

**PUBLIC HEARING  
PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF SPECIAL SERVICE AREA #5  
JO DAVIESS COUNTY BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
MARCH 14, 2007**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairperson of the Jo Daviess County Board, Marvin Schultz, called the hearing to order at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 14, 2007 at the Hanover Park District Building, Hanover, Illinois.

**ROLL CALL** was answered as follows: Present-Beth Baranski, Merri Berlage, Jody Carroll, William Cooper, Dane Jackson, Mike Lorig, Ron Mapes, Margie Montelius, Yerda Potter, Marvin Schultz, Ron Smith, Terry Stoffregen, Sally Toepfer, and Jack Zillig. Present: 14. Absent-Bernece Hill, Alan Kent, and Matt Kluesner. Absent: 3.

**THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** was led by Chairperson Schultz.

**THE INVOCATION** and thought for the day were given by Merri Berlage.

Chairperson Schultz gave a summary of the request by Hanover Ambulance to establish a Special Service Area for ambulance service for residents within Hanover and parts of Rice Township. He explained the application process and the requirement to hold a public hearing.

Chairman Schultz opened the public hearing at this time.

Troy Miller, representing the Hanover Ambulance, Inc. gave a presentation on the history of Hanover Ambulance. He explained how it has changed over the years and why the board is requesting to establish a Special Service Area.

Larry Begun gave a presentation comparing the Galena, Elizabeth, Savanna, and Hanover ambulance services. He compared the number of calls, number of ambulances, number and type of personnel, how each service receives its revenue, and the fees charged. Larry stated that there is a need for strong ambulance service and that the EMTs and Coordinator should be paid, but he feels there is a better way to achieve this than by establishing this Special Service Area.

Mayor Don Schaible feels that this proposal was initiated too quickly. He feels that the process needs to slow down. He stated that more discussion is needed and he would like to see other government entities involved. He would like to see the Ambulance Service, the Village, and townships, discuss this in detail to see if the proposed tax rate could be reduced, or if there are other alternatives to funding.

Troy Miller responded to Mr. Begun and Mayor Schaible by stating that even though Hanover is the smallest ambulance service it still requires close to the same amount of revenue to operate as some larger districts. He also stated that in the past, Hanover residents have contributed very generously from their own pockets. Troy feels with a tax, it would be evenly distributed. He also stated that it was 1½ years ago that the ambulance

service started talking to the Hanover Village Board about establishing a Special Service Area and he stated that the entire village board was behind this idea.

Sandra Principe stated that she is a property owner and taxpayer and feels the asking rate of .34% is too high compared to surrounding ambulance services and feels the tax falls unfairly on the property owners versus the users of the ambulance service.

Ed Duplessis would like to see the revenue based on a per capita basis instead of being associated with the assessed value of property.

Dan Griffin stated that no one disagrees that the Hanover Ambulance Service is much appreciated, but he feels that it would be better to put the question to a vote and have the revenue based on a per capita basis rather than property assessment.

Erin Murphy, ambulance board member and representative of Chestnut, stated that they proceeded with the Special Service Area because that is how Elizabeth proceeded for its ambulance service. She said they were never given any other options. She asked State's Attorney Terry Kurt if it could go on a ballot as a referendum. Terry stated that it could not be a referendum since there is no provision in the Illinois State Statutes providing for the establishment of an Ambulance District by referendum. Terry stated that establishing a Special Service Area is presently the only way for an Ambulance Service to acquire property tax money.

Marvin Schultz stated that Galena Ambulance receives some of its revenue from the different government entities within the district. He thought they each paid \$6.00 per capita toward ambulance service.

Larry Begun stated that there are other avenues for revenue beside a property tax. Terry Kurt said, "Yes there are other avenues, such as working with other government entities; but the only way to receive tax money is to establish a Special Service Area."

Tim Straight asked why the notice stated a tax rate of .41% and now at the hearing the rate is .34%. Marvin Schultz stated that a more recent, higher estimate of assessed value was received since the hearing notice was sent out. The ambulance board is looking for a dollar amount, not a tax rate, so the rate could be reduced to .34% and still generate the needed dollars.

Kevin Ward, representing the Hanover Ambulance, stated that he believed that the County Board could make an amendment to the final ordinance reducing the tax rate to an amount that would be more agreeable. He stated that if the board goes forward and adopts the ordinance in any fashion it can still be halted by an objecting petition process of acquiring signatures of 51% of the registered voters and 51% of the property owners.

Karen Molle stated that it is unrealistic to think that someone will administer a program of this magnitude for \$6,000 a year.

Tony Griffiths said he does not disagree with the fact that the Hanover Ambulance Service needs support; but the method of getting there needs to be something other than a flat tax to property owners. He feels that puts an unfair burden on the property owners.

Troy Miller stated that they are not asking for operating support. The \$90,000 would pay for paying EMS professionals, administration and education.

Colin Fulrath asked how Carroll County portion of the Ambulance Service would be funded if they do not move forward with a Special Service Area. He asked if Jo Daviess County would have to pay for the Carroll County portion. Troy Miller said there would be other avenues to deal with Carroll County.

Mike Miller stated that he has been a volunteer firefighter for 15 years and he and none of the other firefighters are asking to be paid for their services. He feels that there is no such thing as a paid volunteer.

County Board Chairperson Marvin Schultz read letters from Tim Larson and S. G. Paul in regards to the proposed Special Service Area. They were not able to attend the meeting.

Cory Eadie feels that Hanover needs to grow and attract younger people. He said that increased taxes do not make it inviting to live in Hanover.

Troy Miller made a closing statement that whether this tax goes forward or not Hanover Ambulance needs more funding. Volunteers are aging and that issue needs to be addressed. There is a need to get younger people in the door by offering them a wage. Troy encouraged the board to go forward and allow this application to proceed.

Kim Smith asked how many people would be collecting the proposed administration fee. Troy Miller said the proposed amount was based on five different jobs. Kim feels that this money will be benefiting a very small amount of people and asks the board to vote no on the Special Service Area.

Edwin Johnson said he is against the proposed taxes of a Special Service Area. He feels that Hanover is a small town where people need to work together and depend on each other. He feels that volunteers are not there for the money. He also agrees that the proposed amount for administration is too much.

Bill Evans stated that he would like to see the Village Board and the Hanover Ambulance Board get together and work this out without raising taxes.

Mayor Schaible stated that it would take a cooperative effort involving the Village and both Hanover and Rice Townships. He said he supports the Hanover Ambulance, but wants it to be supported in a fair and equitable manner.

County Board Chairperson Marvin Schultz listed the options the board could choose in regards to the hearing. County Board members discussed the options and said they would like to see the Ambulance Board and Village Board, along with any other

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entities, discuss this issue and possibly come up with an agreement that would be acceptable to all entities involved.

Beth Baranski moved that the public hearing be continued to May 9 at 7 p.m. Bill Cooper seconded the motion. The motion carried by a show of hands. Ayes: 11. Nays: 3.

The meeting adjourned following a motion made by Bill Cooper and seconded by Ron Smith.

The motion carried by voice vote.

Chairperson Schultz adjourned the meeting at 9:35 p.m. until May 9 at 7 p.m.

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Jean Dimke, Jo Daviess County Clerk