Call to Order:
The meeting was called to order in the Controller's Office Conference Room by Commissioner Les Atchison at 10.00 a.m.

Roll Call:
Marty Krupa completed Roll Call.

Present: Commissioner Les Atchison; Commissioner Larry Cassidy; Commissioner Shawn Wonnacott
Support Staff: Controller Lyn Johnson; Assistant Controller / HR Director Marty Krupa; Recording Secretary Marlene Robinson.
Absent: None.
Guests: None

Public Comment: None.

Agenda:
Motion by Wonnacott to approve the Agenda. Supported by Cassidy.

Motion carried in an unanimous voice vote.

Approval of Minutes:
The proposed minutes of the April 16, 2012 meeting were presented and reviewed.

Motion by Cassidy to approve the April 16, 2012 meeting minutes as presented. Supported by Wonnacott.

Motion carried in a unanimous voice vote.

Communications:
Atchison has had communication with Tom Fairbairn Jr. from Allied EMS Board. Tom suggested a meeting with Cassidy, Atchison and himself. Atchison stated that he informed Mr. Fairbairn that the Committee is taking a look at all aspects of ambulance millage. There should not be a sense of urgency therefore a recommendation will not be presented to the Board at the May meeting. Wonnacott stated that when he and Krupa met with Allied, Allied seemed concerned about things that transpired before he and Cassidy were elected. Wonnacott explained to them that he and Cassidy, as new commissioners, are familiarizing themselves with the past and present concerns of the ambulance millage. His perception of the Board’s current position is that the authority issue is not a direction the Board wants to go. Wonnacott explained to Allied that the County Board appointed this Committee to study ambulance millage. Allied brought up the concept of proposing that the County put 1 mill on the ballot. Allied felt that if a 1 mill perpetual millage was in place, politics would be removed from funding or ambulance services. Krupa explained that the County has a fixed millage and a senior millage that is voted on every 4 years. This is an opportunity for the Board to evaluate the service and decide whether or not to place the millage request on the ballot for renewal. Wonnacott suggested that Cassidy, Atchison and himself meet with Allied.

Wonnacott received written communication from MediRide EMS. The communication explains their understanding that the County subsidizes ambulance services by $650,000 of which approximately $500,000 is allocated to Allied EMS. They felt they could provide similar or greater EMS services for a lower taxpayer subsidy. Based upon those statements, Wonnacott emailed him asking specifically what his total anticipation of costs would be excluding the Village of Mackinaw City’s area. Wonnacott inquired of their compensation and benefit package, base pay, retirement, health insurance (not necessarily cost
but what he offers) would be. Wonnacott also inquired about the certification of his employees. The response received was generic in nature and didn’t include the requested information. Wonnacott suggested to the Committee that due to the lack of information the Committee not make a trip to Marquette to follow-up with MediRide EMS systems. It was the consensus of the Committee to not schedule the trip.

While visiting the North Carolina area, Atchison had a discussion with Brian Blanton in Catawba County, North Carolina and their Ambulance Management. Atchison stated that the ambulance management is the responsibility of the counties by law and is mandated by the statute. If the counties do not want to run them, they can franchise them out. At the end of year, the department applies for cross leveling and receives money from Medicaid to bring it back up to Medicare levels. We may not be able to do this in Michigan. In North Carolina candidates must go to school for 2 years, through a very stringent exam, and a physical before applying. North Carolina has 12 hour shifts with built in overtime and work 2080 hours, working 2 days on, 3 days off, 3 days on, 2 days off. This allows them to assist the neighboring counties with the understanding that their own county has priority. Their County Board established a response time of 8 minutes which can be accomplished by having buildings with ambulances in various locations. Atchison sent Mr. Blanton a list of questions regarding ambulance services in North Carolina. Mr. Blanton responded to his questions.

On May 1st the Committee along with Johnson, Krupa and Civil Counsel Kathy Abbott did a site visit with Dallas Hyde, Manage of Cheboygan Life Support Systems Inc. Its operation is subsidized by millage at approximately 22% from Cheboygan County for the ambulance. Their successes appear to be due to the direction of the director and board. The Committee concluded that this seems to be a common theme. It appears that other counties are making it work with 22% subsidy. Wonnacott proposed Johnson find out what the cost would be in relationship if Emmet County manages the ambulance service. Atchison suggested working with 2 or 3 counties in a regional concept. In regard to the Village of Mackinaw City, we could provide ambulance service if it were the desire by them for Emmet County to provide it. It was the consensus of the Committee that any land, buildings, or equipment that is purchased with taxpayer dollars should be owned by Emmet County.

To have a better understanding of how other county ambulance services work, Atchison will meet with McLaren and Munson Grand Traverse, Wonnacott will meet with Chippewa County, and Cassidy will meet with Otsego County. Krupa and Johnson will prepare a proposed budget as if the County were to manage the ambulance service.

Other Business: None.

Public Comment: None.

Announcements:
The next Committee to Study Ambulance Millage meeting is scheduled for June 4, 2012 at 8:30 a.m. in the Controller's Office Conference Room.

Adjournment:
There being no further business Les adjourned the meeting at 11:33 a.m.

Approved: 06-04-2012