

Notes from EMS Regionalization Exploratory Committee meeting April 4, 2007

Present: Freeholder Helene Reed
Chad Bruner – County Administrator
Charlene Vitale – EMS Career Chiefs
William Holmstrom – Ambulance & Rescue Assoc.
J. Thomas Butts - Emergency Response
Michelle Pandolfo – Special Projects
Gerald White – Boro/Township Administrator's
Thomas Fromm – Mayor's Assoc
Paul Lambrecht – EMS

Coordinator Position

- ✓ Helene Reed spoke of the applications for the EMS Coordinator position. Human Resources reviewed the applications and identified five candidates to be interviewed. The five candidates will be interviewed much like department heads are interviewed. All will be asked the same questions by an interview committee. The interview committee will be made up of two Freeholders, Administration, and several members of the EMS Committee. A second round of interviews will be conducted on the top one or two individuals selected by the interview committee. The Administrator's Office will set up the first round of interviews between the end of April and the beginning of May.

Civil Service and EMT Positions

- ✓ Gerry White discussed the question of whether an EMT county job would be subject to civil service application and competitive testing. Civil Service rules will apply to County EMTs and no trainee titled position is available through Civil Service. Michelle Pandolfo followed up with the Human Resources Director after the meeting and was advised that Civil Service will not identify the testing procedure ahead of time. The two possible testing scenarios are:
 1. Candidates report at a designated time and place to take a "pencil and paper" test (test questions related to EMT work);
 2. Or more likely (based on tradition), candidate's individual credentials (such as NJ EMT licensure) are reviewed and approved by civil service.

For those who wish to familiarize themselves with Civil Service procedures, the state website: www.state.nj.us/personnel/FAQS/job_seekers/job.htm is available.

Municipal Outreach and Council Presentations

- ✓ Tom Butts stated that the EMS presentations to the municipalities are progressing well. A new schedule is attached. Michelle Pandolfo advised that all of the towns have been contacted by letter and phone call, and over half of the towns have agreed to a date. Gerry White and Tom Butts participated in the presentation given in Westville. Quite a few other towns were present. Westville is in a unique position because they have two fire fighters who serve as both EMT and Fire Inspector, with revenue being produced from the EMT service. The dual role works well most but not all the time.
- ✓ Tom Butts met with Greenwich Township's Administrator, Horace Spoto. Mayor Shivery joined in the discussion. Greenwich is interested in learning more and is agreeable to Tom presenting at an upcoming Council meeting.

- ✓ Tom Fromm discussed the regional program already in existence for Swedesboro/Woolwich/Logan. Swedesboro's current system is working very well and has greatly improved services.
- ✓ Gerry White noted that spending caps are motivating a lot of towns to consider regionalization.
- ✓ Tom Fromm suggested that the committee develop a document that he and others could circulate among the various stakeholders. A list of questions was provided at the Westville meeting that will be used as a basis for a FAQ document. The FAQ will be developed and posted on the web site.
- ✓ Gerry White discussed developing a follow-up package by May to be provided to the towns that have been visited and/or have an interest in joining the county regional program. The follow-up package will include drafts of the following: (1) Resolution of Intent; (2) Inter-local Agreement; and (3) lease agreements for stations and vehicles.

State Partnering

- ✓ A meeting has been arranged with the State Health Department on April 18th to discuss the program. The State Representative is very receptive to assisting with compliance and licensing issues. Gerry White suggested that funding support be sought.

Logistics

- ✓ Paul Lambrecht will get specs on ambulances to the committee.
- ✓ Charlene Vitale provided a budget break down based on one station. The committee discussed the budget in detail.
- ✓ The group discussed the Medical Director job specifications. Although this responsibility is anticipated for later in the program, the committee discussed the time commitment and credentials needed for such a position. Michelle Pandolfo received an RFP used by Prince George's County. It was the general consensus that a Medical Director be from the *Emergency* Medical field and would be needed on a part-time basis.

Feedback and Questions

- ✓ Bill Holmstrom shared the concerns brought up at last Ambulance & Rescue Assoc. A recent article about the State Police Chief's report on police regionalization was brought up and some of the committee was familiar with this article and some were not. It was explained that the Courier Post ran an article on 3/28 which reported that the NJ State Assc. of Chiefs of Police "released a report about the complex factors local leaders should study before making any decisions' and that the Assc. "vowed not to advocate for or against police consolidation in specific communities."

Next Meetings: April 18th and May 8th (rescheduled from the 2nd) @ 6:00 pm, Freeholder Conference room.