



Agenda Report

Citizen Recommendations

3/3/2025

C.3.

Subject:

John Dacko - CEER #2025020

Fiscal Impact:

N/A

Dept/Office:

N/A

Requested Action:

N/A

Summary Explanation and Background:

John Dacko submitted CEER #2025020. Recommendation is attached.

Clerk to the Board Instructions:

N/A

Horst, Rachel

From: CEER@brevardfl.gov
Sent: Saturday, January 11, 2025 1:29 PM
To: Horst, Rachel
Subject: A new CEER Recommendation has been submitted as ID #2025020

Recommendation # 2025020

Dear CEER Administrator,

Speak Up Brevard Recommendation ID #2025020 has been submitted. Please login to the CEER Application to start the recommendation evaluation workflow.

Contact Information:

Group/Organization

Name John E Dacko
Address 1558 Meadow Lark Dr, Titusville FL 32780
Phone (321) 258-7583
Email Srfderth@bellsouth.net
Alternate Email

Recommendation Information:

Recommendation ID 2025020
Recommendation Title Emeregency Services
Areas Affected All of Brevard County
Department Affected FIRE RESCUE DEPARTMENT
Current problem See attached Word Documentation for a full analysis
Recommendation See attached Word Documentation for a full analysis
Attachments Brevard EMS 1 Proposal.docx

Please do not reply to this e-mail, as it will go to an unmonitored mailbox.

Brevard EMS 1: A Countywide Proposal for Free ALS Transports

Brevard County has the opportunity to create a sustainable, equitable emergency medical transport system by funding it through a 1-cent or 0.5-cent sales tax. This tax would allow **all Advanced Life Support (ALS) 911 transports to be free of charge**, ensuring no one hesitates to call for help due to cost concerns. Basic Life Support (BLS) services could remain billable through Brevard County Emergency Services or be contracted out to a private entity for fee-based management.

A similar model has been in place in King County, Washington, for over 40 years through their Medic One program. This system has provided exceptional emergency care to residents while removing financial barriers to critical services. Brevard County could adopt this proven approach to meet the growing demands of its community.

Key Features of Brevard EMS 1

1. Sales Tax Funding:

- A countywide 1-cent or 0.5-cent sales tax would replace the current EMS funding mechanism in property taxes.
- This shift eliminates EMS-related property taxes for homeowners while ensuring sustainable funding for emergency medical services.
- Based on Brevard's population and economic activity, a 1-cent sales tax would generate more than enough revenue to fully fund the system and provide financial stability for the long term.

2. City-Based Ambulance Deployment:

- Each city would maintain and operate its own ambulance(s) using municipal employees, fully funded through the sales tax.
- This local model ensures faster response times and a tailored approach to the unique needs of each community.

3. Countywide Collaboration:

- Cities would become direct stakeholders, with representatives sitting on a countywide governing board to oversee EMS operations.
- This ensures transparency, accountability, and consistent service standards across all areas of Brevard County.

4. Year-Round Lifeguard Services:

- Any surplus revenue from the sales tax could fund year-round lifeguard services for the county's 72 miles of coastline.

- Each city would contribute its own lifeguard staff, while a countywide organization would oversee operations to ensure safety and efficiency.

The Benefits of Brevard EMS 1

- **Free ALS Transports:** No one should hesitate to call 911 during a medical emergency due to high transport costs.
- **BLS Transports** could be managed separately, either through billing by the county or contracting with private ambulance providers to ensure cost recovery without impacting ALS services.
- **Property Tax Relief:** EMS costs would no longer be funded through property taxes, reducing the financial burden on homeowners.
- **Improved Emergency Response:** Locally stationed ambulances ensure faster response times, better coverage, and efficient use of resources.
- **Unified Services:** The governing board ensures a coordinated, transparent system that works for all cities and unincorporated areas of Brevard County.
- **Enhanced Coastal Safety:** Year-round lifeguard services would improve safety for residents and tourists, protecting one of the county's most valuable resources—its beaches.

Why Now?

Brevard County's current EMS funding system relies on property taxes, which can create inequities and limit resources as the county grows. Transitioning to a sales tax-based model shifts the cost to a broader base, including visitors who use the county's services. This ensures that everyone contributes to maintaining a robust emergency medical system.

By adopting the Brevard EMS 1 model, the county can deliver high-quality emergency care, reduce financial stress on residents, and create a safer community for all.

Brevard EMS One FAQ

What is Brevard County EMS One?

Brevard County EMS One is a countywide emergency medical services (EMS) system that integrates **Brevard County Fire Rescue (BCFR)** and **city fire departments** into a seamless, high-performance EMS network. The goal is to improve response times, deliver better prehospital care, and ensure sustainable funding through a **1-cent sales tax**.

Why is this system needed?

Currently, EMS services are fragmented, resulting in inconsistent response times and care quality across Brevard County. A unified system ensures equal access to **advanced life support (ALS)** services, faster response times, and long-term funding for EMS personnel and equipment.

How will this system be funded?

The proposal includes a **1-cent countywide sales tax**, projected to generate **\$50-\$60 million annually**. These funds will cover:

- Paramedic salaries**
- Ambulance maintenance**
- Medical equipment**
- Training programs**
- Centralized supply and dispatch operations**

Will my taxes go up?

This initiative does not increase property taxes. The goal is to **shift the financial burden** away from property owners and place it on everyone who spends time in Brevard County. The **1-cent sales tax** applies to goods and services countywide, ensuring that both residents and visitors contribute to funding lifesaving EMS services.

How does the tiered EMS system work?

BLS (Basic Life Support): City fire departments' **EMTs** provide initial medical response and stabilization.

ALS (Advanced Life Support): **EMS One-integrated paramedics** respond to critical emergencies.

Centralized dispatch: Ensures the closest, most appropriate unit responds to each call.

Centralized supply: Standardizing equipment and supplies across the county promotes uniformity, reduces costs, and enhances crew efficiency.

Who will employ the paramedics?

Cities will have the option to hire paramedics for **Brevard EMS One units**, allowing cities to maintain control over personnel while ensuring standardized countywide protocols. **Salaries** will be funded through the sales tax.

How will this improve response times?

Currently, ALS resources are unevenly distributed across the county. By integrating EMS services into city fire stations and using **centralized dispatch, EMS One** ensures faster deployment of paramedics to critical emergencies, improving overall response times.

Will all paramedics be trained to the same standard?

Yes. All **ALS paramedics** will be required to complete a **standardized countywide training program** in partnership with a regional college and medical school, ensuring high-quality emergency care across all jurisdictions.

What happens if the sales tax doesn't pass?

Without dedicated funding, EMS services will continue to operate under fragmented budgets, leading to **slower response times, inconsistent medical care**, and potential **station closures** and or **ambulances being shut down** due to staffing shortfalls.