

Fire Service Efficiency Project
Operations Team Meeting
Friday, January 19, 2007 11:30 a.m.
Contribution to Minutes by: Oscar Skavdahl, Brandee Moretta, and Nick Condon

Present: Mary Pissnar, Pierre David, Bernard Benedict, Anthony Sinagra, Oscar Skavdahl,
James Astorino, Brandee Moretta, Nick Condon

Anthony Sinagra: Proposal of **standardized protocols**

Team members agree and encourage 1) the completion of standardized protocols, 2) distribution to the medical directors in each city, 3) that training should not be specifically stated in the protocols. Instead, a broad scope of training styles within the fire district will be more appropriate.

Comments from several individuals concerning the **training of EMS** lead to the conclusion that

- The most educated personnel will be used to train under a standardized system
- Specific training can/will be delegated to each hospital to minimize any threats perceived to jobs (makes “losing” the opportunity to hold training at respective hospitals easier to bear)
- Parma and Southwest can each secure the rights to train in specific medical disciplines, however, the same discipline will not be taught at both hospitals to eliminate discrepancies in pedagogy.

Oscar Skavdahl:

- Consulting firms will give suggestions on how to best consolidate protocol
- We plan to compile other data to provide to the consulting firms
- The data consists of four good sets of run data for some of the cities, and past analysis reveals unpredictable patterns of needed attention from fire departments and EMS
- Currently, Pat Finneran has eight potential firms to decide between which were divided up to members to research more thoroughly
- The proposals made to each consulting company will vary
- **At the meeting held on 2/12/07 at Middleburg Heights Fire Dept. @9:00 a.m. we hope to....**
 - 1) Narrow the list of potential consulting firms down to 2 or 3
 - 2) Start discussing a rough-draft operations strategy

Pierre David: Is it more efficient to place fire fighter who must work **light duty** jobs on dispatch duty? Originally, it was considered to use “light duty” firefighters as opposed to using trained EMDs. **Idea rejected** on basis that dispatching requires significant technical training that light duty firefighters were not comfortable with.

Bernard Benedict: Expresses concern for this light duty work option. Some departments no longer use light duty personnel because workman’s compensations reassigns their talents to other municipal work if there is nothing to do at the fire department.

James Astorino: Mentions that a bigger district will open the door to more light duty work options. Makes group aware that the issue of light duty is currently being addressed by the workers union. They are trying to blend the contracts of the seven cities into one contract for the district. The process is time-consuming as there is high concern for firefighter working/living conditions

Pierre David: How can we **reallocate resources** to cut costs?

Bernard Benedict: Equipment allocation is generally fixed. Forming an efficient staffing distribution is an issue which has more potential to cut costs.

Oscar Skavdahl: Possible re-location of 5-10 fire stations will increase the quality of service in the fire

district and lower fire insurance premiums for home owners. (Insurance is based on rating of each fire department with 1 being the best; most cities were 3 or 4)

James Astorino: New location for fire departments may be found by studying similar projects.

Mary Pisnar: “The legal team is working on a **district contract** and a request for proposal (RFP) for a fire district is finished but not yet sent out. “

Benefits to a fire district include the ability to: issue bonds, tax, and negotiate labor disputes.

The committee wishes to consult with David Akers to help us identify **hidden costs** that are not/will not be financed. Eric Fingerhut will inquire about his availability to assist the committee.

State funds for the project have not been tapped. Mr. Fingerhut will focus on securing funds from the state within the coming weeks. The Cleveland Foundation may also be interested in helping fund the project.

Pierre David: How can we solve the **communication issue**?

Bernard Benedict: Within the next 2 years, there will be a unified county-wide radio system. “There will be a radio in all hands” Funding will come from Issue 18.

James Astorino: There will be a **SOP sub-committee meeting on February 8**

Oscar Skavdahl:

- Finance startup expenses include costs of: networking between stations (intra-network), a Communication/Dispatch Center, and Offices for Fire Prevention
- The bargaining leverage of the 7 departments consolidating into one district also represents possibilities for reducing costs (ex: when negotiating with insurance companies)

Mary Pisnar:

- In forming this district, there will be diligent effort toward cost-control (also not letting previous costs balloon out of control)
- “It is important to clearly articulate what decisions will be made, and at what time period these decisions will be reached”
- When considering renovations to older departments we must use forward-thinking in what will best serve the entire fire district
- Topics to be considered at upcoming meetings: evaluating inspections and other support services, overall staffing needs, analyzing work that may be needed on current fire departments

There will be a **strategy meeting** held in the **Baldwin-Wallace Colony Room at 11:30 am on 2/2/07**

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