

Special MEETING
UNION TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES
September 26, 2018

Present: Charlie Prince, Trustee
John Slater, Trustee

Randy Weekly, Trustee
Paula Greene, Administration

Guests

Sally Brigham, Granville Township Trustee Dan Van Ness, Tonya Painter, Curt P. Painter, William Treciak, Dr. Bill Kramer, John Wallace, Hebron Fire Chief Cliff Mason, Donard Myers, Granville Twp. Fire Lt. Brandon Reece, Hebron Mayor Mike McFarland, Cory Zigan, William McCullough and Truro Township Fire Chief Jeff Sharps.

Mr. Prince stated the purpose of the special meeting limited to discussion of the scope of a proposed update of Dr. Bill Kramer's 2004 Fire Service report. Mr. Prince prepared a hand out of what he feels are highlights from Dr. Kramer's 2004 report that address current issues.

Dr. Kramer introduced himself and gave his background as a consultant and highlights from his 2004 report. Dr. Kramer feels a neutral and impartial third-party will provide an objective evaluation of the needs and best options which are affordable to the parties involved. As the Township is a previous client, he will make the township a priority and knows time is an issue. Dr. Kramer estimates a revision of his original report and new data would cost between \$15,000 and \$20,000 and take two and a half to three months to complete.

Dr. Kramer recommends updating each section of the original study; some sections could be skipped to save money, but this may interfere with the result of the study. More information is best. Dr. Kramer will update maps and data.

Mr. Prince would like the updated study to include the Granville Twp. Fire's response time in their service area, the effect on service from their new fire station and whether the current service area boundaries should be changed. In recent years, train traffic has decreased.

Mr. Slater said that is one of his concerns also and believes the service area boundaries need to be reviewed and which could aid in reducing response time. Mr. Weekly added we now have a 911 system which eliminated the need to phone the departments directly when an emergency occurred. Mr. Weekly said avoiding a long-distance call was also a consideration when the service areas were set.

Dr. Kramer has worked with a community with a railway dividing it and they found the fire department was more likely to be on a call than delayed by a train and believes it may be the same situation here. Mrs. Brigham said there are two trains per day. Mr. Prince has the railroad company contact information.

Dr. Kramer touched on the subject of fire districts.

Mayor McFarland said he knows what the steps are to create a fire district and what the state laws are and does not want to contribute to the study. Mr. Prince said we were not

asking Hebron to subsidize an update. Mayor McFarland said Granville's participation is not his concern. Hebron knows where they want to go and have their research and are comfortable with that and did not want his assistance on Hebron's behalf. Dr. Kramer said the point of the original study was to put a station at State Route 37 and Blacks Road and found affordability was an issue at that time.

Mr. Prince said there has been significant population growth in the township and asked Dr. Kramer if he had access to the growth data. Dr. Kramer said he would address growth as well as response time.

Mr. Slater asked if the update would address the possible need of a satellite station and determine if the need is now or in the future. Dr. Kramer felt it may be a need now and a third party should investigate the issue.

Dr. Kramer said there are two opposing arguments regarding service, one being every single resident deserves a speedy response time of 4 -6 minutes regardless of how many stations it would take. The opposing is to look at demand zones. A response call once a year cannot justify a station and the resident would have to take their chances. Dr. Kramer feels there's a balancing act where better service can be provided to most of the citizens in the center of the response area. Most fire station locations tend to be in the center and the community grows around them he believes this may be true in our area. Dr. Kramer will look at the areas that are growing and conduct a density study.

Dr. Kramer assisted the township in negotiating a fair EMS billing system which has been resolved. Both service areas now collect EMS billing from their service area and is not an issue.

Granville Township Trustee Dan Van Ness asked if a central station at Blacks and SR 37 could handle all of Union Township and if it included both fire and EMS in his study. Dr. Kramer said it was. The new location of Granville Township's Fire Department would be used in the new study.

Dr. Kramer said regardless how funding is determined he would expect both departments would continue to need mutual aid assistance. Trustee Prince wants service to continue with both departments and has recommended how they are funded.

Mr. Slater asked what the timeline would be of a new study. Dr. Kramer said at least two months and upon approval of the update, he would begin in mid-October. Mrs. Brigham said she was confused on the contract payments. Mr. Prince explained his proposal and the payments from the first year of the current contract. Each service area now receives revenue generated from their service area.

Mayor McFarland said the public needs to recognize Hebron Village taxpayers will be paying 11 mills (including Union Township millage) while Union Township residents pay 4.8 mills.

Chief Jeff Sharps asked if it wasn't significant to know why the village is paying more. Mayor McFarland said Hebron residents had voted on Township Trustees for years and had not paid Union Township levies. Approximately five years ago, the Licking County

Board of Revision discovered that this situation existed in several townships in the county. Political corporations within townships were given the choice to confirm their boundaries which would remove them from the township (no vote/no township levies) or remain in the township and start paying township levies as they were renewed, replaced or adopted. Buckeye Lake immediately conformed their boundaries; Hebron did not. Mayor McFarland said the township and Village work well together and they could lose that if they conformed their boundaries is afraid they would not be able to share services if Hebron conforms their boundaries and feels there are benefits of remaining in the Township. Mayor McFarland believes a fire district is the best way to resolve the current disparity in taxation rates between the Village and the Township.

A question was asked as to why we are discussing Hebron's millage. Mr. Prince feels Hebron is a partner not a contractor and understands why Hebron is concerned with their millage rate, even though they receive better service. Chief Mason said the residents of Hebron receive quicker service, not better service.

Mr. Slater said Chief Mason was trying to define service and response time is part of the quality of service. Chief Mason argued the service is the same, to which Mr. Slater said it was not due to the response time being longer into the township.

Dr. Kramer said when he does his study he figures response time as a part of service delivery. Quality of service upon arrival is the same as it is the same people and equipment adding response time is part of service.

Chief Sharps asked for clarification that Hebron chooses to remain in the township. Mayor McFarland said they could leave the township at any time which would reduce their millage. Mr. Slater said they could also allow millage to drop off.

Mayor McFarland said the county made the decision that the Village pays on the township levies, but the Village wants to remain in the township and to resolve the Fire Departments funding issues, they want to form a Fire District and remain in the township. Chief Sharps asked how a fire district would fix the problem. Mayor McFarland said the district would eliminate Hebron and Union Township's levies and all would pay one levy and based on his research that would be 6 to 7 mills. Chief Mason the revenue would increase from what it is now.

Chief Sharps said Hebron is proposing to create a fire district to create more revenue.

Chief Mason disagreed by saying the 6-7 mills would create more revenue than what is currently being generated by both Hebron Village and Union Township levies. Chief Mason believes this revenue would allow for a satellite station at State Route 37 and Blacks Road to be built and staffed giving the residents a quicker response time. Chief Sharps asked Dr. Kramer if his 2004 study was based on Union Township creating their own Fire Department at State Route 37 and Blacks Road and separating from the Village of Hebron. Dr. Kramer said it was and it would eliminate contracts. Dr. Kramer feels adding Buckeye Lake to a district would make a district more feasible. Chief Sharps asked what the problem trustees are trying to address. Mr. Prince said he is not satisfied with the response time to the central and western parts of the township and that service should be better since taxpayers are paying nearly \$1.2 million a year for

fire/EMS services. There are more people in the 8-10 response area now than in 2004. Mr. Prince said we are not going to build a station to service a small number of people.

Dr. John Wallace of Old Farm Road feels additional information is needed and the trustees need to be honest with the taxpayers regarding the cost of a new fire station from building to staffing and how it's going to be paid for. Dr. Wallace said all the information that has been given is speculation and the study is fourteen years old. A new study needs to include revenue and expenses, so the taxpayers can see the future costs. Dr. Wallace said he doesn't know what the driving issue is as the taxpayers are satisfied with the service and people don't buy property here to get better Fire/Ems response time. Dr. Wallace does not believe the cost per run is a fair measure for payment. If you are looking at price per run Granville service area residents are paying a higher tax per run and they are not complaining. Dr. Wallace feels we need to have a consultant look at all the current issues.

Mr. Prince said many people moving into the township and into new subdivisions are not aware of township government and expect services to be about the same as the city. Mr. Prince believes it is his obligation as he was elected to be a trustee to be forward thinking. Mr. Prince said he would not allow the status quo to continue for the residents in the 8 to 10-minute response area.

Mr. Wallace wants good information to make informed decisions. Mr. Prince said Dr. Kramer references are impeccable adding he has a lifetime of fire service and understands the business.

Mr. Van Ness said prior to the current contract Granville Township was subsidizing Union Township fire service and with the addition of Union Township's third fire levy the revenue to Granville Twp. was to increase and now Mr. Prince wants to change this. Mr. Prince said he was not here when the third levy was added and he does not feel the current formula is fair. Mr. Van Ness adds mutual aid runs made by Granville into the Hebron service area should be considered. Mr. Prince feels that could be controlled by Chief Curtis' run cards.

Chief Sharps asked if Mr. Prince knew why Chief Curtis set up the run cards they way are. Mr. Prince did not. Chief Sharps questioned how Chief Mason sets his run cards. Chief Mason said by response times and level of service provided. Mr. Prince said cards were not always set up this way citing his year-long research in the Village Buckeye Lake several years ago. Chief Sharps said we were talking about Granville's responses. Mr. Prince said he was not accusing Granville of anything and believes Granville's ladder truck accounts for most of the imbalance in mutual aide runs between Granville and Hebron.

Chief Sharps said Granville received approximately \$250,000 this year and Chief Mason said Hebron received \$672, 580.51 in 2017 adding after the first of the year Hebron tax payers will be paying on Union Township's third levy of 1.2 mills adding approximately \$200,000 of revenue to their department.

Chief Sharps asked if Hebron made 350 runs into the township last year. Chief Mason said they average 1100-1200 per year, a few of these runs are mutual aid and not in

Union Township and every run made is in the township. Chief Sharps asked again if Hebron's run count into the un-incorporated area was around 350. Mr. Prince said the run count into the un-incorporated area was 373.5 runs.

Chief Sharps asked if Dr. Kramer would take into consideration the current contracts. Dr. Kramer believes that would be included in the scope of work and see what the equity would be using various methods adding all things will be incorporated in his evaluation adding nothing is going to be entirely fair. Dr. Kramer said the best place to live would be the just outside of the village in the township where you would have the service time without paying the Hebron's much higher millage. Dr. Kramer said most people would not take the time to determine if they are paying too much for service.

Chief Mason said in 2017 Hebron responded 1477 of that 55 % were in the Village. Union Township carried about 50 % EMS calls and 40% Fire calls.

Mrs. Brigham asked how departments receive assistance. Mr. Prince explained departments provide service according to the run cards.

Bill Treciak questioned how the 4.8 mills were initially determined, and if was the right millage for north of the tracks. Mr. Slater said as the revenue became insufficient to provide the service desired, millage was added. Mr. Prince said you must look at the entire township.

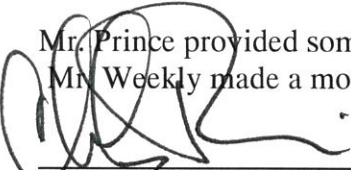
Chief Sharps said he was asked to help with the negotiation of the current contract arrangement as the previous contracts were terrible and the relationship between Hebron and the Township was strained. Union Township was paying 60% of whatever budget Hebron presented and Granville Twp. Fire \$80,000. The combined total exceeded the township's fire revenue resulting in the township paying for fire from the general fund. An additional 1.5 mills were placed on the ballot for additional funding.

Chief Sharps said the current contract was designed to allow each service area to receive their EMS revenue and levy revenue generated from their service area. Mr. Treciak felt this was a clean process. Chief Sharps said it was very clean and how most of the world works.

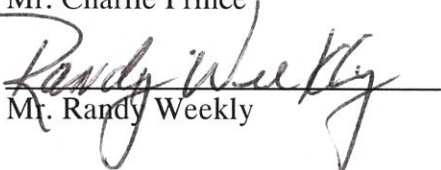
Mr. Prince asked there was a motion to ask Dr. Kramer to submit a proposal. Mr. Weekly made a motion for a cost proposal. Mr. Slater seconded. The motion was moved and seconded. Motion call – Motion passed.

Mr. Prince provided some data to Dr. Kramer.

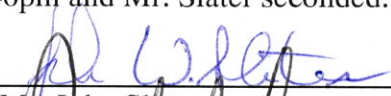
Mr. Weekly made a motion to adjourn at 2:40pm and Mr. Slater seconded.



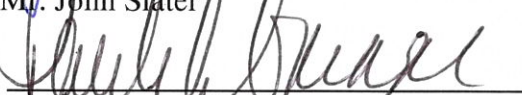
Mr. Charlie Prince



Mr. Randy Weekly



Mr. John Slater



Paula Greene Administrator