

**POWELL COUNTY FISCAL COURT  
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING  
JULY 26<sup>TH</sup>, 2021  
3:00 p.m.**

**Location: Powell County Emergency Operations Center (EOC)  
33 Commerce Drive  
Stanton, Kentucky 40380**

The Powell County Fiscal Court met at the Powell County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at 3:00 p.m. for a special called meeting.

With meeting was held so the EMS employees could come to express their thoughts, concerns, opinions and recommendations for the EMS Department.

Those present for the meeting were:

County Judge Executive James Anderson  
Fiscal Court Clerk Connie Crabtree  
Financial Officer/Payroll Clerk Kacey Davidson  
Magistrate Donna Gabbard  
Magistrate Dennis Combs  
Magistrate Mike Lockard  
Magistrate Chad Patton  
Magistrate Timmy Tipton  
County Attorney Robert King  
Ambulance Director Nathan Hall  
Arlene Rogers  
Brian McKinney  
Chad Charles  
Shauna Station  
Jason Randall  
Matthew Young  
Timothy Riddell  
Jeremy Urekew and girlfriend  
Omer Caudell  
Caleb Williams

Judge Anderson opened the floor to the EMS employees to speak. He said he wanted to give everyone a chance to speak.

Tim Riddell said he would like to address the sick time for EMS employees. He said he feels it's completely unfair that it is going to take him one (1) whole year in order to gain one (1) day of sick time. Judge Anderson handed out a proposal that Ambulance Director Nathan Hall had come up with a while back. Mr. Riddell said it's a fact that a job that you are working a 24 hour shift is a lot different than working an 8 hour shift. He feels at that all the rules such as vacation and sick time is getting lumped in with all the departments and the EMS is there basically there 3 days verses someone that works in a

different department. He said again he thinks it's not fair. If you work a twenty four (24) hour shift it would take a whole year just to get eight (8) hours off of that shift for sick time.

If he gets sick and he's gone twenty four (24) hours he will be gone so he will lose twenty (20) hours of pay. Judge Anderson said he totally understands what he is saying but we cannot afford to give triple of the time. Mr. Riddell said that the field of EMS as far as job wise, you are competing with all of these other counties trying to get employees to come to work for them. He said that he knows we cannot compete with Fayette and Madison counties. Magistrate Tipton said we are not Madison County and we cannot compete with them. Mr. Riddell said that he knows that and he is not taking about the wages it's just anything that we could do to make it attractive so that people will come to work for Powell County. Magistrate Tipton said he does not disagree with him but he just wanted clarification and he feels that we liberal are on vacation time.

EMS employees agreed that the proposal the Nathan came up with looked better to them. One of the employees said they want to make sure they are providing the best service for the people in this county because they care about this community.

Judge Anderson ask them if this proposal would be tolerable to them. Estill County for example gets twenty four (24) hours of sick time per month. Arlene Rogers said that she thought that was sick and vacation time together. Judge Anderson ask them if there were any more thoughts on the proposal. Jason Randall said he didn't like the part about them not receiving holiday pay.

Judge Anderson said he have gotten more complaints about trying to move to PTO. Prior to this administration it was in the handbook that if you were scheduled to work a holiday then you wouldn't get paid for it. One of the things we tried to do with PTO was if you are a full time employee everybody would get it, regardless if you were scheduled or not. The goal was to make it fair for everyone.

Jason Randall ask them to explain the PTO to him. Kacey told him that sick and vacation time has been combined at the beginning which depends on you hire date. You would get 96 hours sick time up front and whatever vacation time that is due to you based on your years of service that you have worked.

Expect for anniversaries dates you get whatever for the 5 year service. You have to be smart and use it wisely throughout the year. The rule still applies that you can carry 10 vacation days forward for one (1) year but if you do not use them within the year then you will lose them. Jason ask her if the holiday things was taken out of your vacation time. She told him no because everyone got tore up about it so holiday time is separate. Judge Anderson said that someone had been spreading rumors that we were just giving two days so you can take anything you hear with a grain of salt this was just a rumor.

Mr. Riddell ask since he started after 2019 will everything still stay the same or be different. This is unique to the EMS department and the change is for this department only because they work a 24/7 shift. There was a lot of abuse in two departments that has ruined it for everyone.

Magistrate Tipton said that he wanted to point something out. He has been part of this court on and off for a long time and in this window of time he has had least complaints of the ambulance service. This gives him the sense that something is going right or correctly. He feels that they are doing to good job. Employee Chad Charles spoke up and said, "They are exhausted though! He said he worked a 160 hours in the last two (2) weeks. Magistrate Tipton told him that he did not want any Buts he was bragging on them so take it for what it's worth. Judge Anderson told them since the time he took office until now the professionalism and service is great. We are very appreciative of the EMS department.

Mr. Riddell said they did not come to the meeting to complain they just needed help because we cannot get people to come to work here. We needed something to encourage people to want to work here.

Magistrate Tipton said, "We are living in an environment where people are not wanting to work

anymore because of the checks they are getting from Uncle Sam. It says a lot for the people that comes out and works every day and does their best.

Judge Anderson ask them again, "If they would happy if we could get close to this proposal. They agreed that is was an improvement and maybe Nathan could revise the part concerning the holiday pay to make it make match our actual policy that you would get paid for it as long as you work it. The only other amendment would be the 3 month to the 6 month which needs to be the same across board in case someone were to quit prior to the three (3) months. Six (6) months would be better for this to insure they are going to stay.

Shawna Staton suggested doing some EMT classes at the high school to start our own force here in our community. Judge Anderson said they have had that conversation before. We may need to push of some scholarships for paramedics and EMT programs. Magistrate Tipton ask how old they had to before they could become an EMT. Judge Anderson told him they had to be eighteen (18) years old.

Jason Randall told them there was awesome EMT program at Georgetown or Scott County High School. Mr. Randall told them his draw to come here to work was that we had Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield.

If you were a county employee and took the single plan it was paid for by the county but now he is paying out for the single plan. Kacey told him that if he took the basic plan it is free to the employee but if you chose the \$1,000 deductible than the employee would be paying some out of pocket. Every year since Judge Anderson has been in office we have gave some form of raise. If you look at the increase in retirement and insurance the county has absorbed the increases. There is a lot of years we could have given a better raise and require the employee to pay for a portion of their insurance but this would have not been fair. We are currently paying over \$500.00 a month per full time employee for insurance.

It has never been the courts goal for our EMS to generate revenue we just like to be as close in the black as we can. We usually have to transfer around \$300,000 to \$400,000 out of General Fund every year.

Employee Omer Caudell told them that since he has been employed he has worked crazy hours. He has worked 30 hours without sleep before. We are not going to draw in medics like other counties without some kind of incentive. He really need to offer an incentive such as helping with medical school. The employee could sign a contract that they would work so many years in Powell County. Judge Anderson ask what other things they could do to help out.

Employee Shawna Staton ask about an educational allowance that they could accrue every year so they could save up for four or five years so they would have enough to spend on a paramedic programs or go to conferences. They could also do instructive classes to help them move up. Ambulance Director Nathan Hall mentioned that they had a mandatory training the other day and the employee was going to get paid for it and only a hand full of people showed up. One employee said they cannot give up pay for a 24 hour shift pay to attend a training.

Judge Anderson ask their thoughts on doing 12 hours shifts. Mr. Riddell said that he like that idea but he did not see us getting enough people to come work for the county to cover this kind of shifts. Would doing to 12 hour shift attract people to want to come to work for us? One employee said he thought the 24/72 shift would also attract more people. Employee Shawna Staton said that most of them work other places. Judge Anderson said he wished we could provide enough wages so that they didn't have to go somewhere else and work. Most of emergency service people have to work somewhere else to make it.

Employee Jeremy Urekew said if you look into how we can make things happier. One would be to improve people's immediate tangible fringe benefits such as sick and vacations days. Salaries is 88 percent of the budget and that cannot be changed today and probably not tomorrow. He suggested that the Fiscal Court establish a sub community and spend some time looking into a five (5) year

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envison of exploratory funding sources. Having a dedicated transfer truck that will do out of town and out of county stuff. Magistrate Tipton agrees with his comments but at the end of the day you have to increase revenue or decrease cost in order to enhance benefits accordingly.

He does feel like the budget is better than it used to be but we need to be as efficient as we can with our cost and spending as wise as we can.

Mr. Urekew ask what the cost of the proposed plan was. Judge Anderson told him that we need to see how many agree to it and then we will look into it some more.

Judge Anderson told them that the perfect thing would be charter government. We are the only county that has a self – county funded dispatch. If the cities were contributing half of the dispatch budget then we could help our EMS with salaries. We can only expect our health care cost to increase and also our retirement rate has increased. The employees need to understand what we are faced with as far as the budget goes. Hopefully there are some things we can do to make some immediate changes and have some goals to work toward. Magistrate Tipton ask Nathan, “If the people that done our billing service gives us matrix’s on income per run. Some of the issues is so much of our runs are Medicare and not insurance. Mr. Riddell said that some many people use the EMS service as a doctor’s office. They go to the same people every day with them wanting their blood pressure and temperature checked. We do not get anything for these type of calls. He said that there job every day is to try and give the people of this county the best quality service that they can.

Magistrate Chad Patton said he thought this proposal is a good start and they can talk about it some more.

Jason Randall said he would like to thank the Fiscal Court for getting them a new ambulance.

He told court members that he also wanted to talk about Nathan’s vehicle. He told them that Nathan arrives on 75 percent of their calls and always helps them out with the patients. Nathan’s vehicle as far as other county vehicles is in the worst shape. He said the sheriff’s office and the jail has new vehicles. Judge Anderson said he came here the ambulance director was not afforded a vehicle what so ever.

The first couple of years he was here we had some severe winters. We fixed the transmission in an old Tahoe that the jail had and used it for transports such as for dialysis patients. After that is became a perception that if you were an ambulance director you got a vehicle. Nathan was never promised a new vehicle and he has done a great job as the director but at the same time we had some bench marks that we wanted him to hit. There is no doubt that our ambulance director has been underpaid. We made the commitment and gave him top salary. CSEPP will be going out in a couple of years and potentially we will have vehicles so why would be buy something now.

As far as the sheriff’s departments we do not have any oversight on what they purchase. It is a total different pot of money. The jail vehicles were not purchased from the general fund. Jason said he did not know this stuff that is why he was asking.

There were a lot of complaints about the purchase of the ABC vehicle. We are just now seeing what we can expect from revenues. We can only use these funds for certain things. We are checking to see if we can use any of it for the purchase of a new ambulance. Enforcement and education is the two things you can use it for. Hopefully the plan is to buy a new ABC vehicle every year to two years. If the revenue stays the same our goal is to alternate with the two law enforcement agencies. We have talked about where we draw straws to identify which one needs it the most.

Jason told them he has worked under other ambulance directors and Nathan is the most active and hands on person he has worked with. He keeps lifesaving equipment in his vehicle so he can help out if him.


Judge Anderson does not drive a county vehicle home which saves the county around \$7,000 to \$8,000 every year. He does not feel entitled to have a county vehicle just because he is fortunate to have been elected this position. The court has cut back which is one of the reasons we have not had to raise taxes. One of most immediate things we could do right now would be to check on classes for EMS employees. We will need to formulate some type of contract and what commitment would come after that for the employee. Employee Matthew Young ask the court to help his tuition for paramedic school during the last meeting. He would like work part-time here for years but he has specific goals with his career he wants to meet. He does not know if he could do a full time contract at this time and he understands if the county could not do this. We could do different contracts based on if one was committing full or part-time. The court needs to work on the terms and have some kind of perception of what the contract would consist of. Court members ask Nathan for himself and the EMS employees to work on a contract/contracts in getting the specifics on what they would want in it so that the county attorney can draft it up.

In closing of the meeting Judge Anderson said that we are in this together and having these meetings are very helpful. Sometimes the employee assumes that the court knows what they are faced and dealing with so these meeting help out a lot. Court members should commit within a year's time to try and spend part of a shift with an employee to see what they actually do.

The plan is to come back by the August meeting with resolute on the proposal and some ideas for schooling. There also needs to be quarterly meeting with the court and the EMS employees to discuss their goals and concerns.

With no further discussion Judge Anderson entertain a motion to adjourn.

A motion was made by Magistrate Mike Lockard seconded by Magistrate Dennis Combs to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

  
James Anderson

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Dennis Combs

  
Donna Gabbard

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Mike Lockard

  
Chad Patton

  
Timmy Tipton