SEPTEMBER 8TH 2026 **SPECIAL JOINT SESSION**

PULASKI COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

PULASKI COUNTY COUNCIL

The Pulaski County Commissioners and Pulaski County Council met in a special joint session Tuesday September 8th 2026 at the Pulaski County Courthouse meeting room. Commissioners present were Donald Street Jr., Michael McClure, Jennifer Knebel and Councilmembers present were Sheila Hazemi, Michael Tiede, Jeffrey Richwine, Tim Overmyer, Bradley Bonnell, Albert Gutwein with County Auditor Teresa Bryant and County Attorney Jacob Ahler. Councilman Kenneth Boswell was absent.

Also present were Joe Moyer, Kathi Thompson, Josh Stamper, Sherry Fagner, Connie Ehrlich, Daryn Wilder, Laura Wilder, Kristie Zimmerman, Cheyenne Zimmerman, James Paulsen, Amber Fagner, Bob Barger, Franna Barger, Stephanie Foust, Steve Nellans, Camden Garner, James Handy, Dominic St Clair, Alex Donathen, Kathy Wyatt, Tonya Bonnell, Jamie Murray, Ed Shank, Bev Smith, Sarah Mitchell, Natasha Daugherty, James Faler, Garry Kruger, Dave Olds, Darlene Olds, Steve Morrison, Gail Lambert, Pam Rausch, Isaiah Tidwell, Lisa Traylor-Wolfe, Chance Fagner, James Fishburn, Sherry Zimmerman, Nathan Origer, Tabor Brown.

President Street opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

IN RE: EMS

Sheila started the meeting by reading the following:

EMS – THOUGHTS AND CONCERNS

1. Council responsibility and confidentiality
   We need to keep our discussions focused on policies, operations, finances and the delivery of EMS services
2. How This Started
   This issue originally began with a simple study. The Hospital was willing to pay for the study because they wanted to determine whether EMS services could be improved. One of the concerns identified was patient transfers, and at one point there was even discussion about the Hospital potentially partnering with the County to provide or improve that service. At that stage, the process appeared to be open and cooperative, with everyone looking at ways to improve EMS for the residents of Pulaski County.
3. The Situation Has Changed
   Unfortunately, it now appears that the situation has become much more contentious. There has been a significant amount of discussion and conflict on social media, and relationships have been damaged in the process. I believe we need to get away from personal disagreements and get back to the question of what is best for he resident of Pulaski County.
4. Ambulance Purchase and Financial Concerns
   I am also concerned about the information that has been provided to the County Council regarding the ambulance purchase. The Council was told that an ambulance had been cancelled and we are now in the position where the County has to purchase an ambulance that does not necessarily need to be purchased this year. Because of the financial penalty associated with canceling the order, we have limited options. Additionally, the consultants have indicated that the County may have overpaid approximately $70,000. This raises questions that the Council needs answered regarding the purchase, the decision-making process, and the information that was provided to Council.
5. Patient Transfers
   Most importantly, I believe Pulaski County EMS should provide transfers when they are needed to serve the residents of Pulaski County. If a transfer is needed at 3:00 am for example, I believe there are ways to structure the service so the ambulance can meet at a reasonable midpoint in the County rather than leaving the entire County without adequate coverage. The EMS schedule is a working schedule with employees being paid their full wage, rather than an on-call system where employees are only paid when they receive a call. If the expectation is approximately three calls per day during these scheduled hours, I believe we should take a serious look at whatever transfers can be incorporated into the existing system without negatively affecting emergency coverage.
6. Questions Still Need to be Answered
   At the last meeting, I asked several questions of the EMS Director. My understanding was that those questions could not be answered at the meeting because the matters were being discussed with the County Attorney. I respect the need to involve the County Attorney when legal issues are involved. However, the Council still needs answers to its questions.

Bottom line

This should not be about personalities or winning an argument. It should be about providing dependable EMS service, protecting the taxpayers, making responsible

financial decisions, and doing what is best for the residents of Pulaski County. I believe we need to lower the temperature, stop the personal attacks, get accurate information in front of the Council, and work toward a practical solution. With new leadership and management, I feel a vote of no confidence sends a message to the Commissioners and they will implement a plan of action to resolve the issues with the money that is allocated in the budget moving forward. Some current employees that have violated the employee handbook should be written up and may need to be terminated from working for Pulaski County EMS. Th new ambulance should be bought with the remaining solar money that is in the EDA account.

Jennifer stated that personnel issues should not be discussed with Council. Council should not have had the EMS Director cancel the ambulance as Commissioners take care of all contracts. Bradley commented that she was supposed to come back to Council if she was unable to cancel. County Attorney stated that both parties can mutually cancel the contract in writing. The penalty section was not on the original contract. Bradley thinks County should continue with the purchase. County Attorney said there was no provision in the contract for cancellation by one side—has to be mutual.

Jennifer is concerned about an additional $180,000./year for managing services. Donald suggested that privatizing is not in the best interest of the County. Jennifers said that at no time did the Commissioners ever talk about defunding EMS.

Jennifer is concerned that she received a contract from Paramount at 2:25PM before a 5:00PM meeting and it was not the same contract she received August 28th.

Albert asked why Council did not go through EMS' budget like other departments. He thinks $97,000. that can be cut.

Jennifer remarked about concern that departments break even. She used the Sheriff's department as an example. Tim said Starke County EMS breaks even and he would like Pulaski County to breakeven also. County Attorney again reminded boards that Council can only work on funding while Commissioners can initiate or cancel contracts. Michael McClure said we should buy ambulance and keep Natasha.

Bradley made a motion to advertise an additional for new ambulance out of 1170 Public Safety, Albert seconded. Motion did not carry as Bradley, Albert voted in favor and Tim, Jeffrey, Michael, Sheila abstained. Michael Tied then made motion to pay out of solar, Jeffrey seconded. Motion did not carry 3-3 with Sheila, Michael, Jeffrey in favor of motion and Bradley, Albert, Tim opposed.

Sheila is concerned that Council is not getting any help from Commissioners.

Michael Tiede made a motion to pay half from 1170 and other half from solar funds, Jeffrey seconded. With no further discussion, motion carried unanimously.

Sheila made a motion of a no-confidence vote on EMS management, Michael Tiede seconded. Sheila explained this was to relate to Commissioners that Council is not confident with the current EMS management. Motion did not pass as Jeffrey, Sheila, Michael Tiede in favor and Bradley, Albert, Tim opposed.

Jennifer ask Council and Commissioners to step up for all of the employees and follow the guidelines in the County's Personnel Handbook.

Michael Tiede made a motion on behalf of Council to adjourn at 5:52PM, Jeffrey seconded. With no further discussion, motion carried unanimously.

Jennifer made a motion on behalf of Commissioners to adjourn at 5:52PM, Michael McClure seconded. With no further discussion, motion carried unanimously.

Approved and signed this 12th day of October by the Pulaski County Commissioners and Pulaski County Council.

DONALD STREET JR. | MICHAEL MCCLURE | JENNIFER KNEBEL

SHEILA HAZEMI | MICHAEL TIEDE | JEFFREY RICHWINE

TIM OVERMYER | BRADLEY BONNELL | ALBERT GUTWEIN

ABSENT
KENNETH BOSWELL

ATTEST: Teresa Bryant
TERESA BRYANT, AUDITOR, PULASKI COUNTY, IN