

June 14, 2023

The Benton County Board of Supervisors met in a special joint session with the EMS Advisory Council. Supervisors Seeman, Primmer and Bierschenk were present. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. at the conference room at the Benton County Emergency Operations Center.

Unless otherwise noted, all actions were approved unanimously. Summarized Resolutions will be available in the Auditor's office and at: www.bentoncountyja.gov

The purpose of the Emergency Medical Services Advisory Council is to take all the different factors to determine what the cost for EMS services in Benton County a year is. Using the data that Anna DeMuth, Director of North Benton Ambulance collected after last meeting and put together a presentation. The rough estimated costs for EMS in a year throughout all of Benton County was \$1,150,000 not including Keystone, Mt. Auburn or Shellsburg. Demuth used the call history and other documentation to provide this oversight with various costs from the varied salaries, vehicles and supply costs. The amount of write-offs from Medicare/Medicaid was also concerning and how the revenue concerns play a huge factor with keeping these services available. Trying to determine a levy amount that would be most effective in helping offset the shortages for all. The Council looked at different tax impact options knowing that levy amount cannot go above .75 per \$1,000. The unanimous top concerns and issues from all was definitely the staffing, recruitment and retention of employees. Training costs and continued education for the staff along with cost of replacing equipment. These things all led to other important discussions such as mandated levy for fire but not for EMS. Good Samaritan laws, workman's comp and how important it is having first responders or an ambulance show up when those calls come in. We need more individuals with a passion for rural EMS, and how hard it is for smaller communities to retain the employees they have so they don't leave for bigger and better pay elsewhere. Not having the resources and people to staff these services could mean a life or death situation to any of us. It is not a matter of if, but when it does take place for ourselves or a family member. You are expecting an ambulance or first responder to show up whether you are on a farm or live in town. Things we all take for granted! The next joint meeting with the EMS Advisory Council for Thursday, July 15, 2023 at 7:00 P.M. at the EMA conference room at the Law Enforcement Center. Motion carried.

Primmer moved/Seeman seconded: To adjourn. Motion carried.

Tracy Seeman, Chairman

ATTEST: _____

Hayley Rippel, Benton County Auditor