

July 13, 2023

The Benton County Board of Supervisors met in a special joint session with the EMS Advisory Council. Supervisors Seeman and Bierschenk were present, Supervisor Primmer attended through zoom. 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.bentoncountyia.gov](http://www.bentoncountyia.gov)*

The Board of Supervisors along with the Emergency Medical Services Advisory Council discussed all the different factors to determine what the cost for EMS services in Benton County is. How costs have increased, and staffing concerns were at the top and also the largest expense. Discussing the different levy amounts using the current county taxable valuations and what the possible revenue a year could be is helping the Advisory council determine a levy amount that would be most effective in helping offset the shortages for all. Looking at the long term scheme of things, for a 15 year maximum and how important it is to have these services in our county. There is definitely an EMS Crisis nationwide, but even more so in our rural communities. It is not a guarantee that a first responder or an ambulance will show up at your residence if you call 911. Looking at this tax increase as an insurance policy for protection and assurance that you would get the response if and when you are the one needing it. If these services don't have the staff and funds to pay their staff or upgrade equipment, it will be hard to keep their doors open. If they can't afford to be competitive, the locals will leave and go somewhere where they can get paid. This discussion led to what if scenarios, if the county would have to absorb these services someday and how much greater that cost could be. Other ideas for promoting EMT programs as early as in our local high schools to get more people interested along with training agreements in place. The older population is dwindling down working in this field, or others are getting burned out from staffing shortages. There is a great need for personnel so these services can be continued. Treating this as one big entity similar to a business, how can EMS grow if it doesn't have the funding to do so. The Advisory council is asking for all voting members or their replacement be at the upcoming EMA meeting to agree to a levy amount they will provide the Board of Supervisors for requesting a special election. Time is dwindling, and proper procedures have to take place by a certain timeline.

**Bierschenk moved/Seeman seconded:** To set the next joint meeting with the EMS Advisory Council for Wednesday, July 26, 2023 at 7:00 P.M. at the EMA conference room at the Law Enforcement Center. Motion carried.

**Seeman moved/Bierschenk seconded:** To adjourn. Motion carried.

---

Tracy Seeman, Chairman

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

Hayley Rippel, Benton County Auditor