



August 7, 2014

The City of Corsicana received notice last week that Navarro County Commissioners would not provide the necessary funding for the City to continue Emergency Medical Services for County residents. The contract to provide EMS between the City and the County requires both parties to meet and negotiate an agreed-upon subsidy to be paid by the County to the City. If the amount is not agreed upon, the contract may be cancelled by either party. The contract has been in effect since 2002. Every year a mutual agreement has been reached until last year. In 2013, the City requested additional funding to cover the cost of adding six new firefighters to the EMS payroll. These positions were added to provide service to County residents and not take fire protection away from the City. The City has provided a good service to the County at a fair price for twelve years. Now that the cost of operation has increased, the subsidy from the County must increase as well. The County declined to provide additional funding last year. In light of two years without sufficient subsidy, the City has cancelled the service. The City will provide EMS for six months to the County residents while the Commissioners search for another EMS provider.

The County should move forward to secure a similar service as that provided by the City. Given the size of the County and the length of time to reach patients in various areas, there should be three ambulances housed within the County and available for use to offer the same service enjoyed by County residences as in the past. The City provided a total of six ambulances to cover both the City and the County, and history indicates this is a sufficient number. If the County can find service with three or more ambulances for less than \$430,000 and continue the same quality of care, then Commissioners should contract for this service.

The question all taxpayers should ask is: "What does EMS actually cost me?" The best way to figure the cost would be on a per person basis. According to the 2010 census, Navarro County has approximately 47,735 residents. If the total subsidy is calculated accounting for cash payments, forgone revenue, and in-kind service by each entity then divided by the population served this would give a per person cost.

In summary:

In 2014, the County's contribution is \$275,000. This means the County will pay \$11 per person for the 23,965 people living outside the city limits for EMS.

In 2014, the City's contribution is \$779,004. The City will pay \$33 per person for EMS for the 23,770 people living within the city limits.

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For 2015, the City is asking the County to contribute \$430,000. This would mean the County would pay \$18 per person for EMS.

For 2015, the City's contribution will be approximately \$1,005,912. The citizens of Corsicana will pay \$42 per person for EMS.

If all of the Navarro County taxpayers, including those that live within the City of Corsicana, are included in the computation, then the citizens of Navarro County are paying \$9 per person while the residents of Corsicana are actually paying \$51 per person for EMS.

Approximately half of the taxable value in Navarro County is within the city limits of Corsicana. The amount requested for the 2015 EMS subsidy is \$430,000 which is \$155,000 more than 2014. The total budgeted revenues for the County in 2014 are \$32,852,905. The additional amount requested equals only 0.5% of the total revenues and that alone should not require a tax increase! To raise taxes on the citizens of Corsicana to help pay for services already being subsidized by the City would amount to double taxation.

It is my hope, along with the members of the City Council, that the County will ultimately negotiate a new contract to allow the City to continue to provide EMS to all residents of Navarro County. The quality of service given by the Corsicana firefighters is undisputedly the best.

Kindest Regards,

Chuck McClanahan
Mayor