

Vital Signs

MARCH 2023



We believe this is the most cost-effective solution to keep 911 ambulance services available to all citizens of Bates County.

Why?

- ▶ BCMH has the required infrastructure in place, including other departments who provide the support services an ambulance service requires, such as dispatch (utilizing emergency room staff), billing, recruitment/human resources, supplies, oversight and Medical Director services.
- ▶ Our Advanced Life Support Paramedics are also certified in Advanced Cardiac Life Support, Trauma Life Support and Pediatric Advanced Life Support, on call 24/7/365.
- ▶ Four ambulances cover a 900 square-mile area with approximately 16,000 residents.

Bates County Needs Ambulance Services



For 50 years, Bates County Memorial Hospital (BCMh) has provided emergency medical services for Bates County with no tax support. BCMH wants to continue providing this critical service, both now and for generations to come, but providing 911 ambulance services is extremely costly.

On April 4, 2023, Bates County voters will have the opportunity to support a countywide property tax of \$0.50 on one hundred dollars assessed valuation for the purpose of maintaining and operating the ambulance service. By Missouri state law, this can only be accomplished with a property tax (real estate and personal property).

Are there alternatives?

Yes; however, all other options would likely come at a greater cost to citizens with the potential risk for a significant break in ground 911 ambulance services.

The question on the ballot will look as follows:

County Hospital Tax

"Shall Bates County, Missouri impose a countywide property tax of one-half dollar per one hundred dollars assessed valuation for the purpose of maintenance, improvement, and operation of the hospital and for constructing and furnishing necessary additions thereto, including funding the hospital's ambulance service?"



Why Tax Now?

Bates County Memorial Hospital (BCMh) is not in financial danger. However, BCMh has had negative operating margins for 11 of the past 13 years, and that is in large part due to losses from the ambulance department. Since 1973, other departments at the hospital have helped absorb any operating losses from ambulance services, but looking down the road, we are seeing an alarming trend.

In the last five years, ambulance services lost nearly \$3 million.

- ▶ 2018-2021 – Losses averaged \$548,000/year
- ▶ 2022 – Loss of \$692,000
- ▶ 2023 – Projecting a loss of \$750,000
- ▶ By 2027, projected loss of \$1.2 million/year

How did it get to this point?

Recently, sharply rising costs and wage increases have only added to the decades-old issue of very low reimbursement rates (as low as \$0.20 on the dollar from Medicare and Medicaid).

What if this doesn't pass?

BCMh will not abruptly halt 911 ambulance services on April 5 if this does not pass, however, our leadership would eventually have to make the tough decision to leave it to our county and/or cities to form an ambulance district, a process that takes a tremendous amount of time, coordination, and quite a bit more money to build from the ground up.

We are committed to continuing to provide quality care to our community, and we want to be good stewards of what we have and what we offer. We believe this is the best solution to continue providing 911 ambulance services to our county.



Emergency Medical Services are vital to the health of the community, yet, in Missouri, 911 ambulance services are not considered "essential": there is no federal or state law saying a county or city is required to provide emergency medical services.

Ground 911 ambulance services are usually provided and funded by local governments. Of the 161 licensed hospitals in Missouri, BCMh is one of the rare non-critical access facilities to provide ground 911 ambulance services with no reported tax base, according to the Missouri Hospital Association.

Tax revenues will generate approximately \$1.2 million, according to the Bates County Assessor's office. By state law, the hospital could have asked for up to \$1.00, but we chose to ask for \$0.50 to meet what we expect the ambulance service's deficits will be in just a few short years.

VitalSigns is published by Bates County Memorial Hospital as a service to our community.

If you have any questions or concerns about specific content that may affect your health, please contact your health care provider. For permission to reproduce any portion of this newsletter, call 660-200-7313 or email info@bcmhospital.com. Copyright 2023 Bates County Memorial Hospital.

615 West Nursery | PO Box 370, Butler, MO 64730 | 660-200-7000

Greg Weaver, Chief Executive Officer

Editor: Andrea Jackson, Marketing/Public Relations Coordinator

Bates County Memorial Hospital complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. BCMh has arranged for language assistance services free of charge. Call 1-660-200-7090 (RTT: 660-464-0303).

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-660-200-7090 (RTT: 660-464-0303).

ACHTUNG: Wenn Sie Deutsch sprechen, stehen Ihnen kostenlos sprachliche Hilfsdienstleistungen zur Verfügung. Rufnummer: 1-660-200-7090 (RTT: 660-464-0303).

“

What the Experts are Saying...

What Is the Cost?

A property tax will impact all residents of Bates County who own **personal property** and **real estate**. Property taxes are placed on the **assessed value** of a property.

Assessed value is not the same as fair market value, or what it could sell for. To calculate how much this tax would impact your property taxes, look at your property tax statements and find the assessed value, divide that amount by 100, and multiply by 0.5.



Example: Residential Real Estate

A residential property with an appraised value of \$100,000 in Bates County has an assessed value of \$19,000.

A half-dollar property tax on one hundred dollars assessed valuation is \$95.00 per year (assessed valuation divided by 100, multiplied by 0.50), or about eight dollars a month.



Mo. Representative Dane Diehl (District 125)

Having discussions in Jefferson City with various organizations and legislator, it's clear ambulance services aren't profitable, but are a very crucial part of many of our rural communities and hospitals. We must find a way to keep these critical services available for our county.



James Miller, MD, Family Medicine

Without EMS services, simple things could become catastrophic, such as stroke—a common event for men and women every day. Time is of the essence. As an Emergency Room Physician and the ER Director, I've seen our paramedics at work over the years. I've seen instances when people would have bled out from traumatic injuries such as farming accidents. Without EMS services it would have been difficult at best to keep these people alive until we could get them to a trauma hospital.



Lori King, FNP, Family Medicine

Nobody knows when you're going to have an emergency, but when that happens, you want an ambulance and you want it fast. I was a nurse in the BCMH ER for about 18 years, and I have seen how that rapid response can truly make a difference. Once that emergency team arrives, it is incredible what they can do—their expertise and their interventions, their triage, the medications they can administer, where the patient needs to be taken—they play a pivotal role in all of that.



Doyle Witt, MD, Emergency Room Physician

Our ALS crews are an extension of the emergency department. When we have a call 30 minutes away, I can trust that those crews are going to be able to say, Doc, we have this, this is what we need to do, but they also have the judgment, the training and abilities to evaluate at the site and say this is what we're going to do and this is how we're going to help as fast and as well as we can.



Troy Trumbore, RN, Emergency Room Supervisor

We work hand in hand with EMS in the emergency department. Over the past 27 years I have worked with many different EMS staff members; they are always professional; they always have a high standard. I think sometimes it's easy to take for granted a service that's provided to you, but when you are in need of that service, the importance is great, and the EMS service here at BCMH does a good job with our community, our hospital, and with ancillary hospitals.



615 W. Nursery Street • Butler, MO 64730

www.bcmhospital.com

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 69
Kansas City, MO



What Is the Cost?

See page 3.

Paid for by: Bates County Memorial Hospital,
Greg Weaver, CEO, 615 W. Nursery, Butler, MO 64730

VitalSigns

How EMS Services Made All the Difference

Visit www.bcmhospital.com/patient-stories/ to read more.



27-year-old **Noah Weaver** writes and performs poetry, but last summer he nearly lost everything in a traumatic auto accident. BCMH Ambulance Services took part in Noah's rescue, and our paramedics couldn't believe his amazing recovery.



In 2020, **Gene Schroeder's** heart stopped twice, but thanks to the quick action of Advance Life Support Paramedics, Gene was already in the emergency room when it happened. Read Gene's amazing story of coming back from cardiac arrest.

**"This is why we're here, to save lives and get patients to the critical care they need.
I am proud of our team and the care they provide our community."**

— Russ Whisenand, Paramedic, BCMH Ambulance Supervisor

For more information, call **660-200-7046**, email info@bcmhospital.com or visit www.bcmhospital.com/tax/

Scan the code to learn more. ►

