

**JOINT CITY COUNCIL/BOARD OF SUPERVISORS PROCEEDINGS
MARCH 24, 2026**

Mayor Ladehoff called the joint meeting of the City Council and Marshall County Board of Supervisors to order at 5:30 pm, March 24, 2026, at the City Hall Council Chambers, 10 W State Street, and led the pledge of allegiance. Roll call: City Council-Present: Cahill, Fonseca, Mitchell, Nichols, Schneider, Thompson, Yopez-Gomez; Board of Supervisors-Present: Goodman, Heil, Hibbs. Mayor Ladehoff recognized the local government members in the audience.

Fire Chief Chris Cross recognized EMS Task Force members, including Mayor Ladehoff, City Administrator Carol Webb, Supervisor Carol Hibbs, Sheriff Joel Phillips, EMA Director Kim Elder, Chief Pfantz of the State Center Fire Department, and Chief Patterson of the Gilman Fire Department.

Chief Cross advised that a task force was formed in 2025 to study Emergency Medical Services (EMS) in Marshall County, as UnityPoint Health (UPH) is looking to discontinue emergency medical transport services. A consultant was engaged to conduct a comprehensive study, including projected revenues, costs, and system models. The final report was presented to both the City Council and Board of Supervisors and was accepted. The task force is now requesting direction on next steps.

Key findings from the study include that the current EMS model is not sustainable and that maintaining the status quo is not an option. It identified the critical issues of risk exposure with third-party providers, lack of local control/input, workforce shortages, declining volunteer recruitment, and financial challenges. UPH has provided EMS service since 1969, but faces ongoing business model and revenue challenges. UPH does not have the same billing capabilities as a government agency.

The task force recommends proceeding with establishing a joint City/County EMS system through a 28E agreement that would provide countywide emergency ambulance transport services. An EMS district would be created under Iowa Code Chapter 357F. A voter-approved levy would be pursued to fund the operations, along with a local option income surtax pursuant to Iowa Code Chapter 422. The levy allows up to \$0.75 per \$1,000 valuation. A third-party would conduct patient billing. The estimated annual revenues include the property tax levy: \$1.65M–\$1.7M, surtax: \$540,000–\$550,000, EMS billing revenue (60% collection rate): \$1.65M for a total projected revenue of \$3.8M to support operations, staffing, and capital expenses.

Marshall County would be the taxing authority and provide financial oversight. The City of Marshalltown would manage the operation, human resources, and personnel management. Proposed staffing is 28 employees and 4 ambulances, with 3 staged in Marshalltown and 1 in State Center. The system would include existing volunteer services. There would be a board that would provide oversight of the system.

EMS designation as an essential service requires voter approval. Both the City and County must support the formation of a joint system and levy. The ballot timing was discussed, and it was agreed

that the November general election was not enough time to complete public education, and a special election in March 2027 will be considered.

Public comment included concerns regarding tax impact, sustainability, and staffing levels. Questions about collaboration with UPH. The service coverage in rural areas and patient outcomes. Maintaining volunteer agency support and autonomy. The City Council and Board of Supervisors were encouraged to speak with the counties that have passed the levy but have not been able to implement the service.

There was a consensus between the City Council and Board of Supervisors that EMS should be considered an essential service and that we should continue refining the proposed model before proceeding, as this must be a sustainable operation. There was recognition that public education and engagement are necessary before taking this to an election. No formal motion was made. Each governing body will have discussions and potential action at its respective meetings. The meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm.

Sincerely, Marshall County



Janet Heil
Board of Supervisors, Chair

Attest:



Nan Benson, Auditor and Recorder