



January 25, 2022

Meeting called to order by Matt Kuhn at 6:45 pm.

Commission members present: Amy Laures, James Mitchell, Randy Taylor, Mark Mueterthies, Bobby Schwickerath, David Geerts, Matt Kuhn, Ryan Shawver

Absent: Jim Ashley and Samantha Johnson

Guests: Sheriton Dettmer, David Laudner, Brannon Anderson, Jacob Hackman, Travis Suckow, Steve Breitbach, Scott Cerwinski

Motion by Mitchell, seconded by Schwickerath, to add election of Officers and approve the agenda. All Ayes, Motion Carried

Motion by Taylor, seconded by Geerts to approve the November 30, 2022 Emergency Management Commission meeting minutes. All Ayes. Motion Carried

Motion by Taylor, second by Mueterthies to appoint Kuhn as Chickasaw County Emergency Management Commission Chair. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

Motion by Taylor, second by Shawver to appoint Schwickerath as Chickasaw County Emergency Management Commission Vice Chair. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

Budget Discussion. Bernatz passed out an updated budget worksheet to all present and discussed the changes. Bernatz discussed that the money taken away from the hazmat allocation was applied back to the budget lowering the county contribution rate. With that money and the EMPG revenue the county contribution rate went from \$252,069 to \$162,069.

Hackman asked why the pooled cash money was not being applied to the budget, Bernatz advised him that the hazmat money that was being applied to the budget is coming out of pooled cash. Furthermore, in a previous Board of Supervisor meeting Hackman quoted "lets spend down their cash pool, or budget for a project, or budget for a truck", Bernatz advised Hackman that he has been discussing projects with the commission which included replacement of the Rescue truck. Bernatz believes that it would be better to budget for that over a couple years than to request the whole sum at once.

Kuhn advised all present that the reason for the joint meeting was due to the fact that the Board of Supervisors were planning to not contribute what EMA is asking for.

Mitchell recommended earmarking the money for capital projects, that way everyone knows exactly what it is for as it carries. Bernatz advised that he does not have a capital project line item on his budget but has request to get one and work with the auditor to label projects. Shawver mentioned that is the way the City of New Hampton does it as well. Mitchell recommended picking one project and going with instead of multiple projects at once, as well as working with the commission on those projects.

Mitchell asked the Board of Supervisors since they said they would not pay the full asking, what was their number, Kuhn advised they were at around fifty thousand. Hackman advised that they wanted to spend down the cash pool. Taylor asked if the cash pool is spent then when it is time to pay for capital projects where does that money come from. Taylor also pointed out that this budget is already cut down from last year with the pooled cash contribution.

Mitchell asked who has the final say on the EMA budget? Hackman says the Board of Supervisors have the final say, Bernatz disagreed stating Iowa code 29c.17 and the Attorney General Opinion that supports it. Hackman quoted Iowa code 331.424 saying that says that the Board of Supervisors have the final say. Bernatz presented a copy of the Attorney General Opinion #21-5-2 that spells out that the Board of Supervisors do not have the authority to change the budget amount of the Emergency Management Commission.

Mitchell asked the Board of Supervisors if it is their stance to not support budgeting for projects and just drive the pooled cash down, Hackman why is it always just the county, why aren't you soliciting donations. Bernatz reminded Hackman that it has been mentioned multiple times that there will be a funding raising drive with the help of the Chickasaw Rescue Association to help offset the project purchase.

Hackman asked why can't the budget request go back to a per capita rate, Taylor advised that the bigger cities would get hit the worst and with Rescue Squad as a countywide department that just wouldn't be right.

Laudner read off the five funding options in 29C.17.

Kuhn advised that there is discussion about putting EMS in general basic but EMA has to go into general supplemental, with these two departments being similar why is it ok for one but not the other. Mueterthies and Taylor both advised that the cities are pretty well tapped out. Mitchell also mentioned that a lot of the small towns do not have a way to replenish their general fund, Fredericksburg has municipal utilities but other towns do not.

Kuhn requested a number from the commission as to where they would like the ending fund balance to be relative to the request. Taylor feels like this is a moving target because if there are no projects then the cash pool could come down, but if the cash pool is going to drain every year then there couldn't be any capital projects.

Breitbach would like to see a description of what the projects that the cash pool money is being saved for, Cerwinski agreed, the public would feel better if they knew what that money was for.

Taylor feels that maybe it is just time to get the new truck ordered and get it come, kind of being forced to spend that money. Dettmer that Fredericksburg Fire bought a new grass rig and it is a year and half wait for delivery.

Cerwinski believes that if the pooled cash was earmarked for projects it would be an easier process, he is \$100,000 to help keep the projects going. Kuhn asked the commission if they would be ok with \$100,000 versus the \$162,069 requested.

Mitchell asked if this would be a different conversation if it were per capita based, Hackman said probably.

Mitchell believes it is going to cost the taxpayers more in law suits if we can't come to some sort of agreement.

Schwickerath asked if there would be any of the \$100,000 from major equipment fund left that would be dumped into pooled cash, Bernatz advised that the spec sheets that he has received from the vendor range from \$180,000 to \$200,000. Bernatz advised that the trailer will be purchased out of the current budget

and the customization will be paid for with the next budget. Options will be removed from spec sheets to keep project within budget.

Laudner advised that the commission chooses the budget request and dictates that to the Board of Supervisors for funding, they are obligated to fund it.

Motion by Taylor, second by Mueterthies to request \$100,000.00 from the county for FY24 Emergency Management budget. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

Motion by Mitchell, second by Schwickerath to set the public hearing for the Chickasaw County Emergency Management budget for February 13, 2023 at 5:10 pm at the Community Services Building at 260 E Prospect, New Hampton, IA 50659

EMS discussion. Bernatz discussed the option of him being allowed to at least get on the roster of the new county owned ambulance service. Bernatz has put in a lot of time and effort to get the new ambulance up and running and would like to be a part of it. Taylor expressed that it would be hard to deny someone with the desire to run ambulance when there clearly is a need. Taylor believes there is a need to figure out the HR side and how it needs to work. Kuhn advised that employment and insurance would need to be decided with the help of the county's HR attorney. Dettmer agrees, finding someone with the desire to do it is hard to come by, so if you have someone you better take advantage.

Anderson gave an operation update of the county ambulance service.

Motion by Mitchell, second by Taylor to adjourn at 7:54 pm. All Ayes. Motion Carried.



Jeff Bernatz, Coordinator
Chickasaw County Emergency Management