

HARBOR, Inc.
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HARBOR SPRINGS, MICHIGAN

NEWS RELEASE –RESULTS OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES-AMBULANCE SURVEY
March 24, 2014

The results of a recent survey by HARBOR, Inc. about emergency medical services in Emmet County indicate little public support at this time for an expanded role by the County in the delivery of ambulance service.

The existing .25 mill levy that provides more than \$600,000 to the County's current providers, Allied EMS and the Village of Mackinac City, will expire this August. The expiration of the existing millage may prompt the need for action by voters in August.

"We were thoughtful in the design and deployment of this survey to ensure that it would reflect community sentiment," said Rachel Smolinski, executive director of HARBOR Inc. "We have previously conducted surveys of public opinion regarding rural internet service and a proposal to help fund the pool at Harbor Springs High School. The EMS survey was conducted on-line, in person, with focus groups, and via random phone calls to registered voters over the past two weeks targeting residents of 24 Emmet County townships and cities."

The Emmet County Board of Commissioners has received a proposal from a County committee tasked to consider the future of EMS service in the County. The plan issued by the committee proposes an estimated annual cost of \$1,347,000 for county-owned or leased facilities, equipment, operational expenses and training for medical first responders. The proposal is pending before the Board of Commissioners.

Nineteen percent of respondents said they would vote in favor of a plan if voters were asked to approve an increase in the current millage rate to support EMS service in Emmet County. Thirty-one percent said they would vote no on a millage increase proposal. The remaining respondents said they either needed more information or were undecided.

In contrast, 63 percent of survey respondents said they would vote yes if the county board asked them to renew the existing .25 mill levy.

Seventy-one percent of respondents said that it was "very or somewhat important" that any new ambulance service funding plan include money to maintain, improve, or replace the current ambulance facility on Fairview Road in Harbor Springs that is owned by the City and used by Allied EMS. Voters surveyed in the City of Harbor Springs and West Traverse Township indicated support of almost 81 percent.

When asked, "How important to you is it that any proposal for an expanded county role in EMS service be clearly stated and agreed upon in advance by Allied EMS, Emmet County, McLaren Northern

Michigan, Harbor Springs and other affected parties?” , 83 percent of respondents said it was “very or somewhat important” .

When asked if Emmet County should seek additional assistance to analyze emergency medical service funding and operation before asking voters to decide on a millage, 57 percent of respondents said “yes.”

HARBOR Inc. is a citizen based, non-profit Michigan Corporation whose mission it is to pursue the community vision and to act as a resource for local units of government, property owner associations, residents and others when decisions are made that affect the greater community. It serves the residents and property owners of the City of Harbor Springs and the townships of Cross Village, Friendship, Little Traverse, Pleasantview, Readmond, and West Traverse. HARBOR, Inc. has the same boundaries as the Harbor Springs School District.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, contact Rachel Smolinski at 231-526-5060 or info@harborinc.org.