

**WEAKLEY COUNTY, TENNESSEE
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE****Monday, June 4, 2018 – 9:00 a.m. - Conference Room, Weakley County Department of Finance****Public Safety Committee Members Present:** Commissioners Scott Fortner, James Bynum, David Hawks, Earl Wright, and Larry Hudson**Public Safety Committee Members Absent:** Commissioner James Roy Pope

The Public Safety Committee met on Monday, June 4, 2018, at 9:00 a.m. in the conference room at the Department of Finance in Dresden. Others present included Mayor Jake Bynum, Director of Finance John Liggett, Emergency Management Director Dustin Kemp, 911 Director Christy Fulcher; County Commissioners Dennis Doster, Larry Taylor, Gary Eddings, Eric Owen, and Roger Donaldson; Rick Workman and Jeff Washburn – Representatives from Weakley County Ambulance Service, Joyce Noles – Representative from West Tennessee Health Care, Eric Messner – Representative from Priority Ambulance affiliated with Baptist, and three representatives of the media.

Chairperson Scott Fortner called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

Approval of Minutes:

Commissioner Hawks made the motion to approve the minutes from the June 4, 2018, committee meeting, and with a second by Commissioner Wright, the motion to approve passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:**DISCUSSION OF AMBULANCE SERVICE REQUESTS FOR PROPOSAL [RFPs]**

Chairperson Fortner asked Finance Director Liggett to open to floor with a bit of background about the RFPs, and Director Liggett explained that the Ambulance services for the county were bid out in the form of an RFP with a due deadline of Friday, June 1, 2018, at 3:00 p.m. He stated that there were 4 proposals submitted and that all of the most pertinent information had been previously emailed to the committee, as well as provided in the packets before them.

Commissioner Hawks asked that all of the representatives who would be speaking on behalf of their organizations and submitted proposals answer two questions: 1. Provide locations where all ambulances will be kept; and 2. Answer whether or not the service will be prepared to be up and running with full services on July 1, 2018.

Medical Center EMS – West TN Healthcare

Mrs. Joyce Noles, Executive Director for Medical Center EMS for West TN Healthcare, began by stating that they would like to keep all ambulances in all the current cities. She stated that they would be ready to begin services by July 1st, and are asking for a 3 year contract with no subsidy request from the county. She stated that her submitted proposal includes 3 ambulances with a fourth paramedic truck with a supervisor on duty at all times, and asked that the current Weakley County dispatch take care of the call and transfer data to Jackson Madison County Hospital. She stated that as of Friday, June 1st, West TN Health Care is the owner of the hospital in Martin, and said that patients will be given to option to choose his or her preferred hospital, but that in the case of a life or death situation, the patient will be taken to the nearest facility.

Baptist Ambulance – Priority Ambulance Affiliate

Mr. Eric Messner, Vice President for Ambulance Operations for Baptist Ambulance, started by saying that his organization's proposal included a 3 year contract with 2 one-year rollovers at no subsidy to the county that would be ready to go on July 1st. He went on to say that he would like to lease the current ambulance locations if possible, and stated that they would purchase 3-5 new ambulances that would be ready in August, and

mentioned that they would be utilizing Carroll and Obion Counties. He said that their plan was to add a 12 hour day care ambulance in Carroll County and a fourth ambulance supervisor truck. He said that patients will be given to option to choose his or her preferred hospital, but that in the case of a life or death situation, the patient will be taken to the nearest facility. He said that his proposal includes 3 ambulances staffed 24/7 and one extra ambulance. He stated that one requirement outlined in the proposal was that Baptist Ambulance would require an exclusive franchise in the county, and said that Weakley County's current 911 dispatch will serve as primary answering point for Weakley County.

MedicOne Medical Response

There was not a representative from MedicOne present. Chairperson Fortner read some pertinent information from the proposal, including that they were proposing 4 twenty-four hour staffed ambulances with a subsidy of \$650,000 to the county and a breakout of \$54,166.66 monthly.

Weakley County Ambulance Service

Mr. Jeff Washburn, CEO of the Weakley County Ambulance Service, began by saying that his proposal included four ambulances with a new implementation of a fifth ambulance during the times when call volume is the heaviest, with a subsidy to the county of \$300,000 for 3-5 years. Mr. Washburn said that Weakley County Ambulance Service, holder of the current county ambulance service contract, would continue to take patients to their choice of hospital and in the case of life and death, they will continue to take the patient to the nearest appropriate facility. He said that the WC Ambulance Service would continue to accept direct dispatch as they had for over 30 years, and stated that he knows from experience that there is no way the county can function with good service with only 3 ambulances. Mr. Washburn talked about his cognizance of the increase in patient transport, the current contract, former retention issues that are on the mend, mutual aid, the costs of new ambulances that reaches upwards to \$193,000, and the subsidy costs in other counties.

Mr. Washburn asked what would happen in 3 to 5 years and whether the county would be required to pay a subsidy. Mr. Messner from Baptist stated that no subsidy would ever be required to Weakley County, and that we could call any county who currently uses Baptist Ambulance for proof.

Commissioner Hudson asked Mr. Washburn if he is paid for his role as CEO of the Weakley County Ambulance Service, and Mr. Washburn stated that he is not paid. He went on to say that if he were working on one of the trucks, he would be paid for his service, but that he chooses not to work as an EMT anymore.

Mr. Washburn stated that Weakley County Ambulance Service is a non-profit organization, Mrs. Noles stated that Medical Center EMS is a not-for-profit organization, and Mr. Messner said that Baptist Ambulance is a for-profit organization. Mr. Messner also said that Weakley County can simply re-bid the services after 5 years and will see that no subsidy will be requested from Baptist Ambulance.

Mayor Bynum stated that currently with Weakley County Ambulance Service, the Weakley County Sheriff's Department is not paying for prisoner transport. He said that Medical Center EMS and Baptist Ambulance would require there be a fee for inmate transport. Mr. Washburn of WC Ambulance Service said that he would continue to use those same practices, as well as the many other public assist calls and the community service support that they have always provided. Mr. Messner of Baptist Ambulance explained that Medicare and federal mandates requires that someone must be billed if he or she is put into an ambulance, and they always comply with federal regulations.

There was a bit of discussion about the fact that only three ambulances were presented as included in some of the proposals, when the RFP specifically requested four. Both Mr. Messner and Mrs. Noles explained that their organizations evaluate need according to historic call volume and that only 3 ambulances were seen as currently

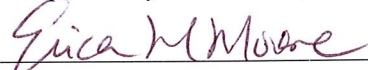
necessary, but went on to say that if the need for more ambulances is identified, more ambulances will be certainly added.

Chairperson Fortner asked if the committee would like to go into recess to discuss recommendations and nominations. Commissioner Hawks said that he would need until the next committee meeting, scheduled for Thursday, June 7, 2018, to make any decisions. Commissioner Hawks made the motion to decide on a recommendation for ambulance service contract for Weakley County at the next meeting on Thursday, June 7, 2018, and with a second by Commissioner Hudson, the motion passed unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

Having no other business, Commissioner Hawks made the motion to adjourn the meeting and with a second by Commissioner Bynum, the meeting was adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Erica Moore, Secretary
Public Safety Committee

Approved:



Scott Fortner, Chairperson
Public Safety Committee

Date: 6-07-18