

FAIRFIELD TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE  
REGULAR ACTION MEETING  
VIA TELECONFERENCE  
JANUARY 20, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Benjamin Byrd, Sr. called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Mayor Benjamin Byrd, Sr. read the OPMA Statement into the record as follows:

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT

This meeting of the Fairfield Township Committee shall come to order. The New Jersey Open Public Meeting Law was enacted to insure the right of the public to have advanced notice of and to attend the meeting of the public bodies at which any business affecting their interests are discussed or acted upon. This meeting held on this 20<sup>th</sup> day of January 2021 via teleconference is held pursuant to notice having been submitted to The South Jersey Times, The Daily Journal and The Press of Atlantic City on January 11, 2021 and also duly posted on the Township website.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG / MOMENT OF PRAYER

Mayor Benjamin Byrd, Sr. led the flag salute followed by a moment of prayer given by Committeeman Tommy Clark, Jr.

ROLL CALL

The following roll call was recorded as follows:

Committeeman Tommy Clark, Jr., present; Committeeman David Gonzalez, present; Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr., present; Deputy Mayor Marvin Pierce, Jr., present and Mayor Benjamin Byrd, Sr., present.

ALSO PRESENT

Township Administrator Burden, Township Solicitor Marmero and Township Clerk Gonzales.

Mayor Byrd asked the Township Committee if they had any questions on the minutes for the Regular Action Meeting December 16, 2020. There were none. Mayor Byrd entertained a motion to approve the minutes of December 16, 2020.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

REGULAR ACTION MEETING OF DECEMBER 16, 2020

Committeeman Tommy Clark, Jr. moved to approve the minutes as written seconded by Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr. Roll Call Vote: Committeeman Tommy Clark Jr., yes; Committeeman David Gonzalez, yes; Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr., yes; Deputy Mayor Marvin Pierce, Jr., yes and Mayor Benjamin Byrd, Sr., yes.

REVIEW OF BILL LIST PROVIDED BY CFO

Mayor Byrd asked the Township Committee if they had any questions on the bill list provided by the Chief Financial Officer. There were none. Mayor Byrd entertained a motion to approve Resolution No. 47 - 2021.

RESOLUTION NO. 47 - 2021

A RESOLUTION OF FAIRFIELD TOWNSHIP, CUMBERLAND COUNTY AUTHORIZING THE PAYMENT OF TOWNSHIP BILLS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,260,962.49

Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr. moved to approve Resolution No. 47 - 2021 seconded by Deputy Mayor Marvin Pierce, Jr. Roll Call Vote: Committeeman Tommy Clark, Jr., yes; Committeeman David Gonzalez, yes; Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr., yes; Deputy Mayor Marvin Pierce, Jr., yes and Mayor Benjamin Byrd, Sr., yes.

ORDINANCE FOR INTRODUCTION (FIRST READING)

None

ORDINANCES FOR PUBLIC HEARING (SECOND READING)

None

Mayor Byrd read the Resolutions under Consent Agenda and asked the Township Committee if they had any questions. There were none. Mayor Byrd entertained a motion to approve the Consent Agenda Resolution No. 49 - 2021 through Resolution No. 53 - 2021.

CONSENT AGENDA

(RESOLUTION NO. 49 - 2021 THROUGH RESOLUTION NO. 53 - 2021)

The Consent Agenda includes items of business which are not controversial & do not require individual discussion. A motion approving the Consent Agenda is moved, seconded and voted upon as one item by the Township Committee. If any discussion is requested on a Consent Agenda item, it is removed from the Consent Agenda to the Regular Agenda

RESOLUTION NO. 49 - 2021

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF AGREEMENT OF SALE FOR PROPERTY KNOWN AS BLOCK 17, LOT 29

RESOLUTION NO. 50 - 2021

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF FAIRFIELD AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF SHARED SERVICES AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN THE TOWNSHIP OF FAIRFIELD AND THE TOWNSHIP OF UPPER DEERFIELD FOR THE CONSTRUCTION CODE OFFICE

RESOLUTION NO. 51 - 2021

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE RENEWAL OF JUNK YARD LICENSE TO B&M AUTO SALVAGE, LLC

RESOLUTION NO. 52 - 2021

A RESOLUTION APPROVING ANNUAL BUSINESS REGISTRATIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 53 - 2021

A RESOLUTION OF FAIRFIELD TOWNSHIP, CUMBERLAND COUNTY AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF STREET OPENING PERMIT(S) TO SOUTH JERSEY GAS COMPANY

PERMIT NO. 1 - 2021 / INSTALLATION OF GAS SERVICE / 19 COPIN DRIVE (216' S OF C/L DUCHESS PLACE)

PERMIT NO. 2 - 2021 /INSTALLATION OF GAS SERVICE / 333 CLARKS POND ROAD (303' S OF C/L FAIRTON - MILLVILLE ROAD)

On a motion by Deputy Mayor Marvin Pierce, Jr. to approve the above Resolutions by Consent Agenda seconded by Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr. Roll Call Vote: Committeeman Tommy Clark, Jr., yes; Committeeman David Gonzalez, yes; Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr., yes; Deputy Mayor Marvin Pierce, Jr., yes and Mayor Benjamin Byrd, Sr., yes.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

DISCUSSION / RESOLUTION NO. 48 - 2021

Mayor Byrd announced that tonight we will open discussion regarding Resolution No. 48 - 2021 oh how we got to this point that we are in right now and that we have to make a decision to outsource our ambulance service. He reported back in 2015, 2016, and 2017 our ambulance service according to the numbers report a loss of \$96,000.00. In 2016 and 2017 it was \$106,000.00 in costs and expense. In 2015, \$196,000.00, in 2016, \$209,000.00, in 2017, \$215,000.00, the revenue side in 2015 was \$100,000.00, in 2016, \$113,000.00, in 2017, \$109,000.00. In 2018, the revenue side was \$169,000.00, the expense jumped in from 2017, \$215,839.59. The expense for 2018 was \$301,000.00 a difference of almost \$85,000.00. The ambulance service increase from 2017 - 2018. In 2018, the loss for the Township was \$132,000.00. In 2019, the revenue was \$184,000.00. The expense was \$303,900.00 and the loss was \$191, 854.00. In 2020, the revenue was \$152, 900.00. The expense was \$302,000.00 and the Township loss was \$159,000.00. From 2015 to 2020, the Township has loss over \$700,000.00 .

Mayor Byrd stated that in 2021, we asked our Chief Financial Officer to do some calculations for us to come up with a number to see approximately what we would lose in 2021. The estimate of \$442,800.00 to operate one ambulance to run full time 24/7 and the loss would be in 2021 close to a million dollars.

Mayor Byrd reported that our tax increase over the years have been as follows: Inn 2015, 2.4 cents, 2016, 2.3 cents, 2017, 0 cents, 2018, 0 cents, 2019, 1 cent and in 2020, 0 cents. He stated that it appears that the loss that our Township has been taken and what our Chief Financial Officer has estimated that it is going to continue to take and it triggered as to what can we do. He stated that at this point, we have been coordinating our efforts with the Chief at the Fairton Fire Company trying to hire Part Time employees to keep up with the changes. He advised that over the last few years, we were told that the volunteers

basically were not showing up and they were hard to get to show up, meaning that it was hard to get people to volunteer their time to do the job through no fault of anyone that took place. He advised it was just a trend over time and this is what happened. He stated that as far as what was explained to the Township Committee, that they were not showing up, therefore, the Township had to keep an ambulance service in place so the Township Committee between 2017 and 2018 poured more money into our ambulance service to try to keep the seats filled in trying to protect our residents in the township. He advised that in doing that, we still had trouble keeping up with the calls. He stated that he looked at the calls and that he spoke with the Chief of Bridgeton advising him that we appreciate them in helping us out; however, at the end of the day, we missed a lot of calls and relied on Bridgeton to come and help us because we had a shortage of manpower on the volunteer side. He advised that we were then asked by our Fire Chief to place a question on the ballot asking the residents if they would support in paying for a Full Time ambulance and we did so, knowing that it would cost us \$442,000.00, but that the Township did not have any choice but to try to protect our Township if we had an emergency by trying to go in this direction. The question was printed on the ballot and the question was approved. He advised that after the question was put on the ballot, the Township was approached by Inspira about taking over the ambulance service with a proposal that was much more economical than the \$442,000.00. Mayor Byrd advised that Inspira would put an ambulance in our Township at \$20,000.00 per year and after the offer was made, Mayor Byrd stated he spoke with the Township Committee and also the Fairton Fire Chief and the Fairton Fire Chief asked a couple of questions, such as if they had to send them somewhere else, they would, but would try to keep them in Fairfield Township. Secondly, Inspira had stated that there would be pay increases to our EMT's.

Mayor Byrd stated that at this point we can either budget \$442,000.00 for a 24/7 Full-Time ambulance service and hope that we do well this year. The prediction is that they would generate \$170,000.00 which would still be a shortfall of \$270,000.00.

Mayor Byrd stated that he wants to keep moving forward with what he has and then if the Township Committee members want to chime in, to please do so. He stated that he wants to try to let the Committee and our residents know that we have been trying our best over the years to keep a good budget and hold our taxes down, but also try to do the best we can for our ambulance service. He further stated that he wanted to circle back and say that the Township is not blaming anybody for the position that we are in, we are just saying that the Township is in a position that we need to consider what is going to happen down the road with our ambulance service. At this time, Mayor Byrd asked the Township Committee if they had anything they would like to say or discuss any issues they may have.

Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr. stated that he has once concern and that it was his own opinion and that was if there was enough research done on the pros/cons on hiring the private EMS. He stated that he knows the Township is looking into saving the Township money, but most importantly, is saving the lives of the residents of Fairfield Township and if we are going to a private firm, if there was enough research with the pros/cons because it was brought to this attention that Inspira was in Millville and that Millville got rid of them and asked if we did we did enough research on that and why Millville did away with Inspira.

Mayor Byrd stated that he did and had a conversation with Inspira about that because it was also brought to his attention as well. Mayor Byrd asked if Jessica was on the line. Jessica responded that she was on the line and that she be glad to answer the questions. She explained that the Millville contract was given away with the previous leadership in her department. She stated that they have a complete leadership change. The previous leadership did not want to participate in 9-1-1 services or the community. She advised that the new leadership is dedicated to the community and they do want to participate in 9-1-1 and they do want to be part of the community and that their crews want to serve the community, so we are committed in doing a good job.

Mayor Byrd stated there was some concern about doing a Mutual Aid, when Inspira had that particular contract with the City of Millville from what he understands it was hashed out without Mutual Aid. He stated for Inspira to do Mutual Aid could you Jessica shed some light on it because Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr. did bring that up.

At this time, Committeeman Tommy Clark, Jr. asked Mayor Byrd if Jessica could enter her name and title for the record.

Jessica Shaw, Operations Manager for BLS Service Line at Inspire Health, 600 Cedar Street, Millville. Inspira. Ms. Shaw explained that it was a previous administration completely different Director and Operation Managers for the department. They managed the Millville contract in a way that they would not provide Mutual Aid to any other town and therefore, that is not the way they do business now and is not the way they would do business if they still had the contract with Millville and as a backup provider, we currently have Mutual Aid to the City of Vineland, City of Millville, a Mutual Aid agreement for a 9-

1-1 contract in Maurice River and Downe Township and we would serve your community in the same way.

Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr. entered his other concern into the record that he knows that with the Township residents, if we were to enter into a contract with Inspira and they went out to a resident, are the residents going to be responsible to pay because with the Township it was free of charge. Ms. Shaw stated that they have an obligation under Federal Law & Medical Law to bill appropriately for insurances, meaning that they cannot bill, but the hospitals participates in several charity care programs that go by the poverty levels in town and they would bill to that extent and they have the ability to accept the Medicare payment and they have the ability to not affect anyone's credit reports or homes or mortgages or anything like that.

Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr. stated so you're saying that every time you went to a resident's house, if it's a repeated time, the residents are going to be charged every time you go. Ms. Shaw stated that what she is saying that they bill according to Federal Health Care Regulations & Medicare Laws.

Mayor Byrd asked if there were any other comments from the Township Committee. There were none.

Mayor Byrd asked if the Chief Financial Officer was on the teleconference. Chief Financial Officer indicated that he was and Mayor Byrd asked him to put his name and title on the record.

Neil Young, Chief Financial Officer. Mayor Byrd stated that a while ago, he went over the numbers that Mr. Young provided to the Township Committee as the CFO and asked the CFO if those numbers were accurate and if he missed anything or make a mistake because he wanted to make sure.

Neil Young, Chief Financial Officer stated those exact numbers are what he provided to the Township Committee based off the current wages, health benefits and the total expense package. Everything the Mayor stated into the record is correct.

Mayor Byrd asked the Township Committee if they had any questions for the Chief Financial Officer.

There were none from Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr., Deputy Mayor Marvin Pierce, Jr., and Committeeman Tommy Clark, Jr.

Committeeman David Gonzalez stated that he had no questions for the CFO, but wanted to know what the response was from the Council #18 Union that represents our labor.

Mayor Byrd asked if Township Solicitor Marmero was on the teleconference call. Solicitor Marmero indicated that he was.

Solicitor Marmero stated that he provided the Township Committee a Memorandum which outlined some of the discussions and some of the procedure history and would answer any questions that they may have.

Solicitor Marmero pointed out that upon learning of the affect that this potential decision could have on Council #18 employees, he reached out to the Union Attorney, Kevin Jarvis. He advised that he contacted Mr. Jarvis on December 18, 2020 informing him that the Township is considering this action.

He advised that they discussed the section of the contract which would permit this action. He stated that he pointed to Mr. Jarvis that per the agreement that is being worked on with Inspira that all the Council #18 employees would be hired by Inspira as long that they pass the prerequisite background checks and driver abstract reviews. Mr. Marmero stated that he and Mr. Jarvis engaged in further discussion later that month where there was discussion about the pay rates, once we got that information from Inspira.

Mr. Marmero advised that there was discussion with the Union and of course as required by law, all affected employees whether union members or not were notified of this meeting as well and received notice prior to the last meeting as well to give everyone a chance to participate in these meetings, including the Union and its employees.

Mayor Byrd asked the Township Committee if they had any questions for the Township Solicitor.

There were none.

Mayor Byrd asked Committeeman Gonzalez if the answers from the Solicitor satisfied his question. Committeeman Gonzalez affirmed.

Mayor Byrd stated moving forward, we can talk about our employees without names, that during the time speaking with Inspira and talking with the Fairton Fire Chief and the employees working in the Township in which Inspira agreed to and what the Township Solicitor just stated, that Full-Time employees would get an additional \$5.00 or more an hour and the Part-Time employees would get \$7.00 per hour or more if this agreement moved forward. Mayor Byrd also stated that since Bridgeton was in our town a lot trying to assist our ambulance service that we had, he did reach out to Bridgeton about a Mutual Aid Agreement. He indicated that Bridgeton did not say they would not do it, but they wanted more information and they wanted to sit down and talk about it and maybe look at the proposed agreement with Inspira. He advised that he had a conversation with Inspira about protecting our Township first and he agrees with Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr. about our residents being protected in our Township. He advised that after speaking with Inspira today about our ambulance service, Inspira agreed to they would put an ambulance in our town 24/7 and also at no additional cost, they would put another ambulance in from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm at night time, they would have another ambulance on stand-by to back up the 24/7 ambulance that is in our town and they would also use Mutual Aid, the second ambulance that they have at night time will help support the 24/7 ambulance that we have right now with no additional costs. He further stated that in speaking with Inspira, if the agreement goes through that in 30 days we could re-evaluate and make sure our Township is being kept and operating properly and if the Township Committee has any concerns, that the Township could consider installing another 24/7 ambulance which would have to go out to bid if need be.

Committeeman David Gonzalez asked what it would cost if we had to go with another 24/7. Mayor Byrd responded that in speaking with Inspira, it would have to go out to bid and hope it would be a reasonable price, but knows that it would be under the budget of \$442,000.00.

Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr. stated that he had once concern and that is the price that Inspira wants to charge, the pricing is so low. He advised that his concern is because the pricing is so low, are we going to get half the service from them. We are looking at what it costs us now and dropping down under \$50,000.00 a year, are we going to half the service or are we going to be at where we are now?

Ms. Shaw indicated that she would be glad to answer his question. She advised that her department is over 300 employees strong. During the day shift, we have about 19 ambulances in service and over-night we have about 14. Ms. Shaw stated that they commit to a contract on a 24/7 ambulance service for which you will have. Ms. Shaw stated that she will rely on her team to provide backup as needed as long as we are in your community. She indicated that she has no intentions ever on providing half a service or sub-standard care to anyone nor her team.

Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr. stated that he understood and that his concern is the pricing being so cheap. Ms. Shaw stated that she understands and explained that you do not get into 9-1-1 to make money, that you build trust in your health system.

Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr. stated that he understood, but that Inspira is also going to hire our Full-time employees and Part-Time employees and pay them more money for the same price is his concern.

Ms. Shaw explained that her bread and butter in her department is their transport service, that is what gives them a strong financial foundation so they can go out in the community and offer a low price for a good service.

Mayor Byrd stated that when he posed the same questions, that Ms. Shaw also explained about a business plan that you have and that he was glad to they were able to do it for that much, but that we also wanted to make sure that our Township would be protected as well. Ms. Shaw explained there is a transport side and her ambulance is assigned to any municipality and that they will not be pulled back to another town, they will be dedicated to your town.

Mayor Byrd stated for record keeping, he explained the second ambulance being dispatched to us just when needed and also the ambulance from 9:00 am to 5:00 p.m. at no additional cost to the Township and asked Ms. Shaw if he left anything out. Ms. Shaw advised Mayor Byrd that he was clear, that they are offering one (1) 24 hour ambulance and traditionally, the busy time of call volumes are between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. or 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and that they will provide a power truck from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and that will be the best utilization for that truck, it can get a lot of transport and dedicated there with ease.

Mayor Byrd stated in addition to the 24 hour truck and at night time after 5:00 p.m., you will have an additional ambulance to come to our town to assist the 24/7 ambulance if needed or if they are on call, you will be able to roll another ambulance to our Township to ensure we are covered.

Ms. Shaw responded that is correct, at night we will have three (3) 9-1-1 trucks and three (3) transports and we will also have eight (8) in service critical care trucks so any capable unit will be able to come and cover your town and that unit may be packed with paramedic and nurse which is a higher level for care at no additional fee.

Committeeman Tommy Clark, Jr. stated that he wanted to make sure that we are clear in reading the MOA regarding the termination of the contract without cause that any party can terminate with a 50 day written notice and wanted to make sure that was on either side of the party. Ms. Shaw affirmed.

Mayor Byrd asked the Township Committee if they had any further questions. There were none.

Mayor Byrd stated that before we open the meeting to the Public, he stated that when the question was printed on the ballot for the residents at the time, the Township was in a position where we really did not think we had a choice to do anything or any other options beside to provide the best care for our Township residents. He stated after the election in November, had Inspira came to us before, I do not know if the question would have been on the ballot and of course the Township Committee would have had to discuss it.

Mayor Byrd read into the Public Comments on Current Agenda Items & Non Agenda Items as follows:

PUBLIC COMMENT ON CURRENT AGENDA ITEMS & NON AGENDA ITEMS

In order for the Committee to conduct the business of the Township in the most productive manner possible, meeting attendees will be given five (5) minutes, all-inclusive to comment on any agenda item(s) without comment or question from the Committee and any non-agenda items including all dialogue, questions and responses from both the speaker and the Committee for the designated public portion of the meeting. There may be no transference of a speaker's time to other attendees. At the appropriate time, please step up to the microphone at the appropriate time, and state your name and address for the record.

Mayor Byrd entertained a motion to open Public Comment on Current Agenda Items & Non Agenda Items.

Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr. moved and seconded by Deputy Mayor Marvin Pierce, Jr. Roll Call Vote: Committeeman Tommy Clark, Jr., yes; Committeeman David Gonzalez, yes; Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr., yes; Deputy Mayor Marvin Pierce, Jr., yes and Mayor Benjamin Byrd, Sr., yes.

Dr. Robert Simon, Clarks Pond Road stated that we spent decades building an ambulance service here and it was one of the principals why we choose to move here among other things. He stated we were pleased to have that kind of security and that he only points out that it may take 30 or 60 days to decide if we wish to dismiss the contractor that is eventually chosen, but that it probably would take a lot longer to be able to reinstitute an ambulance in this town that's being dismissed summarily and that he thinks that the factors need to be considered if we let them go to have something in there that states that they will continue to support the Township while we search for another solution or reap our ambulance service.

Dr. Simon's second question is that he hears a lot of parking of trucks at the Township Hall or wherever the ambulance be garaged, but he hears nothing about where the personnel is going to be because the delay in ambulance response is not usually the vehicle, but it is getting together the team to get on the ambulance and if they are in another city and have to come to Fairfield Township to get in the ambulance, he believes that needs to be addressed.

Mayor Byrd advised Dr. Simon that the personnel will be working inside the municipal building with the ambulance at the Municipal Complex.

Dr. Simon said his other concern was the subscription service and also if the ambulance service would provide aide in fire calls.

Ms. Shaw responded that when there is a fire call, Inspira will respond and they are owners of a bioatric and fire rehab vehicle which will be dispatched to the scene.

Dr. Simon asked if the Township has given consideration to persons who are elderly and have no means of going to a COVID immunization provider whether such individuals would be thought of home availability. He stated that several towns and townships in the State of New Jersey have set up home vaccination programs.

Mayor Byrd advised Dr. Simon that he would have the Township Administrator to look into the home vaccination program that he just brought up.

William McLean, APN, Nurse Practitioner, 86 Ramah Road stated that he was the original grant writer for 9-1-1 center back in 1976-1977 and who has had terrible EMS experience. His question was for Ms.

Shaw asking her that the average charge to a resident who may require basic ambulance run. Ms. Shaw stated the average charge for Medicare right now is \$409.00. Mr. McLean asked if it was covered under Part P. Ms. Shaw indicated that she believed so as she is not a billing specialists, but that she does know their average collection rate for ambulance service transport. Mr. McClean asked if many of the residents in the Township do not have a medicare advantage program or a full HMO program, they would be required to pay 20% of the Part P bill, he explained in this case they would have to pay \$80.00 per run and that right now he believes it is written off and asked if it was written off with Inspira. Ms. Shaw explained New Jersey Charity Care clause and also in their own internal billing procedures. She explained based on the poverty level or the income level in your town that is how their bill will be prorated and what they also accept of medicare by Federal Regulations. She explained they will grade your community and they will adjust your bill and then work with you on the balance if there is one.

Mr. McLean stated that in looking at this whole system and listening to the Mayor and Ms. Shaw that he thinks the Township is actually stealing Inspira's money because he like he believed it was Mr. Pierce that had the question as to why it is so cheap. He stated maybe it is a plan for increasing your EMS profile within the County which he understands from a business model and also to have your transport system backup your EMS system as far as paying the liability of such a system.

Mr. McLean's other question was if there was a plan in this for a prorated increase each year or is it a negotiated contract each year. Ms. Shaw explained to Mr. McLean that the RFP that she submitted to Fairfield Township is for 5 years and does not include any rate increases and explained to Mr. McLean being familiar with 9-1-1, she is sure that he would understand generally there is no money in that as she have stated earlier on, she stated they have a very strong transport business and this the bread and butter of what we do. The men and women that work for Ms. Shaw live in the community and it gives them pride to serve the community in a prehospital 9-1-1 areas. She stated that they want to have a great company, a great company that has employees filled with pride and they get that pride from providing 9-1-1 services.

Mr. McLean stated that he believes everyone received his letter dated on the 10<sup>th</sup> of January 2020. Mayor Byrd acknowledged that the Township Committee did receive his letter. Mr. McLean stated you have the guarantee of a 24/7 service with a backup with Mutual Aid, it can be a win situation for the Township.

Mayor Byrd thanked Mr. McLean.

Pat Conahey, Cedarville Road thanked Dr. Simon and Mr. McLean for their good points and concerns, but that he was present tonight to speak in opposition of Resolution No. 48 - 2021. He stated that our Township has 47.3 square miles according to the 2010 Census and that we have 6,295 residents that reside 6 miles scattered throughout the Township. Mr. Conahey stated for the past 25 years, the residents received excellent EMS service from the Fairton Fire Company. He stated the members combined have had thousands of hours of training and that he had several questions to asked and he asked to wait until the end to respond to his questions so as not to confuse the time.

First Question from Mr. Conahey: Wanted to know if Deputy Mayor Marvin Pierce, Jr. will recuse himself from voting tonight as he has a conflict of interest by being a member of the Gouldtown Fire Company which does have first responders that do go out.

Second Question from Mr. Conhaey: The letter that the Township sent out on January 8, 2021, you explained everything but you did not say when you were going to be talking about this as a lot of residents are not aware that you are having this meeting tonight.

Mr. Conahey stated that the question on the ballot was misleading because it was worded as such that you were going to expand our present service which now you say that was your intention, but then Inspira came into and he wanted to know if we had a signed agreement for Mutual Aid because without it you do not have an agreement and without that agreement you are putting our township residents lives at risk.

Mr. Conahey stated that you had mentioned earlier on that you had spoken with Inspira about why they do not do Millville, but did you talked with the City of Millville to see why they dropped them. Mr. Conahey advised that he knows Laurel Lake and Fairton were making many calls to Millville because they were filling a gap that wasn't even there. He also stated that from the conversations tonight, there is not going to be a subscription service which he agrees with Dr. Simon and Mr. McLean that it is going to cost the residents a lot of money because if they do not have insurance or their insurance does not cover it, it is going to cost the residents more money. Mr. Conahey stated that he also wants to know what the total cost is going to be, not just the \$20,000.00 anything else associated with modifying any billings, making place where the EMS personnel are going to be at the Township Hall. Mr. Conahey stated you indicated that the contract is for 5 years and was it definite that they are not going to raise it.

Mr. Conahey stated that Ms. Shaw had stated that they are there to do a service and not a profit and the Township Committee needs to remember that. He also mentioned about the contract that could be re-evaluated in 30 days, he asked what if they fall short 6 months from now, could you re-evaluate then to get rid of them as he stated this was a good question.

Mr. Conahey is asking the Township Committee to defeat Resolution No. 48 - 2021 and hire more employees for the fine service we have at the Fairton ambulance and if the Township Committee could answer his questions, he appreciate it very much.

Mayor Byrd stated that he will have the Township Solicitor to refer to any conflict that he thinks anybody would have on the Township Committee as you particular called out Deputy Mayor Marvin Pierce, Jr.

Township Solicitor stated that he did not know Deputy Mayor Pierce's situation exactly but that he can give a general over view if there were any questions we can discuss that as well. Generally with respect to any decision that you will be making on a Resolution or Ordinance, if you are going to be receiving some type of benefit over or beyond with the rest of the general public would be receiving, then you would have a conflict of interest, generally what that is some type of financial benefit in this situation, the analysis your making tonight is with the agreement with Inspira, so if anyone on the Township Committee would be making that vote would be receiving some kind of benefit above and beyond with the township residents would receive is a conflict of interest. Township Solicitor Marmero asked Deputy Mayor Marvin Pierce, Jr. to tell us what the situation is so that he could be more specific.

Deputy Mayor Marvin Pierce, Jr. stated for the record, he is a member of the Fairfield Volunteer Fire Company No. 2 in Gouldtown and that after what Solicitor Marmero just stated there is no personal gain, no financial gain or any sort regardless of the ambulance service or the Fire Company. Township Solicitor Marmero stated that is what he figured that he perhaps had a somewhat close tie in the situation, but you would not have something to rise to the level of a conflict of interest that would prevent you from voting in the matter.

Mayor Byrd stated to Mr. Conahey that you also brought up about the subscription program and so did Dr. Simon. Mayor Byrd advised that the subscription program when you pay your money to the prescriber program, did that money go the Fairton ambulance service? Mayor Byrd stated the reason he brings this up is because he stated that as long as he has been on the Township Committee, the Committee has never voted on a subscription program for our Township and anytime that ambulance service is utilized, you do not get charged because you donated \$35.00 or whatever it was, then the rest of the residents picked up the bill anyway.

Mayor Byrd indicted that he would have to circle back to Mr. Conahey's other questions.

Nancy Ridgeway, 502 Irving Avenue asked what is the Township going to do with the equipment that the Township has and or owns.

Mayor Byrd stated to Ms. Ridgeway that the equipment that we have so far and surely the Township Committee would have to discuss it in more detail, but what the Township Committee would like to hold on to our apparatus in the event it does not work out we still have our apparatus to try to make it work.

Kimberly Hall, thanked the Mayor and the Township Administrator for her OPRA Request. She indicated that she has two (2) responders in her household. She advised that Dr. Simon and Mr. McLean raised some very good valued questions and did not have anything further questions on Resolution No. 48 - 2021 or her OPRA Requests as some of the information she requested was answered tonight.

There being no further comments to be received, Mayor Byrd entertained a motion to close the Public Comments on Current Agenda Items & Non Agenda Items.

Committeeman Tommy Clark, Jr. moved and seconded by Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr. Roll Call Vote: Committeeman Tommy Clark, Jr., yes; Committeeman David Gonzalez, yes; Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr., yes; Deputy Mayor Marvin Pierce, Jr., yes and Mayor Benjamin Byrd, Sr., yes.

Mayor Byrd asked the Township Committee if they had any further discussion on Resolution No. 48 - 2021.

Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr. stated that he had another concern and that was that there were some concerns from the residents that were raised about some of the issues and that it is in his opinion, he feels that before we can vote on Resolution No. 48 - 2021, we need to answer their concerns before we go ahead and vote on approving or not approving the Resolution.

Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr. made referenced to the concerns brought up by Mr. Pat Conahey and Mr. McLean regarding the charges to the residents and that he feels that we need to find out more details on them before we pass the Resolution before we find out that the residents are going to be stuck paying because his input on this is that he has always knew that after the 4<sup>th</sup> time an ambulance came to your house that you had to pay.

Mayor Byrd responded that he never heard that and again that he would repeat the subscriber's situation that was mailed out to our Township residents that since he has been on the Township Committee and even as far going back to 2008 or 2009, he never saw the Township Committee vote on that program and the subscriber's program did not go the Township, it went to the Fairton Fire Company. Mayor Byrd stated that whatever was done to implement the subscriber's program, if you think about it, if the ambulance comes to pick you up and you do not have to pay because you paid the \$35.00 to the Fairton Fire Company may be a good thing for that person at the time, but the residents are still paying the bill.

Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr. stated that was his concern and it's up to the rest of the Township Committee to vote, but until we actually get all the issues squared away.

Committeeman David Gonzalez advised Mayor Byrd that he perhaps could shed some light on one the questions. He stated that a few years ago the ambulance provided service to take him to the hospital which was the first time he ever used the Fairton Ambulance service and they provided him with very fine service. He reported that his insurance company was charged for the first time in the amount of \$800.00.

Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr. stated that is something we need to look into because the biggest percentage of Fairfield Township residents is senior citizens on a fixed income.

Ben Church interjected and advised that he could give a response. Mayor Byrd advised Mr. Church to hold off and asked Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr. if he was done with his comments/concerns. He affirmed yes and asked if it was permissive to allow Ben Church to state his comments into the record regarding his concern. Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr. affirmed.

Ben Church identified himself as one of the colleagues with Ms. Jessica Shaw over the Inspira EMS office. He advised that they do bill insurance companies. He advised that Inspira is not for profit agency and that they do not take the collections. He explained that they give the balance of the bill to the personnel base service, but that they do not collect and explained that it is a simple phone call to get an excess bill resolved.

Mayor Byrd asked the Township Committee if they had any other question and or concerns.

Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr. stated that he just does not want the Committee to move too quickly and regret it. Mayor Byrd stated that he did not either. Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr. stated sometimes we can move too fast and could make some mistakes.

Mayor Byrd asked the Township Committee if they had any other questions and or concerns. There were none.

Mayor Byrd read Resolution No. 48 - 2021 into the record and indicated that the agreement goes into effect February 1, 2021 for 5 years and entertained a motion to adopt.

#### RESOLUTION NO. 48 - 2021

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF FAIRFIELD AWARDING A CONTRACT FOR BASIC LIFE SUPPORT 911 RESPONSE AND AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF A CONTRACT  
Committeeman Tommy Clark Jr. moved to adopt Resolution No. 48 - 2021 seconded by Deputy Mayor Marvin Pierce, Jr. Roll Call Vote: Committeeman Tommy Clark, Jr., yes; Committeeman David Gonzalez, abstain, Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr., no; Deputy Mayor Marvin Pierce, Jr., yes and Mayor Benjamin Byrd, Sr., yes.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS / REMARKS

Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr., had no reports or remarks at this time.

Committeeman David Gonzalez had no reports or remarks at this time.

Committeeman Tommy Clark, Jr. thanked the residents for their input provided tonight.

Deputy Mayor Marvin Pierce, Jr., echoed the same remarks issued by Committeeman Clark and thanked the residents for their great questions asked tonight.

MAYOR'S REPORT / REMARKS

Mayor Byrd reiterated the same remarks issued by the Township Committee. He said that the Township has to make decisions for the best interest of the Township and the residents. He sees the costs of the Township soaring and that sometimes hard decisions have to be made and are not easy to make.

There was no need for an Executive Session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (IF NEEDED)

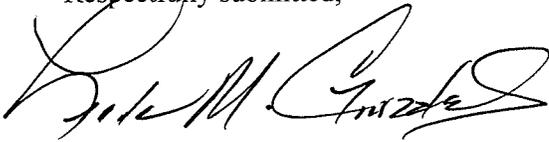
AUTHORIZING TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE NOT OPEN TO THE PUBLIC (ACTION MAY BE TAKEN)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Township Committee, Mayor Byrd entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Committeeman Mark K. Pierce, Sr. moved and seconded by Deputy Mayor Marvin Pierce, Jr. All members voted in the affirmative. The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Linda M. Gonzales, RMC  
Township Clerk