



## THE EXPRESS-TIMES

### Forks brings EMS to life again

**Back in business. Emergency squad has plan to keep running.**

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**By COURTNEY LOMAX**  
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FORKS TWP. | It took eight months to recover from mismanagement, but the township's emergency squad is back in service.

Supervisors voted 3-1 after nearly an hour of discussion Thursday to reinstate Forks EMS as the township's basic life support provider.

"I think it will be a shame not to give them a chance," Supervisor Bonnie Nicholas said.

Supervisor C. David Howell cast the only dissenting vote saying he wasn't convinced the squad will be able to sustain itself financially.

Supervisors Nicholas, John Ackerman and Don Miller voted in favor of the squad. And supervisors Chairman David Hoff abstained from the vote after a resident pointed out his son had previously worked for Suburban EMS. Hoff expressed concerns about the call volume in the township to necessitate a squad.

The move means the state will issue the squad a provisional basic life support license and the squad will likely reopen April 1, squad board President William Keifer Jr. said.

"We are going to be watched like hawks even by the (Eastern Pa.) EMS Council," Keifer said.

The squad suspended its operations in July after several months of mismanagement and has relied on Suburban EMS for services. Suburban EMS will continue to provide advance life support services to the township.

Former Forks EMS squad Director Cory Dailey waived her right to a preliminary hearing in January. She is charged with stealing more than \$21,000 from the squad over five months and using the squad's credit card to make personal purchases.

Forks residents want the squad back, Keifer said.

"I feel we have the support of the residents," Keifer said. "Otherwise (they) wouldn't be donating to us."

Close to \$16,000 in donations has been collected since the squad was forced to close its doors, Keifer said.

But Howell questioned how long the squad, which has been in the township since 1972, will be able to sustain itself.

The squad paid off most of its loans, but still has more than \$140,000 in debt. The squad has a line of credit for \$50,000 and close to \$40,000 in the bank from the subscription drive it ran with Suburban EMS, Keifer said. Monthly expenses are expected to be about \$54,000.

"It appears you are under-funded," Howell said.

Keifer and squads treasurer John Kuhn disagreed.

"We can make this work," Keifer said.

The squad agreed to submit monthly financial reports to the board of supervisors.

Hoff said he doesn't doubt the squad's ability to serve the township but isn't sure it will last.

"Forks Township does not have the call volume to cover the cost of a stand alone EMS service," Hoff said.

Relying solely on residents for funds is not Keifer's plan, he said. The squad plans to run subscription drives, fund raisers and apply for grants.

"I know we can do this," Keifer said.

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