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Memorandum

To: Hailey City Council
Date: August 2, 2011
RE: Request for Recommendations Related to Cooperative Services.

Dear Council Members,

Per your request, I have outlined a number of recommendations for increased cooperation between the fire departments located in the southern end of the Wood River Valley. I recognize that there are numerous other efforts possible, however due to the economic situation I have chosen the efforts that would have the greatest impact for the least cost. Please consider the following options:

- Work with WRF&R and Bellevue FD to standardize Standard Operating Procedures between the three department
Reference: Pages 19-21; Recommendations 3,4,5 & 6; Functional Cooperative Effort Strategies "Strategy R" – Page 293
- Better coordination of basic required training courses and requirements for new members, and recognition of qualified instructors. These could include:
 - Firefighter I & II Classes
 - Hazardous Materials Awareness & Operations Classes
 - Incident Command Classes
 - Basic and Advanced Wildfire & Refresher Training
 - Basic Vehicle Extrication Training*Reference: Pages 138 – 142; Partial compliance with #33, 34,35, 36, 37, 38, & 39; Functional Cooperative Effort Strategies "Strategy J – Page # 268 & Strategy T" – Page 297 (Partial)*
- Increase in the current "Joint Department Training" currently being held twice a year, to quarterly.
*Reference: Pages 139; Partial compliance with #34
Functional Cooperative Effort Strategies "Strategy T" – Page 297 (Partial)*
- Consideration of "Mixed Crews" to allow for daytime staffing of WRF&R Station 3 (South of Bellevue).
Reference: Functional Cooperative Effort Strategies "Strategy O" – Joint staffing of fire stations and apparatus. Page 283
- Provide Fire Marshal services to WRF&R and/or Bellevue for constructions plans review and building and inspection services.
Reference: Page 73, Recommendation 23; Functional Cooperative Effort Strategies "Strategies A & B" Pages 244 – 247", "Strategy Y & Z" – Page 314 – 317 (Partial)
- Resumption of WRF&R's participation in the South County Auto Aid Agreement
Reference: Page 7, Recommendation #1;

These efforts, if successful would go a long way in supporting the ESCI recommendations:

Hailey #1, #33, #34, #35, #36, #39, #40 and #42

Bellevue #4, #17, #33, #34, #35, #36, #37, #38, #41 and #42

WRF&R #1, #6, #23, #33, #34, #35 and #37

Please deliberate on my suggestions and provide guidance on how you would like for me to proceed.

Respectfully presented by:

Mike Chapman
Hailey Fire Chief

Appendix C: Summary of Recommendations (Current Conditions)

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R – Develop Standard Operating Guidelines

Level of Cooperation

Functional

Timeline for Completion

Short Term

Section

Emergency Operations

Affected Stakeholders

All Agencies

Objective

Provide guidelines for operation during emergencies, emergent and non-emergent incidents.

Summary

Standard operating guidelines are used at the operations level of the fire department. They are analogous to a playbook, providing direction yet allowing for individualized company officer adjustments to situations. Currently each fire agency in this study is responsible for developing a unique set of standard operating guidelines for their organization.

Discussion

Standard operating guidelines will improve on-scene safety, efficiency, and effectiveness of personnel. With personnel from all agencies trained in using the same procedures, they can approach an incident with an understanding that everyone will proceed in a similar fashion. This will greatly reduce or eliminate the confusion that can lead to delays in the delivery of service.

Guidance

Keep the guidelines in electronic format for ease of updating.

Give initial and recurring education to personnel in their use.

Provide for continual use of the standard operating guidelines during routine incidents and at each training session.

Provide for a periodic appraisal of the guidelines to maintain currency with changes in tactics, strategy, and equipment.

Consciously keep guidelines non-specific to allow for adaptation to particular incidents by the supervisor.

J – Develop a Single Recruit Training Program

Level of Cooperation

Functional

Timeline for Completion

Short Term

Section

Training

Affected Stakeholders

All Agencies

Objectives

Eliminate duplicated efforts in training of new personnel as fire department emergency responders.

Summary

Recruit training has been unilaterally accomplished by the three fire departments. For fiscal year 2010 – 2011, HFD has determined that funds are not available to conduct a recruit training program.

Discussion

Training needs for new personnel are the same, regardless of the fire department. Recruit training is also both time consuming and manpower intensive. The workload can be shared easily by planning to train all new personnel together. A secondary benefit can be gained by virtue of the fact that recruits from each organization are trained to the same standards and curricula, fostering more standardized and coordinated emergency scene operations.

Guidance

Establish an agreement between agencies to train new recruits jointly.

Appoint a committee to manage new member training.

Identify instructor resources needed, schedule and conduct a joint recruit academy.

Consider expanding to include Ketchum FD, Sun Valley FD, and Carey RFPD.

T – Develop Mutual Training Strategies

Level of Cooperation

Functional

Timeline for Completion

Short to Mid Term

Section

Training

Affected Stakeholders

All Agencies

Objective

Provide purpose and direction for training program management and delivery.

Combine strengths and resources to:

- o Overcome current training obstacles and deficiencies.
- o Provide a single comprehensive integrated training structure.
- o Develop a mutually beneficial training program.
- o Train and certify a cadre of knowledgeable and skilled emergency responders.

Summary

Agreements between public agencies to functionally consolidate certain programs are becoming increasingly common. Such cooperative initiatives are a means to mutually increase efficiency through reduction or elimination of duplication; something not usually achievable by a single entity. We believe that a mutual training strategy among the study fire departments will accomplish that.

Discussion

Certain individuals are assigned responsibility (through job description or by special assignment) for development and delivery of their department's training program. Each fire department training program is carried out, in large part, independently, with varying levels of program development, content, and quality. All persons responsible for firefighter training appear to work towards providing comprehensive programs; but not surprisingly, success is inconsistent.

The geographical proximity of the fire departments to one another, the resources, and the available expertise provide an opportunity for training collaboration. Sharing such resources is considered a fiscally responsible way to fully reach the full potential of all fire department training programs. Development of a strategic plan for firefighter training is a crucial first step.

A strategic plan for training evaluates current training levels and determines future training goals and objectives. The process includes identifying the existing type and level of emergency services, followed by an audit of the certification and skills of emergency workers. Strategies are created to develop curriculum, obtain resources, and produce a training schedule. Each fire department adopts the training standards and certification levels for the job classifications supported by the agency. A mutual strategic plan for training provides consistency to the program for all fire departments. All emergency responders are subsequently trained to the certification levels established by the plan and all emergency workers possess the specified skills.

As part of the training strategy, a system of competency-based training and skills evaluation is recommended for all suppression and EMS personnel. Competency-based training helps to establish the

achievement and retention of skills for specific jobs. The term "skill" is defined in Merriam-Webster as "A learned power of doing something competently; and a developed aptitude or ability." We recommend that mutual training strategies include the semi-annual evaluation of individual and company proficiency. Results of the evaluations may then be used to adjust the training strategy.

Critical Issues

The variations between current programs used by the fire departments may initially require personnel to receive additional training.

Continued involvement by those active in advancing the training manual, should be involved with development of mutual training strategies.

BFD, HFD, and WRFR fire departments should produce a statement attesting to their commitment of developing mutual training strategies.

Guidance

Establish a work group to evaluate and develop common training strategies:

- o Identify goals and establish objectives.

- o Set benchmarks.

Evaluate the following training sections found in "Partnering Strategies:"

City of Bellevue, City of Hailey, and Wood River Fire & Rescue, Idaho Cooperative Efforts Feasibility Study

- o Annual training plan

- o Training manual

- o Training facilities

- o Centralized training

- o Training standards

- o Record keeping

Provide for flexibility and openness to apply existing strategies in new and different ways and for new strategies.

Provide for a periodic appraisal of strategy use, relevancy, effectiveness, and compatibility with current need.

Keep strategies in electronic format for ease of updating.

Fiscal Considerations

No significant financial considerations.

O – Provide for Joint Staffing of Fire Stations and Apparatus

Level of Cooperation

Functional

Timeline for Completion

Short Term

Section

Emergency Operations

Affected Stakeholders

All Agencies

Objectives

Provide for distribution of facilities and deployment of personnel consistent with a regional standard of cover. Provide consistent fire and emergency services within areas efficiently before, during, and after development.

Summary

Practicality and external influences seldom allow fire station placement to match perfectly with a fire department's deployment strategy. Reasons include the availability of property, land use laws, roadway infrastructure, construction cost, traffic patterns, geography, and projected station workload. Given that the area protected by a fire department may change through annexation, merger, and contracted protection (JPA), a perfect fire station location today may be a poor location in the future. Because of these and other factors, it is virtually impossible to place fire stations in an ideal location and not overlap the response areas of other fire stations or departments. Jointly staffed stations and/or response units create more alternatives for fire departments studying the deployment of emergency resources. Fire departments often know how many firefighters are needed for the best possible protection; however, departments are rarely able to afford or staff at such levels. Sharing personnel from different agencies can help to bring staffing levels closer to the optimum.

Discussion

The NFPA recently published an updated state-by-state study of the needs of the U.S. fire service. The Idaho version of the January 2007 report *Ohio: Four Year Later – A Second City of Bellevue*, City of Hailey, and Wood River Fire & Rescue, Idaho Cooperative Efforts Feasibility Study

- o One fire department supplies a firefighter for each shift and another fire department contributes an apparatus operator/engineer and an officer. The workforce is made up each day of personnel from both fire departments.

Personnel from different fire departments staff a fire station on a set schedule.

- o One fire department staffs the fire station on two of three shifts. The other department staffs the fire station on the third shift.

Fire departments apportion responsibility for staffing and support of a fire station for a given number of months.

- o One fire department staffs and supports the fire station for a given number of months each year. During the remaining months, the other fire department provides staff and support.

Two fire departments jointly staff a fire station with personnel from both fire departments, and operate more than one piece of emergency apparatus.

- o One fire department staffs a fire engine and the other department staffs a medic unit in the same fire station.

One fire department staffs a fire station but extends first alarm response from that station to another jurisdiction. The second fire department compensates the first based on an agreed cost/benefit formula. Two fire departments exchange in-kind first alarm response.

- o One fire department provides first alarm response into another fire department's area in exchange for like service from that agency.

Cooperative efforts for the joint staffing of fire stations are an operational opportunity that could have a positive impact on service delivery in the cities and district. Options include but are not limited to: WRFR Fire Station 3 with personnel from BFD and WRFR

Ketchum Rural Fire District Green Horn Station at 12226 Highway 75 and 100 Fire Station Drive with KFD and WRFR personnel

A single fire station in the city of Hailey that would serve the city of Hailey and WRFR

Guidance

Training issues

- o The personnel used for joint staffing of fire stations and apparatus should be trained to provide a service level (including EMS) equal to or greater than that of the cooperating fire departments.

- o While it is preferable to use a single dispatch center when joint staffing, it is not considered essential to the success of the partnership.

Deployment considerations

- o Deployment standards for the partnering agencies should be developed and adopted.

- o The fire departments should execute deployment plans between the agencies prior to entering joint staffing agreements.

- o Several of the joint staffing examples involve personnel from different fire departments staffing fire stations and apparatus together. Developing a single labor agreement will help to alleviate real or perceived issues of equity between career personnel.

City of Bellevue, City of Hailey, and Wood River Fire & Rescue, Idaho Cooperative Efforts Feasibility Study

- o Provide a single IC (Incident Command) for supervision of emergency operations and for oversight of on-duty personnel during routine operations.

Financial considerations

- o Marginal costs of deploying personnel in joint staffing ventures will be determined based on the agency, and on personnel costs.

- o Startup costs may include additional training as well as the supplies and equipment needed to support the stations and fire response units. A portion of the cost for additional training and equipment could be immaterial, if as part of the cooperative initiatives the fire departments also adopt deployment standards, training standards, and a joint purchasing.

Consider expanding to include Ketchum FD, Sun Valley FD, and Carey RFPD.

Fiscal Considerations

Joint staffing of fire stations and apparatus is foreseen only as an interim step towards a unified fire department.

Joint staffing provides fire departments with a way to meet deployment standards when:

- o It is not economically feasible for a fire department to staff a fire station or fire apparatus independently.

- o Fire departments have common borders and underserved territories.

Joint staffing provides the political entities with an emergency service exit strategy where future annexation may remove or transfer territorial responsibility.

Consider expanding to include Ketchum FD, Sun Valley FD, and Carey RFPD.

Fiscal Considerations

The elimination of duplicated staff effort in the creation and updating of standard operating guidelines will reduce soft costs.

Instructional time optimized during multi-agency training sessions by excluding time devoted to adapting to differing procedures.

X – Develop Joint Deployment Standards

Level of Cooperation
Functional

Timeline for Completion
Short Term

Section
EMS and Emergency Operations

Affected Stakeholders
All Agencies

Objective
Develop deployment standards that establish the distribution and concentration of emergency resources, both fixed and mobile.

Summary
All agencies have policies for deploying resources, albeit at times informal and undocumented. Developing standards for response and coverage will formally define the distribution and concentration of the fixed and mobile assets of an emergency organization. The process of standards development includes reviewing community expectations, setting response goals, and establishing a system of measuring performance. The resulting plan includes all aspects of the community and organization that are required to create response standards and to determine the ideal use of resources.

Discussion
The information contained in this partnership opportunity is extracted from *Creating & Evaluating Standards of Response Cover for Fire Departments*
74 This excerpt is from the Introduction and Chapter 1:

74 Creating & Evaluating Standards of Response Cover for Fire Departments, Fourth edition, Introduction, Commission on Fire Accreditation International, Inc., 2003, Chantilly, VA. The material was originally designed as an assignment to the accreditation task force of the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC). When the task force was turned into a commission, the Commission on Fire Accreditation International, Inc. (CFAI) it was included in the accreditation manual Fire and Emergency Service Self-Assessment Manual.

All agencies have an existing policy (for deploying resources), even if it is undocumented or adopted by the locally responsible elected officials. Originally, stations and equipment were situated to achieve certain expectations. How and why they were sited needs to be historically understood, described, and contrasted to proposed changes.

This process uses a systems approach to deployment rather than a one-size-fits-all prescriptive formula. In a comprehensive approach, each agency should be able to match local need (risks and expectations) with the costs of various levels of service. In an informed public policy debate, each city council or governing board “purchases” the fire and EMS protection (insurance) the community needs and can afford.

There are usually three reasons to redo or challenge existing levels of service – expansion, contraction of service areas and change in risk expectations. Contraction is typically the result of a reduction in service area, a decline in risk or value, or a decline in available fire protection funding. Regardless of the reasons, elected officials should base changes in levels of service on empirical evidence and rational discussion leading to effective, informed policy choices. The purpose of the standards of response coverage process is to prepare fire service leaders to conduct just such an analysis and then lead an informed policy discussion.

The Standards of Cover systems approach consists of the following eight components:

Existing deployment

Risk identification

Risk expectations

Service level objectives

Distribution

Concentration

Performance and reliability

Overall evaluation

Standards of response coverage are defined as those written procedures that determine the distribution and concentration of fixed and mobile resources of an organization. The process includes reviewing community expectations, setting response goals and establishing a system of measuring performance. This plan encompasses everything an agency should understand to prepare and determine resource deployment.

If resources arrive too late or are under staffed, the emergency will continue to escalate drawing more of the agency's resources into a losing battle. What fire companies must do, if they are to save lives and limit property damage, is arrive within a short period of time with adequate resources to do the job. To control a fire before it has reached its maximum intensity requires geographic dispersion (distribution) of technical expertise and cost effective clustering (concentration) of apparatus for maximum effectiveness against the greatest number and types of risk. Matching arrival of resources with a specific point of fire growth or medical problem severity is one of the toughest challenges for chief fire officers today.

Some medical emergencies such as multiple car collisions or industrial accident rescues require speedy arrival of multiple crews to control the scene, perform rescue operations, and provide medical care. A high-risk area requires timely arrival of fire companies for several reasons. More resources are required to rescue people trapped in a high-risk building with a high occupancy load than in a low-risk building with a low occupancy load. More resources are required to control fires in large, heavily loaded structures than are needed for fires in small buildings with limited contents.

Most emergency medical incidents require the quick response of single fire crews to limit suffering and to rapidly intervene in life-threatening emergencies. Small, incipient fires need the prompt response of a local fire company to mitigate and terminate the emergency quickly without additional help. For these typical, daily situations, all areas of the city with similar hazards and risks should receive equal service. This is why distribution planning strives for equity and timely service objectives.

Therefore, creating a standards of response coverage plan consists of decisions made regarding distribution and concentration of field resources in relation to the potential demand placed on them by the type of risk and historical need in the community. Furthermore, if a standards of cover is to be meaningful to the community, the outcomes must demonstrate that lives are saved and property is protected.

To clearly define standards of response coverage, agencies should have a policy statement regarding how risks are categorized within the context of their own jurisdiction. Because of the wide range of complex issues for which individual agencies are held accountable, it is necessary that there is a method for identifying risks and expected outcomes. Based upon that risk

assessment and anticipated workload, a standard of response coverage is developed for firefighting and EMS functions. It is recognized within the fire service profession that this evaluation must take into account both the frequency and severity of the most common types of incidents.

Critical Issues

Exercise caution when developing a standards of cover. Even minor changes when setting service level objectives can have broad impact.

Guidance

When developing a standard of cover, reference *Creating & Evaluating Standards of Response Cover for Fire Departments*.

Review existing documents of other emergency service providers standards of cover, deployment standards, and response time standards. Use the opportunity to learn from those who have already developed a standard of cover.

Prior to developing standards of cover, elected officials, administration, and staff should be educated on and have a clear understanding of the process.

BFD, HFD, and WRFR fire departments should develop standards of cover collectively and have agreements in place to specify deployment plans.

When evaluating capabilities and setting performance standards for a community, size and population density often place direct demand upon the department with respect to community expectations. Different expectations are often found in urban, suburban, rural, and frontier communities.

Developing a standard of cover is a loop process. For example, if after establishing risk category expectations the resultant response plan is found to be too expensive, the facilitator of the process might re-challenge the community's elected leaders to lower service expectations, or to find additional funding.

Fiscal Considerations

Change, however minor, in current service level goals may result in dramatic change to the deployment and distribution. A change in service level goals may require:

- o New, remodeling, or modifications to existing facilities

- o New or relocation of apparatus

- o Additional personnel

Marginal cost of staff time to develop a standard of cover.

Y – Develop a Joint Prevention and Code Enforcement Program

Level of Cooperation

Functional

Timeline for Completion

Mid Term

Section

Fire Prevention

Affected Stakeholders

All agencies

Objective

To reduce the threat to life or property from fire

To provide uniform prevention services to the region

Summary

Fire prevention is a specialized discipline that requires personnel with the knowledge, skills, and abilities acquired over a long period of time. Public educators have the skill set of a teacher, plans examiners are detail oriented, fire investigators have tenacity, and fire inspectors are diplomatic. Singly the departments do not have the ability to staff and maintain a comprehensive fire prevention division. Collectively the organizations have the workload, trained personnel with the experience to support a prevention program.

Discussion

The components of an effective fire prevention program, generally, should include the following:

Fire Code Enforcement

Proposed construction and plans review

New construction inspections

Existing structure/occupancy inspections

Special risk inspections

Internal protection systems design review

Storage and handling of hazardous materials

Fire and Life Safety Education

Public education

Specialized education

Juvenile fire setter intervention

Prevention information dissemination

Fire Investigation

Fire cause and origin determination

Fire death investigation

Arson investigation and prosecution

Guidance

Fiscal Considerations

Z – Develop a Joint Safety Program

Level of Cooperation

Functional

Timeline for Completion

Short Term

Section

Administration

Affected Stakeholders

All agencies

Objective

To establish an effective program, consistent with accepted standards and best practices, that will ensure the safety of fire department personnel while working in fire stations and on the emergency scene.

Summary

Best practices call for the establishment of a formalized safety program. The program is formed in the interest of addressing safety concerns, investigating accidents, and maintaining effective safety protocols. Additionally, a safety program provides for training of personnel and monitoring of safety related performance.

Discussion

An effective safety program performs the following:

- o Review of safety concerns identified by department members.
- o Addressing of accident or near-miss events that may occur.
- o Maintenance of effective agency safety procedures.
- o Implementation of safety procedures.
- o Respiratory Protection Program practices.
- o Exposure control practices and monitoring.
- o Appropriate infectious disease prevention practices.
- o Safety related training delivery to membership.
- o Maintenance of records of accidents, exposures and near-miss incidents.
- o Documentation and maintenance of records and minutes of safety committee meetings.

Evaluate and revise existing safety procedures.

Record meeting occurrences and distribute monthly minutes.

Fiscal Considerations

Safety Committee participation can be accomplished with on-duty personnel, generally, at no additional cost.

Safety training can be incorporated into existing, ongoing training activities

Schedule monthly meetings of the safety committee, with a structured agenda addressing the key tasks listed above.

Establish an ongoing safety training plan.