

WEAKLEY COUNTY, TENNESSEE
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
Thursday, June 1, 2017 - 9:00 a.m.

Public Safety Committee Members Present: Commissioners Scott Fortner, James Bynum, Larry Hudson, Earl Wright, and David Hawks

Public Safety Committee Members Absent: Commissioner James Roy Pope

The Public Safety Committee met on Thursday, June 1, 2017, at 9:00 a.m. in board room at the Board of Education/Department of Finance in Dresden. Others present included Mayor Jake Bynum, Finance Director John Liggett, Youth Services Officer Keith Jones, Emergency Management Director Jamison Peevyhouse, Dispatch Supervisor Christy Fulcher, County Clerk Kim Hughey, Rick Workman, Bob Dudley, Dresden City Mayor Jeff Washburn. Also in attendance were County Commissioners James H. Westbrook, Jr., Roger Donaldson, Roger VanCleave, Eric Owen, and representatives of the media.

Chairperson Scott Fortner called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Commissioner Hawks made the motion to approve the minutes from the May 4, 2017 committee meeting, and with a second by Commissioner Wright, the motion to approve passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Resolution No. 2017-40

This resolution moves \$15,000 out of 54110-106 (Sheriff's Department – Deputies) and moves it into 54210-340 (Jail - Medical and Dental Services) for the purposes of an increase in medical expenses for the inmates at the Detention Center. Having no discussion, Commissioner Wright made the motion to approve Resolution 2017-40 and recommend it to the Finance, Ways and Means Committee, and with a second by Commissioner Hudson, the motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION OF FRANCHISE AGREEMENT

Chairperson Fortner recognized Dresden City Mayor Jeff Washburn who began by stating that he has been the CEO of the Ambulance Services since 1983. He said he was unaware of any existing troubles going on with the Ambulance Service and stated that it was the first time he had heard of any issues. He stated that he had not personally been given enough prior notice of the meeting.

Chairperson Fortner recognized Commissioner Donaldson who stated that some of his District's constituents expressed to him that they have had to experience lengthy wait times for an ambulance, and stated that he was concerned for the residents who may be experiencing a life and death emergency. He briefly mentioned that he had heard about some new legislation coming down the line that might help with that issue at a conference he had attended.

Mr. Washburn asked whether the Ambulance Service had violated the franchise agreement that was in place, and stated that he believed that Tennova Hospital in Martin should treat patients in house in lieu of shipping out all of the treatment to Jackson or Nashville.

Conversation continued regarding issues surrounding the availability of ambulances, scenarios and situations when all ambulances are tied up simultaneously, and the lack of communication between the community mayors and the Ambulance Service.

Mr. Washburn commented on the fact that there had been no subsidy increase since 1998. He then went on to name multiple locations where he said Tennova Hospital buys the existing hospital and subsequently closes it down, including Haywood County and McNairy County. Mr. Washburn said that he believes that Tennova Hospital is trying to force the sale of the ambulance service to them so that patients will have to go to Tennova Hospitals when being transported by ambulance.

Chairperson Fortner recognized Commissioner Hudson who asked why Mr. Washburn wasn't addressed with any of these issues prior to the meeting.

Chairperson Fortner recognized Commissioner Wright who commented that it was a surprise that more information hadn't been communicated regarding what seemed to be a large problem, but said that he believed everyone could work together to make the ambulance service better.

Conversation was had about mutual aid agreements, the dramatic rise in the need for emergency medical services, the need for a new plan of action, and how to streamline communications and potential solutions going forward.

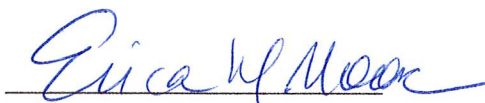
Commissioner Wright made the recommendation that Chairperson Fortner contact each of the mayors of all the municipalities personally, and request that they keep a list with specific enough issues that the Ambulance Service can act upon it, and send those issues to Mr. Rick Workman at the Ambulance Service approximately every 30 days so that the information and issue is still fresh and can be acted upon. Chairperson Fortner stated that he would indeed contact each Mayor personally.

Commissioner Hawks made the motion that in September 2017, all Mayors, the hospital administrator, the nursing home administrator, and Mr. Washburn be invited to attend a Public Safety Committee Meeting to discuss problems that each entity is experiencing, and come forward with possible solutions and ideas to solve problems; furthermore, he added that when problems do arise, the appropriate department or person should be notified of the issue so that solutions might be put in motion at the time of the notification, and with a second by Commissioner Wright, the motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Hawks asked that the parties be notified in no more than two weeks of the scheduled September meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Having no other business, Commissioner Hawks made the motion to adjourn and with a second by Commissioner Hudson, the meeting was adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Erica Moore, Secretary
Public Safety Committee

Approved:



Scott Fortner, Chairperson
Public Safety Committee

Date: 6-14-17