

**IN A & SPECIAL JOINT MEETING WITH THE COUNTY COMMISSION & FIRE COMMISSION  
HELD ON JUNE 4, 2021 IN THE COUNTY LIBRARY CONFERENCE ROOM IN ELY, NEVADA**

**The Following Were Present:**

**County Commission  
Richard Howe, Chairman  
Travis Godon, Vice-Chairman  
Ian Bullis, Commissioner  
Shane Bybee, Commissioner  
Laurie L. Carson, Commissioner  
Nichole Baldwin, Clerk of the Board  
Jill Perez, Deputy Clerk**

**County Officials:**

**Ed Spear, City of Ely  
Brett North, WPC Fire Chief  
Jane Eberhardy, Public Defender  
Elanie Eldridge, Finance  
Mike Johnson, IT Specialist**

**Also Present:**

**Richard Howe, Chairman  
Paul Ward, MedX  
George Chachas  
Bodie Goff, City of Ely  
Pat Stork, City of Ely Fire Chief**

**Present via Zoom:**

**Geri Wopschall, Kirsty Pickering (Public Defender), KV, Shawn, Mary Kerner, Michelle Beecher (City of Ely), Jennifer Lee (City of Ely), Richard Sears (Public Defender), Nancey Abrams, Gary Perea, Jacob Dalstra, Burton Hilton (Assessor), Shane Manuele (City of Ely) and others**

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**Chairman Richard Howe called the meeting to order at 9:00 am. Elanie Eldridge led the Pledge of Allegiance.**

**MOMENT OF SILENCE/SILENT INVOCATION**

**This was duly observed.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

George Chachas addressed the Board. He brought up the safety guard railing that was removed around the Murry Creek over flow ditch in the park and stated it needs to be replaced before someone falls. He still has not received any information on the victim's fund. He claims to pay thousands of dollars in taxes and wants equal protection under the law. He demanded to know who is paying for the damages at Steptoe Park and felt the people around the park are victims and they need equal protection under the law as well. Mr. Chachas still has not seen anything in writing in regards to Heritage Park. He reminded the Board of child safety and stated studies show you do not build a truck stop next to a school. At the meeting held on April 28, 2021 for the sale of county property, Chairman Howe said he was told street lighting and fire hydrants were not required; again, this Board was grossly misinformed. Time was called.

**A. SPECIAL JOINT COUNTY COMMISSION & FIRE COMMISSION MEETING**

**1. NOTICE OF TIMED ITEMS:**

**9:00 AM PUBLIC DEFENDER CONTRACTS**

**\*a) Discussion/For Possible Action: Approval of public defender contracts as submitted for Jane Eberhardy, Kirsty Pickering and Richard Sears at a base cost of \$164,430 each plus additional for cost including \$125 per hour for death penalty cases, \$100 per hour for other complex litigation, and \$100 per hour for domestic violence cases originating in the City of Ely that are not cited to Ely Municipal court or as may be discussed and amended during the Commission meeting. Elizabeth Frances, Finance Director**

District Attorney James S. Beecher addressed the Board and stated Finance Director Elizabeth Frances had a phone call last week with Marcie Ryba, Department of Indigent Defense Services, and the current Public Defenders and during this meeting they sorted out questions that everyone had and came up with a proposed contract to be drafted and submitted to DIDS (Department of Indigent Defense Services). Marcie Ryba and DIDS had one additional change on how the reimbursement was going to be made and it was changed in accordance to statute. Everyone came to an agreement on the contract and the recommendation would be to accept and approve this contract. There was some discussion about how cases would be handled and how the Public Defenders would be paid out. District Attorney Beecher stated all parties involved with drafting the contract are satisfied with the outcome of the contract. Commissioner Laurie L. Carson made the motion to approve as presented. Commissioner Shane Bybee seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**2. NOTICE OF UNTIMED ITEM**

**EMERGENCY AMBULANCE & FIRE SERVICES OPTIONS FOR WHITE PINE COUNTY**

**\*a) Discussion/For Possible Action: Approval to select an option for emergency ambulance and fire services by selecting 1) a modified contract with the City of Ely to provide services through the Ely City Fire Department, 2) a contract with MedX to provide emergency ambulance services and offering a Mutual Aid Agreement with the City of Ely to provide fire services on an as needed basis, or 3) another combination contracting with MedX and the Ely City Fire Department to provide emergency ambulance and fire services. James S. Beecher, District Attorney**

District Attorney Beecher addressed the Board stating he had texted and called the City Attorney and has not received any response. District Attorney Beecher wanted to go on record with corrections of comments that were made during a Council meeting that strongly implied Finance Director Elizabeth Frances and District Attorney Beecher had lied to the Board during the last Commission meeting. District Attorney Beecher felt his integrity and character were personally attacked by the Mayor. The Mayor claimed a bait and switch had occurred by both District Attorney Beecher and Finance Director Elizabeth Frances. District Attorney Beecher and Finance Director Frances had the same understanding of the version of the contract offered to the Board from the negotiation session, what was presented to the City Council was a different offer. The Mayor was not at that negotiation session. District Attorney Beecher felt it was irresponsible to make comments from a meeting, especially for not being there, and advised that he will be forced to start recording any meetings or

negotiations from this day forward. There was not much change since the last meeting and it would be up to the Commission to move forward.

Ely Fire Chief Pat Stork addressed the Board stating District Attorney Beecher was correct. In the meeting of negotiations, it went back and forth dollar for dollar. The week before Finance Director Frances did meet with the City Treasurer, Janette Trask, and went over the 3% contract. The day of the meeting, City Treasurer Trask went to the meeting without her paperwork and blindly agreed with what the City Council was saying about the contract stating, "That sounds about right". It was said the numbers would be a wash and what was said in the meeting and what came out of Council was the 3%, but it was not done to "blind side" anyone. He felt it was not his place to correct the finance people during a meeting.

Fire Chief Brett North and Ely Fire Chief Pat Stork had a meeting to discuss the changes that were needed to be made to be able to continue to work together. During the meeting it was discovered they had problems on both sides and will fix them ASAP. AAR (After Action Reports) will be done correctly and in a timely manner. Policy states the AAR will need to be completed within 24 hours and by the person who did the call. Ely Fire Chief Pat Stork stated if there is a problem within their stations, they will start handling them as they come together. There was some discussion about what should be put in the new policy to make it where everyone can continue to work together. Ely Fire Chief Pat Stork would like District Attorney Beecher to look over the policy to make it more efficient for both Ely Fire and the County Fire Departments.

Commissioner Carson felt she was also attacked from the last meeting and stated District Attorney Beecher was correct. Chairman Richard Howe inquired about billing. Ely Fire Chief Pat Stork stated that when the volunteers complete the paperwork it will be sent to the billing company and advised that there is a policy that states reports needs to be completed within 24 hrs. Fire Chief Brett North will remind the volunteers to get the paperwork completed on time. Only the people who go on the call can do the paperwork.

Paul Ward, MedX, addressed the Board stating MedX works very hard to make sure the patients do not have the burden of a bill. They do bill for transports, but it is not something that they live by. The goal is to provide a service for the community and quality care for the patients. MedX will be here to work together with the Fire Departments and make sure things get handled appropriately. Chairman Howe would like to know if MedX would be on board with working every call or would they sit back and wait for a call? Commissioner Shane Bybee did remind the Board of a mutual agreement with Nye County and asked if MedX would be willing to cross that boarder. Mr. Ward stated there is already an ambulance in Wells and they are the only one between Elko and Wendover. They are the primary 911 in Wells. The MedX agreement would be with specifically with the County but they will work in the best interests of the community and for everyone involved. Chairman Howe stated the County needs this assurance that MedX will go to Hwy 318. Commissioner Bybee likes the no balance billing. His concern is if this would this be a freebee for the population with no insurance and no Medicaid. Mr. Ward stated they will work with the patient to make sure there is no financial burden.

Commissioner Ian Bullis would like to see a contract to stop the County from being in this position again and make it difficult for a party to back out of the contract. District Attorney Beecher stated the City's position did not change and right now the contract that states the County and the City will meet yearly to review any changes that need to be made.

Dr. Batalli, Medical Director for the County and the City, advised that the County is going to add a 3<sup>rd</sup> entity and he is concerned about this. He asked what the qualifications are for the EMT advanced? He stated that we don't have enough paramedics in our County and his concern is the County will have to fall back on the City. He asked who the Medical Director for MedX will be? Mr. Ward responded that their Ambulance will be staffed at the advanced EMT level. They have advanced certifications of ACLS, PALS, and PHTLS which is beyond what the State requires. Some of the paramedics mainly serve in the Elko area. They do have flight crews with critical care RNs and paramedics. They do work with any Medical Director of whichever County they are working with at the time to make for a smooth patient hand off.

Bodie Goff addressed the Board and stated he does all the billing for the City of Ely and wanted to make clear the City does not place collections on anyone who lives within White Pine County. They are a tax funded fire department and people in White Pine County pay their taxes. On balance billing, the City doesn't send the residents of White Pine County to collections. If a patient does not live in White Pine County and does not pay the County taxes, they will be sent to collections and the patient will pay the bill. There was some more discussion on what MedX has to offer and how the billing is done.

Ely Fire Chief Stork wanted to make sure the Board knows the City does offer what is called a tiered service. They are at paramedic level down to the basics. There will be a new Ambulance added around the 18<sup>th</sup> of this month. The City and the County will be working together on the long distance transports.

Commissioner Ian Bullis made the motion to renew the contract with the City to incorporate the changes discussed and with District Attorney Beecher to work together with the City Attorney to make sure it is not so easy to get out of the contract. Vice Chairman Godon would like to include a financial audit for both City and County. Commissioner Bullis restated his motion. District Attorney Beecher reminded the Board the new contract will go into effect July 1<sup>st</sup>. Commissioner Bullis requested to make the duration the same as the original term. Vice Chairman Travis Godon seconded the motion. Chairman Howe clarified the motion is for option 1, to renew the modified contract with the City of Ely. Vice Chairman Godon seconded the motion. Motion passed.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

George Chachas addressed the Board. The Board needs to change things. Mr. Chachas felt something should be put in the contract stating if something goes wrong, then it's over. The Board needs to think about the public at large who cannot afford the service.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Shane Bybee made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:25 am.  
Commissioner Carson seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**WHITE PINE COUNTY  
STATE OF NEVADA**

**BY:**

Richard Her  
**CHAIRMAN**

**ATTEST:**

[Signature]  
**WPC CLERK OF THE BOARD**