

FULTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Thursday, August 4, 2022

Meeting Called to Order at 9:00 a.m. with Pledge to the Flag. Present: Bryan Lewis, Rick Ranstead, 911 Director Gail Karas, County Attorney Holli Shorter-Pifer. and Auditor Christina Sriver. Not present: David Sommers.

EMS SERVICES FOR FULTON COUNTY – Gail Karas opened the floor for introductions. Those in attendance:

Jeri Good: LEPC Chairman and Coroner
Brad Rogers: Chief Operating Officer, Woodlawn Hospital
Alan Fisher: CEO, Woodlawn Hospital
Alicia Mediano: EMS Director, Lutheran EMS
Jay Brainard: EMS Manager Peru
Jeff Caesar: Lutheran Health Network
Teri deMatas: Luther Health Network
Wesley Dehne: Rochester Sentinel
Randy Wynn: WROI Radio
Phyl Olinger: Fulton County Council
John Geier: Fulton County Highway (Superintendent)
Craig Brouyette: Pike Lumber Company
Rebecca Hartzler: Akron Clerk-Treasurer
Janet Hackworth: EMS Board, Akron Representative
Jim Saner: Akron Town Council
Aaron Gearhart: Henry Township Fire Department
Maurice Siders: Constituent
Doran Collins: Kewanna Town Council
Justin Gearhart: Henry Township Fire Department

Gail used Miami County/Duke Memorial Hospital for comparison to Fulton County. In response to Gail's questions representatives of Luther responded: EMS services for Miami County are run out of Duke Hospital as agreed to prior to Lutheran acquiring the hospital; Miami County has three ambulances that are stationed at the hospital.

Question: What is the agenda with Lutheran EMS for the next 3 years? (reference the rumor of them pulling the ambulance service out)

Jeff Caesar: Lutheran has every intent to safely fulfil the current contract with Fulton County. It is unclear if any additional ambulances will be pulled from the county.

Question: What is the cost to maintain service in the county without performing transfers?



Jeff Caesar: Increasing fuel costs, obtaining and retaining staff, and acquiring ambulances are obstacles with the EMS service. If there was a formal request to add an ambulance leadership would need to sit down to figure the cost.

Commissioner Ranstead commented that there should have been communication prior to the Akron ambulance being pulled.

Question: What is the cost to station an ambulance in Henry Township area with a total of three allocated to Fulton County? How are the ambulances stationed?

Jeff Caesar: A formal protocol can be written to give an overview of operations and what-if scenarios.

Gail gathered figures from Miami County for comparison; Jeff Caesar requests copy. Miami County has had 590 transfers versus 725 in Fulton County with 274 medical standbys. Miami County has 2,630 medical transports so far in 2022 with 2,126 in Fulton County. Jeff believes that Miami hospital does less transfers than Woodlawn; he will verify once receiving the information from Gail.

Question: What percentage of calls are Medicare/Medicaid and what percentage is insurance?

Jeff Caesar: Lutheran will later provide figures.

Ambulance coverage is the biggest concern for Gail when looking at volunteers. Where the ambulances are stationed will have an impact on purchasing more LUCAS devices to house throughout the county.

Rebecca Hartzler stated Akron would like the Commissioners to continue to provide the services that had been provided in June and prior.

The contract (between Lutheran and the County) says there are three locations that can be used, but not that there will be an ambulance at each of the three locations. The Commissioners are requesting a proposal from Lutheran to provide ambulance service in each of the three locations (Akron, Rochester, Kewanna) as had been provided previously. The intent of the contract was to house an ambulance at each of the three locations although it does not clearly state that. Currently there are two ambulances in two locations, Rochester and Kewanna, with the loss of the ambulance in Akron.

Brad Rogers stated Woodlawn Hospital will have to change policies and processes depending on the outcome of ambulance services. Patients' families wait times for transportations could change from a couple of hours to ten to twelve hours and would change the needs of the hospital. Alan Fisher stated the ambulance is the patient's responsibly, not Woodlawn: except in the case of testing. Patients at Woodlawn are two-thirds Medicare/Medicaid. Of the two-thirds, half are Medicare and half are Medicaid.

Jeff Caesar stated that the response times are being tracked and they are happy to share data regarding response times. The County is broken down into west, central, east and the county as a whole in response time; the overall response time has increased 7 seconds after removing the ambulance from Akron. The ambulances are pulled from a network, such as Bourbon, to help cover areas.

Jeri Good stated that we once had four ambulances and are now down to two, demographics are changing with an aging population and deaths have increased.

Question: At the Akron meeting Jeff gave an example with a transport out of Woodlawn hospital (using Rochester ambulance) and the Kewanna truck moved into Rochester to cover. If there is a medical call in

Akron at that point the Kewanna truck goes to Akron, if Kewanna would have a call where would the ambulance come to Kewanna from? Is that when you would pull from the network/surrounding counties?

Jeff Caesar stated these things will be documented in the formal plan.

Question: What was the catalyst after 7 years of the 10-year contract to pull an ambulance at this time?

Jeff Caesar stated market dynamics come into play, continually looking to be efficient and doing it in a safe and quality manner.

Questions: Considering the concern of the County, has it changed any thoughts of putting the ambulance back in Akron?

Jeff Caesar stated the decision was driven by metrics, the data does not support replacement.

An EMT in attendance stated that he feels that there has not been a loss of service. He feels the situation is dynamic, the same care is provided.

Question: The decision was based on market dynamics and metrics, was the data analyzed based on Fulton County or was it broader in demographic? What period of time?

Jeff Caesar stated the data was based on specifics in Fulton County using data back to 2018.

Question: With the heavy industry and school in Akron, why was the ambulance pulled?

Jeff Caesar stated that the area makes up 14% of the calls for the County. The Akron ambulance that was stationed in Akron only responded 25% of the time to the Akron area. The Akron ambulance was always moving and going everywhere.

Question: Was there ever thought of putting an ambulance in Kewanna and Akron (rural areas) rather than in Rochester?

Jeff Caesar stated 70% of calls come from the central Rochester area; 15% come from the west, the other 15% come from the east (Akron area). The overall response time has gone up 7 seconds.

Question: Is Lutheran thinking of adding another ambulance?

Jeff Caesar stated Lutheran wouldn't be here if it wasn't a discussion, he appreciates the partnership. It's all about coming to a reasonable solution.

Jim Saner, Akron Town Board President, stated when Lutheran took over he was sure Akron would lose their ambulance. He promised constituents when he joined the Town Board that he would keep an ambulance in Akron and will support Woodlawn Hospital to have an ambulance back in Akron if necessary.

Question: When is the next meeting, how soon can it be scheduled?

Commissioner Lewis stated the next meeting can be scheduled when Lutheran can provide a number to the County. Jeff Caesar will respond with a better timeline by next Wednesday. Lutheran will need some time to understand all the stakeholders and their expectations. By next Wednesday Jeff will have a date of when the next meeting could be.

Question: The next agenda will include putting a plan on the table with the proper folks that need to speak with the Commissioners?

Jeff Caesar stated the metrics questions and protocols will be delivered right away. To be able to come to the table to say exactly what it looks like will take time.

Commissioner Ranstead stated that the County needs a price for the remainder of the contract and the contract will be amended to state where the ambulances will be stationed.

Jeff will deliver a timeline to the Commissioners next week.

RESOLUTION FOR CDL TRAINING – Commissioner Lewis read the proposed resolution aloud:

**RESOLUTION #08042022
CONCERNING EMPLOYMENT WITH REQUIRED CDL
FOR FULTON COUNTY HIGHWAY EMPLOYEES**

WHEREAS the job description for Laborers at Fulton County Highway Department requires a CDL; and

WHEREAS the Fulton County Commissioners understand there is a cost to acquire a CDL; and

WHEREAS there is a concern that requiring a CDL prior to employment may be burdening the Highway Department in finding qualified applicants; and

WHEREAS it is necessary to operations of the Highway Department to employ individuals who possess a CDL.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Fulton County Commissioners agree to the following:

1. Newly hired Highway Department employees will have up to six (6) months, during the probationary period to acquire a CDL.
2. An employee, whom is unable to acquire a CDL during the six (6) month probationary period, must be granted a waiver to stay employed.
3. Such waiver must be approved by the Highway Superintendent and the Fulton County Commissioners.
4. Any such waiver to extend employment to acquire a CDL, will be granted for three (3) months at a time.
5. Any Highway Department employee who already possesses a Class B CDL will have the option of acquiring a Class A CDL.
Expenses of obtaining a CDL

1. The cost for obtaining a CDL in regards to school/training/testing will be paid for by the Fulton County Highway Department.
2. A vehicle to travel to the school/training/testing site will be provided by the Fulton County Highway Department.
3. Employees obtaining a CDL will be paid their normal hourly wage while attending school/training/testing.
4. Newly hired employees wishing to obtain a CDL or existing employees wishing to obtain a Class A CDL, will be required to stay employed for a minimum of two (2) years after acquiring the CDL.
5. Employees who fail to stay employed (regardless of reason) with the Fulton County Highway Department for two (2) years after obtaining a CDL will be required to reimburse the Highway Department for all expenses paid for school/training/testing.

This resolution will be in full force and affect upon passage, and will remain in effect for two (2) years upon passage unless extended by the Fulton County Commissioners.

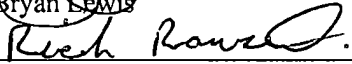
Commissioner Ranstead motioned to approve, Commissioner Lewis seconded; carries 2-0.

RECESS – Commissioner Ranstead motioned to recess at 10:18 a.m., seconded by Commissioner Lewis; carries 2-0.

FULTON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



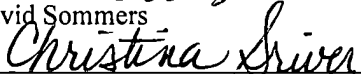
Bryan Lewis



Rick Ranstead

(absent) 

David Sommers



Christina Sriver

Attest: Christina Sriver, County Auditor

I affirm under penalties of perjury, that I have taken reasonable care to redact each social security number in this document, unless required by law: Christina Sriver

Prepared by: Christina Sriver