

SPRINGVILLE TOWNSHIP
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
JULY 26, 2018

Meeting was called to order by Supervisor Clyde Kastl at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. Present: Clyde Kastl, Sharon Girard, Mickey Sparks, Beverly Walton and Cheryl Leatherman. Public present: Laurie Dayton, Jalene Croel, Deborah Stanton, Garry Jewett, Sue Boyko, Rod Keillor, Craig Gabier, Otto Ream, Sandy Ream, Richard Crossman, Ryan Mercer, Nickolas Hawkins, Paul Owens, Ben Townsend, Jessica Boonstra, Diane Stanton, and about 30 other unnamed public. Richard Cross, EMT, the Secretary from the Mesick Rescue Squad and another MRS EMT were present, as was the Sue Boyko, Director of North Flight, the Manager of North Flight and another North Flight Paramedic.

Chair Kastl read an opening statement concerning the meeting and voicing any opinions or questions in a decent manner. There was a 3-minute limit to any speeches that would be made.

Ms. Girard read an opening statement naming the amount the millage increase would be per the average house tax bill and read the difference between the EMT's and Paramedics.

Richard Crossman, EMT stated that all the EMT's at MSU were certified in life saving techniques, but that the cost increases were mainly due to an increase in salaries. The salary budget ten years ago was \$25,000 per year because volunteers were paid per ambulance run, while the salary presently due to full time staffing of the MSU 24/7, is \$175,000. Insurance 12 years ago was \$12,000. Insurance now is \$27,000. He also stated that the increase in transfers with Blair Rescue Squad went up from \$250 to \$390 per call. He stated that 40% of the runs goes to Cadillac Munson, but all trauma victims have to go to TC Munson. They bill the victim's insurance for approx. 80%, while the .75 millage contract with the township pays for the 20% of the Springville resident.

Another unidentified person stated that their ambulance bill just received was \$1655.

A North Flight EMT stated that Medicare paid \$348 for Basic Life Service Emergent run and \$218 for a non-emergent run.

A question was asked as to the current contract and how long the new millage would last. It was answered by Ms. Girard that 2.25 mills would be the increase in November to the already .75 mills now being received. The 2.25 increase would be good for the next two years running concurrently with the .75 mills. Then a new millage would have to be passed for 3 mill by November of 2020.

Craig Gabier gave a perspective of his 44 years on the MRS and the difference in the modernization and that the cost of medical supplies has gone up.

Sue Boyko, Director of North Flight gave information as to how North Flight now works in Wexford County. They have 2 ambulances in Cadillac and 1 in Manton presently. She stated that the increase in cost for North Flight has had a 24% increase, and that they have to write off about

50% of their bills as uncollectable. She stated that Springville would need a millage no matter which direction they went, whether to stay with MRS or go with North Flight.

Cheryl Leatherman stated that she simply was concerned about getting the best emergency ambulance service for the money that the township residents could get, and if the township could get better ambulance service with more highly trained EMT's with North Flight than we should be searching that out.

Tom Williams, Supervisor of Antioch and 20-year fire chief in Springville, informed that the township supervisors and the MRS make up an advisory committee, but that the committee does not make any decisions, especially financial decisions for the MRS. In answering someone's question about meeting with the MRS concerning their budget, he stated that there have been constant meetings over the years, but the Supervisors have not received the answers they have asked in order for the MRS to be accountable to the taxpayers. He stated that he had the records from the MRS since 2004, and as of two years ago they had over \$467,000 in the bank. Since then they have overspent their budget by at least \$50,000 per year and more than double that this past year. He stated that Slagle Township has already rejected placing the millage increase on the budget.

Richard Crossman of MRS stated that Slagle Township has notified the MRS that the contract between Slagle and MRS has been decided to dissolve by October.

Ben Townsend stated how much he appreciated the MRS saving his family during their accident on 9-11-2001 but that he had some questions as to the discrepancy in the various costs he was told about the new ambulance. Mr. Cross cleared this up by answering that the basic cost of the ambulance was \$160,000, but that there was a \$30,000 lift cot added and another \$10,000 item was added later. Ben then asked Sue Boyko what an EMT with North Flight was paid per hour, and she stated it was roughly \$20 per hour. The MRS EMT's are now being paid \$7.50 per hour, and it was determined that this was a huge sacrifice for the service in Springville. Ben thanked the MRS EMT's for their personal sacrifice for the community.

Otto Ream made the point that there is always an ambulance at school games which has saved the lives of student/athletes injured before and was there going to be an ambulance at these games if the MRS was no longer around. This was answered that by law there will always be an ambulance at these games for the safety of anyone injured at a game.

Sandy Ream asked the board why there was not a second to the motion at the last board meeting to adopt the increase millage to be placed on the November ballot. This was answered by the board that there were questions that still remained concerning the MRS accountability to the townships it serves, and that was the purpose of this meeting was to get public input as to the pros and cons from the public. Sandy then stated that if there are differences between the township board and the MRS that a mediator could be called upon to hear both sides and make a recommendation. She based this upon the contracts of the teachers at the school and the school board that called in a mediator for that contract.

Kathy Abel stated that Antioch Township was having a meeting concerning this issue next Monday night. Her concerns were that there was no accountability in spending the money.

Ms. Boyko stated that Wexford County gives North Flight \$25,000 each year which would only pay for three EMT's for three months.

Ben Townsend asked if the \$25,000 that Wexford County gives was for "Educational Purposes" and was answered in the affirmative. He suggested that some of the money per year could be utilized to help upgrade the training of the MRS EMT's and not just North Flight.

Ms. Boyko was asked to sum up what she had heard at this point in the meeting, and she stated that either way Springville Township decided, there still would have to be a millage to support or subsidize ambulance service no matter what.

Butch on front row asked the question, "What is a human life worth?" And would people be willing to pay a little extra to help save lives.

Deborah Stanton, Mesick Clerk, stated that the Mesick Treasurer, Lorie would volunteer to help with the MRS books and budget. At that point the MRS Treasurer Jim was there and stated that he was willing to take whatever help he could get. At this point it was stated that North Flight does the MRS billing.

Someone asked how the MRS was organized. It was answered that it was a 501(c)3 Not-for-profit organization.

Greg Bailey stated that he was willing to pay the extra \$160 per year to keep the MRS here in Mesick. He stated that if he had a heart attack that he would not want to wait until another ambulance could get there to save his life.

Chair Kastl asked if there were any more comments. There were none. There was some discussion on the board as to the procedure for bring this to a board motion at this meeting or at a regularly called meeting of the township board. It was determined by the board members that there was a quorum of the board present at this meeting and if the members of the board wanted to bring the motion at this meeting, they had the prerogative.

Chair Kastl moved to place the 2.25 Millage increase on the November Ballot. Cheryl Leatherman seconded. A voice vote was called, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Sparks moved for adjournment, supported by several board members, and passed unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:52.

Springville Township Deputy Clerk,

Jessica Boonstra