

Bertrand Charter Township Board Public Hearing Minutes
Special Assessment District for Emergency Medical Services
Through Southwestern Michigan Community Ambulance Service, District #1

Thursday, July 14, 2022

Bertrand Charter Township Hall
3835 Buffalo Rd., Buchanan, MI 49107

Supervisor Hicks called the public hearing to order at 7:05 p.m.

Members Present: Hicks, Kuhn, Payton, Vite, Zelmer

Members Absent: None

Guests present: Brian Scribner, SMCAS Executive Director and other members of SMCAS; Paul Janča – Berrien County District Court Judge candidate; Brad Paquette – 78th District State Representative

Purpose: To hear public comments and answer any questions regarding the estimate and on the question of creating a SMCAS special assessment district and defraying the expenses of the special assessment district by special assessment on the property to be especially benefited.

Public notice was given in the forms of a First-Class letter sent to the address of every parcel in the township qualifying to be assessed as well as two publications in the South Bend Tribune.

Mr. Scribner gave the same powerpoint presentation to the audience that he made to the township board in the June meeting.

Public Comments/Questions

Numerous residents attended the meeting and nine residents asked questions or made comments. It was unanimous consensus based on comments and support that the residents appreciate the services of SMCAS in our township. However, a majority commenting expressed concern and disapproval for the 150% increase requested over the next five years. Farmer Shane Masten expressed deep concern as he has numerous parcels throughout all the jurisdictions that would be affected by this SAD.

Attorney Senica spoke concerning the language in the SMCAS by-laws re: funding the SAD by each owner municipality, and the wording clearly indicates each municipality provides its share of funding based on its population formula.

Board Member Comments

Trustee Zelmer has repeatedly expressed his concern and disapproval for the disproportionate amount required of farmers and multi-parcel owners and the hardship that may place on these individuals who may never even need the services of SMCAS.

Treasurer Kuhn expressed the need for more thorough analysis of SMCAS' financials and where other funding options like the COVID CARE deposit have been spent.

There was consensus among the board that more study and analysis of the books would be helpful to understand the true need presented.

Motion made by Hicks to close the meeting at 7:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



July 20, 2022

Don Vite

Dated

Bertrand Charter Township Clerk