

FIRE COMMITTEE MINUTES

February 12, 2004

The Fire Committee of the City of Mesa met in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on February 12, 2004 at 10:18 a.m.

COMMITTEE PRESENT	COUNCIL PRESENT	OFFICERS PRESENT
Claudia Walters, Chairman Dennis Kavanaugh Mike Whalen	None	Mike Hutchinson

1. Discuss and consider approving a proposed Emergency Transportation Services Contract with Southwest Ambulance.

City Manager Mike Hutchinson advised that the contract (a copy is available for review in the City Clerk's Office) was a complicated document, and he apologized for the late delivery of the information to the Committeemembers. He noted that due to the fact that the contract term commences on March 1, 2004, staff would like the Council to consider this item at the Regular Council Meeting on Tuesday, February 17, 2004, which is the last Regular Meeting prior to March 1st.

In response to questions from Committeemember Kavanaugh, Deputy Chief Kenny King provided the following information:

- The response time of 8 minutes, 59 seconds, was based on the national standard that the department has utilized for many years. Response times are also reviewed on a monthly basis at activity meetings.
- A \$20,000 cap was placed on pharmaceuticals, and Southwest Ambulance has agreed to provide a monthly reimbursement for the medications that are utilized.
- Replacement supplies of consumables will be delivered to the fire stations.
- If the Arizona Department of Health Services requires that more expensive medications be included in the drug box for use by paramedics, the dollar amount in the contract would have to be renegotiated.

Deputy City Attorney Joe Padilla confirmed that any amendment to the contract would require Council review and approval.

Committeemember Kavanaugh noted that the contract is the result of a long process, and he expressed support for moving the contract forward for Council consideration.

Mr. Padilla addressed questions from Chairman Walters regarding liability issues by stating that the litigation and risk management attorneys reviewed the contract and both determined that the City is sufficiently protected by the terms of the contract and by the City's insurance coverage. He noted that indemnities from Southwest Ambulance limit the City's liability for any negligence or omission in circumstances where City of Mesa and Southwest Ambulance personnel are jointly administering medical care.

Chairman Walters noted a spelling error in 4d of the contract where the word "forth" should be substituted for the word "fourth."

Committeemember Whalen expressed his appreciation to the Fire Department staff and to Southwest Ambulance for their cooperation in developing this contract. He noted that the contract appears to provide the best of both worlds, an efficient management approach for the City, and a program that is economically viable for Southwest.

In response to a question from Chairman Walters, Fire Chief Harry Beck stated that the Centralized Medical Control Program is not included in the subject contract. He explained that the program would be proposed as a new service agreement. Chief Beck added that the department has been working with local hospitals to formulate a model for Centralized Medical Control.

Chairman Walters expressed concern regarding Rural Metro's decision not to provide service to County islands in Chandler and questioned whether this issue was addressed in the contract.

Barry Landon, President of Southwest Ambulance, addressed the Committee and advised that Rural Metro has been meeting with the chiefs of Valley fire departments regarding the County island issues in Chandler, and a determination was made that service would be provided by the closest, most appropriate fire station. He stated that the situation in Mesa may be more difficult, but he emphasized that the problem will be resolved. Mr. Landon said that Mesa would probably participate in a revenue-sharing partnership.

Chief Beck clarified that the issue of County islands is related to fire service and that the contract before the Committee is in reference to emergency transportation.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that the purpose of three-year cycles for the contract is to be able to monitor the actual service levels and to adjust to changes in service demands; that an extended contract would not afford the City the opportunity to make changes as a routine matter; and that Southwest was agreeable to the terms and would be willing to negotiate changes during the three-year cycle of the contract.

It was moved by Committeemember Whalen, seconded by Committeemember Kavanaugh, to recommend to the full Council that the Emergency Transportation Services Contract with Southwest Ambulance be approved.

Carried unanimously.

Chief Beck expressed appreciation to Mr. Padilla for his efforts in regard to the contract, to Southwest Ambulance for their cooperation, and to staff members who were involved in this regard. He also expressed his appreciation to the Fire Committee and noted that the

agreement is a major milestone for the Fire Department. Chief Beck added that the agreement is unique and is currently being used as a model by other Valley cities.

Chairman Walters, on behalf of the Fire Committee, thanked Chief Beck and Mr. Padilla for their efforts.

2. Hear an update on the new Emergency Management Division.

Chief Beck advised that in the absence of Assistant Chief Cliff Puckett who was attending Department of Homeland Security meetings in Washington, D.C., Lieutenant Wade Pew would provide an update on the activities of the new Emergency Management Division.

Lieutenant Pew acknowledged that the Fire Committee was instrumental in the formation of the new Emergency Management Division and expressed appreciation for the Committee's support. He referred to the mission statement and organizational chart (see Attachment 1) and advised that July 1st was the target date to fill the positions of Fire Captain Medical Coordinator and Administrative Support Assistant. Lieutenant Pew noted that representatives from many City departments participate in monthly meetings of the City Emergency Management Committee to discuss security and emergency management issues.

Lieutenant Pew outlined the three key goals of the division and the activities that have been implemented in support of those goals:

1. Citizen Education
 - Citizen education classes beginning in February 2004.
 - Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training.
 - Family Preparedness Training as requested by citizens (Over 500 citizens received training in this area in 2003).
2. Employee Training
 - Educated 1,000 City employees regarding emergency preparedness and their role in a disaster.
 - Conducted a four-hour training session for Department, Division and RC (Responsibility Center) Managers.
 - Preparing for an EOC (Emergency Operations Center) exercise in April and coordinating with Williams Gateway Airport regarding a federally mandated exercise.
3. Regional Coordination
 - Developed a written document for the State Task Force Response Team to provide Metropolitan Medical Response Team (MMRS) support for an incident within the State of Arizona or the Valley including:
 - Command officers to support operations.
 - Bomb SWAT Team.
 - Heavy Rescue Units.
 - Participated in Bi-National Exercise.
 - Extended the MMRS contract and received an additional \$280,000 in grant funding by meeting the requirements of the Federal Health Services Program.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that grants from the Department of Homeland Security to the State of Arizona in 2003 totaled \$28 million, and the City of Mesa received a total of \$850,000 of those funds for homeland security and emergency operations; that as a consequence of being identified as one of the top 30 high-threat areas in the country, Maricopa County received over \$11 million in grant funding from the Urban Area Security Initiative in 2003 and will receive over \$12 million in 2004; that the City of Mesa's portion from the Urban Security Initiative grant will total \$2.2 million with half designated for the Fire Department's heavy rescue teams and half designated for development of Police Special Operations to support the heavy rescue teams; and that Arizona has been allocated \$41,488,000 in 2004 Homeland Security grant money of which \$9 million is designated for prevention and deterrence, \$654,000 to the Citizen Corps, and 80 percent of the remaining \$31 million will be passed on to local governments within the State.

Chairman Walters excused Committeemember Kavanaugh from the remainder of the meeting at 10:42 a.m.

Lieutenant Pew continued the presentation by outlining current activities of the Emergency Management Division:

- Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) Trailer: A 42 foot trailer was purchased and equipped for response to any significant incident involving chemical and biological weapons and weapons of mass destruction.
- Security at City Facilities: In cooperation with Municipal Security staff, assessments have been completed on the City's critical infrastructure locations, and security concerns will continue to be addressed as grant funding becomes available.
- Personal Protective Equipment: A large quantity of personal protective equipment will be stored in the MMRS trailer and other locations for use by Police, Fire and other City employees requiring protection in the event of an incident.
- East Valley Emergency Managers Forum: This group is chaired by Assistant Chief Puckett and meets quarterly to discuss emergency management and homeland security concerns.
- County Mitigation Plan: The Federal government mandates a countywide mitigation plan, and the City of Mesa has partnered with Maricopa County to develop the plan, which will be presented for Council review and approval within the next few months.
- Needs Assessment Completed: As part of the Homeland Security grant process, a threat and vulnerability assessment was completed on City facilities along with a plan to address the needs that were identified.
- Senior Officials Workshop: A workshop will be held on March 31, 2004 to educate elected and appointed City of Mesa officials on terrorism related issues.
- Law Enforcement Regional Coordination: The Division participates in a monthly meeting of an East Valley Law Enforcement Homeland Security group that includes the Maricopa County Sheriff's Department and the Department of Public Safety; Assistant Chief Puckett serves as president of the Arizona Emergency Services Association and he was appointed to the State Homeland Coordinating Council by Governor Janet Napolitano; and Lieutenant Pew and Deputy Chief Carbajal serve on a State advisory committee related to technical standards.

Further discussion ensued relative to the fact that Lieutenant Pew serves as the Police Department's liaison to the City's Municipal Security Department to insure coordination of security efforts; that the emergency broadcast system on Cox cable should be operational by

the end of February; that staff is also holding discussions with Cable America regarding the emergency broadcast system; that grant funding of the Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) is separate from funding of homeland security; that COPS (Community Oriented Policing Services) grant funding for additional police officers has decreased as funding for homeland security has increased; and that the region and the City have been very conscious of maintaining an equal balance of grant fund dollars between the Police and Fire Departments.

In response to a question from Committeemember Whalen, Chief Beck confirmed that an accounting system is in place to collect data on the increased cost to the community relative to an elevated alert.

Lieutenant Pew addressed Committeemember Whalen's concern regarding the regional approach to the alert system and advised that the Division maintains communication with the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) and other agencies to determine if an elevated alert affects the Western States, the State of Arizona or the Valley in order to respond accordingly. He noted that all communities are in agreement that an elevated alert for an incident that may occur internationally was cost prohibitive for local communities.

Chief Beck explained that a regional framework has evolved wherein Mesa coordinates for the East Valley, Phoenix for the central area of the Valley and Glendale for the West Valley. He noted that emergency response vehicles, often referred to as "heavy rescue" vehicles, are another component of the regional approach. Chief Beck advised that the units provide Mesa, Phoenix and Glendale with the capability to respond to a regional or statewide incident in addition to regular deployment on a daily basis at the local level. Chief Beck stated that the concept was the result of many discussions with State and local officials and is now being studied nationally as a model for other jurisdictions. He reported that grant funding will be utilized to purchase equipment and apparatus, and as the concept continues to develop, additional grant funding may be pursued for staffing.

Additional discussion ensued relative to the fact that implementation of the 800 megahertz (Mhz) system will enable local jurisdictions to communicate during an emergency; that the City of Mesa and the Town of Gilbert Police Departments are presently using the 800 Mhz system; that the City of Mesa Fire Department is scheduled to implement the system during the last quarter of the year; that discussions are ongoing regarding implementation in Phoenix and the West Valley; that the City of Mesa and the region are at the forefront in this area when compared to the rest of the country; that the recent Presidential visit identified the need to equip college campuses and the airports with the 800 Mhz system; and that in order to bridge the inoperability concern, Mesa plans to stock an additional supply of 800 Mhz radios in units responding to an emergency.

Chief Beck advised that the State advisory committee regarding technical standards, on which Lieutenant Pew and Deputy Chief Carbajal serve, is reviewing the method used by the State to allocate their 20 percent of the Urban Area Security Initiative grant, which is Maricopa County specific, to ensure that the State's expenditure of these funds supports the strategy that was developed for the County.

In response to a question from Chairman Walters, Lieutenant Pew stated that staff is investigating alternatives that would enable pharmaceutical supplies to be rotated out prior to the expiration date in order to avoid replacement costs.

Chairman Walters noted that the State of Tennessee has a system in place that enables the rotation of pharmaceuticals prior to the expiration date, and the system could provide a model for this type of program in Mesa.

Further discussion ensued relative to the fact the issue of hospital coordination has been addressed from a State level down to the regional level within the County; that hospitals have received grant funding to facilitate training and to purchase decontamination equipment; that plans are in place with all of the local hospitals regarding the types of support to be provided by the City, particularly Public Safety, and the support to be provided by the hospitals; that dialogue with local hospitals will continue in the future; and that education is a key factor to maintaining public awareness and vigilance regarding terrorism.

In response to Committeemember Whalen's comments regarding recruiting and succession plans for Fire Department employees, Chief Beck stated that a key part of the development process is to provide staff members the opportunity to make presentations, such as the one at this meeting, rather than having the presentations made by senior employees. He also noted that a number of employees are present in the audience as observers in an effort to provide them with exposure to the administration aspect of the Fire Department, and he asked that they introduce themselves by stating their name and their assignment in the department.

Chairman Walters stated that following September 11, individual and family preparedness were topics of concern, and she noted the importance of education in the area of neighborhood preparedness as a critical level between individual and City preparedness.

Lieutenant Pew explained that the division was named "Emergency Management" rather than "Homeland Security" in order to reflect their intention to respond to hazards and large-scale disasters in addition to terrorist events.

In response to Committeemember Whalen's concern regarding the issue of intelligence, Lieutenant Pew advised that the State is creating an anti-terrorism information center, which is scheduled to be operational later this year. He stated that the FBI and other agencies would be housed in the facility with a system in place to facilitate the sharing of appropriate intelligence information required by the first responders of local police and fire departments.

Chairman Walters thanked staff for the presentation.

Chief Beck expressed appreciation for Committeemember Whalen's involvement in these issues through the National League of Cities and Towns.

3. Hear an update on the pending purchase of a new Fire Records Management System.

Chief Beck stated that Deputy Chief Rich Upham and Assistant Fire Chief Bob DeLeon were present to provide an update on the Fire Records Management System.

Deputy Chief Upham advised that the department initiated a project with the Information Systems Division (ISD) to replace the existing records management system, a mainframe based system designed in the early 1980s that is extremely difficult to use. He explained that a new system would simplify data entry and enable the department to generate statistical reports. Deputy Chief Upham stated that responses to a Request for Proposals (RFP) were narrowed to

two vendors following an extensive evaluation. He added that negotiations are now in the final stages, and staff expects to present a recommendation to the Council in May.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that the estimated cost of \$300,000 for the new records management system will be paid by utilizing Quality of Life funds.

Chairman Walters thanked staff for the update.

4. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Fire Committee Meeting adjourned at 11:13 a.m.

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Fire Committee Meeting of the City of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 12th day of February 2004. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

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Attachment