



The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners met in special session on Tuesday, August 9th, 2022 at 4:00 pm in the Board Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, 348 South Main Street, Sparta, North Carolina.

Present: Chair Bill Osborne, Commissioner Mark Evans, Commissioner Bobby Irwin, Commissioner Mechelle Luffman, Commissioner John Irwin, County Manager, Michael Carter, County Attorney, Heather Klein and Clerk to the Board, Drew Todd.

Alleghany County Board of Commissioners

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County Commissioners

Bill Osborne
Bobby Irwin
Mark Evans
Mechelle Luffman
John U. Irwin, Jr.

County Manager
Michael L. Carter

Clerk to the Board
Drew Todd

County Attorney
Heather R. Klein

AGENDA

Tuesday, August 9th, 2022
4:00 pm

4:00 Meeting called to order
Approval of Agenda

A. 4:05 EMS Staffing/Scheduling Discussion

B. Adjourn

Commissioner Mechelle Luffman made a motion to approve the agenda.
Commissioner Bobby Irwin seconded. Vote 4:0.

County Manager, Michael Carter explained that EMS has continued to provide service over the past 2 years despite critical staffing levels sometimes going to one truck during day and nighttime hours. He explained the prior staffing at EMS was 12 full-time paramedics but sometimes we were down as many 3 employees. He said pay, time off and overall working environment all attributed to turnover and staffing levels. He said we have experienced difficulties filling these specialized positions.

Linda Edwards, EMS Director explained the frustrations employees were having at EMS. She said the squad has not had to do any transports during the two weeks since the schedule changed. She said she has filled the 2 vacant positions since raises and schedule change was implemented. She explained the "Modified 24/48" schedule. She said she received another paramedic application yesterday because of the overtime pay.

April Hamm, HR Officer said EMS hasn't had full staff since May 2020. She said raising the salary \$3,000 and paying straight time and a half overtime made us competitive with surrounding counties. She said we are waiting on the EMT-Basic contract to come back from the attorney.

Drew Todd, Assistant County Manager explained the changes to the internal Transport Policy to go along with the proposed "Modified 24/48" schedule. The change would be extending the latest routine transport to Baptist/Forsyth time to 8 pm.

County Manager, Michael Carter said it will take 2 additional employees to change to the “Modified 24/28.” He said it also allows to have the second truck back during all hours. He said of the candidates for these positions, it is likely first of September before both spots can start. He said the true cost of these employees in a 10-month scenario is around \$112,000. He said by using the \$25,000 per month average of the ¼ cent sale tax revenues, for FY22/23, using 4-5 months of these monies will cover the cost. He said adding 2 employees to EMS will not exceed the EMS budget before we start recognizing the ¼ cent sales tax revenues. He suggested at Monday’s meeting, the Board consider hiring the 2 additional employees. He said if we are successful, we should offer the positions to them. He said we have reduced part-time EMS employees because the roster included employees who hadn’t worked in months. He said he realizes there is a lot of unpopularity, criticism and rudeness associated with these decisions but it has gotten us to this goal.

There was discussion about transports when a “bed” at the receiving hospital becomes available after 8 pm.

There was discussion about the criteria for someone to drive an ambulance, EMT-Basic, Advanced EMT or EMT-Paramedic.

Linda Edwards explained that if EMS is responding within Sparta Fire District, the Rescue Squad is on Standby and if they are in any other district, they are on Active Standby meaning they are physically at the squad building.

Dr. Bryant said there are things in the Transport Policy that need to be adjusted if possible.

Linda Edwards said it is not written in policy where EMS will standby on structure fires. She said it was an understanding that when the Rescue Squad arrived at a fire, EMS was cleared.

Joseph McGrady said it’s a recipe for disaster not to have ALS service at every structure fire.

There was consensus among the Board to put this change on the agenda for Monday.

Michael Carter said he would like to expedite the interview process for the individual who has not been interviewed yet.

Dr. Bryant asked about putting the second ambulance back on in the interim.

Michael Carter said he is not interested in going backwards with the momentum in EMS. He confirmed that as soon as notices are given and pre-employment is completed, the second ambulance will be back in service 24/7.

Adjourn

Commissioner Bobby Irwin made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Mechelle Luffman seconded. Vote 5:0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Drew Todd
Clerk to the Board

Bill Osborne
Chairman