 30 would have to have a discussion and comment period of not only the residents of Hancock County but also Adams County because they do not want to detract from either service.

Ms. Fleming stated this sounds enticing but at the end of November would there be an escalation of contract and how is the \$75/hour determined. He stated if we want expertise in hiring a new director, that would be outside the normal scope, union negotiation expertise would be outside the normal scope. If the county desires a more in-depth analysis of what changes can be made or a fee structure, etc, this would be \$12,500. This would be no different than a consulting fee. Ms. Fleming stated \$5000 over a 12-month period is \$60,000, that is more than we were paying the director. Mr. Simon stated that this fee brings you a team of resources from administrative expertise for running a modern-day EMS that succeeds. Mr. Stewart asked if the board passed this today will the county continue to pay somebody in executive position while your assistance is going on. Mr. Simon stated this has nothing to do with Hancock County and Mr. Doellman.

Mr. Bergmeier asked about the long-range communication equipment and what it entails and costs? Mr. Simon stated that in order to make sure that we can communicate with crews effectively we want to make sure that there is something in there for communication. It was unclear at first what communication they were on but they have assessed the equipment in place so there should be no expense incurred. Kevin Broemmer asked what Mr. Simon was hired to do here. This agreement is to provide a management agreement to operate Hancock County EMS from providing data guidance, support so bills are paid, issues can be addressed, ambulances are maintained, rules are followed, all of the general expectations that administration or management would provide. Kevin Broemmer asked who would be handling any grievances EMS would have. Mr. Simon explained it would go to the supervisor. It would follow the normal steps that are already set up. Kevin Broemmer said so if an Adams County employee came to Hancock County to get a fresh start and has a grievance then it would go to Mr. Simon? Mr. Kreps asked why this would matter. Mr. Cramer stated if you had problems in Adams County you would think you would stay out of trouble in Hancock County. Mr. Simon stated he would have to defer to whatever the union contract states.

Mr. Bergmeier stated it was great that they got Adams County out of the hole of \$2.5 million, but we are still going to do the billing. Mr. Simon stated it was his understanding that the board has a contract with a billing service and he does not know what this contract ensues. He stated it would not make sense to the citizens of Hancock County to pay 2 people to take care

of this service. His team will take a look at the billing and make sure that all the necessary requirements are in there for clean bills. They are very aware of what should be done and good information to submit for a clean claim and then our revenues should increase, and if for some reason if they do not then we should look at a third-party biller. Ms. Fleming asked if this service was part of the \$5000, yes it is. She asked within the \$5000 is there a director to be named or is that opened ended, and who is the contract person. Mr. Simon stated this amount gives us 120 hours of administration assistance. If this board executes this agreement tonight the person responsible would ultimately be him, but instructions could come from any of his team members.

Ms. Davis expanded on the fact that any time between now and November 30 that if we decide that this is not working that we can get out of the contract at any time. Mr. Rodgers asked if on November 30 if we could go to a monthly basis. Mr. Simon stated all of this aside our purpose of being here is to help you. It does not make any logical sense to me that if we are willing to provide a helping hand that we would leave you on the lurch on November 30.

Ms. Fleming asked where we were with the transfers for Memorial Hospital. Mr. Simon stated they met with them once but those conversations continue and it is in Memorial Hospital's court. Ms. Fleming stated this was Hancock County money that is going to Adams County and it is a concern of hers. Mr. Menn stated that the transferring business is what the board has struggled with for many years. He thinks this is a burden lifted as we are losing revenue. Mr. Doellman stated he has been here since February 27 and he has had quite a number of employees quit. There are 4 full time EMTs and 4 full time paramedics. To keep up 2 ALS ambulances 24/7 he needs 14 employees. There is a shortage nationally. We want to have at least 1 ALS ambulance in service. If we are trying to do transfers we do not have the manpower. We have to look at other options for transfers. Nobody is piling in here to be an EMT. Mr. Menn asked Mr. Doellman if we have a transfer and then end up having somebody at Memorial Hospital that needs to go to Blessing Hospital would this still be possible with the functioning of our EMS. Mr. Doellman stated he was not going to leave a Hancock without an ambulance to transfer. Mr. Cramer stated that we had offered Memorial Hospital the use of an ambulance and a list of EMTs and they did not accept. Mr. Menn stated he thinks we need to keep on track of what we are going to do with this agreement. Ms. Phillips stated that residents are thinking this is a takeover from Adams County.

Mr. Bergmeier stated he hated to harp about the billing but the agreement reads that would cost \$12,500. Mr. Simon stated that they will make sure that PBS has the papers to submit the claims. The \$12,500 assessment would involve claim assessments, they would pull a random set of claims, evaluate for dispatch, crew, documentation provided, how it was coded, what HCPCS code they used to send to Medicare/Medicaid, and was it coded correctly, how it was picked up, the remittance, the EOB, make sure contractual write offs were correct and was there a followup to it. They look at the big picture and how many were tracked correctly or

incorrectly. He stated we will not get much more than 34% of the billable dollar. Hypothetically, the \$5000 fee is for Adams County Ambulance to steer the ship. The \$12,500 would give you the options of destination of the ship. He stated he also has employees on the Adams County Ambulance who are residents of Hancock County.

Ms. Fleming stated when they were hiring an EMS director that quite a few applicants were from the Adams County ambulance but they would not take the job because of the pay. Mr. Cramer stated it was because they were told it was a part-time job. Mr. Menn stated that they were told it was a temporary full-time job. Mr. Kreps asked Mr. Bollin if we have handed out any ARPA money. He stated that we gave authorization for the Connable Road in which the process was already undertaken. This had been passed through the county highway and also through the board. He stated we have quite a bit of money leftover.

Ms. Davis made a motion to pass the intergovernmental agreement with Adams County Ambulance. Ms. Fleming asked if we did not sign the IGA agreement if we would still have Mr. Doellman working at the ambulance. Mr. Kreps informed her that Mr. Doellman's help was just temporary. Mr. Cramer seconded. A roll call vote was taken with Mr. Menn, Mr. Rodgers, Mr. Hanson, Mr. Cramer, Mr. Bergmeier, Mr. Finney, Mr. Bollin, Ms. Davis, Mr. Asbury, Mr. Stansbury, and Mr. Kreps voting "yes". Ms. Fleming and Ms. Phillips voted "no". Mr. Bollin made a motion to pass the resolution for the intergovernmental agreement between Adams County and Hancock County Ambulances. A roll call vote was taken with Mr. Menn, Mr. Rodgers, Mr. Hanson, Mr. Cramer, Mr. Bergmeier, Mr. Finney, Mr. Bollin, Ms. Davis, Mr. Asbury, Mr. Stansbury, and Mr. Kreps voting "yes". Ms. Fleming and Ms. Phillips voted "no".

A motion to pass the tax anticipation warrants ordinance was made by Mr. Hanson and seconded by Mr. Rodgers. A roll call vote was taken with Mr. Menn, Mr. Rodgers, Mr. Hanson, Mr. Cramer, Mr. Finney, Mr. Bollin, Ms. Davis, Mr. Asbury, Mr. Stansbury, and Mr. Kreps voting "yes". Ms. Fleming, Mr. Bergmeier, and Ms. Phillips voted "no".

Ms. Pilkington stated the minutes had to be approved from the meeting for her to do the tax anticipation warrants. Ms. Wilde-Tillman stated it would be done on Tuesday, March 22, 2022.

Mr. Finney made a motion to adjourn at 7:28 and seconded by Ms. Phillips.



Respectfully submitted,
Holly A. Wilde-Tillman

Holly A. Wilde-Tillman
Hancock County Clerk

Henry A. White - Illinois

