**WHY A SPECIAL ASSESSMENT & NOT A MILLAGE VOTE?**

The millage based special assessment is figured on taxable value and the Michigan Tax Tribunal has ruled it offers a fair and equitable approach compared to a flat rate (like our garbage collection). The reason for that is those who live in large apartment complexes with a taxable value, the nursing home and other areas of the city who most likely will need those services more often, should pay more versus the ordinary homeowner.

***Second,*** as a result of the extraordinary lack of paramedic services to our city and increased response times, coupled with overwhelming medical responses our police officers are running on, and the expected continued EMS system degradation across the county, the city Council and administration is greatly concerned, especially given our demographics, that time is of the essence.

***Third,*** if we were to take this to a vote, best case scenario is that it would be on the August 2023 ballot. A special election will cost the city thousands of dollars and, assuming the millage passes, by the time the taxes are collected in December 2023, EMS response out of the fire department would not occur until most likely June 2024. That is entirely too long given the aforementioned circumstances we are faced with.

**WHAT WILL THE AVERAGE ANNUAL MILLAGE BASED SPECIAL ASSESSMENT (SA) COST TO A HOMEOWNER?**

The Millage based special assessment analysis revealed the average cost to a homeowner will be between $145-$156 annually for 24-7-365 a year for emergency medical response in approximately four minutes. Compare that cost to garbage collection which is approximately $270 a year for 52 days of the year.

**WHY NOT CONTRACT WITH A PRIVATE FIRM?**

“Why can we not contract with a private ambulance firm?” The requirements by Genesee County 911, specifically the 911 attorney demanded that local jurisdictions indemnify the 911 consortium. Doing so is in violation of state law. State law does not permit local jurisdictions to indemnify consortiums.

***Second,*** the 911 attorney said that this arrangement (indemnification) is illegal but still offered this solution for communities, if they so choose. By choosing so they are also required to mandate their service provider to have a $10 million insurance policy and they to be indemnified as a listed participant.

***Third,*** another violation of Law is the Genesee County local ordinance for “direct dispatch”, authored back in 2012.

***Fourth,*** the dispatch method 9-1-1 is using for contract violates the State 911 Enabling Act, per 9-1-1 their own attorney’s authored opinion.

***Fifth,*** some communities have chosen the illegal path, and those contracts are proving to be insufficient in improving response times to those communities.

***Finally,*** a local jurisdiction has filed a complaint to the state of Michigan, and the Genesee County prosecutor’s office for the 911 consortium violating state law. It is a legal conundrum.

**DOES THE CITY’s PLAN KICK PRIVATE PROVIDERS OUT?**

NO. The City’s plan is a non-transport Medical First Responder pilot in which the Fire Department EMS will respond immediately to attempt to assess and stabilize a patient while waiting for the ambulance to arrive. You will still see ambulances stationed in the city until they are called on by 911 to respond to a call anywhere in the county. No service is getting booted from the city. We are aggressively working with private services to coordinate and enhance service to our residents.

**WHY IS PRIVATE EMS STRUGGLING?**

The inherent issue is the collapse of the private market. Increased demand and lower supply have made it challenging to provide ambulance services to this county. Private Ambulance Companies are underfunded, understaffed and overburdened. The city and county had in the past enjoyed for many, many years no lack of resources. That is no longer the case. Municipalities all across the state of Michigan and the country are converting their fire departments to first response up to and including ambulance transport to fill the gaps, because of the issues.

The city has been analyzing and trending this data since September 2021. We have had a number of months of discussions at City Council, formed an ad-hoc committee in December 2022 and hired an outside consulting firm (CPSM Consulting) to procure a recommendation to provide a solution to the serious issue we have here in the city.

**WHAT ABOUT GENESEE COUNTY SHERIFF PARAMEDICS?**

When analyzing the data from last year, the Genesee County Sheriff paramedics responded to 19% of the 911 medical emergency calls and response times were over 14 minutes to the ambulance or to the scene. This is not the fault of the Genesee County Sheriff’s department but the extraordinary lack of resources was also a factor in our recommendation. Currently the Flushing City taxpayers, in 2022, were levied in taxes $103,000. That’s almost $1000 per response cost for our citizens. The proposed unit we have for the city will cost our citizens nearly half of that and expected to respond to 98% of the total calls in our city.

**WHAT HAS THE MAYOR DONE?**

The mayor has met with nearly three (3) dozen seniors at the senior center and none have expressed their opposition. He has answered and/or been contacted by more than two-hundred (200) people (many school teachers, seniors, families, victims of prolonged ambulance wait times, etc.) over the past several weeks expressing their commitment to making sure we protect their lives through a “non-transport paramedic unit” and stated they have no problems with paying a little extra a year through a SA. Not a single one of them asked for it to go to a ballot because they have expressed that it would be too late and someone’s life could be lost.