

# **VILLAGE OF HEBRON**

## SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

April 13, 2022  
5:00 pm

This meeting was held both remotely and in person.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Layton called the meeting to order at 6:00pm

**ROLL CALL**

Councilmembers in attendance: Council President Dr. Valerie Mockus; Councilmembers Stacy Stoner, Paige Seymour, Kenney Nauer, Annelle Porter, and Rich Moore.

Others in attendance: Mayor James Layton, Village Administrator John Trujillo, Village Solicitor Wesley K. Untied, Village Fiscal Officer Deborah Morgan, and Clerk of Council/Administrative Assistant Christina Furbee.

Visitors: Randy Wolf, Andrea Chapman, Clifford & Rose Mason, Donard Myers, Ryan Wyse, Lieutenant Chris Clancy, Marc Weekley, Jon Slater, Travis Colley, Logan Glosser, Lawrence Tittle

Remote Visitors: Patty Costello, Chris Tucker





**Discussion: Fire District options**

Mayor Layton said the purpose of this meeting is to discuss options for fire service. He said the Village is looking into three proposals with Union Township, West Licking and Heath. Mayor Layton said Union Township wants the Village of Hebron to take over the fire service as it was before and contract with them. He said Heath’s proposal would have been too much money, but there is an option to join West Licking Fire District and be a part of their department. Mr. Moore concurred.

Mrs. Stoner said she liked the comparison graph that Dr. Mockus provided. She said everyone likes the Refugee-Canyon Joint Fire District the way it is now but she does not see how that can continue, financially.

Dr. Mockus said she tried to compare apples to apples in her report. She read the information aloud and said she added in what she sees as the level of difficulty for each option.

(Inserted from Dr. Mockus’ report):

	Hebron	Union T	West L	Heath 3	Heath 4
	Hebron will staff its own department	Hebron will contract with Union Town	West Licking will include Hebron in Dist	Hebron will contract with Heath for 3 staff	Hebron will contract with Heath for 4 staff
 Millage	20	7.2	8.9 Initially 10.4 After November	19	23
 Staffing	4	4	3 plus 4 other stations	3 plus 2 other stations	4 plus 2 other stations
 Equipment	Village of Hebron retains	Village of Hebron retains	Possibly goes toward debt on building	Owned by Heath	Owned by Heath
 Difficulty	High	Very High	Medium	Medium High	Medium High

Hebron Fire Service Options  
Comparison Chart  
April 9, 2022  
Version 1

Dr. Mockus said she feels the best option for the Village is to move the Fire District to the West Licking Fire District.

Mr. Nauer said the Village is considering all options, and it all comes back to the finances. Mrs. Seymour agreed.

Mrs. Porter said she does not think the Village can support its own fire/rescue service without a levy, and a levy is easy to put on but hard to get it to pass, and she has heard a school district levy will also be on the November ballot. She said she is leaning toward

supporting the option to join the West Licking Fire District but she is not sure at this time. She said the aim is to provide quality service for Village residents and any other areas we may serve.

#### **Open Discussion**

Chris Clancy, Lieutenant for the Refugee-Canyon Joint Fire District, said he thinks Union Township and the Village of Hebron should get together and agree on a termination date for the District, to allow Refugee-Canyon Firefighters time to decide what they want to do. Mayor Layton said the Village will get the information to the Fire District as soon as we can.

Clifford Mason, 113 Dennison Street, asked Council to consider that the Hebron Fire Department has provided Fire/EMS service in this community since 1926. He said he does not know all the details, but he feels anything other than the Village spending all its efforts in saving the Fire District, or the Village running the Fire Department in contract with Union Township, would be a disservice to the residents of this community. He said he was the Chief of the Refugee-Canyon Joint Fire District and is continuing to be paid as Fire Chief for the next three months, and he knows what funds it takes to run a Fire Department. He said he does not believe that it cannot be done financially. He said the Fire Department has been a part of the backbone of the community. Mr. Mason said the Hebron Police Department has more staff on duty everyday than the Fire Department and their millage is much less. He noted that he was the Mayor of the Village of Hebron for 20 years and he knows what the finances are and where a lot of the financing for the Police Department comes from—the income tax and the general fund. Mr. Mason said he would encourage Council to strongly consider doing everything they can to save the Hebron Fire Department. He asked Council to develop the necessary number and ask the voters what they think about the millage to sustain the Hebron Fire Department and before making final plans with someone else, to consider the residents in this community and how they would be best served.

Union Township resident Patty Costello said everything was working and now the Village is talking about Union Township almost doubling what they need to pay to get the same service that they have. She said she is sorry about the situation, as she felt the previous gentleman's speech was very impassioned and she understands where he is coming from. Ms. Costello said she wishes there were more options, but apparently there are not. She said it is a shame that a partnership that had been in place for so long is apparently going to go away.

Mr. Nauer said the Village is looking at everything. Mr. Moore said he thinks the Village needs to sit down with the Township again and take another look at the numbers.

Mayor Layton said it's all about the money, as we can't have a Fire District that we cannot fund. He said we looked at what it took to run the Fire District over the past three years, and one of the options with contracting with Union Township was approximately \$2,360,000.00. Interim Fire Chief Ryan Wyse said that number is right about what the Fire District is currently running on. Mayor Layton said that was converted into the necessary millage to see if it makes sense going forward. He said we have three proposals and there will be more discussions to boil down the options.

Dr. Mockus asked what the next steps will be.

Mayor Layton said he believes a motion from Council to sit down and negotiate and fine tune the numbers would be appropriate.

Dr. Mockus said she thinks it is imperative to consider the equipment, as Mrs. Porter has mentioned many times. She asked that those things be considered when negotiating with West Licking so that we have a very clear sense of what we want out of that dialogue. She encouraged Councilmembers who are not in attendance at those meetings to communicate anything they feel strongly about with someone that will be attending.

Mrs. Porter said we also have to determine what portion of the million dollars is up-front cash, how much per year, what interval, equipment to be used, etc. She said she understands Mr. Mason's comment about the Fire Department being the backbone of the Village but money is not abundant, inflation is ripping a hole in things, and she does not see that changing anytime soon.

Dr. Mockus said if we decide to dissolve the Fire District, she feels it is critical to get feedback from the Township on timing so that a hardship is not created on the Township.

Mr. Nauer said we are trying to work as quickly as possible, but remain fair to everyone.

Marc Weekley, 118 Dennison Street, asked Dr. Mockus about a guest committee she is on. He asked if there is a record of who she talked to. Dr. Mockus said that is a private citizens group, not a public Board or Commission. He asked if there were any minutes taken. Dr. Mockus confirmed there were no minutes taken. He asked if the group reported back to Union Township Trustees. Dr. Mockus confirmed the group did report back to the Township.

Andrea Chapman, 408 W. Main St, asked what West Licking's millage is currently. Mayor Layton said their millage is roughly 8.9.

Mr. Nauer moved to direct Mayor Layton, Dr. Mockus, Mr. Moore, and Mrs. Seymour to direct Mayor Layton, Dr. Mockus, Mr. Moore and Mrs. Seymour to negotiate options for the Fire District, second by Mrs. Stoner. A roll call vote was taken with all Councilmembers present voting in favor. Mayor Layton said this group will sit down with West Licking Fire District, Heath, and Union Township to discuss options, negotiate and make a decision. He said citizen comments are welcome anytime.

Mr. Moore said if the Village decides to go with West Licking Fire District, there will be no public vote on the millage, as Council will vote to take over that millage. He said he believes an ordinance will be created to reduce our current millage. Mayor Layton said we will try to have a public meeting to address it with the public. He said in the interest of transparency, West Licking will put a levy on if we decide to join them. He does not believe Heath would do the same, as they operate out of the general fund.

**Adjourn**

Dr. Mockus moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:32pm, second by Mr. Nauer. A roll call vote was taken with all Councilmembers present voting in favor.

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James Layton, Mayor

Attest:

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Deborah Morgan, Village Fiscal Officer