

January 27, 2023

Announcement to Twin Township Residents

Concerning: EMS coverage

After enjoying a great EMS Department for many years that normally reacted to 80 to 90% of the calls and numerous Mutual Aid runs, that is no longer occurring. We are now only taking approximately 5 to 6% of our runs in Twin Township and zero Mutual Aid Runs. (Mutual Aid Runs are runs taken in other Townships when they can't respond.) This is completely unacceptable. Twin Township residents deserve better service.

Twin Township EMS and Fire is completely a Volunteer Department. Even though the Department is volunteer, the members that participated for EMS runs are paid per run. The Board has attempted to work with the Fire Chief to rectify the issue. The Board was advised that if we paid more per run that this would give the incentive needed to have more participation. We more than doubled the pay per run stipend, and the response worsened.

The EMS problems we are experiencing is not just relative to Twin Township. This problem exists throughout Ross County. Currently there is a county wide committee attempting to develop a County EMS. However, this will take time and until this is accomplished, the Board wants the best possible coverage for Twin Township that our residents can afford.

Currently, the responsibility of calling out squads is the Ross County Sheriff's Office. A 911 call is received by a dispatcher and the tone is dropped for the Township responsible. If no one answers the tone in 5 minutes, then the tone is dropped again for the same Township. Only after this has been done and 10 to 15 crucial minutes have passed, then Mutual Aid is called. 15 minutes is too long to wait before a dispatch is possibly accomplished. The Board attempted to have the time reduced to 2 minutes then Mutual Aid would be called. The Sheriff's office would not change the protocol even though the office is fully aware that our EMS has not been responding.

When the tone drops for a 911 call, time is of the essence to provide lifesaving care. In order for the tone to automatically be dropped to the closest Township, Twin Township EMS must be eliminated. This is not a decision taken lightly. For many years residents of Twin Township have served faithfully to provide excellent service, mostly on a volunteer basis. Times have changed and, unfortunately, that is no longer happening. Twin Township volunteer Fire Department services will not be affected.

Our Fire Department responded to 86% of their runs last year, and will continue to operate.

The Board has taken action by establishing mutual aid contracts with adjacent Townships to handle our runs. The Board has agreed to pay the reacting Township for this service. We are so thankful for all their help. Also, if the run is handled by one of the adjacent Townships then the cost is billed to the resident's health insurer, just as if Twin Township responded to the emergency run.

The Board attempted a 3 mill levy in the primary election in May, 2022. This levy would have provided funds for EMS to have personnel on station for approximately 50% of the time. It is estimated that it would require an 8 mill levy to have a full time EMS Department for Twin Township. We currently manage the entire volunteer Fire/EMS Departments with a 2 mill levy.

This millage is not sufficient to pay for the runs by other Townships. Twin Township will average approximately 360 runs per year. Currently, we are paying for these runs with American Rescue Plan funds. These funds are limited and will be completely exhausted by the end of this year. The calculations of cost versus revenue indicate that a 1 to 1.5 mill levy will have to be passed to allow payment for the services by other Townships going forward.

Here are the benefits:

- When the 911 call is made, the tone will be dropped for an adjacent Township to respond. Hence eliminating the 15 minute wait period before calling for mutual aid.
- Instead of an 8 mill levy for having a crew on station at all times, a 1 to 1.5 mill levy, if passed by the voters, will accomplish our goal of having help on the way.
- The Board will not have the expense of purchasing squads and very expensive equipment and maintenance cost associated with maintaining a squad.
- The board's goal is to provide the very best care for our residents for the least amount of tax dollars needed.
- Please call any member of the Twin Township Board of Trustees if you have any questions.

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