

John R. Ryman, Trustee  
Randy Mott, Trustee  
Greg D. Dilts, Trustee

Mary Ann Mumford, Fiscal Officer  
Jim Cozatt, Zoning Inspector



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5710 Walnut Grove Road  
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Nic Rice, ETCC

## **Residents of Elizabeth Township,**

The following is an update by the Trustees to some questions that came up at the meeting on March 7, 2024.

### **Termination of New Carlisle contract:**

New Carlisle had let the percent of time that our department was being staffed go down to less than 25% while we were paying the full contracted price and while we were promised full staffing at the time that we negotiated the contract. When our department was not staffed, a medic or fire apparatus was dispatched from the New Carlisle station which added to the response time.

### **What happens after the 8 mill levy for 5 years:**

The township is committed toward reducing fire and EMS costs as much as possible now and in the future. There could be opportunities to contract some services to others for a potential lower cost. There could be opportunities to contract with surrounding departments for us to provide services to lower our costs however, when our medic is out for a call in a surrounding area and our township gets a call then the response will be a lot longer in time and would have to rely on mutual aid for the response.

The township is also committed to keep the lowest response times to our residents as possible. Since we started our department, those average times have been reduced by over 5 minutes.

### **Why weren't residents notified about the status of the New Carlisle contract before announcing the levy?**

The township trustee meetings that are held twice monthly on the first and third Wednesdays of each month at 7:00 pm at 5710 Walnut Grove Road are always open to the public. The status and discussions on the fire and EMS subject at our meetings were open to the public and were also posted on the township website in the minutes of each meeting which are also available to the public. The negotiations with the New Carlisle City Manager started in February 2022. A new contract was signed in April of 2022 and the trustees could not have known about the staffing issues until they occurred later in the summer and fall of 2022.

### **Why 8 mills and not a smaller millage?**

The \$626,000 raised by 8 mills is approximately 66% of the fire/EMS current projected budget for 2024. The township spent \$567,000 from the general fund in 2023 and the total budget for fire and EMS in 2024 is \$929,450. If the levy is passed, our general fund expenditure for fire and EMS would go down to \$303,450 or less if the township did not need to spend the whole budgeted amount. This is significantly less coming out of the general fund without the levy in place. All fire and EMS contracts have in the past been paid for out of the general fund since the equipment was purchased in 2004.



The decision by the voters is whether to keep on spending all general fund monies to fund fire and EMS or to reduce the general fund expenditures by the amount that a levy would generate.

### **Why 5 years?**

Much can change in a 5-year time span. There is a possibility that the levy would need to be renewed or it could be that a lower amount might be needed, or it could be eliminated altogether.

The township may be able to partner with other jurisdictions to lower the cost of running the department and that could change the outlook by the end of the 5-year period.

The trustees are already using different ways of holding costs down by sharing turn-out gear, renting a portion of the gear needed, maintaining current equipment instead of replacing, using only part-time staff, utilizing current facilities and others.

The Miami County Commissioners have committed to funding a study on fire and EMS services in the county and it is possible that there might be some opportunities for our township that would come out of that study.

### **Why did the trustees hire consultants?**

EMS and fire services are operated very differently than most other departments and the trustees felt that they needed professional guidance and a third party to help them to find and negotiate a new potential contract with another jurisdiction other than New Carlisle. The consultant's background in negotiating novel contracts in their area would be a plus for Elizabeth Township if the Tipp City collaborative agreement could have been finalized. Former trustees contracted multiple times with a consultant to help guide them in the decisions that they made when they purchased the current facility on Childrens Home Road and the equipment for fire and EMS.

### **Did the township explore other solutions other than starting their own department?**

Yes. The contracted feasibility study enumerated a total of 5 different directions that the township could go. Only one of which was to start a department. The township trustees spent many hours with the Tipp City Fire Chief and Tipp City Manager to try and work out a collaborative agreement that would save both departments money but the Tipp City Council rejected the plan over the advice of the fire chief and the city manager.

The township trustees also attempted to contract for service with Tipp City and Troy instead of New Carlisle but they were not interested.

The trustees also could not have known that Christiansburg was going to abandon their EMS service. The Jackson Township Trustees (Champaign County) have contacted Elizabeth Township to examine the possibility to serve a portion of their area with our EMS department.

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### **How can the taxes that we currently pay, which come back to our township from Miami County, be used?**

Monies that we pay in taxes that are coming back to the township from the county are in the form of gas tax funds and road and bridge funds. These dedicated funds are used for road maintenance such as crack seal, new asphalt, right of way weed control, ditch mowing, etc.

### **What are we being taxed for now in our township without a levy?**

These are the percentages that we are paying currently when we pay our real estate taxes to Miami County if you are enrolled in CAUV:

School District	69.29%
Township	3.09%
County Breakout	15.99%
JVS	8.77%
Misc +	2.87%

### **What are residents of surrounding townships paying in taxes for their fire and EMS service?**

Bethel Township	Fire Levy	4.9 mill	\$740,374	Total \$934,514
	Fire Levy	1.5 mill	\$194,140	
Concord Township	Fire Levy	3.7 mill	\$617,825	
Lostcreek Township	Fire Levy	1.5 mill	\$ 57,704	Total \$137,295
	Fire Levy	1.5 mill	\$ 46,175	
	Fire Levy	1.5 mill	\$ 33,416	
Monroe Township	Fire&EMS Levy	4.0 mill	\$697,632	
Springcreek Township	Fire Levy	1.2 mil	\$ 56,322	
Staunton Township	Fire Levy	1.0 mill	\$ 60,614	Total \$232,050
	Fire Levy	4.0 mill	\$171,435	
Union Township	Fire Levy	1.2 mill	\$125,819	Total \$361,855
	Fire Levy	1.5 mill	\$124,081	
	Fire Levy	0.7 mill	\$111,955	

Note that the Monroe Township 4.0 mill levy generates a little more than the 8-mill levy proposed in our township which is due to the difference in the total township tax base.

Elizabeth Township is the only township in Miami County that does that does not currently have a levy in place for fire and EMS services. All costs have been paid for out of the general fund.

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### **Why not rely just on mutual aid?**

To receive mutual aid from other jurisdictions, we must provide aid in a like kind. Without the ability to respond to their calls if they are on a call, we must provide a like kind of service to them, providing we are available to take the call. It is trade of services.

### **How many total runs do we have?**

In 2023 there were 235 answered calls combined for both EMS and fire response.

### **Talk with Greg Kaffenbarger, Trustee of Pike Township:**

Friday March 8<sup>th</sup> Mr. Dilts contacted Mr. Kaffenbarger to follow up on the statement that was made about Pike Township at the March 7 meeting. Pike Township is made up of Volunteer fire personal and part time EMS personal, they are two different services. He said that they were not looking for work to do but could entertain the idea for discussion. He said they had a 2<sup>nd</sup> medic that they thought would be nice to get staffed. When asked about not serving Christiansburg he stated that their EMS chief said it was not a good idea at the time since the residents were paying for them to serve Pike Township and it would not look good that their medic is out of the township serving someone else, so they did not take on their contract. (This is the same concern Elizabeth Township Trustees and Chief Marchal have currently). When asked about their employee retention, he stated that their chief is doing good things of getting people but there are some shifts during the month that go un-staffed. He also stated that the chief lives nearby and *if available* could respond from home if needed.

Prior to the first of this year (2024) they had only volunteers to run EMS from midnight to 0600. Taking on a contract with Pike Township would be no different than having the one with New Carlisle plus it would be a longer response time to a large portion of the township.

### **In Summary:**

The Trustees intend to continue to explore any and all possible options whether the levy passes or fails. No matter how we proceed, there will be impacts, whether they be financial, increases in fire/EMS run times, or gaps in coverage.

We value the input from residents that we have received regarding the levy issue from phone calls, trustee meetings, social media comments, and at the March 7 public meeting. The Elizabeth Township Trustees have always placed the health and safety of our residents in the highest regard when making decisions.

**Sincerely,**

The Elizabeth Township Trustees