

Ambulance Board settles on liaison position

BY DEBORAH LUCAS ANGEL
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Grant County Special Ambulance Taxing District Board (Board) Chair Anthony Morgan called the April 8 meeting to order. The main item of business was settling on a liaison position.

Attorney Pete Whaley was available for phone call consultation. Secretary Ashley Brinker was unavailable; treasurer Brooke Rider Cummins joined late.

POSITION UPDATE

As with several past meetings, the “director” or “liaison” position was again an agenda item. Vice Chair David Curtis shared a job description he had developed for the liaison position the Board approved during the March meeting.

With the July 1, 2027, end date of the current inter-local agreement fast approaching, Curtis said the Board is “running out of time” to get organized and get things done.

He made clear that Dry Ridge Fire

Department (DRFD) has an Emergency Medical Service (EMS) operations director and that the proposed position would simply be a liaison between DRFD/EMS and the Board—specifically a “non-operational position.”

“[EMS Director] Kevin Stave is in charge [of operations] until July 1, 2027,” Curtis explained.

In his written description, Curtis said the liaison would serve as a “primary communication link between the Board and key Grant County stakeholders ... Liaison is responsible for facilitating clear, transparent, and professional communication between the Board and external partners while strengthening relationships throughout the county.”

The description stressed the position would be an advisory one of a communications nature between the Board to external entities.

“The Liaison may only represent positions or statements that have been authorized by the Board or the Board Chairman.”

Limitations included no type of

“operational management of ambulance or EMS services” including personnel, purchasing authority, policy/procedures nor EMS delivery.

The term of appointment is described as “at the will of the Board” and may be “reviewed periodically and may be modified or terminated by action of the Board.”

Provision is included for the Board to change the position into a permanent director position if deemed necessary in the future.

Upon information from Whaley, the Board agreed Curtis could remain a member of the Board while taking on the responsibilities of liaison.

OTHER ACTIONS

· Rider reported the only payment for the month would be to the City of Dry Ridge for the \$108,333.33. Because of confusion with the report from new accounting software, the official treasurer's report was tabled until the next regular meeting.

· City of Dry Ridge update concerning “Section 5.0 of Inter-

Local Agreement, general service update” for the last two months. Dry Ridge City Administrator Ken Little addressed the Board and gave them documentation of the past two months of activities, expenditures, runs and billing.

“Collection is leveling out at about a 90% ... a lot are written out and written off” from insurance, Medicare and Medicaid.

Year-to-date (YTD) there have been 730 EMS calls with 261 in March and 190 patients transported and 83 not transported.

Fuel costs YTD are \$28,777 and EMS maintenance costs in March was \$3,988 with \$82,500 for the Fiscal YTD. Mileage totaled 8,011.

· Possible live streaming: Board had discussed looking to live-streaming the meetings. Morgan said he contacted Judge/Executive Chuck Hills to see if they could “piggy back” onto the County's digital meeting processes.

While livestreaming seemed not to be encouraged, the Board could record meetings and then have them

“put up” the next day.

After some technical difficulties, District 2 Magistrate Shawna Coldiron and Finance Officer - Fiscal Court Clerk Jenna Johnson Alspig apparently had the system working.

· A decision by Attorney General (AG) on the director position was on the agenda, though it was somewhat unclear as to what the exact question was. It was assumed by the Board the “Attorney General response” section of the agenda referred to Whaley's requesting a determination from the AG as to whether Curtis could remain on the Board while acting as liaison.

Whaley had texted to Morgan “Dave is fine as far as new role is concerned.” Board assumed this means Curtis can remain on the Board and take the Liaison responsibilities.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 13 at 6:30 p.m. at the Courthouse, 101 North Main Street, Williamstown; second floor courtroom. For meeting information, contact Chair Tony Morgan at (859) 992-7081.

Crittenden awards salt contract, reviews city litigations

BY DEBORAH LUCAS ANGEL
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

With all members present, Mayor Jim Purcell called the March 10 meeting of the Crittenden City Council to order. On the agenda were reports and a request for purchase (RFP) review.

There will be a first reading of the 2026-2027 Budget at the next meeting.

City Clerk Shawn McHolland said the City's Certificate of Deposit matures soon. He said there have been no changes in the 3.55 rate. He said they will maintain the balance at Forcht Bank, as it is 0.4 % higher than money market funds.

According to Purcell, only one response for their RFP for snow and ice removal services was received. He noted the response was from the company that had had the contract in 2025-2026 and was “\$200 less per line item” than last year.

Councilmember Leo Saylor asked about possible a salt storage building.

Purcell said plans are not finalized, but the City is “working on pricing” for such a building.

City Clerk Shawn McHolland said this would be a hoop-type barn.

Purcell said cost for this would be included in the next budget.

McHolland said they used approximately 86 tons of salt during the winter and had to purchase three shipments in January and February. He said they had found an affordable source for the salt.

Councilmember Joe Dusing asked about “a general update on legal issues” facing the City perhaps during a meeting or even a special meeting.

Purcell instead gave “a quick rundown” since talking with City Attorney Brandon Voelker:

· Enforcement hearing on Thursday April 17 concerning a citizen contesting a parking citation

· Pending litigation: “Garrison” at the Lake. He said Voelker's firm is trying to “get the mortgagees to agree with the transfer” of property to the City. Purcell said the owner of the property thought it was already accomplished.

He said they are “probably going to have to do some code enforcement there in order to get it into a posture where the mortgagee, the banks will agree to do it.” He said he believes they do not see the urgency and that it may cost them money in the long run. He said it will not.

· Hannahs Way litigation regards concrete trucks causing damage. He said it will cost more in attorney fees than in repairs.

· Crittenden Court litigation, the City has filed foreclosure documents. Prucell said the “principals have done transfer among selves”—parent to child—however, he said this does not remove responsibility of principals to pay the City.

Prior to the business part of the meeting the annual Star Recognition Program by Crittenden Mt. Zion Elementary School was held. The program spotlights students whose teachers recognize them for outstanding, positive behavior.

The regular meeting of the Council will be held on Tuesday, May 12 at 6 p.m. at the City Building. For more information on the meetings or any City business, call (859) 428-2597.



Evgeniy Maloletka/AP Photo

Denys Vyshnevskiy, researcher at the Chernobyl Radiation and Ecological Biosphere Reserve, stands in front of a dead wild Przewalski horse in a forest inside the Chernobyl exclusion zone, Ukraine, Wednesday, April 8. Chernobyl is the Ukrainian name for the city.



Chernobyl Radiation and Ecological Biosphere Reserve via AP

In this undated photo taken by a camera trap and provided by the Chernobyl Radiation and Ecological Biosphere Reserve on Wednesday, April 15, a wild lynx walks in a forest inside the Chernobyl exclusion zone, Ukraine. Chernobyl is the Ukrainian name for the city.

Grant County officer graduates police academy

JUSTICE & PUBLIC SAFETY CABINET
DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE TRAINING

Sgt. Adam Prince of the Grant County Sheriff's Office is among 23 law enforcement officers from agencies across the commonwealth to graduate from the Academy of Police Supervision Class 105.

The Academy of Police Supervision, also called the sergeant's academy, is a three-week, 122-hour training program targeted for newly promoted sergeants or officers who are on their agency's promotion list to become sergeants. The academy was launched in 2003 as a leadership course aimed at developing and shaping current

and future leaders in law enforcement agencies across the commonwealth.

The program provides a deep dive into how to positively influence groups of people, as well as how to apply situational leadership, demonstrate an understanding of constitutional and administrative law, emotional and social intelligence, ethical decision-making, problem-solving, emotional survival and public speaking.

DOCJT is a state agency located on Eastern Kentucky University's campus. The agency is the first in the nation to be accredited under the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies' public safety training program designation.

CHERNOBYL

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has a free-ranging population is something of a small miracle,” said Denys Vyshnevskiy, the zone's lead nature scientist.

With human pressure gone, parts of the exclusion zone now resemble European landscapes from centuries past, he said, adding: “Nature recovers relatively quickly and effectively.”

The transformation is visible everywhere. Trees pierce abandoned buildings, roads dissolve into forest, and weathered Soviet-era signs stand beside leaning wooden crosses in overgrown cemeteries.

Hidden cameras show the horses adapting in unexpected ways. They seek shelter in crumbling barns and deserted homes, using them to escape harsh weather and insects — even bedding down inside.

The animals live in small social groups — typically one stallion with several mares and their young — alongside separate bands of younger males. Many died after their introduction, but others adapted.

Tracking them takes time. Vyshnevskiy often drives alone for hours, setting motion-sensitive camera traps in camouflaged casings attached to trees.

Despite persistent radiation, scientists have not recorded widespread die-offs, though subtler effects are evident. Some frogs have developed darker skin, and birds in higher-

radiation areas are more likely to develop cataracts.

However, new threats have emerged. Russia's 2022 invasion brought fighting through the exclusion zone as troops advanced toward Kyiv, digging defenses into contaminated soil. Fires linked to military activity swept through forests.

Harsh wartime winters have also taken a toll. Damage to the power grid left surrounding managed areas without resources, and scientists report increases in fallen trees and dead animals — casualties of both extreme conditions and hastily built fortifications.

“Most forest fires are caused by downed drones,” said Oleksandr Polischuk, who leads a firefighting unit in the zone. “Sometimes we have to travel dozens of kilometers to reach them.”

Fires can send radioactive particles back into the air.

Today, the zone is no longer just an accidental refuge for wildlife. It has become a heavily monitored military corridor, marked by concrete barriers, barbed wire and minefields — a landscape of what some describe as grim beauty.

Personnel rotate in and out to limit radiation exposure. Chernobyl is likely to remain off-limits for generations — too dangerous for people, yet full of life.

“For those of us in conservation and ecology, it's kind of a wonder,” Vyshnevskiy said. “This land was once heavily used — agriculture, cities, infrastructure. But nature has effectively performed a factory reset.”

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