

ANDERSON COUNTY COUNCIL ANDERSON, SOUTH CAROLINA

All area newspapers, radio stations and television stations were informed of this meeting in compliance with the guidelines set forth in the *Freedom of Information Act*:

Chairman Tommy Dunn, Presiding  
Special Called Meeting

**Corrected MINUTES**

July 13, 2015 -

6:01p.m.

Kimberly A. Poulin, Clerk to Council

PRESENT

Francis M. Crowder, Sr - District One

J. Michelle Cole – District Three

Tom Allen - District Four

Ken Waters – District Six

M. Cindy Wilson - District Seven

Rusty Burns – County Administrator

Kimberly Poulin -Clerk to Council

- Gracie S. Floyd – District Two – Absent

A verbatim transcript of the meeting is hereto attached for your approval. The regular business meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly A. Poulin  
Clerk to County Council

State of South Carolina

County of Anderson

ANDERSON COUNTY COUNCIL  
SPECIAL CALLED COUNCIL MEETING  
JULY 13, 2015

IN ATTENDANCE:  
TOMMY DUNN, CHAIRMAN  
FRANCIS M. CROWDER  
M. CINDY WILSON  
TOM ALLEN  
J. MICHAEL COLE  
KEN WATERS

ALSO PRESENT:  
RUSTY BURNS  
KIM POULIN

1 TOMMY DUNN: If you would I'd call this  
2 meeting to order of July the 13th County Council. At  
3 this time we all rise to Invocation and Pledge of  
4 Allegiance.

5 **(INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE BY TOMMY DUNN)**

6 TOMMY DUNN: If you would, could I ask  
7 EMS Advisory Board members to come up to the front and  
8 stand here so we can see them. If y'all wouldn't mind,  
9 I'm going to ask y'all to introduce yourself so  
10 everybody will know everybody. And I know Ms. -- I  
11 know two of you ain't here. I know Ms. Sloan's not  
12 here. I talked to her and somebody else. Mr. Peace,  
13 introduce yourself, please.

14 DONALD PEACE: Dr. Donald Peace.

15 TOMMY DUNN: District 5. Thank you.  
16 Mr. Mack.

17 ROY L. MACK: Roy L. Mack, M-A-C-K.

18 TOMMY DUNN: Thank you, Mr. Mack.

19 TERESA MORGAN: Teresa Lett Morgan, District  
20 7.

21 ERMA KINNEY: Erma Kinney with District 6.

22 TOMMY DUNN: Thank you.

23 HILDA HARVEY: Hilda Harvey, 1.

24 TOMMY DUNN: Thank y'all very much. I'm  
25 going to start off saying I appreciate each and  
26 everyone of y'all taking time to serve Anderson County.  
27 Appreciate it very much what y'all do. The reason I  
28 called this meeting tonight was two-fold. Heard y'all  
29 had a meeting the other night and had some questions  
30 might not been satisfied or couldn't get the answer or  
31 didn't think good. I'm a big believer -- come up  
32 through the fire service. I want to stop rumors. I  
33 already heard a couple of them today going around. So  
34 that's what I'm having this meeting for. Heard Mr.  
35 Stoller called an emergency meeting tonight and do  
36 this. Think the Council is going to take no action  
37 tonight. Ain't about that at all. It's about y'all  
38 had a meeting Thursday night or whenever it was and had  
39 some issues come up and I'm here to -- and the rest of  
40 the Council is too -- and I invited them to make sure  
41 see if we can get to the --get y'all answers that  
42 y'all need. Anybody want some anybody else. Who wants  
43 to start off?

44 TERESA MORGAN: I appreciate y'all having  
45 this meeting and allowing us to come before you. The  
46 first thing is, we are very proud of our Council and  
47 our county and we are proud to be a part of it. Some  
48 of the issues that came up the other night literally  
49 were because some things have gone on in one of our  
50 districts that we were not made aware of until after

1 the fact, which is not unusual. I think -- I did take  
2 a poll of the Council -- I mean the commissioners that  
3 were there to ask them how often we actually talk to  
4 our Council person. And Ms. Wilson is mine and we talk  
5 frequently. I generally call her after each meeting to  
6 let her know what's happened. And so I think there's  
7 just been a breakdown in communication.

8 I think that we think about things -- I think  
9 the biggest thing is perception. How we all perceive  
10 things occurring rather than really looking to see what  
11 was meant by both sides. So all we want to do is to  
12 make sure that we've honestly looked at every avenue we  
13 possibly can to do the best we can for the citizens of  
14 this county with EMS.

15 I've been a critical care nurse now, and now I work  
16 pediatric at home on ventilators so EMS is very  
17 important to me. I've been a nurse for thirty-seven  
18 years. And I just want to make sure that everything is  
19 right because I have been in the back of that ambulance  
20 with people and making sure they're getting there. And  
21 right now we have got the most amazing situation here  
22 in Anderson County with EMS, especially in comparison  
23 to the rest of the counties in the state of South  
24 Carolina. I think we've been put into this position by  
25 Medicare, Medicaid and the new plan of action and I  
26 think that it's -- you know, we have to work even  
27 harder to come together to be as amicable as we can  
28 trying to take care of our citizens.

29 So all we ask -- all I ask -- is that everyone  
30 have the same relationship that me and Ms. Wilson have  
31 as far as being in contact with each other. There's a  
32 lot of things she could not tell me, which I understood  
33 that. But what I guess I don't understand is why could  
34 we not sit down, the Council and the commission, when  
35 this issue came up in Williamston, sit down together  
36 and try to find out what we exactly we were going to  
37 do. Next thing I heard, like yourself, I heard rumors  
38 that the mayor of Williamston was asking for meetings  
39 behind closed doors. I don't know. I wasn't there.  
40 It's perception once again. So I'm just trying to make  
41 sure that we're doing everything we possibly can in an  
42 open manner and for the best of our citizens. Thank  
43 you.

44 TOMMY DUNN: Thank you. I just want to  
45 state that this Council's goal and certainly is mine  
46 about doing what's best for the citizens of Anderson  
47 County. We definitely got to do something. And as far  
48 as the situation of the Advisory Board, anytime any of  
49 y'all --each one of y'all been appointed by Council  
50 District. Any time y'all got any questions or

1 comments, you need to call your Council person and ask  
2 and find out what you call it. If you can't get the  
3 answers, you think you know, they should be able to get  
4 them for you. Myself, the Williamston situation sort  
5 of little bit-- y'all's rumors and this and that and  
6 the other going around, but this thing happened pretty  
7 quick. And it was acted on quick for the best interest  
8 of the citizens over there and the county as a whole,  
9 what was done.

10 Just want to thank -- couple of things been out  
11 there about the authority, what the Administrator done.  
12 He had full authority to do what he done. Council give  
13 it to him. Told him to make sure the situation, that  
14 the citizens in Williamston had EMS protection.

15 TERESA MORGAN: Yes, sir.

16 TOMMY DUNN: Do what's best. And that's  
17 what he done.

18 Second thing. I know it's been brought up by  
19 somebody about a contract and why -- was it open.  
20 Everything we done was legal and open and contracted on  
21 -- in contact with the attorney, hand in hand about it.  
22 Certain things is done, everything ain't done on a bid  
23 -- what you call a bid process or procurement process.  
24 It's done, you got professional services comes up it's  
25 under a different thing than emergency situation. And  
26 all this is looked at and done and on the short thing.  
27 I know it's been contacting-- question about Squad 9  
28 or Greg Shore's EMS service not having a contract right  
29 now around the city of Anderson. And the reason that  
30 don't we in a hold and looking at everything about the  
31 EMS system -- I get to that in just a minute -- and you  
32 don't give no contract to nobody when you're sitting  
33 here and don't know what you're going to do. But we  
34 got to do something in Anderson County. I'll agree  
35 whole heartedly we got a great system and a good  
36 system, but that don't mean it can't be better, because  
37 what we got ain't -- we just start off ever what we get  
38 is money. And I know it takes money. I've got a  
39 letter up here right now from Pelzer asking for more  
40 money. There ain't no money -- we can't raise -- state  
41 law won't let us raise taxes enough to give EMS  
42 everything what they want. We give them all -- what  
43 they can get doing something or other. Can't operate  
44 on the money we give them. And we can't give you no  
45 more. We got to figure out a solution to this and do  
46 something or another. Wouldn't y'all agree?

47 TERESA MORGAN: Yes, sir.

48 TOMMY DUNN: And that's what we-- that's  
49 what we in the process of trying to work through. The  
50 Council has asked the Administrator to look out for a

1 consultant to come in, talk -- look at the county, look  
2 at our system, how can we improve, how we can tweak it,  
3 what needs to be done to it. And at that time, when  
4 there's one hired and one's talked about when done,  
5 everybody, Advisory Board, EMS people, everybody will  
6 be brought up to that discussion about what it is. And  
7 that's where-- y'all know now-- y'all know just as  
8 much as I do and y'all over there probably know more  
9 about Williamston situation than I do.

10 TERESA MORGAN: May I?

11 TOMMY DUNN: Yes, ma'am.

12 TERESA MORGAN: This isn't the first time  
13 we've had a problem with Williamston. Ms. Wilson, if  
14 you recall, I don't even -- it's probably been ten  
15 years ago at least, we had a similar issue. And so,  
16 Belton and Pelzer and Metro, I believe, they all  
17 stepped up to the plate and offered to kind of come in  
18 as a triangle and take care of the situation. It's my  
19 understanding at that time -- and please correct me  
20 that that was going to be a feasible way of doing it  
21 and it wasn't really going to cost us any more to do it  
22 that way. That's what I'm talking about.

23 TOMMY DUNN: Well let me -- excuse me  
24 right there. It ain't costing-- we're saving money by  
25 the route we're going now. It ain't cost us no more  
26 money.

27 TERESA MORGAN: Well, and I understand that.  
28 But what I'm saying is, if we had gotten together -- if  
29 the Administrator or yourselves had called and said,  
30 you know, we need to kind of hash this out real quick.  
31 So we need to have an emergency meeting just like we're  
32 having tonight. And sit down and say does anybody have  
33 a solution? This is what we have to offer. This is  
34 what we see feasible. Because everybody on this  
35 commission -- the majority of us have a medical  
36 background. The majority of us -- I've worked with Dr.  
37 Don Peace for thirty years, I guess. Ms. Sloan, I  
38 worked with her in the emergency room for five or six  
39 years. So we've got the knowledge to try to help you  
40 on that level. No, do we have financial backgrounds?  
41 No. I have to balance my budget, but I don't have to  
42 balance anybody else's budget.

43 But if we could sit down when all -- something like  
44 this comes up with whatever commission you've got and  
45 say, okay guys, this is why we have appointed you. We  
46 want to rack your brain here. We want to use every  
47 resource we've got to try to come up with it. I  
48 understand that in this particular situation, you  
49 didn't -- maybe haven't been involved with the  
50 Williamston situation as long as I have. I've been

1 I was on the board in Belton from '91 till I was  
2 appointed by Ms. Wilson. So I was very much there in  
3 the heat of things when we had problems to begin with.  
4 Do I have all the answers? No. I'll be the first one  
5 to admit that. But I do have the best interest, as you  
6 do, for the people of this county and whatever that  
7 takes for us to ensure that, not just physically, but  
8 financially, we're here to do that as a group. We're  
9 not the enemy.

10 TOMMY DUNN: And that's what -- like I  
11 said a few minutes ago, once we get a report back and a  
12 study whatnot, we want to work hand in hand with the  
13 Advisory Board. That other night or the other week  
14 when it happened, was a pretty quick thing. Don't  
15 think every options wasn't looked at and the Council,  
16 along with the Administrator, thought we come to the  
17 best solution for the people of Williamston in the long  
18 term.

19 TERESA MORGAN: And I'm not denying that at  
20 that moment, but do you understand where I'm coming  
21 from?

22 TOMMY DUNN: Yes, ma'am.

23 TERESA MORGAN: Well, I appreciate you  
24 taking

25 TOMMY DUNN: And that's why I say,  
26 anytime you feel like that, I wish each of you or one  
27 of you or whatnot would pick up the phone and call our  
28 Council members.

29 TERESA MORGAN: I did.

30 TOMMY DUNN: Go talk to them.

31 TERESA MORGAN: I did. Thank you.

32 TOMMY DUNN: Okay. Yes, ma'am. Anyone  
33 else on the commission want say anything? Mr. Allen?

34 TOM ALLEN: Yeah, I just have a  
35 question. You know, looking at the survey that was  
36 done, I think you've all seen this, about the squads  
37 and the net income or losses. And a whole lot of them  
38 in here show net losses for the year in dollars. And  
39 you had mentioned Medicare, Medicaid and probably the  
40 new Obamacare or Affordable Health Care plan, whatever.  
41 My question is, money's been lost here. Do you foresee  
42 losing more money in the future because of the way the  
43 healthcare system is set up nationwide? Yes or no. I  
44 -- in other words, I don't know how it affects you.  
45 Maybe somebody could explain that. Thank you.

46 DONALD PEACE: Well, I don't know that I'm  
47 an expert. I've written two published articles on the  
48 Affordable Care Act and Medicaid expansion process.  
49 And this is a challenge that I think we're only on the  
50 verge of. I can see where in the next number of years

1 it's going to dramatically get worse unless we have a  
2 better and more substantial plan for paying for  
3 healthcare in our communities.

4 But in the shortfall, I see where -- that we can  
5 only continue to lose funds. Obviously the cost of  
6 care from the side of the individual in terms of what  
7 we pay with our rates, are substantially higher than  
8 what they have been before, even with the insurance  
9 exchange for those persons who are not fortunate enough  
10 to be employed and have some substantial compensation  
11 through their employer to help offset some of those  
12 expenses, we're just seeing that that cost of care  
13 going dramatically higher and higher every day.

14 And so, to answer your question in a short way, I  
15 personally don't see how we can not continue to bleed  
16 to death as we have continued to done -- to do. And my  
17 hat's off truly to the EMS personnel in our community  
18 here. They're doing an incredible job trying to  
19 maintain a quality of care and a continuum of care from  
20 the patient's home to the hospital bedside, getting  
21 them from Point A to Point B. And I think they're done  
22 an outstanding job.

23 Truly we recognize there are some substantial  
24 shortfalls in funding and financing and from the tax  
25 infrastructure that you guys provide for these agencies  
26 to sustain. That's only-- we understand that  
27 shortfall. I just think we're going to continue to see  
28 these kinds of things. Cost of care is going to  
29 continue to rise. Our payrolls -- our bank accounts  
30 continue to shrink and the cost of living continues to  
31 increase and the cost of care is going to continue to  
32 increase. So we're caught in the middle. And my hat's  
33 off to these EMS squads who get out there and do the  
34 best they can and manage their funds the best they can.  
35 But quite frankly, I think many of them are in just a  
36 severe losing process. It's going to be very difficult  
37 for them to ever maintain that type of care that maybe  
38 they could have done a number of years ago with the  
39 same amount of funding.

40 TOM ALLEN: And I, too -- I want to add,  
41 I think what the EMS crews do is fantastic, and I thank  
42 you. I sincerely do. What would we do in this county  
43 without you? And I understand the situation you're in.  
44 And you stated that medical care costs will continue to  
45 rise, but is there a why, an answer to that? What's  
46 causing them to go up? Do you know?

47 DONALD PEACE: Well ---

48 TOM ALLEN: I don't mean to put you on  
49 the spot. I don't ---

50 DONALD PEACE: It's okay. I live on the

1 spot. So that's okay.  
2 I think, honestly, we were not ready to have the  
3 Affordable Care Act thrust upon us. We had worked,  
4 ideally since 1968, under a financed healthcare system  
5 that's predominantly governmentally funded. And so we  
6 have seen that grow -- that growth and development in  
7 both from the federal fiscal side of the House  
8 providing funding to our healthcare infrastructure to  
9 now that dwindling amount of money going into the  
10 infrastructure. Keep in mind, too, we have so many  
11 more people on the boat, as it were, requiring  
12 healthcare that's not being compensated by employers or  
13 out of pocket. And of course, the Affordable Care Act  
14 was really, truly, put in place to try to provide a  
15 greater expansion to numbers of persons who are able to  
16 get that healthcare resource. But what it failed to  
17 do, and I don't mean to be preachy here, but what this  
18 failed to do, is we're not --we don't have enough  
19 money going into the system to keep it viable. And so,  
20 that's on a macro level. On a micro level we certainly  
21 understand. We have fiscal constraints from your  
22 perspective. Folks, they have the constraints of many  
23 things going on on their side. They have persons that  
24 they go and in good faith attempt to provide good  
25 quality care to, get them to their local hospital and  
26 expect the measure of compensation on behalf of that  
27 person's insurance or out of pocket. Many times these  
28 organizations are not being compensated at all. The  
29 individual may not pay their bill. Or, you know, it's  
30 a loss. So it's a significant problem, and yes, I  
31 expect this is going to continue to exacerbate and get  
32 worse over the course of time.

33 TOM ALLEN: And I think, well, like you  
34 said, there are more people entering into the system  
35 and that's --us baby boomers can take some of that  
36 blame. There's a lot more of us out there needing more  
37 care now than there were before.

38 DONALD PEACE: Yeah, I am one of those  
39 boomers and I'm consuming as much as I can today.

40 TOM ALLEN: But you mentioned the cost  
41 care going up and this is something that I know there  
42 was an article in the Charlotte Observer and then there  
43 was one out of a Nashville newspaper and they're  
44 talking about the cost in states of health insurance  
45 going up any place from eighteen to almost forty  
46 percent over the next year. So we're all going to be  
47 in this boat. And I look at these numbers here. If  
48 the county was to try and make you whole, each  
49 department, I don't know where we'd get that money  
50 from, either. That's a lot of money.

1 DONALD PEACE: Absolutely. And see, these  
2 are individual businesses out here, as it were, and you  
3 guys are providing some substantial assistance. But by  
4 no means are you compensating all of their needs. And  
5 I don't know that we can, as a county.

6 But first of all, I just want to say my hat's  
7 off to Mr. Burns, who was called the other night, as a  
8 means of trying to find some answers. We were being  
9 posed with some very serious questions that we had no  
10 response to. And my hat's off to you, Mr. Burns, for  
11 your willingness to come and, or at least by phone,  
12 being able to speak with us and answer some questions  
13 that seemed to ameliorate some of the concerns that  
14 were being addressed to us. So thank you very much.

15 TOM ALLEN: I thank you. And again I'll  
16 kind of reiterate what Mr. Dunn said. What was done  
17 here the other night was more or less an emergency  
18 stop-gap measure. There's-- you know, we're still  
19 trying to figure out what we really need to do. Thank  
20 you. Mr. Chair.

21 TOMMY DUNN: Mr. Waters?

22 KEN WATERS: You had mentioned you had  
23 written a couple of articles about the Affordable Act  
24 Care. Was that correct?

25 DONALD PEACE: Yes, sir.

26 KEN WATERS: Did I hear that? I've read  
27 some of the summaries and from what I understand this  
28 thing's going to level out in the negative run of it.  
29 No matter what we do, it's going to level out and be  
30 equally a loss. Is that correct?

31 DONALD PEACE: It's going to be a -- it's  
32 always going to be a loss. Anytime that you have more  
33 people consuming than the amount of dollars going into  
34 the system -- and you know, I'm sort of a country boy  
35 at heart here. But I always learned when you're in a  
36 hole, quit digging. We haven't learned that as a  
37 culture yet.

38 KEN WATERS: That's correct. That's  
39 correct. And so, from what I see I agree with what,  
40 what I've read.

41 Now, to get back to what we're here for, is  
42 the EMS. You guys as an Advisory Board, I appreciate  
43 everyone of you taking your time to come do this. But  
44 there are going to be things -- we've been working on  
45 this probably-- I think it's been ever since I've been  
46 here, this has been an issue. And it's not going to  
47 get fixed over night, just as you heard the doctor say.

48 Now, all seven of us up here were elected by  
49 the people to make decisions. And I take my job  
50 serious. I'm going to make a decision. Now, just

1 because you guys don't get a call and we don't ask you  
2 individually what you think, that's probably how it's  
3 going to happen. Because you are an advisory  
4 committee. And I appreciate what you do, don't get me  
5 wrong, but when it comes time to make a decision, I'm  
6 not afraid to do that. And with the information we  
7 get, we're looking at about four or five years worth of  
B information and there's still not a good answer and  
9 from what it looks like in the future there's not going  
10 to be a good answer. The cards we've been dealt, we're  
11 going to have to make the decision and so you're just  
12 going to have to trust us on that.

13 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 TOMMY DUNN: Thank you. Mr. Crowder.  
15 Mr. Crowder.

16 FRANCIS CROWDER: Oh, got to put on my  
17 speaker. I actually put a BQ on my thing. Stands for  
18 Be Quiet. Well, I don't want to boast, but I've  
19 followed the Affordable Care Act since they first  
20 drafted draft one. I've read every line of it. The  
21 first version, the second version, the third version,  
22 the fourth version, the fifth version, the sixth  
23 version, the seventh version and the final version.

24 And first of all, South Carolina has been  
25 identified as one of several states that are under  
26 extreme scrutiny by CMS because of the possibility of  
27 over-billing, fraud. Not in our county. And so that  
28 has actually placed a significant burden on people like  
29 you. I greatly appreciate what you do, because I'm a  
30 great believer that if you involve people in the  
31 decision-making, it will be more acceptable. I hate to  
32 force anything down anybody's throat. Because if you  
33 do, people are going to buck up. I'm just that  
34 country.

35 Secondly, it is my thought, after looking at  
36 the data and analyzing it, that probably one of the  
37 problems that you're dealing with is the fact that  
38 services that are non-emergent, that are convalescent  
39 care, has probably significantly destroyed you, for  
40 lack of a better word. Is that true? In other words,  
41 carrying people to clinics for dialysis and other  
42 things. And so, consequently, I see your business as  
43 two types of business, even though you run a squad.  
44 You actually have a squad that provides emergency care  
45 and you're a squad that provides convalescent care.  
46 And in my mind that's two different cost centers. And  
47 so, I hope whomever the county selects to do the study  
48 will keep that in mind. I hope that they're going to  
49 select somebody who are just not counters or bean  
50 counters and I don't mean that in a disparaging word,

1 to do the study because there are firms around the  
2 country that specialize in this type of environment.  
3 And I feel like, as a part of that study, the Advisory  
4 Committee should be part of that team that has input  
5 into that study. And not be the recipient of the  
6 report after the fact. Does everybody hear that?  
7 That's my opinion. My other Council members may not  
8 share that. I only can speak for myself. But of  
9 course, on Council it takes four votes to make anything  
10 pass. I do appreciate what you're doing. I know it is  
11 a challenge. I actually have spent hours and hours and  
12 hours in spare time that I've had lately because I  
13 haven't felt too good, in reading up on the different  
14 models of providing both convalescent care and  
15 emergency medical services ranging from the county-run  
16 model, the hospital-run model, ABC model, XYZ model.  
17 And there's no one model that fits everything. That's  
18 not to say that you cannot come up with a model that  
19 will suit Anderson County. But I think that's going to  
20 be highly dependent upon the input of all those who are  
21 involved. I think citizens need, to an extent, to have  
22 input into how emergency services are going to be  
23 provided in Anderson County, because I was the  
24 recipient for that kind of service four weeks ago when  
25 I had to call 9-1-1 and be taken by Med-Shore to the  
26 hospital, to ER, which I would give a C or a D for the  
27 service, not of Med-Shore but of the emergency room.  
28 And so I had a great appreciation of what went on. I  
29 looked at everything they did, you know, including the  
30 stuff sticking in my arms and the EKG machine being  
31 read. And so that gave me a first hand appreciation of  
32 what you do and what your staff does. And I can tell  
33 you that the people who served me operated in a  
34 technically wonderful fashion as well as being  
35 compassionate about giving the care that they give.

36 I say that because often that is not the kind  
37 of response you can get in institutional healthcare.  
38 It has to be based in a level of service where people  
39 put their all in it and I think Anderson County EMS  
40 providers do do that. And so, with that, it may seem  
41 like I was wandering, but I really was not. I knew  
42 what I wanted to say, but I just didn't know quite how  
43 I wanted to say it.

44 So thank you, Mr. Chairman, and like we would  
45 say in Congress, I turn the rest of my time over to  
46 you.

47 TOMMY DUNN: Thank you. Ms. Wilson?

48 CINDY WILSON: May I? Oh, thank you, Mr.  
49 Chairman. There's no question that when our citizens  
50 dial 9-1-1 they expect help within ten minutes and

1 great help and we've been blessed in this county. I  
2 know of no complaints for the last several years as far  
3 as the quality of care and the response time. It's  
4 been an incredible collaborative effort. We have a  
5 good Advisory Commission, we have the Chief's Squad and  
6 we have the individual squads. And it seems that our  
7 dispatch has done a good job, too.

8 What we have now, with the advent of the  
9 Affordable Care Act, we have the shifting sands of  
10 requirements and it's very difficult for an individual  
11 squad to even begin to keep up with the demands. You  
12 have the training aspect of it, you have the billing.  
13 And in the years past, the convalescence transport  
14 pretty much helped support each squad. And there were  
15 several things that happened over the years to really  
16 wipe the -- knock the feet out from those efforts. For  
17 example, I remember several years back a lot of the  
18 squads went out and bought more units and then former  
19 Governor Sandford then decreed that there would be some  
20 group out of Missouri, I think, to do that. So the  
21 squads that had just bought new equipment, hired new  
22 people, they were left in a jam.

23 So we've had, you know, all kinds of scenarios  
24 for the squads to deal with. And they all started out  
25 as volunteers borrowing or driving a hearse and it's --  
26 it has morphed to this level. And the county and our  
27 squads have done a remarkable job adjusting until  
28 recent years -- well, until this past year. I know one  
29 squad requested that we meet and we talked with  
30 Congressman Jeff Duncan and his office because that  
31 particular squad was almost totally put under  
32 financially because they had been taking a lot of  
33 people for convalescent routes and so forth. Their  
34 billing -- their revenues were not there. They were  
35 being denied approvals and so forth all of a sudden.  
36 And they made the simple request through Congressman  
37 Duncan's office, they said that they knew there would  
38 be another wave of this hitting this fall and they  
39 requested that there be some training put in place  
40 before that deadline and maybe a phase-in time of a  
41 month or two to give them time to adjust. And it seems  
42 that as we move through coming up with a model, it will  
43 be difficult to have a model that will work now that  
44 will work in five years. We've already learned that  
45 things have changed so rapidly. But the important  
46 thing is so far we've been able to adjust to  
47 accommodate all this. We've had one squad that kind of  
48 fell by the wayside, but another one stepped up to the  
49 bat to carry it on. We're either out of contract or at  
50 contract deadlines on some of these agreements and it's

1 been very difficult to figure out how to proceed. So  
2 it's going to take all hands on deck to come up with  
3 something that will work and have measures in place,  
4 perhaps, that give us some adjustability to increased  
5 demands and so forth. We know we have an increasing  
6 population. We know we've got traffic increasing.  
7 That compounds the difficulties for response times.  
8 And I know in reading the EMS agreed-upon  
9 procedures that Mr. Green was kind enough to work  
10 through with each squad, because each squad originated  
11 and evolved individually, the accounting for each squad  
12 is so dramatically different. And some squads were  
13 more dependent on convalescent transports to provide  
14 them that base foundation of financial security. And  
15 others relied more on the county tax funds that we  
16 provided. But it may be time that we pull everybody  
17 together and look at some kind of -- as per the  
18 recommendation in this report, we look at providing  
19 some stronger leadership and direction with the squads  
20 in areas of communication, financial training, billing  
21 training and the actual training for the emergency  
22 care. And perhaps we need to work better on our  
23 communication and come up with some common grounds  
24 before we head off to areas where some of the squads  
25 might have particular differences.  
26 But, anyway, I have to say thank you. I've  
27 been a recipient, like Mr. Crowder, of our EMS and I've  
28 never been so grateful to see squads arrive in all my  
29 life as when Williamston and Med-Shore on various  
30 occasions came to our -- the rescue in my family and  
31 out at our farm. It was just -- it was breathtaking  
32 how quickly the help got there and how professional the  
33 triage efforts right there on the ground communicating  
34 to hospitals and other doctors. We can take great  
35 heart in knowing that we do have incredible  
36 professionals who do have great care and compassion for  
37 their fellow man. So I think that there's a good  
38 chance we get this figured out in the not too distant  
39 future. Thank you.  
40 TOMMY DUNN: Thank you. Mr. Cole.  
41 MITCHELL COLE: I, too, have a great  
42 appreciation for the rescue squads. My dad was a  
43 member of the Fort Rescue Squad for about twenty years,  
44 till the education requirements outgrew his education  
45 and he couldn't do it anymore. Bottom line, it is all  
46 about money and we've got to figure out a way to make  
47 it viable for everybody. Working together there's a  
48 way we can do that. Thank you.  
49 TOM ALLEN: Mr. Chair.  
50 TOMMY DUNN: Again. Go ahead, Mr. Allen.

1 TOM ALLEN: Well, just very quickly, to  
2 cut to the chase. We've all said a lot of things up  
3 here tonight that we kind of all know. But what we  
4 need are answers. And even though we will have a  
5 survey done and an audit team come in or whatever you  
6 want to call them, we're going to have anybody to look  
7 at the uniformity of the squads and the way they're  
8 going to run?

9 TOMMY DUNN: What I envision and what the  
10 Council asked, is a consultant, come a group that  
11 specializes in EMS to come in, not audit nobody, but  
12 come and look at our system.

13 TOM ALLEN: As a consultant. But I  
14 would say the EMS committee, your input will be  
15 extremely important. And if you folks could put  
16 something together, you know, put it in writing. Step  
17 one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight; here's  
18 how we think we can do things a little better. We can  
19 be more uniform. You may not -- you may still be in  
20 the red on dollars, but your input's going to be very  
21 important and I would hope you would let me know  
22 I'll be more than happy to talk to you. But you know,  
23 we need to have your input to go along with this survey  
24 that's going to come up. So, that's all I had to say.

25 TOMMY DUNN: Thank you, Mr. Allen. I  
26 just want to say again, appreciate everybody and  
27 thankful for what everybody's done. But this to  
28 come in, there's no easy answers, I just want to make  
29 it clear, you know, when this Council come on a few  
30 years ago, we put more money in EMS than was there  
31 before. And we're still not enough. We still have one  
32 go under. So we can't just keep doing the same old,  
33 same old what we're doing. And that's what we got--  
34 we got -- we have fixed a couple of little spots. We  
35 still got dead areas in Anderson County. We shouldn't  
36 have these spots. Because, as Ms. Wilson said,  
37 response time, it ain't the same in the county. We  
38 need to fix it that way. We need the same -- it  
39 shouldn't matter if you have a heart attack and need  
40 medical care in Pendleton, Iva or Williamston or  
41 Anderson, or whatnot, you ought to get the same level  
42 of patient care. That's this Council's goal. I hope  
43 --hope it's-- and to get the most when you have our  
44 money.

45 But like I said, even if we -- if this Council  
46 wanted to, we can't raise taxes by state law to give  
47 everything we want to. Just can't. So we've got to  
48 look at everything. And I don't want to be in no way,  
49 shape or form said a while ago, that y'all wouldn't  
50 have no input in this thing. But this consultant comes

1 in -- I've been talking to the Administrator about when  
2 he pick one --it'll be somebody that don't know  
3 nothing about Anderson County, non-biased, and they  
4 going to ask input from y'all and everything in the  
5 survey and Mr. Allen said survey. But I think it's  
6 more of a study what we got and issues and this will be  
7 a company that specializes in this kind of thing and  
8 see what we can do to get the best things for our  
9 citizens of Anderson County.

10 And I do appreciate y'all's time tonight. Mr.  
11 Burns, any citizens --yes, ma'am? If you would, step  
12 up to the mic so we can hear you.

13 ERMA KINNEY: Ms. Wilson had a very valid  
14 point. She said lack of communication.

15 TOMMY DUNN: Yes, ma'am.

16 ERMA KINNEY: And that's what we have so  
17 desperately needed. And at the meeting the other night  
18 -- at the meeting the other night -- at the meeting --  
19 thank you. At the meeting the other night, one of the  
20 chiefs pointed out to us that an audit had been made,  
21 which I think is wonderful that we would have that  
22 made, and the study was done on the financial aspects  
23 of it. But they knew nothing about the audit until it  
24 was done. Then they ---

25 TOMMY DUNN: Excuse me, ma'am. Who  
26 didn't know nothing about it?

27 ERMA KINNEY: The chiefs. And then the  
28 they had never received any follow-up work or  
29 correspondence on the results. We're going back to the  
30 lack of communication. And I think that's what we as a  
31 Commission are so interested in being. Is there any  
32 purpose for us?

33 TOMMY DUNN: Yes, ma'am.

34 ERMA KINNEY: You know, there hasn't  
35 seemed to have been.

36 TOMMY DUNN: Well, that's what we need to  
37 work on. You got some things in y'all's job  
38 description that needs to be tweaked and we're going to  
39 do that at next Council meeting.

40 ERMA KINNEY: Just communications ---

41 TOMMY DUNN: It is. Communication is  
42 everything in life.

43 ERMA KINNEY: --- that we need.

44 TOMMY DUNN: But it's like these little  
45 things -- but the rescue squads -- I don't like to call  
46 them rescue squads -- the EMS providers, the chiefs  
47 might not have known, but if it was, it was lack of  
48 communication on their part because these people got  
49 the information to do this audit from the rescue squads  
50 so they did know.

1 ERMA KINNEY: I think that's wonderful.  
2 They did.  
3 TOMMY DUNN: They had to know. The  
4 reason, the reason they haven't got the information is  
5 -- is we haven't known what to do with it. We just  
6 trying to study -- see what to do if we get it. and I  
7 think Mr. Burns got everybody a copy and asked them to  
8 give all the board members a copy.  
9 ERMA KINNEY: On Friday.  
10 TOMMY DUNN: Today, I think it was  
11 Friday, and I hope they'll do that because talking to  
12 some board members today they still hadn't got their  
13 copy of their audit. So I hope -- communication goes  
14 two ways. Hope they can get that.  
15 And again, I want to impress, I can't press  
16 enough, y'all as EMS Advisory Board, anything you got a  
17 question -- just like the other night that could have  
18 been well avoided if you just call -- pick up the phone  
19 and call the Council member, or call Mr. Burns ahead of  
20 time instead of that night. Call your Council members.  
21 ERMA KINNEY: We did.  
22 TOMMY DUNN: We appreciate it.  
23 CINDY WILSON: May I?  
24 TOMMY DUNN: Yes, ma'am.  
25 CINDY WILSON: One of the things that we  
26 discovered recently that we need to make sure everybody  
27 understands. A lot -- sometimes there would be a board  
28 at a squad. Some of the boards are very active, very  
29 informed, very engaged, but some of them apparently are  
30 not and didn't realize they had fiduciary  
31 responsibility. That brought up a very difficult  
32 situation because if the squad is formed or founded on  
33 that framework and the board is not staying informed  
34 and involved in asking questions and getting  
35 information and providing input and guidance to whoever  
36 the chief is, it can quickly unravel. And that's one  
37 of the issues that we found in one of the -- one in my  
38 districts. So that's something that needs to be--  
39 that our board members are made aware of. Some boards  
40 both corporate and foundations, they will have, for  
41 example, insurance to cover board members in case they  
42 made a mistake or what have you. But a lot of these  
43 people, some of them were very highly educated, but  
44 they apparently didn't know what they were responsible  
45 for. And that is an issue that we need to address with  
46 each of our squads.  
47 TOMMY DUNN: We just -- if you would  
48 you're exactly right on that Ms. Wilson but ---  
49 CINDY WILSON: May I say one more thing  
50 real quick?

1 TOMMY DUNN: Yes, ma'am.

2 CINDY WILSON: You see, the county  
3 contracts with the squads.

4 TOMMY DUNN: Contracts, I was going to  
5 say.

6 CINDY WILSON: And so we have an agreement  
7 of what we pay and what we're to receive and those  
8 things may need to be adjusted now. And so, it's very  
9 important that all of our squads look at their level of  
10 service and their funding and what we're requiring of  
11 them, and we need to look at all the reports and get  
12 together and try to come up with something that works.  
13 And we may have to do contracts that are maybe not as  
14 long a term or something just to allow some  
15 flexibility. There's a lot at play here and it's going  
16 to require a lot of brighter minds than mine to come up  
17 with the answers. Thank you.

18 TOMMY DUNN: Yes, ma'am. I just want to  
19 touch on what you said. That's exactly right. The EMS  
20 providers in Anderson County are sub-contractors to us.  
21 So we ain't got no say in about their boards or  
22 nothing. You're right, they should, anybody on the  
23 board ought to well have enough sense enough to know  
24 they ought to be -- what their responsibility is and  
25 what they're liable for. That's something I'm talking  
26 about when -- the system we got needs to be looked at.  
27 That was going to come up. We don't have not one say  
28 in -- no accountability. Our boards are picked.  
29 They're just randomly picked, people looking for them  
30 pick them or community votes for them or how-- how's  
31 the board's doing; we don't have no say in that. Got  
32 none whatsoever. And so, that's something got to be,  
33 you know, about the fiduciary duty. All they are is a  
34 contract getting thing and like I said, we give them  
35 more money and, you know, what we're talking about, you  
36 know, we kept talking about the Affordable Care Act,  
37 and I understand that, and we're certain. But what  
38 we're talking about is emergency calls. That's what  
39 we're responsible for for our citizens. Emergency  
40 response. Emergency calls. Yes, ma'am.

41 TERESA MORGAN: One last question, or one  
42 statement. I think that one aspect we really need to  
43 consider and something that I forgot to say initially  
44 was, the piece of this puzzle that we're not putting in  
45 place, too, is the chiefs themselves. They've been in  
46 on the ground level for years, many of them, and they  
47 know exactly how the county works, exactly where all  
48 the lines are drawn. They know these things. And  
49 sometimes I think we -- as a system we have evolved and  
50 as a group we have evolved. We used to have a lot of

1 distrust and many other things. But now I think we are  
2 more unified so we can actually utilize what we have as  
3 a resource, which is these chiefs. And we have Mr.  
4 Stoller. You know, he's done an admirable job and I  
5 respect him dearly and greatly for what he's done. But  
6 we really need to involve these chiefs in this process.  
7 As an Advisory Committee we can help, we can  
8 help with what we know. But these chiefs are on the  
9 ground level. So when the consultant firm comes in, I  
10 would like to really see the chiefs involved. And  
11 you're right, the board members, when I was on the  
12 board, and I'll say Mr. Robertson, in Belton, he made  
13 sure we got a financial report every time and I wanted  
14 to cry every time I saw it. And this was years ago.  
15 Because we were always trying to make a little -- make  
16 sure we had everything taken care of. I don't know how  
17 in the world he did it, but he did. And he still does.  
18 So with that respect we need to make sure these  
19 gentlemen are out there and have a say in all this.  
20 Thank you.

21 TOMMY DUNN: And I do -- what --  
22 everybody and I would say everybody should have a say.  
23 But also, it's very important for a fresh pair of eyes  
24 in this. Not getting paid or getting no money, got  
25 nothing, no dog in this fight. Just work for the best  
26 thing. I think that's very important, very important,  
27 too. When you got some squads, I said earlier, that's  
28 got umpteen thousands and thousands of dollars in the  
29 bank and this one over here is just barely getting by,  
30 this chief ain't run -- this squad ain't running but so  
31 many calls, but that EMS chief might be getting paid  
32 this and this one here's running all kinds of calls and  
33 like that, which we don't have no say in, that's part  
34 of the problem, in my opinion. But the whole issue  
35 needs to be looked at.

36 And also, I definitely want the EMS people  
37 you brought up about district lines. It's something to  
38 think about. You know, that run this in the fire  
39 service. That patient's having a heart attack, they  
40 don't care how they -- who helps them, how they get  
41 there. So this district line thing something, and we  
42 still have that going on to this day about this jumping  
43 my line. We need to look at what's best for the  
44 citizens of Anderson County. And I hope we'll do that.

45 Mr. Burns, you got anybody that signed up?

46 RUSTY BURNS: Mr. Dan Durham.

47 TOMMY DUNN: Dan Durham.

48 DAN DURHAM: I just signed up to speak  
49 because I wasn't sure what this entire meeting was  
50 about.

1 TOMMY DUNN: Yes, sir.  
2 DAN DURHAM: First thing I want to do is  
3 thank you for corning before and allowing the EMS  
4 commission to answer some questions or ask some  
5 questions and you provide the answers. I want you to  
6 realize, too, that there are only two members of  
7 Council that have been around long enough to see what  
8 the EMS system in this county has evolved in in the  
9 last twelve, fourteen years. That's the number of  
10 years I've been on the EMS board at Pelzer. And that's  
11 Ms. Wilson and Ms. Floyd. They know what it was like  
12 and what we faced when we were trying to get under one  
13 contract with the county. They understand, too, that  
14 convalescence was our life-blood, Mr. Crowder. It has  
15 not killed us. It allowed us to provide the funds that  
16 we needed to operate on to make up the difference  
17 between the stipend that the county was paying in  
18 addition to our total costs.  
19 Yes, Pelzer has very little money in the bank.  
20 We recognize from this audit, which we really can't  
21 call an audit because it's basically just a study that  
22 determines the cash level of each particular squad.  
23 And that's important because that lets you know how  
24 long if everything's shut off tomorrow, how long that  
25 squad could survive. Okay? We don't have the money in  
26 the bank that Pendleton has, according to this report.  
27 By that you would think that, you know -- and Pelzer  
28 board recognized quite a while ago, that we are asset  
29 rich and cash poor. Yet we've been able to keep our  
30 heads above the water with no problem. Three or four  
31 years ago we had four hundred thousand dollars in the  
32 bank. Okay. We bought equipment in the last few years  
33 and we paid cash for it. You know, rather than  
34 financing it and paying interest and all that good  
35 stuff. Our board's actively involved in the financial  
36 side and we've been keeping a close eye on it. Have  
37 been, will continue to be.  
38 Now the Affordable Care Act, not so much, that  
39 hurt, too. But this new Medicare program that we're in  
40 this three state trial basis, basically, that thing hit  
41 the ground before Medicare folks knew what to do with  
42 it. Before we knew what to do with it. Before the  
43 billing agencies knew what to do with it. When the  
44 pre-approved process was put in, you know, it caused us  
45 to do some changes. And there was actually a two week  
46 period there that went by that Medicare just put a  
47 moratorium out there, there was going to be no payments  
48 at all made, okay? That has eased up a little bit. I  
49 say eased up, we're still fighting it and we're still  
50 complying with it, but hopefully it's going to continue

1 to get a little bit better.  
2 I don't want to ramble too much on this, but  
3 Pelzer's sitting there with three stations, you know,  
4 we got a bunch of folks that work for us. The other  
5 thing that we've got to look for, too, is what happens  
6 if we go over that magic number of fifty employees and  
7 we have to wind up providing the insurance for those  
8 employees? Now we provide some insurance benefits now,  
9 but I don't think it's quite to that level.  
10 Nonetheless, we contract with our billing agency;  
11 basically we've got the contract with a bookkeeping  
12 service. We've got a local squad bookkeeper that keeps  
13 our own things for us. So there's a number of  
14 different things that we can do to try to keep a firm  
15 handle on our financial situation. But you talk about  
16 communication, yeah, we need some help on that. And  
17 I'm going to lay out the invitation tonight. The  
18 Pelzer board meets at seven o'clock the first Thursday  
19 in every month. Well, we delayed it because it was  
20 Fourth of July week this time, till last week. But  
21 then when the EMS Commission met and we found out what  
22 was -- that subject was about, we delayed it one more  
23 time till this week. So I invite the three County  
24 Council representatives, Mr. Allen, Mr. Waters and Ms.  
25 Wilson, to be at the Pelzer board meeting at Station 1  
26 at seven o'clock Thursday night and invite you to  
27 communicate with us.

28 Again, thank you for your time. I do  
29 appreciate the effort that you folks put in place on  
30 behalf of the county and of the EMS service. Thank  
31 you.

32 TOMMY DUNN: Thank you, Mr. Durham.  
33 Anyone else? Appreciate all the Council members coming  
34 out tonight. Meeting be adjourned.

35  
36

**(MEETING ADJOURNED 6:50 PM)**