

**MEETING MINUTES**  
***Monroe County Income Tax Council***  
***Public Safety Option Income Tax Committee***

***Nat U. Hill Meeting Room***  
**Monroe County Courthouse, 100 West Kirkwood, Bloomington, Indiana**  
**July 27, 2017**  
**5:30pm**

Allison Chopra called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL

Committee Members Present: Allison Chopra (Bloomington Common Council), Susan Sandberg (Bloomington Common Council), Isabel Piedmont-Smith (Bloomington Common Council), Dorothy Granger (Bloomington Common Council), Ryan Cobine (Monroe County Council), Cheryl Munson (Monroe County Council), Scott Oldham (Ellettsville Town Council), Lois Purcell (Stinesville Town Council)

Staff Present: Jeff Schemmer (Communications Manager, Monroe County Central Emergency Dispatch), Mick Renneisen (Deputy Mayor, City of Bloomington), Michael Diekhoff (Chief of Police, City of Bloomington), Jeffrey Underwood (Controller, City of Bloomington), Dan Sherman (Council Attorney/Administrator, City of Bloomington), Michael Flory (Council Attorney, Monroe County), Stacy Jane Rhoads (Deputy Council Attorney/Administrator, City of Bloomington)

2. AGENDA SUMMATION

Ms. Chopra gave a summary of the agenda.

3. APPLICATION PRESENTATION FROM THE TOWN OF STINESVILLE

Ms. Purcell presented the proposal from Stinesville and detailed the items contained in the town's request. She explained the need for the requested items.

Ms. Piedmont-Smith asked if there were any grants available for the kinds of purchases proposed. Ms. Purcell said she did not know.

Ms. Sandberg asked if Spencer contributed to Stinesville's department as Stinesville periodically helped respond in Owen County. Ms. Purcell said Spencer did not contribute financially, but some of Stinesville's volunteers came from an Owen County fire department, and responding was a matter of common courtesy.

Mr. Cobine asked who would apply for external funds, such as grants. He asked if it would fall on the fire fighters themselves. Ms. Purcell said yes, that was often the case. Mr. Cobine asked if there was a potential staffing issue, considering everyone in the fire department was part-time and not able to raise funds due to working several jobs. Ms. Purcell confirmed that was an issue.

Ms. Chopra asked if the proposed items would be primarily used for mutual or automatic aid. Ms. Purcell said that the Stinesville Fire Department responded every time there was trouble on White River. She noted that County Line Road flooded a lot and people would ignore the posted gates and signs. She said that some of the equipment would be used outside of the department's coverage area, but the department also responded to calls from Stinesville residents out on White River.

Mr. Cobine informed the committee he would likely move to postpone item five on the agenda to the August meeting. He stated that he would like to make a presentation about the budget, which he had not had time to prepare.

#### 4. FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS ON THE REPORT FROM UNIFIED CENTRAL DISPATCH POLICY BOARD – RE: RECOMMENDED ADJUSTMENT IN THE PUBLIC SAFETY ANSWERING POINT (PSAP) TAX RATE FOR 2018

Mr. Cobine asked if someone could provide a more detailed budget with a line-by-line breakout. Mr. Schemmer said that could be provided.

Ms. Piedmont-Smith asked whether a representative from the respective municipalities could comment on the impact of reduced funding to each municipality. She noted that if there were no increase in the PS-LIT distribution then there would be about \$300,000 less available to the different municipalities. Mr. Oldham explained how such a decrease could impact Ellettsville and its budget process. He noted that delaying recommendations until August might also impact everyone's budget processes.

Mr. Renneisen introduced himself and said a lower distribution to the city could result in not being able to pay for repairs to equipment or stations. He said that they don't use any LIT money to pay for staffing. He noted a few items that might have to be cut if the distribution was decreased.

Ms. Piedmont-Smith asked if Ellettsville contracted with Van Buren Township for fire services. Mr. Oldham said it was Richland Township that contracted with the town for fire services, which was partly responsible for the shortfall facing Ellettsville.

Ms. Munson said that, while the county did not provide fire protection, it did provide the jail, community corrections, probation, the prosecutor, public defenders, and the court system. She noted those departments had budget requests that the county could not come close to meeting. She said a decrease in funding to the county would have a negative effect on those services they provided. She said that she had a spreadsheet that she would like to present later.

Ms. Piedmont-Smith asked whether Monroe County Sheriff Brad Swain's staffing plans would be impacted by a decrease in distribution to the county. Mr. Cobine said that question was hard to answer with certainty. He noted the county had set aside some PS-LIT funds for possible restricting of the criminal justice system. He read a report from Monroe County Judge Marc Kellams that detailed some of the conditions in the county jail. Ms. Piedmont-Smith noted that the request from dispatch was for two years. After that, she pointed out that the committee could theoretically decrease their allotment. She asked for clarification on the long term impacts to which Mr. Cobine referred. He said he was thinking about the timeline for when such changes to the justice system might be possible.

Ms. Sandberg agreed that the committee should be thinking in terms of the future. She requested that the committee discuss allocations before tabling the matter, so that members of the public and other affected entities would have some idea of how the committee was approaching the issues. Ms. Chopra agreed.

Ms. Chopra asked whether the city would be receiving less money than the previous year if the committee chose to recommend fully funding the request from dispatch. Mr. Underwood said that was correct. He provided details on the impact of fully funding the dispatch request. Ms. Chopra asked whether the city supported the dispatch request. Mr. Underwood said yes.

Ms. Chopra asked if someone could respond to a recent press release that detailed apparent requirements announced by the city related to mutual aid and automatic aid. Mr. Renneisen said that mutual aid would continue as it had before, which meant that if one entity needed another's help, all that would be needed was a phone call. Regarding automatic aid, he explained that the city would no longer request automatic aid from county and township fire departments after September 1. He said the city would also like to memorialize the automatic aid agreements it had with other departments by the end of the year. He said interoperability tied into that because dispatch would work better if everyone was operating with the same equipment. He said that the city's desire to get the automatic aid agreements reduced to writing was initiated, at least in part, due to discussions with an Insurance Service Office (ISO) representative. Ms. Chopra asked whether the dispatch communications project would help with interoperability, which would help facilitate the automatic aid agreements. Mr. Renneisen agreed that was the case.

Ms. Sandberg said the definition of automatic aid seemed very clear. She said that the press release mentioned not only equipment but training too. She said it was good to have exact definitions because the press release showed that automatic aid had higher standards than mutual aid.

Mr. Cobine provided additional context and information about the definitions of mutual aid and automatic aid. He noted some elements that could impact an ISO rating, one of which was automatic aid agreements.

Ms. Munson and Mr. Underwood clarified funding sources for dispatch personnel. Ms. Munson confirmed that the request for dispatch from PS-LIT revenue was \$2,875,000. Mr. Underwood said yes. She asked if that included the proposed additional dispatchers. Mr. Underwood said the budget proposal reflected the total cost for personnel, as well as the funding sources that would be used to pay for personnel.

5. FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS FOR APPLICANTS SEEKING PUBLIC SAFETY LOCAL INCOME TAX REVENUES FOR 2018 UNDER I.C. 6-3.6-6-8(c)

Ms. Chopra and Ms. Purcell clarified that there were separate applications from Bean Blossom Township and the Town of Stinesville. Ms. Purcell explained that the application from Stinesville had been overlooked.

Ms. Granger asked for clarification on the ongoing consolidation efforts between fire departments. Joel Bomgardner, Chief of Northern Monroe County Fire Protection Territory (NMCFPT), introduced himself, and said he assumed Ms. Granger was referring to Indian Creek Township's desire to join the Perry-Clear Creek Fire Protection District. He said Van Buren Township had also expressed an interest in joining that district. Dustin Dillard, Chief of Perry-Clear Creek Fire Protection District, introduced himself and said that there would potentially be just a fire protection territory and a fire protection district in the future, though consolidation would not occur before 2018.

Ms. Sandberg asked for clarification on the proposal from NMCFPT that included a \$50,000 request to go toward a new fire station for Washington Township. She asked what the timeline was for the new station. Bomgardner said that the \$50,000 was a one-time only request from Washington Township. Ms. Piedmont-Smith then asked for a more specific answer regarding how much money had been raised or committed for building the station. Bomgardner said that the territory's budget had a new line item to make payments toward the station. He believed \$134,000 per year had been budgeted. Lillian Henegar, Bloomington Township Trustee, introduced herself and said that in the next year or two she expected to break ground on the station. She discussed the various options available for financing the construction. She said the township had budgeted \$135,000 to help pay toward some sort of debt that would finance the station. Ms. Sandberg asked for details about how the newly-formed district was functioning. Ms. Henegar said it was a process. She said that Bloomington Township and Washington Township still had separate boards and citizens. She said that there was an executive board with representatives from both townships that had been meeting for a year. She said it took a long time to come to agreements for purchases and stated that they had previously been unrealistic about the time frame for things like breaking ground on the fire department.

Mr. Cobine confirmed that NMCFPT served as the training hub for District 8, which included various surrounding counties. He and Mr. Bomgardner discussed the available training at the territory. Mr. Cobine asked for information about the territory's role in hazardous material emergencies. Mr. Bomgardner explained that the territory serves as District 8's hazardous materials response team and explained what that entailed.

Mr. Oldham asked if Benton Township was planning to join NMCFFPT. Ms. Henegar explained that the process of consolidating had not yet begun, noting the earliest it could occur was January 2018.

Ms. Piedmont-Smith asked Mr. Bomgardner if NMCFFPT could meet the requirements laid out by Jason Moore, Chief, Bloomington Fire Department, regarding automatic aid. Mr. Bomgardner believed it could.

Ms. Sandberg asked if NMCFFPT charged fees for the training it provided. Mr. Bomgardner replied that there was a charge for some training, such as flash-over training. He said that other trainings were free and paid for by District 8, such as basic fire fighter training. Ms. Sandberg asked if there were scholarships or grants for any of the trainings. Mr. Bomgardner said that he was not aware of any.

Ms. Munson suggested that the committee consider the \$50,000 request for the Washington Township fire station as a separate item because the committee had wanted to fund the fire station the previous year but could not do so. She asked whether NMCFFPT's application would have been different had the Washington Township fire station been funded the previous year. Ms. Henegar said she thought yes, but she was not sure how to answer.

Mr. Bomgardner and Mr. Dillard provided additional information about funding for training available through NMCFFPT, noting that some grant money that helped pay for such training was available due to a tax on fireworks.

Ms. Piedmont-Smith noted that the committee had received a memo from the Benton Township Trustee, Michelle Bright. Ms. Piedmont-Smith asked for clarification on a number of points raised by the memo regarding the township's budget and whether the township also contracted with the NMCFFPT. Mr. Bomgardner confirmed that Benton Township did contract with NMCFFPT. He said the contract required his department to respond to every emergency that was dispatched within the township. The township department would also respond if there was available personnel.

Mr. Cobine asked if it was typical for there to be more than one responding station to fire emergencies, such as the relationship between NMCFFPT and Benton Township. Mr. Bomgardner said that it was normal for a volunteer fire department. He explained that dispatch was set up so that if a fire department did not respond within a given time, another department would be dispatched.

Ms. Granger pointed out that Ms. Bright's memo included an estimated of \$300,000 for the contract with NMCFFPT, while the township's budget was only \$212,000. She asked Ms. Henegar to comment. Ms. Henegar explained the \$212,000 was Benton Township's maximum levy for fire protection. She said the \$300,000 cost for the contract was her estimate for how much it cost for NMCFFPT to respond to calls within Benton Township. She acknowledged that Benton Township would not be able to pay that full amount, but said the figure was a way to start a conversation. She said the \$300,000 was meant to represent an estimate of the cost to NMCFFPT of providing fire protection in the township. She said she would be meeting with Ms.

Bright to discuss what the township could afford. Ms. Henegar said that Bloomington Township would not leave Benton Township without fire emergency services.

Ms. Piedmont-Smith asked if Indian Creek Fire Department could meet the requirements for automatic aid laid out by Chief Moore. Vicky Sorenson, Indian Creek Township Trustee, said she was not sure. Ms. Piedmont-Smith asked if Indian Creek Township contracted for fire services. Ms. Sorenson said that they only contract with Indian Creek Fire Fighters Inc. and that the township receives mutual aid from other fire departments.

Mr. Cobine asked for information regarding the consolidation of Indiana Creek Fire Department and Perry-Clear Creek Fire Protection District. He asked Ms. Sorenson about the timeframe of such a consolidation and what impact it might have on the funding requests. Ms. Sorenson said consolidation efforts had begun, and explained where the townships were in that process. She said the process would not be complete any earlier than 2018, and in the meantime, the township had to provide fire protection. Mr. Cobine asked why Indian Creek was pursuing joining the fire protection district. Ms. Sorenson said that small township departments struggled with funding to pay for the required equipment. She said they hoped to improve upon that by joining the fire protection district. Mr. Cobine asked if there were any parcels of land in Indian Creek Township that were part of a recent annexation proposal by the City of Bloomington. Ms. Sorenson said no.

Mr. Oldham asked whether the fire protection district would get to reset the rate for fire protection if Indian Creek Township joined the district. Mr. Dillard said that the district's levy would not reset. He said in the specific case of Indian Creek, the idea was to apply the rate currently available in Perry-Clear Creek to the Indian Creek portion. He explained the possible options for the rates.

Ms. Munson asked if the township would be contributing resources to the fire protection district should they consolidate. Ms. Sorenson said yes, and explained that some property might still be owned by Indian Creek Township, but some property would be given to the fire protection district. Ms. Munson asked if the tax rate for Indian Creek Township citizens would increase. Ms. Sorenson said yes, and pointed out that the township had notified citizens of that possibility with mailed notices. She said the township had still gotten a positive response to the consolidation proposal.

Mr. Cobine asked whether there were any considerations that should be highlighted in the Perry-Clear Creek Fire Protection District application regarding possible township consolidation efforts. Mr. Dillard said that he did not understand why, in 1987 when the district was formed, more townships were not included. He said that Indian Creek was the first township to ask about joining and there was talk about Polk and Salt Creek Townships joining too. He said there was a possibility in the future for the six southern townships to become one fire protection district. He said in terms of those requests that nothing would happen until January 1, 2018.

Ms. Piedmont-Smith asked if the district would be able to meet the requirements to formalize automatic aid agreements as proposed by the city. Mr. Dillard explained personnel considerations for his department and for meeting the proposed standards.

Mr. Oldham asked if the fire protection district was taking on coverage in Polk and Salt Creek Townships, as he thought the city already provided coverage for those areas. Mr. Dillard answered that the city had offered a contract proposal to those townships but that contract was not secured. He said his district was also working on a proposal as well. He mentioned that Polk and Salt Creek had contracted with several fire departments over the years. Mr. Oldham asked if the townships were going to join the district or just contract with it. Mr. Dillard said it would be a contract as there was not enough time for those townships to join the district. Mr. Oldham asked if those townships planned to eventually join the district. Mr. Dillard said he could not answer that question, but said there had been informal discussions. He said he would like to see the six southern townships under one fire district.

Mr. Cobine and Mr. Dillard discussed automatic aid and how the district's application for additional staffing would help it meet the staffing requirements requested by the city before automatic aids could be memorialized.

Mr. Oldham asked if automatic aid affected ISO ratings. Mr. Dillard said that the only form of mutual aid that affected ISO ratings was the initial response, so automatic aid would affect ISO ratings. Mr. Dillard provided additional information on how ISO ratings were determined.

Ms. Munson asked for more detail about how ISO ratings functioned. Mr. Dillard said that an ISO rating of 10 meant there was no fire protection. Ms. Chopra said that a lower ISO rating meant insurance costs would be lower. Mr. Dillard said that was correct. Ms. Munson asked whether the type of self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) used by the city and those used by the townships were compatible. Mr. Dillard explained that each SCBA manufacturer had different parts and might not be compatible. Ms. Munson asked whether city and townships had interoperable equipment. Mr. Dillard said it was a tricky question, as some equipment functioned with other pieces of equipment. He noted that older SCBA units had been purchased with a county-wide grant and were therefore interoperable because they were all the same.

Mr. Cobine and Mr. Dillard clarified what equipment the city would be purchasing. Mr. Cobine asked if a fire fighter from a township or district department was able to share their air with a city fire fighter but not the reverse. Mr. Dillard said that was correct.

Mr. Oldham and Mr. Dillard discussed Ellettsville's interoperability.

Rita Barrow, Van Buren Trustee, introduced herself. Ms. Piedmont-Smith asked if Van Buren Township could commit to the standards set by the city for automatic aid. Ms. Barrow said that she only hired fire fighters who could meet all of the required training. Ms. Piedmont-Smith asked whether the township could meet the staffing requirements. Ms. Barrow said the township did not have four personnel per truck but that there were part-time and volunteer personnel.

Ms. Granger asked how much money had been allocated to Van Buren from PS-LIT revenue. Ms. Barrow said she thought it was between \$283,000 and \$289,000. Ms. Granger asked why the township had only spent \$60,000. Ms. Barrow corrected herself and said the township had requested between \$283,000 and \$289,000 but had been allocated \$60,000, which had already been spent.

Ms. Munson asked whether the radios proposed to be purchased by dispatch were the highest priority for Van Buren Township. Ms. Barrow said yes, along with the mobile data terminals (MDTs) and technical support. Ms. Munson said she noticed that other departments listed radios as a higher priority than the MDTs. Ms. Barrow noted some concerns she had with receiving good signals for the radios and MDTs.

Ms. Cobine asked for an update about the status and possible timeline about Van Buren Township combining with Perry-Clear Creek. Ms. Barrow said the idea had been discussed, but a lot was still unknown. Mr. Cobine asked if Barrow knew if the plan to unify radio communications included a way to identify and correct the dead spots in the southern portion of the township. Barrow said station 9 had good reception. She said she had been told by the Monroe County Emergency Management Director that there would also be a way to get radio signal at station 19.

Mr. Oldham asked Mr. Schemmer if anything was being done to address the radio dead spots throughout the county. Mr. Schemmer said yes and explained the state was coming down the following month to make a propagation map. They would identify dead spots and try to correct them. Mr. Oldham asked if the issues with the 800MHz radios were any different than those with UHF or VHF radios. Mr. Schemmer said no and provided information on the factors that could affect radio signal.

## 6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Jerry Ayers, from Washington Township, said that the PS-LIT was supposed to track the portion of property taxes that citizens pay. He said that he would prefer to see the township relieved of the tax burden than for the money to automatically go to fire authorities. He was frustrated that taxes went up and only six additional personnel were hired. He wanted the citizens to have input on where the money should be allocated.

Ms. Barrow referred to memos from the Bloomington Fire Department and asked who wrote them. Ms. Chopra said that representatives from the city's fire department wrote those memos. Ms. Barrow clarified that volunteer fire fighters in the township were required to be certified. She also clarified the status of discussions with the city about consolidation.

Shane Chapman, with the Perry-Clear Creek Fire Protection District, clarified portions of the same memo referenced by Ms. Barrow.

Mr. Bomgardner also clarified portions of the same memo referenced by Ms. Barrow.

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE MONROE COUNTY LOCAL INCOME TAX COUNCIL

Mr. Cobine moved and it was seconded to delay any formal vote on recommendations from the committee to the meeting scheduled for August 10, 2017.

Ms. Munson was in favor of the motion. She said she was working on a spreadsheet to show different funding scenarios. She said that there were multiple variables that the committee could not control. She said the committee could not yet make good decisions about PSAP or the township requests.

Ms. Granger asked how the proposed delay might impact the city's budget process. Mr. Underwood said that it would force the city to make assumptions about funding levels rather than knowing what would actually happen.

Mr. Oldham said he viewed the question as whether the dispatch proposal was worthy of funding or not. If it was then that funding would come off the top and everything else would fall into line after. He stated he was against delaying the vote. Ms. Sandberg asked Mr. Oldham about Ellettsville's budget process. Mr. Oldham said that they had to make some estimations. He said they were waiting on what the numbers would be based on the vote. Ms. Sandberg asked if it would be possible to meet earlier than August 10. Ms. Chopra said that there were too many committee members out of town the following week to accommodate an earlier meeting.

Ms. Piedmont-Smith said she was in favor of postponing the final decision due to only receiving the information packet earlier in the day. She said it was not enough time to digest the information. She understood the urgency of the vote but needed more time to make a decision.

Mr. Cobine said that the committee had not considered budget schedules when originally scheduling meetings. He said he did not know how to make a good decision without more information, hence his motion.

Ms. Chopra said she did not support the motion. She highlighted inefficiencies she saw and concerns she had with the county's fire protection. She said that talk of consolidation highlighted those inefficiencies. She said she would suggest using PS-LIT money to hire a consultant to consolidate fire protection in Monroe County. She said she did not think the dispatch communications project proposal was a waste but was needed and would serve the entire county. She said she wanted to vote that night and wanted to support the PSAP proposal.

Ms. Sandberg said she agreed with Ms. Chopra. She said that township consolidation efforts were a good reason to suspend township funding. She agreed that unification was a good idea. She said she supported the PSAP proposal in order to create better communications throughout the county. She wanted a unified system that benefited everyone.

Mr. Cobine said that if the committee voted that night, it would be the last meeting. He stated that there were documents not ready from the city and other areas that needed to be heard before the committee voted.

Ms. Munson spoke about income tax and station needs. She said that many of the fire chiefs stated that they had greater needs for equipment replacement and staffing than anything else. She said she would rather side with the fire departments because they knew what they needed. She said she would rather see radios on the agenda for the following year rather than the current year.

Ms. Piedmont-Smith noted that the committee had not had its final meeting the previous year until August 10.

The motion to delay any formal vote on recommendations from the committee to the meeting scheduled for August 10, 2017 received a roll call vote of Ayes: 4, Nays: 3 (Oldham, Chopra, Sandberg), Abstain 0.

Mr. Cobine moved and it was seconded to reschedule and relocate the meeting previously schedule for August 10, 2017 at 7:00 pm in the Nat U. Hill Meeting Room of the Monroe County Courthouse to August 10, 2017 at 6:30 pm in the City Council Chambers of Bloomington City Hall. The motion was approved by voice vote.

#### 8. OTHER BUSINESS AND FINAL COMMENTS

Ms. Piedmont-Smith said it was unfortunate to see the animosity between the City of Bloomington Fire Department and the township departments. She said the packet, which was issued very late, blatantly gave misinformation in the previous meeting. She said that if the Bloomington Fire Department felt there was misinformation, it could have informed the committee privately instead of putting it in a packet. She said that the press release issued from BFD about automatic aid agreements, though reasonable in terms of unity and having agreements in writing, was also coercive. She noted there was no mechanism set up for a legal agreement to recommend funding to the townships. She wanted the municipalities to enter an agreement if that happened. She said she was glad to see townships wanting to consolidate.

Ms. Munson said she was willing to entertain the idea of the city or the county working as an agent of the council to work out a legal agreement with recipients of PS-LIT funds. She said a legal agreement was important.

Mr. Cobine thanked the committee for postponing the final vote. He agreed with Ms. Munson and Ms. Piedmont-Smith about needing legal agreements. He also agreed with Ms. Piedmont-Smith about the conflict between the city and the townships. He said that, from what he saw, the conflict was born from differences in opinion on what was best for the common good at an administrative level. He then stated that the township organizations could not change if they could not maintain their current level.

Ms. Sandberg said that she agreed with everyone on the need for written agreements, but also noted that there should be funding criteria in the agreements. She said the committee should consider what it wanted to fund as a priority.

Ms. Chopra reminded people that the Dispatch Policy Board was a county-wide board and its recommendation was for a county-wide need. She said that PS-LIT funds were meant to increase public safety, not merely maintain the status quo.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.