

## Special Council Meeting

May 19, 2025

The Special Meeting of the Dillsboro Town Council was called to order at 6:30 p.m. on May 19, 2025 by Council President, Tim Benning, who led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Council present: Tim Benning, Becky Fryman, Charlie Caldwell, Jerri Jackson and Dustin Kitchell.  
Attorney present: John Watson.

### Clerk-Treasurer – Rita Stevens

Need approval to pay the invoice for the Annual Insurance Policy with Friendship Insurance of \$66,114.00. From Riverboat - \$28,000, Water - \$13,307.00 and Sewer - \$24,807. CM Kitchell made a motion to approve paying the invoice, seconded by CM Caldwell. All were in favor, motion carried.

Also need approval to pay Dillsboro Civic Club for the Dillsboro Homecoming Fair police coverage of \$3,000.00 from Riverboat donations. CM Jackson made a motion to approve paying the invoice, seconded by CM Kitchell. All were in favor, motion carried.

### Old Business

#### 911 Dispatch Interlocal Agreement

Attorney John Watson stated the reason for this Special Meeting is the funding of the 911 Call Center and the dispatch and local agreements that the county is asking from the towns and cities for 2025. This is quite an increase. One way this is funded is through a surcharge tax on cell phones, and this hasn't been raised. The money comes down from the State and is divided proportionally by the county, and that doesn't cover the whole expense. The LIT funding is not maxed out and certainly the state funding is not maxed out.

Attorney Watson is attorney's for Dillsboro and St. Leon and stated they are struggling with this increase. They both signed a 1 year contract in 2024 and paid the amount requested. Attorney Watson have contacted Senator Randy Maxwell and Representative Garrett Bascom, which Bascom is present. And during the legislative session, they have talked to various individuals to see if this is a statewide situation.

Attorney Watson stated that Mayor Vince Karsteter from Greendale did attend the County Council Meeting on May 15 and presented a plan to raise the existing LIT from 0.4% to 0.6%.

State Representative, Garrett Bascom, stated he has contacted Daniel Elliott, State Treasurer, who has a lot of impact on the 911. Elliott is working on a study to see if this is just a specific Dearborn County problem or happening in other areas. Also has talk to other representatives and see if this is a problem in their counties. Any sort of a rate would need to be increased because it has not been raised in a significant period of time. Question is does the tax rate just change, does the phone change fix it or is there something else that needs to be looked at. The Legislative did set up a committee to oversee this matter and will have the ability to intervene if the numbers support. Randy

Maxwell, State Senator, could not attend this meeting but has been working on this issue aggressively. For sure there is a deficit and it needs to be filled.

City of Greendale Mayor, Vince Karsteter, commented who is responsible for the 911 call center, the county is solely responsible. Mayor Karsteter has had conversations at the state level regarding increasing the phone tax, but raising taxes is a very low priority for the General Assembly. The shortfall between what it costs to run a center and what they receive in cell phones is \$980,000. Every town, cities and the county all contribute to the general fund, 19 cents of every dollar of the taxes goes to the county and it goes into the general fund. The general fund is used to pay the shortfall. The county is not using safety LIT at all right now to pay for this. Everybody is getting doubled billed. If you do the math, .4% is the safety LIT, and .46% would pay for it. The .6 would just be invisible. The big concern is people working out of state, that cell phone money is going out of state. The county certified safety LIT, breaks down to 10.5 million. But the county don't get 25% of the people because people work in Kentucky and Ohio. So these people are paying the LIT tax out of state. Roughly 3.5 million goes to the jail, then the rest is distributed from there which is roughly 6.977 million. Dearborn County get 56%, Lawrenceburg gets 26% (1.8 million), Aurora gets \$394,000, Dillsboro gets \$58,000, Greendale gets \$734,000, Moores Hill gets \$13,054, St. Leon gets \$359.00 and West Harrison gets \$28,000. The distribution is not on per capital basis, it on a property tax levy. The traffic at Greendale, Lawrenceburg and Aurora has more calls then everyone else because of the traffic. 911 is a county problem.

Attorney Watson did say Aurora had meetings and could not attend but do support the effort to secure more funding from the State.

Dearborn County Councilman, Doug Baker, stated he has talk to one of the commissioners from Ohio County, the county is paying for the 911 and their 911 budget was sufficient of what they are receiving from the state. Did call Switzerland County but hasn't got an answer. But is interested in the state study.

The County Commissioners are meeting May 20 at 6:00 p.m. and Greendale Mayor Karsteter will be giving the same speech as he did at the county council meeting.

Attorney Watson stated that county budget workshop will be coming up, so they will be working on their budget. So the budget will be presented for council to review.

Representative Bascom stated this will not be addressed until next year. Legislation has to occur in January of next year. State Treasurer is doing his study and it is going to be a tough study. He has heard the problem and know he has came and talked with some of the commissioners and can see the particular fee is a problem. The first step is getting this study looked at. Bascom is working on talking to other representatives, are they willing to empower, to raise more and then put pressure to raise that.

Town Manager, Derek Walker, asked if there is a timeline for when we need to take action on the local agreement. Attorney Watson stated the county has already sent it to the town and they wanted executed by April 1<sup>st</sup> just like last year. Dillsboro paid at the end of the year last year, but right now the town is not under a contract. This 2025 agreement is \$32,046.70 which is more than half the Safety LIT the towns receives.

The question was asked what is considered a 911 call. D. Baker stated it is stats on emergency calls of fire, EMS and police. TM Walker stated the nursing home in Dillsboro has a lot of the calls and that really jumps the town's numbers up. So they take all the calls from each area and it is kinda do a prorated portion. Dillsboro averages 3.4%.

D. Baker did state that the number of calls are people calling 911, considered is all police calls or their respective police agency, either 911 or non emergency phone calls over the radio. So they do take them all into consideration.

Nobody wants to pay this increase. CM Becky Fryman did ask can they do something if we don't pay the full amount. Attorney Watson stated the county does control the Riverboat funding, so they could cut the Riverboat funding.

Greendale Mayor Karsteter stated people are paying 19 cents of every dollar collected on property taxes goes to the county. We are getting doubled billed. Greendale has their own services, police force, EMS and fire department. And Greendale takes care of their own roads. That is what don't makes sense because your not using the county services. The jail is a whole separate fund, there is a safety LIT just for the jail.

D. Baker did state it doesn't looks like there is going to be a correction soon from the county and state until the study is finished.

With no further business, CM Fryman made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:16 p.m., seconded by CM Jackson. Motion carried unanimously.



Rita Stevens, Clerk-Treasurer

  
  
