
CITY OF ROCHESTER HILLS



Susan Galeckza, City Council Liaison
248.841.2463

DATE: January 16, 2004

TO: Public Safety Committee (PSC)

RE: Informational Request

Per your request by resolution from PSC minutes dated January 12, 2004, the following are attached:

1. The Information Request from Gerry Robbins dated September 11, 2003 regarding Fire Response Time from Greg Walterhouse, Fire Chief; and
2. The Fire Department Five-Year Improvement Plan

If you need additional information, please feel free to call me.

DATE: September 11, 2003

Fire Department

TO: Susan Galeckzka

RE: Information Request from Gerry Robbins

Gregory L. Walterhouse, Fire Chief

The information provided below is in response to a request from City Council Member Gerry Robbins regarding Fire Department operation from June 1, 2003 through August 31, 2003. For easier reading, the questions are listed with an answer following.

1. How many times was the Fire Department on the scene in less than 4 minutes?

ANSWER: Please see Exhibit A attached.

2. How many times did Fire Department response exceed 4 minutes?

ANSWER: Please see Exhibit A attached.

3. How many times did Fire Department response time exceed 6 minutes? Ambulance response times only. Applies for BLS and ALS.

ANSWER: Please see Exhibit B attached.

1. How many times did it take longer than 4 minutes for an ambulance to arrive scene?

ANSWER: Please see Exhibit B attached.

2. How many times did an ambulance arrive on scene between 4-6 minutes?

ANSWER: Please see Exhibit B attached.

3. How many times did it take longer than 6 minutes for an ambulance to arrive on scene?

ANSWER: Please see Exhibit B attached.

4. How many times was an ambulance pulled with only one POC?

ANSWER:

0500-1700

1700-0500

UNIT	TOTAL RESPONSES	RESPONSES WITH ONE	%	TOTAL RESPONSES	RESPONSES WITH ONE	%
22	85	28	33%	86	2*	2%
23	76	40	53%	46	5	11%
24	120	46	38%	66	2	3%
25	115	62	54%	88	18	20%

* Station Two started two-man response teams August 1, the remaining stations started September 1.

City Council and Bev Jasinski 10-3-03 me

5. *How many times did we get no response when a POC station was toned for a medical run? (Station had to be toned out a second time)*

ANSWER: None.

6. *How many times did we have to tone a different station to respond to a medical run because of no response from the first station?*

ANSWER: Two.

1. *A list of items from the 5-year fire plan that have NOT been implemented to date?*

ANSWER: None.

2. *A list of any modifications made to the 5-year plan.*

ANSWER: Please refer to Exhibit C attached.

IV An additional rescue/pumper was not purchased, as the need was not warranted.

XV Station One Paid-On-Call Firefighters were not reassigned and we continue to have Paid-On-Call Firefighters assigned to Station One.

XVI Because Paid-On-Call Firefighters continue to be assigned to Station One, redistricting was not necessary.

XVII In addition to the two ALS Engines, we also have an ALS Squad (Suburban) that responds when we are at full staff, which reduces wear on the Engines.

Incident Response Time Analysis

Alarm Date Between {06/01/03} And {08/31/03} and
Incident Type Between "300 " And "381 " and
Alarm Type = "1 "

Response		Count	Percentage
Hrs	Mins		
00		8	1.4%
01		19	3.3%
02		69	12.1%
03		80	14.0%
04		96	16.8%
05		134	23.5%
06		89	15.6%
07		38	6.6%
08		26	4.5%
09		7	1.2%
10		2	0.3%
12		1	0.1%
		<u>569</u>	

Overall Average Response Time: 00:04:29

Rochester Hills Fire Department

Rochester Hills Unit Response Time Analysis

Alarm Date Between {06/01/03} And {08/31/03} and
 Unit Resource Type = "75 " and Response Code =
 "1 "

Response		Count	Percentage
Hrs	Mins		
	01	2	0.4%
	02	7	1.6%
	03	17	3.9%
	04	24	5.6%
	05	42	9.8%
	06	54	12.6%
	07	40	9.3%
	08	48	11.2%
	09	47	10.9%
	10	46	10.7%
	11	31	7.2%
	12	28	6.5%
	13	17	3.9%
	14	12	2.8%
	15	4	0.9%
	16	3	0.7%
	17	2	0.4%
	18	2	0.4%
	20	2	0.4%

Overall Average Response Time: 00:08:15

Outline of Service Delivery Improvements

- I Replace career fire fighters in dispatch with civilian dispatchers. (2000)
- II Expand coverage of career fire fighters to 7 days, 12 hours per day. (2000)
- III Train two career fire fighters to BEMT. (2000)
- IV Purchase 1 additional rescue/pumper on current bid. (2000)
- V Establish two career crew leader positions. (2000)
- VI Recruit paid-on-call BEMT's and establish POC EMS division. (2000)
- VII Train existing POC fire fighters to BEMT on voluntary basis. (2000-2001)
- VIII Establish two person POC medical response teams. (2000)
- IX Hire 12-16 fully trained career firefighter/paramedics. (2000-2003)
- X Train six career fire fighters to AEMT. (2000-2002)
- XI Replace existing rescues with ambulances. (2000-2002)
- XII Establish source of medical supplies and medical oxygen. (2001)
- XIII Upgrade to basic transport. (2002)
- XIV Provide 7 day, 24 hour career firefighter coverage. (2002)
- XV Reassign station 1 POC's. (2002)
- XVI Re-district station coverage. (2002)
- XVII Purchase required ALS equipment for two ALS engines. (2002)
- XVIII Establish EMS transport billing procedure and projected revenues. (2002)
- XIX Provide ALS service from paramedic engines and BLS/ALS transport. (2003)
- XX Other

City Council Work Session Discussion Information

Agenda No: Status Report regarding Fire Department's Five-Year Plan (A0451)
Date: November 12, 2002
Prepared by: Susan Koliba-Galeczka, City Council Liaison, ext. 2463
Department: Clerk's Office
City File No: None

Work Session Date: November 20, 2002

PURPOSE:

Attached you will find the Final Report of the Fire Department's Five-Year Plan, submitted by Fire Chief Walterhouse. Chief Walterhouse will be presenting the update at the November 20, 2002 Work Session.

ATTACHMENTS:

Fire Department Five-Year Plan Final Report

RETURN TO AGENDA

Fire Department Five Year Plan Final Report

- I **Replace career fire fighters in dispatch with civilian dispatchers.**
This transition was complete as of March 2001.

- II **Expand coverage of career fire fighters to 7 days, 12 hours per day.**
Coverage of the city by full-time fire fighters providing Fire, EMS, and Technical Rescue service was expanded from five 10-hour days to seven 12-hour days on September 11, 2000.

- III **Train two career fire fighters to BEMT.**
All full-time fire fighters and all sworn full-time administrative and support staff were trained to the Basic Emergency Medical Technician-Defibrillator (BEMT-D) level as of September, 2000.

- IV **Purchase 1 additional rescue/pumper on current bid.**
The purchase of a third rescue/pumper was an initiative of the previous fire department administration. The current fire department administration has determined there is no need or justification for the purchase of a third rescue/pumper; accordingly no purchase will be made.

- V **Establish two career crew leader positions.**
Three full-time Captain positions were established, one for each of the three full-time fire fighter platoons. Job descriptions were developed and the positions were filled by competitive testing of the eligible candidates in July 2000. The Captains are responsible for their respective shifts, and are in charge of the fire department in the absence of a senior command officer.

- VI **Recruit paid-on-call BEMT's and establish POC EMS division.**
As of January 2002 the Paid-On-Call Division was divided into separate subdivisions of EMS and Fire. This allows POC fire fighters to participate in Fire only, EMS only, or both. This has allowed us to re-hire some POC fire fighters who previously resigned because they did not desire to respond to EMS calls. We have been actively recruiting POC fire fighters and have hired 27 this year, and have 12 applicants for our January 2003 hiring process. We currently have 66 members assigned to the POC Division.

- VII **Train existing POC fire fighters to BEMT on voluntary basis.**
Training of POC fire fighters to the Basic Emergency Medical Technician Level was completed in August 2001. There are nine POC fire fighters that elected to not be trained as EMT's and are assigned to the Fire Division. All new POC's assigned to the EMS Division are trained as BEMT's.

VIII Establish two person POC medical response teams.

This was also an initiative of the previous fire department administration that was never discussed with the Paid-on-Call Division. After being appointed Chief I met with the POC fire fighters and they very clearly indicated that they were not interested in any form of “team responses” or stand-bys. They requested to continue to be dispatched as a station on all calls as they have been in the past. This request was granted and responses from the paid-on-call fire fighters have generally been acceptable. We have recently made some minor refinements relative to the response of our day shift POC fire fighters. The day paid-on-call fire fighters had input into these refinements, which appear to be achieving the desired results. We will continue to make minor modifications to POC response guidelines as changing conditions dictate.

IX Hire 12-16 fully trained career firefighter/paramedics.

The last full-time fire fighters were hired in April 2002. A total of ten full-time fire fighters were hired bringing our total number of full-time fire fighters to 18. We were able to hire slightly less than the range presented in the Fire Year Plan due to the utilization of 24-hour shifts as opposed to 12-hour shifts. 24-hour shifts utilize 3 Platoons where as 12-hour shifts utilize 4 Platoons or 25% more manpower for the same on-duty coverage. 24-hour shifts were implemented at the request and subsequent negotiation with the fire fighters union.

X Train six career fire fighters to AEMT.

All full-time fire fighters have been trained to the Paramedic/ACLS level. All full-time fire fighters, with the exception of two, have received state licensure as Paramedics. The remaining two fire fighters were the last to receive Paramedic training and have successfully passed their practical testing. They are scheduled to take the written licensing examination later this month.

XI Replace existing rescues with ambulances.

The Fire Department received delivery of 4 Type III Ambulances in September 2001. A fifth ambulance was cancelled due to production problems. The ambulances were purchased for \$71,767 each, through the competitive bid process. The ambulances replaced four rescue vehicles purchased for \$80,000 each in 1995. There have been Rescue vehicles in the fire departments fleet for the past 25 years. The fire department is currently considering the purchase of the fifth ambulance in 2003-2004.

XII Establish source of medical supplies and medical oxygen.

The Fire Department continues to obtain medical oxygen from Wilson Welding & Medical Gases, Inc. as we have done for a number of years. We recently surveyed other suppliers and Wilson remains the best value. Medical supplies are being purchased from Emergency Medical Products through the Oakland County Purchasing Cooperative where by all Oakland County Fire Departments can participate. Due to the overall volume, quantity discounts are extended to each participating department.

XIII Upgrade to basic transport.

The Fire Department received a Basic Transport license from the State of Michigan in April 2002. We commenced with gradually performing BLS ambulance transports after receipt of our license.

XIV Provide 7-day, 24-hour career firefighter coverage.

During June 2001, the Fire Department started providing 7-day, 24-hour service with full-time fire fighters. This was provided with 12-hour shifts, with 4 fire fighters from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and two fire fighters from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. On April 8, 2002, 24-hour shifting started providing six full-time fire fighters on duty 24 hours daily.

XV Reassign station 1 POC's.

Station 1 remains staffed with POC fire fighters at their request. Station 1 POC's consistently respond in a timely manner and respond to EMS calls with an ambulance, and staff the departments 102' Aerial for all fires and mutual aid requests. No changes are anticipated in Station 1 POC staffing at this time.

XVI Re-district station coverage.

Re-districting is not necessary due to continued staffing of Station 1 with POC staff.

XVII Purchase required ALS equipment for two ALS engines.

All required ALS equipment was purchased and both full-time Engines were equipped for ALS service. Both vehicles passed inspection by the State of Michigan.

XVIII Establish EMS transport billing procedure and projected revenues.

We have selected a third party provider of this service through the RFP process. The proposed service contract, EMS service fees, and projected revenues will be presented to council in the near future.

XIX Provide ALS service from paramedic engines and BLS/ALS transport.

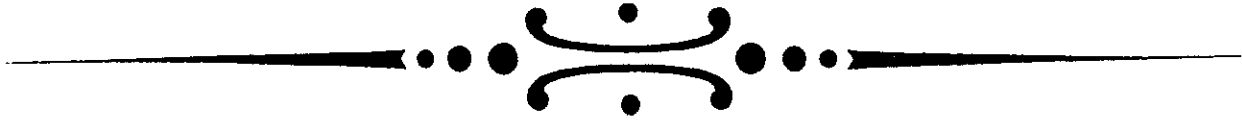
On October 25, 2002 the Fire Department commenced with providing ALS service upon receipt of our ALS non-transport license from the State of Michigan. We continue to hold a BLS transport license for our 4 ambulances.

XX Other

None

Date Prepared: November 11, 2002

Prepared By: Fire Chief Gregory Walterhouse



Rochester Hills Fire Department

Proposed
Five-Year Plan



Rochester Hills Fire Department Improvement Plan

Based on separate requests from Mayor Somerville and the Public Safety Committee, the administration of the fire department has developed a proposed improvement plan for the Rochester Hills Fire Department. The plan utilizes both the career and paid-on-call (POC) divisions of the department. The plan also provides for an increased level of fire based service to the citizens we serve. The expanded fire based service will increase administrative control of service delivery and provide for increased consistency of service delivery.

We propose to provide Advanced Life Support (ALS) service from ALS engines staffed by career fire fighters. Career staffed ALS engines will provide quicker response times that on-duty personnel can provide, and immediate ALS interventions for patients. It will also provide us with consistent manpower on a 24 hour basis available to respond to fires and other emergencies, as well as medical emergencies.

The ALS engine is a trend in the fire service due to the smaller start up costs and the long-term cost efficiency. A number of fire departments currently provide successful ALS service from ALS engines, those include: Bloomfield Township (Mich.), Phoenix (Ariz.), Fremont (Calif.), Anaheim (Calif.), and Fayette County (Ga.). Phoenix has been successfully operating ALS engines for 20 years.

We also propose modeling our EMS system after another successful aspect of the Phoenix system. Phoenix provides patient transportation through a separate division of the fire department. We propose providing patient transportation through a paid-on-call EMS division of our department. There would be virtually no increased costs to provide this service, and we could recover some of our overall costs by billing for EMS transportation which we currently cannot do.

A proposed outline of improved service delivery and a projected time line will be presented next, followed by sections describing general details of each improvement in service delivery. The numbers in parenthesis next to the report section headings refer to the outline numbers.

The purpose of this report is to provide a proposed plan outline with general details. If the fire department is granted authority to proceed with all or portions of the plan, then the fire department administration will develop detailed implementation plans for internal use.

Outline of Service Delivery Improvements

- I Replace career fire fighters in dispatch with civilian dispatchers. (2000)
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- IV Purchase 1 additional rescue/pumper on current bid. (2000)
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Expand Career Fire Fighter Coverage (I & II)

The Rochester Hills Fire Department Communication Center is staffed by four career fire fighters and four civilian dispatchers. Career fire fighter EMS/suppression coverage can be expanded to seven days a week, twelve hours a day by replacing the four career fire fighters in dispatch with civilian dispatchers. Funds are provided in the 2000 budget to hire five civilian dispatchers. The expanded career EMS/suppression coverage provided by the four additional career fire fighters would be at no additional cost over what is currently budgeted. It is projected that it would take approximately six months to hire and train civilian dispatchers, and could be completed in 2000. The benefit received is reduced response times and uniform staffing. Approval has already been received for this upgrade of service, and is currently in process.

Basic Emergency Medical Technician (III)

The career fire fighter division of the fire department is currently staffed by eight fire fighters. Two of the career fire fighters are licensed Advanced Emergency Medical Technicians (AEMT), four are licensed Basic Emergency Medical Technicians (BEMT), and two are Medical First Responders (MFR). To increase our service level to any level above Medical First Responder the first step is to increase the licensure level of the two MFR's to BEMT.

This is currently in process as we have enrolled the two career MFR's into a Rochester Hills Fire Department sponsored Basic Emergency Medical Technician program. The program starts February 22, 2000 and will be completed in June 2000. The cost of this training will be minimal, and has been provided for in the 2000 budget.

Licensure of all career fire fighters at the BEMT level is the first step to increasing the Fire Departments service level to Basic non-transport. However, to achieve this we would need career fire fighters available on a seven day, twenty-four hour basis, or provide Paid-on-Call medical response teams staffed by BEMT's.

Additional Rescue/Pumper Purchase (IV)

The fire department has two rescue/engines being built at this time. One will replace Engine 6, the career engine, and the other will replace Engine 2, a POC engine. An additional rescue/pumper would allow both career crews to operate from rescue/engines giving them greater flexibility to handle any type of call. Currently one crew operates from an engine and the other crew from a rescue.

The rescue/engines are designed such that they could be used as paramedic engines in the future. An additional rescue/engine could be added to the current bid under which our two rescue/engines are now being built. This would provide a cost savings over re-bidding for a rescue/pumper in 2001. There are sufficient funds budgeted in the 2000 budget to support the purchase of an additional rescue/engine in 2000, at an estimated cost of \$210,000.

Establish Crew Leader Positions (V)

With the proposed expansion of career fire fighter coverage it is desirable that a first line supervisor be provided for each platoon. Initially, two supervisors would be needed with an additional two supervisors needed at a time when 24 hour coverage would be provided. This is a negotiable item with IAFF 3427, however we would recommend the supervisors have the title of Captain, and be paid a premium of \$1,500 over Firefighters pay. This is commensurate with the \$1,500 premium paid to the Fire Inspector/Lieutenant over Fire Inspector pay in the current collective bargaining agreement.

These officers would supervise on-duty crews, and could be trained as limited fire inspectors which would allow use to provide in-service engine company inspections to assist the Fire Prevention Division. The first two supervisors could be promoted in 2000, and sufficient funds exist in the 2000 budget to pay the recommended premium.

Establish POC Basic Emergency Medical Technician Division (VI)

It is recommended that we reorganize the POC's into two divisions, EMS and Fire. The current thought is that there are individuals in the community that would like to do either EMS or Fire, and not the other. This would allow such a person the opportunity to offer his/her services to the Department. Individuals could belong to either or both divisions. This change is crucial to the overall direction that the Department wishes to pursue. It is further recommended that we institute this change early in the program. This will allow us to validate our assumptions and make necessary adjustments as recognized.

Offer BEMT Training For POC Firefighters (VII)

The POC EMS division would have to be upgraded to Basic level. Currently, this group consists of four (4) Paramedics, twenty-one (21) Basic EMT's, and forty-four (44) Medical First Responders. Any new employee's hired into the EMS Division would have to be trained to Basic EMT.

Establish Two Person Medical Response Teams (VIII)

Part of the overall change would be to structure the POC EMS Division into a system utilizing Standby (Medical Teams). Utilizing the POC's to respond the ambulance, it is mandatory that we have a guaranteed response. A Standby Team would consist of two people that are available to respond to a call within five (5) minutes. They are not required to be at the station, but within their response district. Limiting the number of people responding to a medical incident will aid in the burnout problem and reduce the number of vehicles responding "Code 3".

Hire Additional Career Fire Fighters (IX)

To provide any form of 24 hour coverage an additional 12 to 16 career fire fighters are required. To provide 24 hour coverage on a two 12 hour shift system will require four platoons. To provide five fire fighters on each platoon would require a total of twenty (20) fire fighters. Coverage with 6 fire fighters per platoon, or 24 total fire fighters, would provide more flexibility and fewer scheduling problems for time off.

New fire fighters would be required to be Fire Fighter I/II, Operations, and ICS certified, and licensed as Paramedics. To hire 12-16 fire fighters in one year would be problematic with regards to scheduling, in-house training, and performance evaluation of these probationary employees. Accordingly, we would recommend the hiring of 4 additional career fire fighters each year beginning 2000 and ending in either 2002 or 2003. There are sufficient contingency funds to hire 4 career fire fighters in the fourth quarter of 2000.

Advanced Emergency Medical Technician Training (X)

Two of our eight career fire fighters are trained and licensed as paramedics (AEMT's). To advance our service level to ALS, the remaining six career fire fighters would need to be trained to the AEMT level. This would best be achieved by training two fire fighters each year starting in the year 2000 and concluding in the year 2002. The tuition is approximately \$2000 per student for the AEMT course.

Replace Existing Rescues With Ambulances (XI)

To provide transport service, we recommend replacing our existing Rescues with ambulances. We recommend the purchase of five (5) transporting ambulances. It is estimated that it will cost approximately \$350,000 to purchase and outfit all of these ambulances. We can spread this expense over time by replacing current rescue vehicles with ambulances when they are replaced. Money is set aside in each budget currently for the replacement of apparatus.

Medical Supply Source (XII)

Drug boxes for ALS service would be provided through the Oakland County Medical Control county wide program. Through the program each participating department pays an initial fee of \$140.00 per drug box, (we need two.) When drugs are used we simply trade the used box at any county hospital for a new box and the hospital bills the patient for the drugs.

Our department currently has an oxygen filling station at Station One, and the supplier would be selected through the normal city bid process.

Start Basic Transport Program (XIII)

It is our recommendation that the Rochester Hills Fire Department become an Advanced Life Transporting agency within the next four years. This will be accomplished utilizing both full-time and POC personnel. The full-time personnel would be trained to the Paramedic level. They would respond to priority EMS calls as they currently do during the weekdays. The POC personnel would be utilized to respond the transporting ambulance to the scene. If Paramedic services are required, the full-time crew would board the ambulance for the transport to the hospital. If less than Paramedic services are needed, the POC would transport the patient to the hospital and the full-time crew would go back in service.

Start 24 Hour Career Coverage (XIV)

With the hiring of four additional career fire fighters in 2000 and four more in 2001, that would give us a total of 16 career firefighters. At this point we could begin 7 day, 24 hour coverage with four platoons of 4 working 12 hour shifts. The cost of hiring each firefighter is approximately \$42,000 (\$31,000 base salary and \$10,700 for benefits which include \$2,300 for Medicare, Social Security & Life Insurance; \$3,000 for Medical Insurance; \$5,400 for Pension, Dental Insurance, Workman's Compensation, Disability, and Unemployment). This improvement would also aid us in improving our ISO rating.

Re-District Stations (XVI)

With the 24 hour manning of Station One with career fire fighters, we would re-assign the POC fire fighters from Station One to one of the other four stations, based on where they live. We would also do some modifications to the response districts of Stations Two through Five. The exact boundaries to be determined by the fire department administration, at a future date.

Purchase ALS Equipment (XVII)

Some additional medical equipment would be required for BLS and ALS transport. For BLS non-transport we would need MAST trousers, air splints, poison kits, and medical control radios. The BLS equipment would need to be purchased prior to providing BLS service. For ALS we would need to add laryngoscopes, glucometers, pulse oxymeters, and cardiac monitors. The projected cost of the BLS equipment is approximately \$2000 per unit for 7 units. The cost of ALS equipment is approximately \$15,000 per unit for two units. The majority of this ALS equipment cost is for the required 12 lead heart monitors/defibrillators.

Establish EMS Billing System (XVIII)

When we begin to transport patients, we will then be able to start billing for our services. It is suggested that we can expect to receive some reimbursement on 66% of our billing. The funds collected will not cover the cost of providing the service, but will help to offset costs. It is further recommended that any funds received be allocated to vehicle and equipment replacement. We will be researching the benefits of utilizing a third-party billing source.

Begin ALS Transport (XIX)

It is projected that in 2003 we could begin providing ALS service from two career staffed rescue/engines. Transport would be provided by the POC EMS transport division and transports would be BLS when possible. The career paramedics would staff the ambulance en route to the medical facility for ALS transports.

Other (XX)

We will also experience some cost reduction for services that we presently contractor for, that the additional career fire fighters could perform. These include, but are not limited to: custodial services, grounds maintenance, and routine building maintenance. It is also possible the career fire fighters could assist in performing ladder and pump testing, which we currently sub-contract.

It is also time to consider priority dispatching. We respond to many medical emergencies that are low priority, but we are responding units and personnel in an emergency fashion only to have the person transport as a non-emergency. This priority dispatching can be accomplished by implementing the Clawson Dispatch program. This software program will ask key questions and based on the answers, will set a response priority.