

The Board of Commissioners of Fayette County, Georgia met in a Special Called Meeting on Wednesday, June 7, 2006, at 6:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Conference Room of the Fayette County Administrative Complex, 140 Stonewall Avenue, Fayetteville, Georgia.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Greg Dunn, Chairman
 Linda Wells, Vice Chair
 Herb Frady
 Robert Horgan
 Peter Pfeifer

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Chris Venice, County Administrator
 Peggy Butler, Chief Deputy Clerk
 Jack Krakeel, Fire Chief of Fayette County
 Mary Holland, Assistant Finance Director

SPECIAL GUESTS: Harold Logsdon, Mayor of Peachtree City
 Bernie McMullen, Peachtree City City Manager
 Steve Boone, Peachtree City Council
 Stuart Kourjian, Peachtree City Council
 Judi-ann Rutherford, Peachtree City Council

Chairman Dunn called the meeting to order.

EMS TAX DISTRICT

Chief Jack Krakeel stated that the Board of Commissioners has asked him to put together a presentation based on his knowledge of the EMS system in Fayette County and his perspective on the issues before the group tonight. He said he could not speak on the particular issue of discussion because that was a public policy decision for the Board and for the City. He said he could talk about the EMS system and some of the issues that he felt were pertinent to this discussion.

Chief Krakeel said the history of the Fayette County EMS system paralleled with what happened on a national level. He said the development of the EMS system in the United States came about as a result of the number of different things that converged during the 1960's and ultimately ended up with the Federal Government passing legislation known as the Emergency Medical Services Systems Act of 1973.

Chief Krakeel said pertinent to today's discussion was the Act of 1973 which was passed by the state of Georgia. There were a number of requirements contained within the Act. He said the Act established guidelines for the EMS Systems. He said the Act established training guidelines for personnel, ambulance specifications, and a host of issues. He said it required the creation of regional EMS councils. He said it charged counties with the responsibility for providing EMS at a local level in the community. He said in addition, in order to develop EMS systems in this country, a grant program was developed through the Federal Government and that program, at least historically, was a 70%-30% program. He said it was the way by which most communities started their EMS systems. He said local governments would pursue the funding for the grants and procure equipment, ambulances, and training to begin establishing local emergency services.

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Chief Krakeel said if they looked at the EMS history in Fayette County, pre-1973, the ambulance transport service in this county was provided by C. J. Mowell's Funeral Home. He said that was not atypical. He said in pre-1973 the responsibility for rescue services was for things like trapped victims in car wrecks and getting these victims out. He said prior to 1973 that was a function of the Civil Defense Department in this county staffed by volunteers.

Chief Krakeel stated in 1973 Fayette County applied for and received two ambulances through the 70/30 grant program. He said Fayette County was given a license to operate the ambulances and given the zone for the operation of these ambulances in Fayette County. He said in the state of Georgia there were two ways to have an ambulance license. He said there was a 911 license where the provider had the responsibility for responding to 911 calls and they were awarded a zone where they had exclusive operating rights. He said the other license was for non-emergency transport services.

Chief Krakeel said in regards to the two new ambulances that were acquired, one was placed in Peachtree City and one was placed in Fayetteville. He said they were staffed by volunteers.

Chief Krakeel said in 1978 Fayette County requested one additional ambulance and was provided two additional ambulances by the state through the 70/30 grant program. He said these ambulances were placed in Tyrone and South Fayette. He said during this time frame Peachtree City obtained its own EMS license and was awarded a Zone for providing ambulance services.

Chief Krakeel said in 1983 the Fayette County Board of Commissioners established the Department of Fire and Emergency Services and essentially consolidated all of the voluntary agencies in the unincorporated area of the county and some of the incorporated areas of the county. He said from 1983 until 1987 the Fayette County Emergency Medical Services continued to operate in Peachtree City even though they held their own license and fell underneath the umbrella of Fayette County EMS. He said during that time they provided training support, billing services, administrative support, supplies, and capital equipment including an ambulance.

Chief Krakeel said in 1987 Peachtree City informed Fayette County that they were divesting itself from functioning under the county EMS system and took over full responsibility for training, billing, administrative services, capital acquisitions, medical direction, and other services that were being provided as part of the county's EMS system. He said the Board of Commissioners and the Peachtree City council entered into a contract stipulating that termination. He said since 1987 the two systems had remained separate and apart other than providing mutual aid to each other which was a requirement of state law for 911 providers.

Chief Krakeel said in the year 2000 House Bill 489 arose and required local governments to define services provided to their constituents. He said Peachtree City raised the tax equity issue of double taxation for the provision of EMS services.

Chief Krakeel said this evening the discussion would focus on that public policy issue. He said the Board of Commissioners had asked him what options were available to them. He said the options, from his perspective were to retain the status quo, reimburse Peachtree City annually, or create a separate EMS tax district that would exclude Peachtree City and incorporate the rest of the unincorporated area of the county.

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Chief Krakeel said the Board had asked him for possible implications from this public policy decision. He said he felt there were two fundamental public policy issues. He said one had to do with the governance and the other with financial and fiscal implications.

Chief Krakeel said from the government's perspective you have to go back to the EMSSA Act of 1973 which established counties as the principal government responsible for EMS at the local community level. He said it also established the Regional EMS Council responsible for coordinating 911-ambulance service through the Regional Zoning Process that resulted in rewarding an exclusive operating zone to a provider.

Chief Krakeel said from his prospective on the governance side of the equation there were some implications associated with this. He said should Peachtree City decide not to provide EMS transport service for any reason, he said it was his understanding that Fayette County would not be obligated to provide the service. He said this was from a regulatory perspective. He said this would leave Peachtree City with two options. He said those would be to retain their license and contract with another provider, or Peachtree City could relinquish its zone and that zone would be opened up for a competitive bid process. He said that process would be available to any agency that had the capability to provide transport services. He said whether Fayette County would participate in that bid process would be a decision to be made by the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Wells clarified with Chief Krakeel that if the zone was relinquished the Regional Council would decide who would service that zone. Chief Krakeel said that was correct. He said when a zone was opened the entity that handled that process was the Regional EMS Council, which for this area was located in LaGrange, Georgia. He said that council had a zoning subcommittee which was responsible for obtaining all of the bids for the zone and then awarding the bid to the most economical and efficient provider of the services.

Chief Krakeel said there were fiscal issues clearly at play here. He said he had calculations based on the net fiscal impact on both the Peachtree City residents and the residents that reside in the remainder of the county. He said these calculations were based on the 2005 budget and done so because 2005 was the only year that there was actual data. A copy of the calculations, identified as "Attachment No. 1", follows these minutes and is made an official part here.

Chairman Dunn said he had read in the paper where Peachtree City thought the money they were talking about was over a half million dollars.

City Manager McMullen stated the calculations that Chief Krakeel made were basically the same methodology that he had used when looking at this. He said he came up with very similar numbers.

Mayor Logsdon said since they had started discussing this issue he had heard any where from \$250,000 to \$400,000. He said since City Manager McMullen and Chief Krakeel had come to the same conclusion with their numbers he felt they should yield to those numbers instead of things they had heard.

Chairman Dunn said they certainly would not yield to the numbers they had heard. He asked if they saw the situation the same as Chief Krakeel had presented or did they disagree with any of it.

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Chief Krakeel said Fayette County fundamentally operated identically to Peachtree City.

Mayor Logsdon said he wanted to resolve this issue. He said he wanted to resolve the double taxation issue. He said he was open to discussion.

Chairman Dunn asked the mayor what he wanted. Mayor Logsdon said a special tax district would be the cleanest option of the three options.

Commissioner Wells stated that Chief Krakeel had not included another option which the board felt very strongly about. She said that option was consolidation. She said that would be the most cost efficient manner to provide services county-wide and in the best interest of the citizens.

Council Member Boone said Peachtree City was starting to age. He said if they were responding to unincorporated areas responding to emergencies what would happen to someone in his neighborhood if one of the county units could not respond within the time allotted. He asked Chief Krakeel what was the response standard for the county. Chief Krakeel said the response standard for a first due response unit was an average 3 to 5 minutes.

Council Member Boone said if they pulled out two of their units in unincorporated.....

Commissioner Wells interrupted and said wait. Commissioner Pfeifer asked Council Member Boone what was he talking about, why would they pull them out. Council Boone responded if they consolidated then they would be pulled out. Commissioner Pfeifer said that was an open question, that was the issue. Council member Boone asked if they consolidated would they still maintain their four units. Commissioner Wells said to ask Chief Krakeel. Chief Krakeel responded that they would.

Chairman Dunn said if they were discrete entities in either jurisdiction it would be a lot easier to say EMS or Fire or both. He said but because all of their people were duo trained in providing both services to both jurisdictions it seemed like total consolidation was really where you got the most bang for the both.

Commissioner Wells said Chief Krakeel made a very good point about cities annexing and getting large that it became much more difficult for the city to plan where to put their fire stations and the county to plan where to put their fire stations because the boundaries constantly changed and the response time was in a constant state of flux. She said if this was not a separate entity it could be planned where and what they needed based upon growth, the number of units they had county-wide, and the best response time. She said the cost would be minimized if there was someone who looked at the big picture rather than two separate pictures.

Commissioner Pfeifer said in reference to the elimination of two ambulances from Peachtree City, there was a statement in the newspaper, attributed to Council Member Rutherford, that the county had made a proposal that included eliminating two ambulances in Peachtree City. He said the county had never made a proposal to Peachtree City regarding ambulance service and consolidation. He said that proposal came from a study that

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Peachtree City did. He said the county had nothing to do with it. He said it was an option in the Peachtree City study not the county's.

Commissioner Frady said Peachtree City use to provide service for this county for the seventh district years ago. He said he did not think anything had been said about the number of ambulances to be had.

Commissioner Wells said the commissioners were responsible for the entire county. She said they would not be saying Peachtree City residents would get less of a quality of service because they were all county residents. She said it would not be that Peachtree City would get one standard and the rest of the county would get another standard. She said the entire county and all planning would be done on that basis which made much more economic sense.

Mayor Logsdon said he did not know if he was buying all of that. He said Peachtree City had their services carved out and it had been that way for a long time. He said it had worked for 20 years and they were perfectly content with that. He said they were content with continuing with mutual aid. He said they had their own fire district in Peachtree City and their EMS lined up with their fire department because all personnel were duo trained. He said it was Peachtree City's desire and intention to continue to operate that way.

Commissioner Pfeifer said the talk they heard was all speculative. He said he felt the citizens expected more of the commissioners than speculation, guessing and opinions. He said he did not understand why it would be any opposition to sitting down and having some elected officials, Chief Krakeel, Chief Lohr, Chris Venice and the mayor looking at this issue and finding out the answer to the questions of how much it cost now, how much it would cost if they consolidated, what the service level was now, and what the service level could be if they consolidated. He said then they could make a rational decision. He said without that information a rational decision could not be made.

Mayor Logsdon said they knew what it cost. He said it cost what was in Peachtree City's budget and the County's budget.

Commissioner Pfeifer said there would be different staffing levels, different administrative expenses and different training expenses. He said everything would be different. He said consolidation was happening around the state and the reason it was happening was because it made sense. He said he did not know if it would make sense for them, he did not have the answer to that. He said until they had actual numbers no one could say whether it was good or bad.

Council Member Rutherford asked why was it that no one seemed to have a problem when they set up the fire service district but now that they wanted to set up the EMS district it was causing such a heartburn.

Commissioner Pfeifer asked who set up the first district. Council Member Rutherford said that was what she was asking. Commissioner Pfeifer said it was not any of these commissioners.

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Chairman Dunn asked if Chief Krakeel could address the difference between the fire tax district and the EMS tax district. He said it was difficult to understand.

Chief Krakeel said originally the fire district concept was developed in the state of Georgia as a methodology for funding fire departments. He said it essentially applied to unincorporated areas. He said state law was very specific about what fire protection district funds could be used for. He said they could only be used for fire protection services. He said it was very clearly stipulated unlike municipal budgets which had the capability to aggregate cost centers into a single budget structure so EMS expenses could be co-mingled with fire expenses, and could exclude the labor costs from the EMS costs. He said in Fayette County there was actually two fire districts at one point. He said Peachtree City had a volunteer service and the rest of the county had a volunteer service. He said in the late seventies the City of Fayetteville decided they would separate themselves. He said the vast majority of the separation decisions were based on personnel matters.

Chief Krakeel said in most communities and counties around the country fire protection districts actually had a separate elected board from local government. He said they were almost like school boards. He said they had the ability to set tax rates. He said in Georgia that did not exist. He said in Georgia the fire districts generally reported directly to the Board of Commissioners. He said in order to establish a fire district it had to be put before the citizens and then there was a separate tax structure that supported fire protection. He said there could not be co-mingling of funds. He said there had to be a separate process for budgeting for EMS and that process was through the general fund. He said he was not familiar with any single county in the state of Georgia that had a separate EMS tax district that excluded municipalities specifically.

Commissioner Pfeifer said he agreed with Council Member Rutherford that what colored this issue depended on what side you were on. He said he thought the side everyone wanted to be on was the side of the tax paying citizens who expected to get the best possible service at the lowest possible cost. He said he did not care about anyone's personalities or if Peachtree City wanted to have something written on the side of their trucks, or if Fayette County wanted to have something written on the side of their trucks. He said that did not matter to him at all. He said all he wanted was the best service and the lowest cost for all citizens.

City Manager McMullen said one of the realities was that at this point when looking at the level of service in Peachtree City in terms of number of ambulances per 1,000 people, number of fire stations per square mile, and those type of things, that level of service was going to be higher in Peachtree City than in Fayette County. He asked Chief Krakeel if he disagreed with that.

Chief Krakeel responded that he did disagree with that. He said the problem with EMS was that everyone looked at the ambulance as being EMS. He said they did not look at the system. He said the first responder was the critical link in any EMS system in this country. He said we tended to focus solely on the ambulance because the ambulance meant medical care.

Chief Krakeel said today in the United States the ambulance was a transport medium to get a patient from point A to point B. He said the primary provider of care in this county today was the first responders that responded from

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a fire apparatus to the needs of the community. He said this was important because the standard for ambulance response in the United States, through the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services, was "that in suburban communities an ambulance shall be available and on scene within eight minutes and fifty-nine seconds from the point of dispatch until arrival on the scene." He said the county did not use that standard as their first responder standard. He said their first responder standard was substantially lower than that. He said if they were going to have an impact on patient outcome once you passed the six minute mark it really did not matter. He said brain death occurred between four and six minutes. He said if you could not intervene between four and six minutes, the survivability of that patient went almost to zero. He said the critical factor on delivering emergency medical care was getting the right people with the right equipment to the right patient at the right time. He said they did that by responding with their fire trucks which were strategically positioned throughout the community to have a fast response time.

Mayor Logsdon said he had seen the county numbers and the Peachtree City numbers of last year and it was five minutes and fourteen seconds verses five minutes and sixteen seconds. He said the level of service was the same.

Chief Krakeel said that was his point. He said there was not a higher level of service in either community. He said the service level that was being provided was identical. He said the mere fact that Peachtree City had three ambulances with one reserve and Fayette County had five ambulances with one reserve was immaterial to this discussion. He said the discussion should focus on how quickly the right services were gotten to the right patient with the right capabilities at the right time. He said that was the fundamental issue if someone was laying on the ground with a heart attack. He said they could care less if the first responder was in a fire truck, an ambulance or a police car. He said in this country the system that had the highest percent of out of hospital cardiac arrest survivability did not even involve public safety. He said there was a city in the United States that had a fifty three percent out of hospital cardiac arrest survival rate. He said we could not match that. He said it was the city of Las Vegas. He said they had that capability because every one in every hotel was watched one hundred percent of the time, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

Mayor Logsdon said he agreed with Chief Krakeel. He said the level of service with the two organizations was basically the same. He said his point of contention was that the Peachtree City system was double taxed and he wanted that stopped. He said they were both good organizations. He said they could do all the studies they wanted to but twenty years ago Peachtree City decided they wanted their own. He said they got their own fire district and they got their own EMS. He said all he wanted was to quit paying two taxes on it.

Commissioner Horgan said if they consolidated they would be able to have future planning, more ambulances and better control. He said that would save people money.

Commissioner Wells asked what their population was. City Manager McMullen said it was about 38,000. Commissioner Wells said for 70,000 people the county had been running four ambulances and for 36,000 people Peachtree City had been running three ambulances with a reserve. She said Peachtree City's area was twenty-five square miles and Fayette County was one hundred ninety-nine square miles when taking out Peachtree City. She said the county had been providing for more people, larger area and the response time was the same. She said

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they had been covering almost three times the square miles and twice that much population wise with four ambulances or first responder. She said the county people were getting more bang for their buck.

Council Member Rutherford said that was because the Peachtree City citizens were helping the county pay for it. Commissioner Wells said that had nothing to do with money, it had to do with response time.

Commissioner Frady said he knew everyone wanted the citizens in this county to have good ambulance and fire service. He said you could not leave Peachtree City without going through this county where service was provided.

Commissioner Pfeifer asked why they did not want to find out the answers. Mayor Logsdon responded that he thought they were being double taxed for a service they were capable of providing.

Commissioner Pfeifer asked why didn't they want to find out the best way to do it. Mayor Logsdon said it really did not matter, they wanted to have their own EMS.

Chairman Dunn said when they went into the tax equity thing, and this was an issue at one time, the whole issue was tax equity and the best use of tax payers' money. He said now they had strange rules in that they had a fire district that did not allow money to be spent on EMS. He said it was a stupid law. He said he thought it was incumbent upon us, if really serious about taxes, to figure out what was the lowest tax that could be paid for the service. He said the county was providing the same level of service. He said Peachtree City's own study indicated that the county was more efficient. He said Peachtree City seemed to think that having more units provided a higher level of service. He said it did not appear to. He said it gave more expense because the county provided the same level of service over a larger geographical area a lot cheaper.

Chairman Dunn asked how many people did Peachtree City have on a fire truck when they left a fire house. City Manager McMullen said two and sometimes one, most of the time one. Chairman Dunn said that was inadequate response for fire. He asked if they were doing a good thing by having a separate ambulance service that had a lot of extra capability and then the firemen were going out short.

City Manager McMullen said the most efficient way to do it was to have both fire and EMS service consolidated in terms of either how the county or city was doing it. He said as pointed out before, the individuals were dual qualified in fire and EMS. He said the issue was that they were sending out the EMS according to state law with two people. He said typically in their stations that had both an ambulance and fire truck they had three people. He said two would go out in an ambulance and one in a fire truck. He said one issues was in terms of dis-consolidating EMS. He said the number of two ambulances came about two years ago when he met with Chief Krakeel and asked him the question "If they gave up EMS service how would the county provide service to Peachtree City. What would they staff in terms of ambulance and personnel?" He said Chief Krakeel's answer then was they would need to put two ambulances in Peachtree City and fifteen to seventeen people. He said that would add to the entire expense in terms of providing services, both fire and EMS, to all of the citizens of Fayette County. He said irregardless of how the tax expenses were divided up, there was funding of an additional fifteen to seventeen people plus the ambulances. He said they would also have to make all of their engines ALS engines. He said just because the

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county was staffing the ambulances did not mean making a like reduction in the number of people because they had staffing needs in terms of being able to respond to a residential fire with the adequate number of firemen. He said that was one thing they were doing in their budget process.

Chief Krakeel said for clarification, they did have that discussion two years ago and he did indicate two ambulances would be required in Peachtree City. He said they actually provided four to Peachtree City, one located on the north end in Tyrone, one located in the south end at Highway 85. He said those would be four units that would respond to the needs of the citizens. He said with respect to the issue of additional cost, that was only valid if they did not absorb the existing positions into the two units. He said otherwise Peachtree City would essentially be absorbing an additional twenty something personnel into your fire program. He said the expenditures they were currently looking at for new positions to adequately staff fire apparatuses would not exist today. He said in Peachtree City there would be a net influx of personnel into their fire program without any additional increase in cost that would equal the staffing level on those three ambulances. He said he would argue that there was a significant cost savings to Peachtree City.

City Manager McMullen said true the county covered one hundred square miles and Peachtree City covered twenty-five square miles. He said they had a great number of people in a consolidated area. He said in the unincorporated area the time of first response in some of the little lanes was going to take more time. He said if the fire truck and ambulance were out in the rural areas and Peachtree City had three critical massive heart attacks how would they cover them.

Chief Krakeel responded by saying most agencies that make a profit with the EMS in the private sector average 3,500 transports per year per ambulance in order to make a profit. He said the county's threshold value that is a benchmark for adding an additional unit was 2,000 calls per year per unit. He said right now the county had five units and still had a tremendous amount of excess capacity available from a transport perspective that would carry this county for the next ten years. He said when you remove the ambulance from the response time requirement then you can use those resources to their maximum potential for patient transports and patient revenues.

Chairman Dunn said with so many first responders in this county, if they were being managed by the same people, it would be much easier to plan a program and budget for it. He said it seemed obvious. He said he did not know if that was how a study would come out, but it certainly seemed that way.

Commissioner Pfeifer said he would also point out that if they went ahead and got some real answers they had sitting at this table one of the experts in the United States in this subject, Chief Krakeel.

Council Member Boone said if they were talking about a full blown study where the city and county had to pay for it he would rather see their own internal people do it. He said he was a "show-me" guy. He said he would not have a problem with that but he did not want to drag this thing on forever.

Chairman Dunn said the decision that Peachtree City made years ago was what had caused this double taxation problem. He said the other thing was that it was costing Peachtree City more money for decisions made before

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this board got into the government. He said now rather than finesse it around and create new tax districts, it seemed like a logical time for experts to sit down and look at this. He said the county was only 199 square miles and it had three fire departments and three EMS systems. He said it was not necessary to have all that. Chairman Dunn asked if there was a study done and it showed that we could all provide the services more efficient for our tax payers, what would be the excuse not to do it.

Mayor Logsdon asked why there was unreasonable resistance to Peachtree City wanting to continue to do what they had been doing?

Chairman Dunn responded that because they were doing it and it might not be right did not mean that they should always do it.

Council Member Rutherford said that was the same answer to the EMS district, just because no one else did it did not mean that it may not be the most efficient way to do it here.

Chairman Dunn asked if they did a study and it came out as some of us believed, and it was shown that services could be provided and there were efficiencies, why wouldn't we do that for all of our people. He said if it was a power issue we were not serving our citizens.

Council Member Kourajian asked if a study was done and it showed that there was a negligible difference or it was not a big improvement to consolidate would you agree to give Peachtree City its own EMS district.

Commissioner Pfeifer said his feeling was however it came out it came out.

Chief Krakeel said the cost of providing the same level of service to Peachtree City would be spread over the entire digest value. He said it would be increasing the contributory participation of the individual tax payer by 6% verses 36%. He said automatically that was going to result in reduction. He said the critical issues and tough decisions in a consolidation effort were very difficult to achieve by staff. He said it dealt with elimination of positions. He said there were repetitive administrative structures where there was no need for two fire chiefs, two fire marshals, and two EMS captains. He said in a consolidation effort it was very difficult for staff to come up with those recommendations because those very individuals at the table discussing this may very well be affected by the decisions.

Council Member Rutherford asked if Chief Krakeel thought they needed an independent study.

Chief Krakeel responded that he felt they could provide the numbers. He said there were ways to lower costs.

Chairman Dunn asked since Peachtree City had its own zone could they consolidate. Chief Krakeel responded that yes they could consolidate because they were not materially vacating the zone but assigning the zone as one system. He said the fourth district would have to approve it.

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Chief Krakeel said the fundamental area where they would save the most money by consolidation was long term as this community grew. He said savings would result from the ability to plan for emergency services on a county-wide basis, without having jurisdictional boundaries that interfered with the planning process and foregoing duplication.

Mayor Logsdon remarked that Peachtree City was just about built out. He said they were about at staff level now. He said they had already been spending \$220,000 a year and their people would be paying for Fayette County growth.

City Manager McMullen remarked that Chief Krakeel said it would be more economical. He said if the county looked at what their fire district tax was right now which was 3.09 mils, he said that was more in terms of milage than Peachtree City citizens paid for fire right now. He said in addition to that they only had one person being funded in their EMS and the county had forty people. He said about a third of the county's force was being funded by the general fund. He said if all of that rolled over to a fire district then what would happen would be the citizens of Peachtree City would be paying more for fire service in a consolidated effort than what they were paying right now.

Chief Krakeel said they would have to look at the calculations. He said when consolidation happened there was a larger digest value into which that potential budget would be funded from and you were not dealing with one budget here and one budget there funded by different digests.

Commissioner Wells said if they looked and found the numbers were more in Peachtree City's favor, keeping things in the status quo, she was certainly favorable to looking at changing the way they were doing things. She said she did not think they could do that right now because they did not have adequate information. She said they both had very intrenched ideas and beliefs but they were based on speculation.

Mayor Logsdon said there was a five member panel representing Peachtree City and they were in 100% agreement that they wanted to end double taxation now.

Commissioner Pfeifer made a motion to appoint from amongst themselves at least two members of these two bodies, plus Chief Krakeel, Chief Stoney, County Administrator Chris Venice and a person from Finance to sit down and work through this, answer the questions honestly with no foregone conclusions, and report back to this group.

Motion failed due to lack of seconding the motion.

Mayor Logsdon said there were foregone conclusions all around this table.

Chairman Dunn said there seemed to be a lot more foregone among the five from Peachtree City. He said the commissioners were willing to take a look at the information.

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Commissioner Frady said if Peachtree City was not going to pay any attention to what the study showed there was no sense wasting the time of everyone for another ninety days and still have the same conclusion. He said if they were willing to take the numbers and look at them that was fine. He said all he heard so far was that they wanted to settle it.

Mayor Logsdon said he was not interested in any study.

Commissioner Frady said he hated to waste time to do something when the outcome was going to be the same.

Chairman Dunn said his difficulty was he thought when Peachtree City approached the board years ago and again recently he thought the whole idea was saving tax payers money.

Commissioner Wells stated if the county could save the city more than \$220,000 she was not hearing that they were even interested in entertaining that. She said the savings could be significantly more than \$220,000. She said she was confused as to why that wasn't even a viable consideration if they were truly looking out for the best for their citizens. She said she did not understand the reluctance to find that out.

Council Member Rutherford said currently Peachtree City provided for their citizens what was equal to what was provided in the county. She said they did it at a less expensive rate because their mills that paid for the fire and EMS were less than what the county paid for theirs. She said her citizens then pay additional money to the county.

City Manager McMullen said one of the things that was going to be difficult was defining the level of service in terms of more than just response time. He said they provided other services such as providing ambulances for special events. He said he did not know what the level was that the county did.

Chairman Dunn said they did also.

Commissioner Wells said if they could save the city tax payers more than \$220,000 a year what was the reluctance for exploring that. She said they believed they could save more than that.

Council Rutherford said she suggested the commissioners pull their numbers together and visit them at their house and show them.

Chairman Dunn said they could not get the numbers for Peachtree City's expenses.

Chief Krakeel said the quandary had been that they had been discussing EMS for the last two years. He said what they were discussing now was consolidation. He said that was a different issue. He said under that environment they could look at where cost savings could be achieved giving the existing organization structure, the service levels that were provided, and maintaining the same service levels. He said then it could be determined if there was an opportunity for cost savings. He said his concern with the process of sitting down and looking at this was he may

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have recommendations from his perspective and Chief Lohr may totally disagree with his perspective because it may involve the elimination of his position or the elimination of Chief Lohr's position. He said if either one of them were sitting at the table discussing that they would individually argue that their position was essential to a consolidation effort. He said that was where the difficult task came in. He said he thought they could make the decision that one of them needed to go but that ultimate decision would have to be made by someone else. He said those were the kind of tough decisions that were dealt with in consolidation efforts.

Chief Krakeel said he could say what the real crux in this issue came down to. He said they went through this process with the City of Fayetteville in 1991. He said there was a consolidation effort that was undertaken between Fayette County and the City of Fayetteville for fire and EMS. He said the talks broke off when Fayetteville wanted to know how much the county was going to give them for their fire station, how much they would pay them for their apparatus. He said if that was done it was impossible to come up with a cost savings. He said they calculated if they had combined the departments the service being provided would have actually been cheaper to all the citizens. He said the issue was defeated because of personality issues. He said the critical issues in a consolidation effort have proven to be identity and control.

City Manager McMullen said when you talk about the consolidation it becomes more than a financial issue. He said Chief Krakeel was right on the money about that.

Chairman Dunn asked if the service could be provided cheaper what was the issue.

Chairman Dunn asked wasn't it right that the four people here tonight from Peachtree City did not want to have a study done. He said the five of us were saying we would like a study.

Commissioner Frady said he did not want a study if Peachtree City wasn't going to look at it or take it seriously.

Council Member Rutherford said they would like for the county to create the district and have it be that but the county did not want to create a district. She said the county wanted to buy some time, gather some information to determine what was most cost efficient in their eyes for all the citizens of the county. She said they had two very different opinions on what it was they wanted to accomplish tonight.

Commissioner Pfeifer said he wanted to make a motion to appoint a study committee to report back to this group.

Council Member Rutherford said this was a work shop for them.

Commissioner Wells said it was a special called meeting.

Council Boone said in the presentation one page mentioned options; retain status quo and reimburse PTC annually. He said he felt it was a good idea to reimburse PTC annually for the \$220,000.

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Chairman Dunn said it would not do anything for the tax payers if they wrote the council a check because the tax payers would not get the money. He said anything they did would have to benefit the tax payers and not the city government.

Chairman Dunn reaffirmed with the council that they did not want to have a study. Mayor Logsdon said they were not interested in another study.

Commissioner Pfeifer said there had never been a study so there could not be another study. Chairman Dunn said the only study that had been done so far was the one that was done for Peachtree City that indicated they ought to be looking into a lot of this.

Mayor Logsdon said in the study it was listed as one of the options to create a separate EMS tax district. Chairman Dunn said it was also listed as one of the options to consider consolidation.

The motion failed due to lack of seconding the motion.

Chief Krakeel asked City Manager McMullen if he had looked at the contract that was entered into in 1987. City Manager McMullen said he had not. He said the fundamental issue was Peachtree City believed it was being double taxed and the county believed Peachtree City was not being double taxed but that the burden of providing EMS service in Peachtree City was a Peachtree City decision. He read from the contract: "It is expressly agreed that as the city is establishing an independent emergency medical service, the county is under no obligation to replace, repair, or in any way provide, any other vehicles, equipment or other services except that is provided in this agreement. Further, in no event will the county be responsible for any of the equipment once said equipment and vehicles are transferred to the city and the city shall be charged with the maintenance of and any and all liability, insurance and/or maintenance for said vehicles and equipment so transferred."

Council Member Rutherford said what he is saying is that we chose responsibility so we had to pay for it. She said they had no argument that they chose to do what they did.

Mayor Logsdon said they chose to do that.

Council Member Rutherford said what they were saying now was they would like the board to choose to create a district, which meant that the citizens of Peachtree City would not be taxed for the service provided by Peachtree City. She said they did not tax them for the fire service and they did not think they should tax them for the EMS.

Chief Krakeel said he understood their position. He said his recommendation to the board was to obtain the status quo. He said the reason for that recommendation was because service was provided by the county from the very outset beginning in 1973. He said Peachtree City elected independently and on its own to establish this service.

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Mayor Logsdon asked if there was an objection from Fayette County when they did that. Chief Krakeel responded that there was not an objection.

Chief Krakeel said so Peachtree City made that decision (to establish this service). He said his recommendation to the board was that nothing had fundamentally changed since 1973 and 1987. He said since 1973 the citizens of Peachtree City had contributed to the provision of EMS services in the county.

Mayor Logsdon said in was not a big deal back then but now it was \$220,000. He said today it was a big deal.

Commissioner Frady said one thing that came along was House Bill 489.

Chairman Dunn said they were obviously at an impasse. Mayor Logsdon agreed that they were at an impasse and that was disappointing.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Dunn adjourned the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

Peggy Butler, Chief Deputy Clerk

Gregory M. Dunn, Chairman

The foregoing minutes were duly approved at an official meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Fayette County, Georgia, held on the 27th day of July 2006.

Peggy Butler, Chief Deputy Clerk