

## February 21, 2025 Minutes of Special County Commissioners' Meeting

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A special meeting of the Hanson County Board of Commissioners along with the Davison County Commissioners was called to order at 7:00 P.M. in the Muth Technical Room at Mitchell Technical College in Mitchell, S.D.

Board members present: Chairman Reider, Claggett, Nebelsick, and Kiner. Also present was Auditor Wingert. Absent was Commissioner Blaaid.

Each member present acknowledged business before the board and consented to the meeting.

This was the time, date, and place for the joint meeting of the boards of commissioners of Hanson County, S.D., and Davison County, S.D., and for the conduct of a public hearing to consider adopting a resolution to establish an ambulance district in Hanson and Davison Counties.

Amy Storm with the local ambulance gave a presentation on the proposed district. Amy noted that currently Mitchell Fire/EMS has 33 employees and gave an overview of what these employees do. Amy further noted that they are staffed with paramedics. Amy stated that 87.5% of calls that come in are for EMS services. Currently, the City of Mitchell plans on only servicing the City of Mitchell beginning in January 2026. The ambulance district proposal is seeking to add 6 additional staff members at approximately \$700,000 which includes the salary, benefits, and training of the staff members. There will be a board of approximately 7 members for the proposed ambulance district. The board would create the amount for the levy.

Chairman Schoenrock opened the public hearing, gave certain instructions, and called for public comment.

Input from an individual consisted of inquiring how many of the calls placed each year have to do with the interstate. Feedback from the Mitchell Ambulance staff indicated that approximately 19% of the calls in 2023 were on the interstate in Hanson County.

Chris Lingman inquired what would happen if there was no ambulance district, further asking if they would respond to 911 calls. Feedback from ambulance personnel indicated that beginning in January 2026, they would only be servicing Mitchell City Limits.

Davison County Sheriff Steve Harr noted to the audience that he is not a medical expert and reiterated that if he was on a call outside of city limits, he would have to call a coroner instead of the ambulance due to lack of service.

Brad Greenway noted that the jobs of volunteer Fire/EMS personnel is hard enough already and stated without the support of the proposed ambulance district that it will get harder, noting that it is a no-brainer to pass the proposal.

Bill Lament inquired about the possibility of including Parkston Ambulance and utilizing their hospital.

McCook County Commissioner asked that if the resolution passes, will Salem Ambulance never get called again? Feedback from personnel from the Mitchell Ambulance was “never say never”. Ideally, everyone still works together as needed to cover what needs to be.

Roger Muhlberg stated that currently McCook County is paying for Hanson County Ambulance services. He stated that it isn't fair to get double-taxed. Feedback was this would change if the new proposed ambulance district goes through.

Cathy Hofer noted that she liked the boundaries that are set for the proposed district. She further stated that she is worried about McCook County's private ambulance district and the fact that it is privately owned could potentially make a person question how long they would be around. She added that she believes that Mitchell's service will always be there.

Representative for Ethan City stated that there are a multitude of pros for and very few cons against the proposed district.

An unknown community member inquired about how many times the ambulance is short staffed now, and how many times there are calls back-to-back. Numbers were provided by the Mitchell Ambulance personnel.

Kane Max stated he has done 3-4 ride-alongs with the Mitchell Ambulance and each time, there has been additional staff called in to assist.

Jason Cook of Ethan Town Board asked how much it costs to stock an ambulance. Comments from Mitchell Ambulance were provided.

A current paramedic stated he couldn't imagine not being able to call 911 for something his family needs. He stated that in his eyes, there are two options if this resolution doesn't pass: either there is no ambulance or the county creates its own ambulance district, which would cost more than the \$700,000 they are currently asking for.

Michael Hanson stated this is common sense on what needs to happen. He further asked about Life Flight, to which it was stated that nothing would change.

Isiah, who is a volunteer fireman in Mount Vernon, stated that he can do CPR; otherwise, you don't want him to be making the medical calls, as those are for the professionals. Discussion was held on the legality of first responders transporting for medical needs.

Mac Daneil of Mitchell Ambulance stated that he would rather pay this tax than be forced to sit in the station and not answer a call. He further stated that during his time with the department, it has been a common occurrence to have multiple ambulances out at a time or one leaving right after another.

Mike Bishop questioned if 6 personnel is enough to make a difference with the deficit that Mitchell City is taking on, as well as to keep the ambulance staffed like needed. Mike also inquired if there was a way to get compensation for interstate calls. Feedback to this was this district proposal is a great start to fixing the problem.

Public input stopped at 8:15 P.M.

The two boards of commissioners met jointly to consider what had been presented. They also considered whether to adopt a resolution to call for an election of the residents of the proposed district to determine whether or not a district should be formed and other matters related thereto.

Moved by Nebelsick, seconded by Claggett to approve the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION NO. 022125-01**  
**A RESOLUTION FOR ESTABLISHING AN AMBULANCE DISTRICT WITHIN HANSON AND**  
**DAVISON COUNTIES**

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the Board of Commissioners of Davison County, South Dakota that the following Resolution be adopted:

1. BE IT RESOLVED that an ambulance district be formed pursuant to South Dakota law as follows:

A. Name: The “Davison-Hanson Ambulance District”

B. Area included: The area included in the district will be:

(1) All of Davison County except the area located within the municipal boundaries or city limits of Mitchell, South Dakota; and

(2) All of Hanson County except:

(A) the following property all located in Township One Hundred One North, Range Fifty-Eight West of the P.M., in Hanson County, South Dakota:

/1/ Section Thirty-one;

/2/ Section Thirty-two;

/3/ The South Half and the Northeast Quarter of Section Twenty-nine; and

/4/ The South Half of Section Thirty-three; and

(B) also in Hanson County, except the “East Half (E1/2), Section Thirty-Six (36), Township One Hundred One North (101N), Range Fifty-Nine West (59W) of the 5th P.M.”.

C. Boundaries: The boundaries of the district will be the boundaries of Hanson County and Davison County combined, less the areas described above.

D. The following plat maps are attached and incorporated herein by reference:

(1) Exhibit “A”: a combined Davison and Hanson County map, showing the excluded areas and including all of the rest of the counties.,

E. This district shall have seven (7) members on its Board of Directors. 3 per county, and one at large.

F. Monies to pay for the publication requirements of these proceedings called for by SDCL 34-11A-6 and SDCL 6-16-4 shall be allocated from county general fund.

Roll Call Vote was held; Kiner- Aye, Claggett-Aye, Nebelsick- Aye, Chairman Reider- aye. Motion carried 4-0. 1 Absent.

Attest:

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Chairman Reider

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Auditor Wingert

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. Motion by Nebelsick, seconded by Claggett.

Davison County Commissioners will meet again at 9:00 A.M. on 2/25/25 in the North Offices Building at 1420 North Main, Mitchell, S.D.

**ATTEST:**

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Kathy Wingert, Auditor

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Randy Reider, Chairperson