

# **Strategic Plan**

## **Village of Scottsville Fire Department and Rescue Squad**

### **Submitted to:**

The Board of Directors of the Scottsville Fire Company,  
Inc.

and

The Village of Scottsville Mayor and Trustees as Fire  
Commissioners

Submitted – March 2, 2009

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## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Planning Process

In 2007, the Scottsville Fire Department and Rescue Squad, the Board of Directors of the Fire Company and the Village Fire Commission (Village Mayor and Trustees) began a process of strategically examining the department with an eye toward preparing a plan for the department. A group of individuals representing the three entities developed a project plan to create a strategic plan. Using a facilitator, the group worked for almost 15 months to create this document. A copy of the project plan is included in the Appendices, Section 8.1.

As issues were identified or information was needed, individuals accepted responsibility for doing the research and gathering the information. As an early ground rule, the committee recognized that all members may not agree with everything recommended or may want something different. Therefore, it was agreed that "minority" opinions would be included in the report at the discretion of the individual committee member. Section 7.2 includes those reports.

### 1.2 Background and Assumptions

In January 2006, the Monroe County Fire Advisory Board Strategic Planning Committee issued a report entitled "Planning for the Future – Developing a Strategic Plan for fire Service in Monroe County". Focusing on the increasing demands facing the fire and emergency medical services (EMS) today, they examined how to provide those services over the next 10-20 years.

The report states:

"Clearly, the demands on fire departments for fire and EMS services have changed dramatically over the last 20-25 years. As a result, departments throughout Monroe County are going to face significant challenges in the future. These include:

- Increased difficulty attracting and retaining enough volunteers to properly staff volunteer departments;
- Increased demands for EMS services, especially as the population in Monroe County continues to age;
- Increased potential for homeland security response requirements;
- Increased regulations, standards and mandates that require more training, upgraded equipment and additional equipment; and
- Fiscal pressures to keep taxes as low as possible."

The report identified nine key trends that show the pressures fire departments now face. The report says in summary, "the Committee believes that these trends indicate the need to think strategically about how to obtain and

manage volunteer and career staff resources and the equipment, apparatus and facilities needed by the fire service to meet the needs of the future."

Additionally, the Volunteer & Combination Officers Section of the International Fire Chiefs Association (IAFC) published three reports dealing with the fire service.

- **A Call for Action, The Blue Ribbon Report**, "Preserving and Improving the Future of the Volunteer Fire Service", 2004;
- **Lighting the Path of Evolution, The Red Ribbon Report**, "Leading the Transition in Volunteer and Combination Fire Departments", 2005 and
- **Keeping the Lights On, the Trucks Running and the Volunteers Responding, The White Ribbon Report**, "Managing the Business of the Fire Department", 2006.

All of the IAFC reports can be viewed and printed at [www.vcos.org](http://www.vcos.org).

Given the Monroe County Fire Advisory Board report and those of the IAFC, the Scottsville Fire Department and Rescue Squad decided to initiate a process of examining its organization and operation in light of the challenges obviously facing this organization.

A strategic planning committee was formed and began work. As the initial step, each member of the committee reviewed and digested the issues and data presented in the above reports and documents.

### 1.3 Strategic Planning Committee Members

The committee members are listed in Appendix 8.1

### 1.4 Village Fire Department and Rescue Squad Background

The Scottsville Fire Company was founded in the 1800's to provide fire protection services to the Village of Scottsville. It was originally composed of and supported by local business owners and residents. In the late 1800's, the firehouse was located on the south side of Main Street near the corner of River Road, as part of a commercial building known as Salyard's block. It was in the west portion of the building and had a wooden post with a bell to alert residents/volunteers.

Fires were fought by the residents via bucket brigades, supplemented by a hand pump that would draw water from the race or creek. During the McVean Mill fire of 1878, Scottsville requested mutual aid from Rochester via telegraph to the railroad. The City Fire Department dispatched a steamer to the railroad for transport to the Maple Street station. However, an hour later the effort was called off as the buildings walls had collapsed.

In 1911, the fire district was increased and a two-story brick firehouse on the north side of Main Street was purchased.

In 1947, ambulance service was added. The emergency dispatch function was accomplished by the use of siren alerting and telephone trees.

In the 1960's, a new municipal complex was built on the north side of Main Street and the fire hall was combined with the Town and Village Offices. A new Fire and EMS Station replaced the Main Street facility, in 2004, on Scottsville-Mumford Road.

The Scottsville Fire Department has provided emergency ambulance service to the Scottsville and Wheatland areas since 1947. Until 1992, the ambulance was funded exclusively through annual fund drive donations to the Fire Company. Staffing was provided by firefighters that were classified as "Company 2" members. These members had no voting rights and were not allowed to attend Department meetings.

In 1991, two members of "Company 2" petitioned the Fire Company for equal rights and treatment. When the petition was denied, these members petitioned the Village Board of Trustees. At about the same time, members of the ambulance requested the Village of Scottsville fund ambulance operations. The ambulance operation was experiencing significant increased costs in two areas, insurance and training.

In June of 1992, the Village of Scottsville created the 'Village of Scottsville Fire Department Rescue Squad' which is authorized under section 209 (b) of General Municipal Law (G.M.L.). The fire department ambulance operations was funded by the Village of Scottsville, through Village taxes, and monies received under contract by the Town of Wheatland and Town of Chili fire protection districts. The position of 'EMS Captain' was created, and was in charge of departmental EMS operations, the EMS budget administration, and EMS personnel. The EMS Captain administratively reported directly to the Village Fire Commissioners (Trustees).

Due to evolving needs of the department and the community, the structure of the EMS operations was once again changed in 2008. The Village Board of Trustees modified the EMS Line Officer titles to include an EMS Chief, an EMS Captain, and two Lieutenants. At the same time, the Village dissolved the 'Village of Scottsville Fire Department Rescue Squad' and created the Village of Scottsville Rescue Squad. This new 'department of the village' was created under section 122 (b) of NYS General Municipal Law. The end result of the change will allow the Village to third-party bill for EMS service.

## **2.0 Strategic Context and Guiding Principles**

### **2.1 Mission Statement**

The Scottsville Fire Department and Rescue Squad is a high quality fire and EMS provider in its service area now and in the future. We do this to provide needed and vital services to the community at a level to comply with State and national standards.

This will be accomplished by implementing the recommendations over a five (5) year period with annual updates to the plan.

## 2.2 Core Values

The Scottsville Fire Department and Rescue Squad desire to create a culture and environment that is open, honest and family-oriented with a focus on the core mission of the organization (fire and EMS services, educational services, and community service). The organization is committed to a number of core values:

- Department and community leadership
- Community service and education
- Dedication to quality service delivery
- Quality and continuing training
- Honesty and integrity
- Treating people with respect and dignity

## 2.3 Vision Statement

The Scottsville Fire Department and Rescue Squad will provide quality emergency services, maintain a safe environment for personnel, and meet or exceed all requirements and standards.

## 3.0 Strategic Assessment

### 3.1 Strengths

The strategic planning committee identified a number of strengths that need to be continued and enhanced:

- Facilities are good and will serve the department well over the next 30 years;
- Department equipment (vehicle rolling stock) are good with replacement schedules in place;
- Several new young members have recently joined the agency;
- The Scottsville Fire Department and Rescue Squad have a strong and well established tradition for delivering fire and rescue services and as a community service organization; and
- The organization has a core of dedicated individuals that are “committed” to the agency and many of them fill multiple roles.

### 3.2 Weaknesses

The strategic planning committee also identified some weaknesses that need to be addressed so the agency can continue to improve the delivery of services:

- Capital and operational budgets need to be better utilized and aligned as needs, requirements and service demands change;
- The department is substantially non-compliant with many accepted standards;
- Reduced service level by the fire department because they no longer respond as first responders for EMS calls;
- Capabilities are not keeping pace with emerging needs for such things as special operations, basic training, and professional development;
- New member intake and orientation process;
- Fire operations: SOG's/SOP's, basic training standards, maintenance and documentation of records, driver clearance processes, and response capability (numbers and kinds of fire fighters; and
- Coverage of emergency medical calls and number of available EMT's and drivers (the EMS operation only covered 75% of calls in 2007.

### 3.3 Opportunities

The strategic planning committee identified a number of opportunities that are available as the organization looks to the future:

- Capitalize on an overall positive community perception of the organization;
- National standards that are driving staffing and specialty areas;
- Assess the situation currently before the organization regarding experience with some significant changes in mission, requirements, and standards that continue to accelerate the speed of change;
- Enhance organizational leadership with succession planning, consistency, training (both in-house and external standardized programming by professional certification entities), establishing of qualifications and articulation of expectations by commissioners.

### 3.4 Challenges

The strategic planning committee recognized that strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities lead to challenges for the organization:

- Update SOG's/SOP's for the fire department;
- Enhance and define administrative policies and procedures dealing with a wide variety of areas (purchasing, matching resources with emerging needs, training, qualifications, record-keeping, new members, etc.);
- Capitalize on an overall positive community perception of the organization;
- Address recruitment and retention issues to attract more fire fighters and EMT's; and
- Meeting minimum training standards.

It is the consensus of the strategic planning committee that if the Scottsville Fire Department and Rescue Squad continued as is (on our current path and direction) that there is a significant likelihood that the organization will not be able to deliver the fire and emergency medical services as we have in the past.

Note: The five year call volume for the Fire Department is summarized in the table below [2004-2009].

| <b>Call Type</b>               | <b>2004</b> | <b>2005</b> | <b>2006</b> | <b>2007*</b> | <b>2008*</b> | <b>Total</b> | <b>%</b> |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------|
| Working Fire                   | 3           | 3           | 2           | 1            | 5            | 14           | 1.54     |
| False Alarms/Good Intent       | 31          | 31          | 30          | 66           | 136          | 294          | 32.27    |
| Vehicle Fire                   | 3           | 6           | 0           | 5            | 2            | 16           | 1.75     |
| Vegetation Fire                | 5           | 9           | 4           | 14           | 5            | 37           | 4.06     |
| Accident w/o Extrication       | 34          | 23          | 26          | *            | *            | 83           | 9.11     |
| Accident w/Extrication         | 7           | 4           | 2           | *            | *            | 13           | 1.42     |
| Other Rescue                   | 6           | 2           | 2           | *            | *            | 10           | 1.09     |
| Hazardous Conditions/Materials | 21          | 28          | 18          | 32           | 33           | 132          | 14.49    |
| Service Calls                  | 34          | 17          | 20          | 22           | 15           | 108          | 11.86    |
| Other Calls                    | 1           | 5           | 1           | 3            | 4            | 14           | 1.54     |
| Mutual Aid Received            | 3           | 5           | 2           | *            | *            | 10           | 1.09     |
| Mutual Aid Provided            | 32          | 39          | 33          | 41           | 35           | 180          | 19.76    |
| <b>Total Calls</b>             | <b>180</b>  | <b>172</b>  | <b>140</b>  | <b>184</b>   | <b>235</b>   | <b>911</b>   |          |

\*Due to changes in reporting methods it was difficult to compare certain specific call types between 2004-2006 and 2008-2009.

Note: The five year call volume for the Rescue Squad is summarized in the table below [2004-2009].

| <b>Call Type</b> | <b>2004</b> | <b>2005</b> | <b>2006</b> | <b>2007</b> | <b>2008</b> | <b>Total</b> | <b>%</b> |
|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|----------|
| BLS              | 175         | 182         | 163         | 186         | 143         | 849          | 50.42    |
| ALS              | 160         | 178         | 179         | 161         | 157         | 835          | 49.58    |
| Total            | 335         | 360         | 342         | 347         | 300         | 1684         |          |

The data compiled allow for several key points to be made. First, over the past 45 years, the number of EMS calls has increased from approximately 75 annually to around 350 annually. Second, in the past 15 years the number of EMT's and total medical personnel has decreased from an average of 14 to an average of 10. And third, the percentage of calls covered has decreased in the past 15 years to below 80%.

#### **4.0 Strategic Goals and Objectives**

Strategic Goal 1: **Improve the organization and structure of the Fire Department and Rescue Squad.**

**Objective 1.1:** Evaluate the possibility of a larger service area for opportunities of “shared services” like the multi-agency restructuring of the Northeast Joint Fire District.

*Timeline: 3-36 months\**

**Related Tasks**

- Research legal options utilized by the Northeast Joint Fire District.
- Contact representatives of the Northeast Joint Fire District and review impacts of their organization.
- Contact neighboring departments and inquire of interest in discussing related issues.

**Objective 1.2:** Develop and create policies and procedures that support and enhance Fire Department and Rescue Squad operations.

*Timeline: 3-18 months\**

**Related Tasks**

- Design and implement an equipment matrix that meets current and future operational needs.
- Develop a leadership succession plan.
- Support leadership incentives and/or benefits.
- Establish qualifications (accountability) for leadership positions (line officers, drivers, etc. at the strategic, tactical and administrative levels).
- Develop and use best practice human resource policies and procedures, i.e. exit interviews, etc.
- Create a set of standard purchasing guidelines (using specifications) with a process for purchasing items.
- Adopt a comprehensive savings and spending plan including a long-term capital and equipment replacement schedule.
- Match taxing and funding to the operational and capital needs.

**Objective 1.3:** Maintain and enhance changes to the EMS structure made in 2008.

*Timeline: 3-36 months\**

**Related Tasks**

- Adopt a third-party billing plan for ambulance service.
- Maintain the existing ambulance fleet at two (2) vehicles and replace them as scheduled.

- Obtain, equip, and establish policies/procedures for an EMS first response vehicle.
- Continue to collocate the fire and emergency medical operations.

Strategic Goal 2: **Improve Fire Department and Rescue Squad recruitment and retention efforts.**

**Objective 2.1:** Create and adopt a recruitment and retention plan providing for a career path for members.

*Timeline: 3-18 months\**

**Related Tasks**

- Create and implement a mentoring program.
- Institute an enhanced application, background and interview process for new members.
- Draft a recruitment and retention plan based on material presented in Appendix 8.4.
- Target training and retention programs to young members, i.e. college students.
- Develop a plan to retain existing members by focusing on a percentage of the staff at a time.
- Support the development of a leadership succession plan as described in Objective 1.2.
- Create an enhanced incentive program and develop leadership incentives and/or benefits.
- Evaluate social activities to meet member needs and/or expectations.
- Reward members that maintain a high levels of training and certifications.

Strategic Goal 3: **Improve operations through an increased emphasis on training.**

**Objective 3.1:** Create a training matrix for all or key positions and match the training level needed to each job.

*Timeline: 3-18 months\**

**Related Tasks**

- Generate a qualifications matrix for all fire and EMS positions.
- Establish a recordkeeping system, both electronic and hard copy) with training specific records.

Strategic Goal 4: **Improve Corporation administration and support for members.**

**Objective 4.1:** Develop and adopt policies and procedures that increase efficiency and effectiveness.

*Timeline: 3-36 months\**

**Related Tasks**

- Create and institute a long-range savings and spending plan.
- Create and adopt a standard set of purchasing guidelines (using specifications) with a process for purchasing items.
- Modernize the accounting system used by the corporation.
- Establish and adopt a recordkeeping system, both electronic and hard copy.
- Support the establishment of qualifications for leadership positions.
- Develop and establish a set of personal behavior standards with consequences (human resource policies and procedures).

**Objective 4.2:** Develop and adopt policies and procedures that support corporation members.

*Timeline: 3-60 months\**

**Related Tasks**

- Develop leadership incentives and/or benefits.
- Support the evaluation of social activities to meet member needs and/or expectations.
- Create a reference library.
- Target training and retention programs to young members.

Strategic Goal 5: **Improve the overall operation of the Fire Department and Rescue Squad.**

**Objective 5.1:** Implement a community outreach program.

*Timeline: 3-60 months\**

**Related Tasks**

- Undertake activities that will expand the community knowledge of and involvement in the Fire Department and Rescue Squad.
- Create a “speakers group” that are willing to make presentations on behalf of the fire Department and Rescue Squad.
- Generate a set of “talking points” that will serve as a reference for speakers.
- See Appendix 8.8.

**Objective 5.2:** Develop a process to continually monitor for strategic plan implementation.

*Timeline: 3-18 months\**

### **Related Tasks**

- Conduct periodic internal audits regarding “where we are” and “where we are going” based on the five (5) year plan.
- Establish policy at the Commission, Board of Director, and Department level to implement the multi-year strategic plan.
- Annually review and update the strategic plan prioritizing “deficiencies” to drive implementation.
- Periodically evaluate operational needs (local, county, regional, State and nationally) to assess emerging needs with a planning committee.
- Conduct periodic workshops with the Commissioners to increase their involvement with the Fire Department and Rescue Squad.

\*The Strategic Planning Committee ranked the objectives based on a perceived liability of risk to the organization and the members. It is a relative ranking in relation to the other objectives. The committee believes all of the objectives are important but ranked them into three categories: high risk (3-18 months); medium risk (3-36 months); and low risk (3-60 months).

## **5.0 General Recommendations**

The Fire Department and Rescue Squad function as departments of the Village of Scottsville. New York State Village Law, Article 10, regulates the administration and operation of the two departments along with many other federal and State laws, regulations and industry standards in both the fire service and emergency medical services. The Village Board function as the Board of Fire Commissioners to administer and fund the two departments. The Village Board members, as fire commissioners, have the ultimate legal responsibility and liability for the performance of the Fire Department and Rescue Squad.

The Village provides fire and ambulance services to its residents and, under separate contracts, to surrounding residents in the Town of Chili and the Town of Wheatland. Property owners in the three areas – Village, town of Chili, and Town of Wheatland -- pay for the services through their jurisdictions tax levy.

The Scottsville Fire Department Corporation provides and manages the volunteers to the Village departments to staff equipment and physically deliver the services. Therefore, the Village and Fire Department Corporation have a mutual partnership and responsibility to all district residents to provide services at a level consistent with common expectations and that meets, or exceeds minimum accepted standards.

This strategic plan is intended to assist both the Village and Corporation to overcome shortfalls and continue those elements that meet or exceed standards. It is meant as a guide to change. The five (5) strategic goals, nine (9) enabling objectives, and forty-five (45) related tasks constitute the plan for accomplishing the mission stated above. This is a very important and critical undertaking given the challenges facing all levels of government and the emergency services. The strategic planning committee believes the village and Corporation are up to the difficult path ahead.

To assist with the implementation of the plan the following general recommendations are made for the Board, Commission and Department Management:

- 5.1 Recognize that in order to survive in a world with increasing demands and expectations, financial challenges, and calls for “doing more with less”, there is a need to examine all aspects of service delivery. That means raising and discussing fundamental questions about the organization, culture, change and basic business practices and processes.
- 5.2 Acknowledge that there may be a need to alter the way the fire department and Rescue Squad “do business” to meet service demands and comply with training and performance measures.
- 5.3 Actively utilize the strategic plan to build annual action plans and funding (budgets) to support and guide change within the Fire Department and Rescue Squad.
- 5.4 Recognize and acknowledge the value of the “people” side of the business by placing an emphasis on human resource management, career building, leadership development and positive rewards for high performance.
- 5.5 Continue to engage representative organizations such as the Fire District Officers Association, the County, State and federal professional groups, and the fire chiefs’ organizations, to learn about change management and articulate the needs and challenges facing local emergency services.
- 5.6 Undertake an enterprise wide effort to educate all involved – department members, commissioners, and residents – on the issues confronting fire and emergency medical services both locally and nationwide.

## **6.0 Implementation Suggestions**

The following implementation recommendations are made for the Board, Commission and Department Management

- 6.1 The Chair of the Commission (Mayor), the Fire Chief, the EMS Chief and the Corporation President will need to work as a team to accomplish the plan.

The alignment of these four individuals will be critical for the change process to work. This group represents the Leadership Team that will need to work in concert if strategic goals will be achieved.

- 6.2 It is suggested that the Leadership Team formally meet at least quarterly to evaluate the status of the strategic plan implementation.
- 6.3 Given the importance of the safety and compliance issue, it is suggested that the commission appoint a qualified individual to implement the plan, function as the Health and Safety Officer, and actively work to achieve compliance where needed. This person would chair a team to recommend action and changes to insure compliance within the 3-18 month time frame.

## **7.0 Summary Comments and Minority Opinions**

### **7.1 Summary Comments**

The Village Fire Department and Rescue Squad are at an important juncture in their history. There are many ongoing challenges dealing with structure, funding, staffing, training, leadership, volunteers, and operational performance to standards. Any one of these issues could easily overwhelm the volunteer members that administer the departments.

The purpose of the strategic plan is to present a vision for the future, identify and prioritize the goals, objectives and tasks, and undertake a process to manage the change that is coming. By trying to manage the change process in a structured way, the potential for success increases and the effort is not so overwhelming.

The goals, objectives and tasks are only the beginning. All governing entities will need to carefully balance day-to-day needs with the long-term vision of the future. Strategic planning is a tool to guide the direction of an organization. Establishing budget priorities, evaluating each major decision against the strategic plan, and using data and facts to help direct policy development are all necessary to institute real change.

The members of the strategic planning committee are committed to assisting the governing entities, as efforts are made to implement the recommendations and plan submitted for consideration.

### **7.2 Minority Report**

From the beginning of the strategic planning process, members have known that they had the opportunity to submit a separate and independent "minority" report and have it made a part of the planning document. It was recognized and acknowledged that everyone may not agree on all aspects of the plan.

As part of the planning process, members were asked to share their thoughts on the future and many did submit written documents. As a planning tool, the exercise is considered a means of identifying areas of consensus and difference.

No members desired to issue or submit a minority report.

## **Appendices**

- 8.1 Strategic Planning Committee Membership
- 8.2 Original Project Plan for Strategic Planning
- 8.3 Department Survey Instrument and Result Summary
- 8.4 Community Survey instrument Example for the Future
- 8.5 Recruitment Plan
- 8.6 Scottsville Rescue Squad – An Agenda for The Future
- 8.7 Standards List
- 8.8 Major Department Equipment List
- 8.9 Community Outreach Reference Material
- 8.10 Training Audit Material

## **Appendix 8.1 Strategic Planning Committee Members**

### **Strategic Planning Committee Members and 2009 Positions\***

- **Jay Coates**, Firefighter
- **James Craven**, Firefighter/Safety Officer – Lt.
- **Luke Elasky**, Firefighter – Lt.
- **Robert Emerson**, Firefighter -- Chief
- **Russ Hogue**, Firefighter/EMT – Corporation President
- **Matt Jarrett**, Firefighter/EMT – EMS Chief
- **Michael Souers**, Village Mayor – Commission Chair
- **Chris Steimer**, Firefighter/EMT

### **Process Facilitator**

- **Stephen Bowman**, Firefighter/CFR – Lt.

\*Two (2) members were replaced on the committee during the time the committee was conducting its business – David Sheffield and Glenn Sickles.

**Appendix 8.2**  
**Original Project Plan for Strategic Planning**

# **Scottsville Fire Department and Rescue Squad**

## **Strategic Planning Committee**

### **Strategic Planning Process**

#### **Project Plan**

The project plan was developed over several meetings.

Submitted February 13, 2008

**Strategic Planning Committee Members** [SME – Subject Matter Experts]

Jim Craven  
Luke Elasky  
Bob Emerson  
Russ Hogue  
Matt Jarrett  
Dave Sheffield  
Glenn Sickles  
Mike Souers

**Facilitator**

Steve Bowman

**Initial Meeting** [1/16/08 – 1830-2100]

## Agenda

1. Introduction – Steve
2. Appoint/Select a Chair – Chief and President
3. Review Steve’s Proposal to the Board – All
4. Review and Approve Project Planning Process – Steve/All
5. Share Information – Book/FAB Project Plan and Hinesburg VFD in Vermont – All
  
- 8.** Begin Project Planning Process – Steve/All

## Project Plan SFD Strategic Plan

### Overview

The planning team met to develop a strategic plan of action. The project planning agenda included seven (7) steps. The planning steps used were:

1. Define the project.
2. Prepare a goal statement.
3. Develop strategic options/game plan.
4. Generate an activity list.
5. Layout the timeline.
6. Test for reality/evaluate.
  
- 8.** Implement/track/follow-up.

The subcommittee developed this plan during several meetings and used a set of ground rules to guide discussion. The remainder of this document outlines the activities and decisions, which led to the project plan.

Ground Rules [Adopted by subcommittee at the first meeting]

- OK to have fun
- Respect differences
- Spelin and handwriting don't count [facilitator]
- Welcome disagreement
- Full participation
- 3 minute rule – timeout, facilitate, parking lot
- Focus on issues, not people
- Establish confidentiality?
- Roles – facilitator = process; participant = information as SME (subject matter expert)
- Consensus for decision making which means
  - ◆ Action is considered WORKABLE – not working toward ultimate solution; and
  - ◆ Not necessary to argue that it is your first choice –I COULD LIVE WITH IT

**Roles**

Team – SME

Steve -- Process

Brainstorm Ground Rules

- No discussion – No criticism
- All ideas are accepted

- ❑ Give ideas in a few words (Voice Activated Pen – VAP)
  
- ❑ Need full participation
  
- ❑ Keep it moving
  
- ❑ 8-15 minutes

**8.** Define the project. *[Answer the 5 W's and how]*

**WHO?**

- Scottsville FD
- Service area (Chili/Wheatland)
- Corporation
- Ambulance/Fire

**WHAT?**

- Devise a strategic plan
- Vision

**WHERE?**

- Village/Town/County
- SFD

**WHEN?**

- 5 year plan

**WHY?**

- Work together between commission and SFD
- Active decisions not passive
- Problems: declining volunteer #'s
- Want to better the system
- Work within the budget wisely
- Limited resources [\$/people] – use effective & efficient

**HOW?**

- Group has authority by BOD to go and put together

## 8. Prepare a goal statement.

### Goal

The SFD, in conjunction with the fire commission, will devise a strategic plan by June 1 for the district to actively prepare for the future over the next five (5) years. We are doing this to deliver the best possible service/support in the most efficient and effective manner. Additionally, we want to retain existing members and attract new members given limited resources that are available.

### Standards: “We’ll be successful if...”

- ✓ By June 1 we have a document describing the strategic plan for SFD with the fire commissioners;
- ✓ There is consensus to submit the plan with the possibility of a minority report;
- ✓ Commissioners and the Board of Directors accept and act on the report; and
- ✓ There is a system established by the Board of Directors and fire Commission to evaluate/assess outcomes annually --Review, Change, Go/No Go

Develop strategic options.

Strategic Option List [how could we do it/how could we fund it?]

To Do: The planning group of 8 people with facilitation and a planning process

To Fund: Funds are adequate [maintain record of hours]

Forces we influence or control

- Public opinion
- Customer survey
- Department culture

Forces working for us

- Public opinion for
- Housing & equipment
- Good will (BOD/FC/FD)
- Good working relationship
- Good relationship w/TB
- Training ingrained
- Government mandates

New forces we can bring to bear

- Public opinion
- Mentoring program
- Structured interaction
- Transparency of operations (sharing information)
- Training and mentoring for leadership

Forces working against us

- Public opinion
- New members – intimidation
- Communication w/I the org
- Communication bet FC/FD
- Government mandates

Criteria Analysis [Given a number of characteristics or dimensions, what is the assessment whether we will be successful – **A**ttainable, **U**nattainable, or **Q**uestionable]

| Characteristic or dimension           | <b>A</b> | <b>U</b> | <b>Q</b> |
|---------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Time         | <b>A</b> |          |          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> People Power | <b>A</b> |          |          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Control      | <b>A</b> |          |          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy       | <b>A</b> |          |          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Politics     | <b>A</b> |          |          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Skill        | <b>A</b> |          |          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Legitimate   | <b>A</b> |          |          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Risk         | <b>A</b> |          |          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pay Back     | <b>A</b> |          |          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Success      | <b>A</b> |          |          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Funding      | <b>A</b> |          |          |

Prepare a strategic game plan.

Strategy/Game Plan Selection

Primary      The planning group of 8 people with facilitation and a planning process

Alternate

4. Generate an activity list. [100-1300 in bold indicate the 13 core task areas to be addressed; the subtasks indicate the related task for the core task area]

**100 Re-read the documents as reference**

**200 List individual expectations for the plan**

**300 Conduct a community survey in coverage area**

301 Prepare a survey [#?] [Note – time consuming]

302 Define outcomes desired

303 Generate/get a mailing list

304 Fund mailer/printing

305 Compile and analyze the results [Note –time consuming]

306 Draw conclusions and report on results

307 Define purpose of survey

**400 Deliver regular updates to the Board of Directors, Fire Commissioners, and Body**

**500 Look at (document existing and future service standards (requirements))**

501 Define standards

501.1 Fire

501.2 Emergency Medical

- 502 Describe what drives the standard – law, regulations, financial, grants, etc.
- 503 Evaluate if we meet standards – should we/can we?
- 504 Explore legislative impacts
- 505 Capture/document metrics regarding response times, call type, etc.
- 506 Audit internal documents
  - 506.1 SOG's
  - 506.2 SOP's
  - 506.3 By Laws

**600 List (audit) existing resources [hard assets/personnel]**

**700 Survey members of the SFD**

- 701 Prepare a survey (“image” as we see ourselves)
- 702 Define outcomes
- 703 Give to members (mail? In person?)
- 704 Establish a collection point
- 705 Compile and analyze results

**8. Draw conclusions and report results**

Note: Consider an incentive for the return of the survey by certain date

Note: Include idea of the impact on the family

**800 Identify future needs for equipment and facilities**

- 801 Village/Town growth plan/zoning
- 802 Analyze manpower needs
- 803 Analyze equipment needs
- 804 Analyze facility needs
- 805 Use output from #500
- 806 Look at how well we meet our needs today
- 807 Audit (document) businesses, housing, specialty sites, etc.
- 808 Use electronic board

**8. Develop a recruitment plan (open house)**

- 901 

|  |
|--|
| <b>See draft plan submitted for review by Russ Hogue as a starting point</b> |
|--|
- 902
- 903

**1000 Conduct a PR program [active in the community, member of Chamber, etc.)**

- 1001 Conduct enhanced activity in the community
- 1002 Wheatland Chamber member
- 1003 School DWI program
- 1004 Rotary involvement
- 1005 lions Club involvement

- 1006 Blood pressure checks at the Senior Center
- 1007 Articles for newspaper
- 1008 Enhanced website
- 1009 Health Fair
- 1010 Participate in the Festival
- 1011 Fire Prevention open house

**1100 Identify where we would be in 2014 if we do nothing**

- 1101 Evaluate historical call volume and types of calls
- 1102 Evaluate historical numbers
- 1103 Evaluate personnel numbers
- 1104 Evaluate equipment
- 1105 Evaluate facilities
- 1106 Examine governance changes
- 1107 Identify the drivers

**1200 Be active in FASNY (and similar organizations) to lobby for fire and EMS issues**

**8. Write the strategic plan**

- 8.** Layout the timeline.

### Timeline/Action Plan

| <u>#</u> | <u>Description</u>              | <u>Who</u> | <u>Start</u>  | <u>End</u> |
|----------|---------------------------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| 100      | Re-read documents               | ALL        | 1/31          | 2/15       |
| 200      | List individual expectations    | ALL        | 1/31          | END        |
| 300      | Conduct community survey        | JC         | 2/1           | 5/1        |
| 400      | Deliver regular updates         | BE/RH      | Every 30 days |            |
| 500      | Document service standards      | MJ         | 2/15          | 4/15       |
| 600      | List existing resources         | BE         | 2/15          | 3/15       |
| 700      | Conduct a member survey         | JC         | 2/1           | 4/1        |
| 800      | List future needs [equip/fac]   | DS         | 2/1           | 4/1        |
| 900      | Develop a recruitment plan      | RH         | 2/15          | 4/15       |
| 1000     | Conduct a PR program            | GS         | 2/15          | 4/15       |
| 1100     | Where are we in 2014?           | LE         | 4/1           | 5/1        |
| 1200     | FASNY and lobby organizations   | GS/LE      | 2/15          | END        |
| 1300     | Write strategic plan with input | SB/ALL     | 5/1           | 6/1        |

Timeline/PERT Chart – See attached document

#### **8.** Test for reality/evaluate.

Once the basic project plan was completed, the team reviewed the elements with a “reality check” about whether the plan is realistic.

The team agreed that the project plan was realistic and could be accomplished

#### **8.** Implement/track/follow-up.

Once the project plan is finalized with names to coordinate each task, the project manager needs to implement, track and follow-up the activity. The facilitator will assist the co-chairs with the task of managing the project.

### Parking Lot Items

- ❑ Issue of change in the FD [leave on list until done]
- ❑ Town as stakeholder [involvement?]

### To Do – Standards

- ❑ Set meeting dates for the strategic planning committee
- ❑ Strategic planning implementation timeline over the 5 years
- ❑ Set some milestones in the strategic plan to assist the Board of Directors and Fire Commission with implementation
- ❑ Utilize outside expertise as needed
- ❑ Repeat the survey to the community [as a quality control measure?]

**Appendix 8.3**  
**Department Survey Instrument and Result Summary**

## Member Survey Letter

As you have probably heard by now the Strategic Planning Committee needs your help to assess the issues facing the department. To that end we have compiled a brief survey for all member of department and would appreciate it if you would talk a few minutes to complete it.

One of the mailboxes behind the radio room will be marked "Surveys" for completed surveys to be returned. When you return your survey please put the envelope it was mailed to you in the president's mailbox, as we will be drawing door prizes for people who participate.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact a member of the strategic planning committee.

Thanks for your help,

The Strategic planning committee,  
(Chief Emerson, President Hogue, Captain Jarrett, Steve Bowmen, Dave Sheffield, Jim Craven, Mike Souers & Luke Elasky).

## Actual Member Survey Instrument

### MEMBER SURVEY 2008

A) How many years have you been a member of the Organization? (Circle one)

0-5 yrs          5-10          10-15          15-20          20-25          25+

B) Which branches of the organization have you been actively involved with?

(Circle all that apply)

Fire Ops          EMS Ops          Fire Police          Company 6,          Fire Prevention

Explorers          Corporation          Softball          Social activates

C) Have you ever held an elected office in one or more of the branches? (Circle) Yes No

D) Which of the following influenced your decision to join the department?

(Please circle all that apply)

- |                                |                      |                         |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1) Community Service           | 2) Action/Excitement | 3) Social Outlets       |
| 4) Friends/Family were Members | 5) Explorers         | 6) Softball             |
| 7) Training Opportunities      | 8) Recruitment Drive | 9) Interaction w/ dept. |

13) Other \_\_\_\_\_

E) Which of the following influence your decision to remain with the department?

(Please circle all that apply)

- |                      |                      |                   |
|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1) Community Service | 2) Action/Excitement | 3) Social Outlets |
|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|

- 4) Friends/Family are Members      5) Explorers      6) Softball  
 7) Training opportunities      8) Incentive Program      9) Service record  
 10) Advancement goals      11) Time Commitment      12) Recognition  
 13) Other \_\_\_\_\_

F) How many hours a month would you estimate you volunteer, including meeting, drills, calls and work details, etc.? (Circle one)

1-5      5-10      10-20      20-40      40-60      60+

G) Please rate 1-5 which of the following reason you think would be a deciding factor if you choose to leave the department or change your member status.

- \_\_\_\_ Time requirements      \_\_\_\_ Physical demands      \_\_\_\_ Activity level  
 \_\_\_\_ Support from Organization      \_\_\_\_ Conflict with members      \_\_\_\_ Personal usefulness  
 \_\_\_\_ Lack of membership benefits      \_\_\_\_ Group atmosphere      \_\_\_\_ Other:(Please specify)

Please continue on page two on the other side.

For the following section please rate how much you agree with the following statements 1 is **Strongly Disagree**, 2 **Disagree**, 3 **Unsure or No Opinion**, 4 **Agree** and 5 is **Strongly Agree**

|  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| A) I enjoy my membership in this organization                                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| B) Membership in this organization includes many benefits.                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| C) There is strong leadership within the origination.                        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| D) Leadership positions are filled by the most qualified individuals.        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| E) The organization develops strong leadership skills in its members.        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| F) The training I receive is useful beyond my work with the organization.    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| G) The time I volunteer is used effectively.                                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| H) The contributions I make are appreciated by the organization.             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I) The work I do with the organization is rewarding.                         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| J) The things I do within the organization are important.                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| K) The organization is well funded to conduct its operations.                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| L) The organization is well equipped to conduct its operations.              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| M) The organization is well trained to conduct its operations.               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| N) I am well trained to deal with all the issue I face during operations.    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| O) I am interested in training that would be useful beyond the organization. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| P) I am well trained to do the things asked of me.                           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Q) Others people's attitudes affect my involvement with the organization.    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| R) A professional attitude is important for the organization.                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| S) The organization's culture is appropriate.                                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| T) The Corp President serves an important role in the organization.          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| U) The Fire Chief serves an important role in the organization.              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| V) The EMS Captain serves an important role in the organization.             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| W) The Board of Directors serves an important role in the organization.      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| X) I get involved whenever I can.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Y) I get involved when I think I am needed.                                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Z) I get involved when I am asked.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

(Feel free to submit your answers to the following questions separately if you need more space.)

What else do you think it is important that the strategic planning committee know?

What else do you think the organization should know?

The Strategic Planning Committee thanks you for responding!



**Appendix 8.4**  
**Community Survey Instrument Example for the Future**

### Community SURVEY 2008

A) How many years have you lived in the Scottsville / Wheatland area? (Circle one)

0-5 yrs      5-10      10-15      15-20      20-25      25+      Nonresident

B) Do you rent or own your residence? (Circle one)      Rent      Own

C) Which age group best describes you? (Circle one)

14-18      18-25      25-30      30-40      40-50      50+

D) Have you dealt with any of the following services or activities of the Scottsville Fire department? (Circle all that apply)

|                   |              |                   |
|-------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Fire Response     | Fire Police  | Fire Prevention   |
| EMS Response      | Loan Closet  | Explorers (youth) |
| Rec. Hall Rentals | Turkey Party | Other: _____      |

For the following section please rate how much you agree with the following statements 1 is **Strongly Disagree**, 2 **Disagree**, 3 **Unsure or No Opinion**, 4 **Agree** and 5 is **Strongly Agree**

|  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1) I'm confident the Department can handle emergencies in the community.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2) The contributions members make are appreciated by the community.        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3) The department provides a professional response to emergencies.         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4) I understand the work that the department does.                         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5) It is important to have a department run by community volunteers.       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6) Emergency Medical Services are important role of the department.        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7) Fire suppression operations are an important role of the department.    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8) Fire prevention programs are an important role of the department.       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9) Traffic control operations are an important role of the department.     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10) The services provided effect my willingness to support the department. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11) I wanted to be a fire fighter when I was a child.                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12) I would be interested in joining the Department                        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

-----  
Raffle ticket

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you interested in more information about the department?      Yes              No

What else do you think it is important that the department consider as it plans for the future?

What else do you think the department should know?

Thank you for taking the time to respond!

## **Appendix 8.5 Recruitment Plan**

Recruitment & Retention  
Scottsville Fire Department  
Strategic Planning Committee – 2008

**Introduction:**

There is adequate existing documentation on the subjects of Recruitment and Retention in the Volunteer Emergency Services, as is evident in the bibliography accompanying this document. Those documents should form the foundation for the future tactical recruitment efforts that are put forward. Strategically, the Department and the Village have to decide if they want to recruit more members into the organization.

The number of members that belong to an organization should reflect the duties and roles that exist in that organization. There are many factors to be considered and within the scope of the Strategic Plan, what does the Department look like in 5, 10, 20 years. How many people do we need to fulfill this vision?

The attached plan (Appendix "A") is a few years old but it was created in response to a query about how could we do recruiting in the Scottsville Fire Department, it is not the definitive action plan, however it is plausible.

This issue is split into 2 areas – Recruitment, getting people into the organization, and Retention, keeping people in the organization.

We then have to look at these two topics in the context of our split mission. Volunteers for fire fighting are motivated differently than those that join to do EMS work.

So this becomes a task that is looked at from 4 discreet issues:

- Fire Recruitment / Retention
- EMS Recruitment / Retention

Although there is a lot of cross over between the topics and similar strategies can be adopted for recruitment efforts, they still have to be examined by the leaders of each organization and applied with the specific service in mind.

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the Recruitment and Retention process, which is applicable to either branch of the Emergency Services.

To quote the USFA 2007 Retention and Recruitment Guide:

*"Individuals are still willing to give their time to volunteer emergency services organizations provided the following:*

- *The experience is rewarding and worth their time*
- *The training requirements are not excessive*
- *The time demands are adaptable and manageable*
- *They are rewarded with a personal sense of value*
- *There is good leadership, minimizing conflict*
- *There is ample support for the organization"*

These should be the underlying themes in all that we do to recruit and retain our volunteers. We should structure our activities going forward with the goal of having these activities fulfill these 6 needs of the individual. More over we have to step back and include the needs of all individuals in our thinking when we are assessing our activities. Our leaders should be familiarized with these needs of the individuals and be supported as they structure their activities to meet these needs.

## Recruitment

### ***Why join?***

2 main reasons are cited in the literature for joining either the Fire Service or the EMS Community:

- *Satisfaction in helping others*
- *Recognizing a community need*

It is very easy to categorize the public into 2 groups, those that achieve a satisfaction in helping others and those that do not. It does not mean that this second group of people is inferior; they are driven by different needs. By identifying and targeting the first group of individuals with your recruitment efforts you are already speaking with an engaged person, receptive to your message.

By targeting existing service organizations and community support events, you are getting your message out to the individuals that are most likely to join the organization. In addition to this group of people, expanding the number of explorers creates a group of eligible candidates already predisposed to helping others.

Establishing a community need has to be done through an organized educational effort. Making the public aware of the need for volunteers has to be an ongoing process. Once all recruitment goals are met then the public must be kept informed of what the department is doing.

The larger the role that the fire department plays in the community, the easier it will be to ask them for support, either in money (taxes, fund drive, fund raising efforts) or support (recruitment, donations for events, etc).

The recruitment process itself takes place after the department has asked the question:

### ***"How many people do you need?"***

The correct answer is not "as many as you can get", but is a result of the careful study of resources and expenses of bringing a recruit through the process. It also has to reflect the changing scope and mission of the fire department. Discreet goals and limited numbers make the process manageable and can actually create a demand for new members wanting to join. People should never be turned away but the actual recruitment efforts should be goal oriented.

The next question to be answered is:

### ***"What kind of people are you looking for?"***

Do you need interior fire fighters? EMT's. Station personnel to support the active functions? Auxiliary members?

How many people can you afford to equip and train per year? Do you have adequate resources to train and mentor more than your influx goal? As soon as you make the application form available, you have to be ready for it to come back with an acceptable candidate that wants to "do it all". Go back to the scope and the mission of the fire department; what personnel do we need to achieve the goals in this mission?

Although everyone is certainly welcome to apply, a needs analysis has to be done to determine which applicants the department needs most. When allocating resources to attract recruits, the most needed type of applicant gets priority.

Moving along in the process, you have to ask:

***"Who should do the recruiting?"***

Unsuccessful or improperly implemented recruitment efforts may have an overall negative outcome on not only the number of recruits attracted, as well as the public image of the department.

A committee should be struck for the sole purpose of overseeing all recruitment. This committee should create a professional marketing campaign targeting the desired number and type of recruits and equipping every department member with the tools they need to be an ambassador. Our leaders should be out front in all recruitment efforts, however everyone should be equipped with the resources to recognize a potential recruit and steer them to the correct person so that they may start the process to become a member of the department.

***"Where do you look for recruits?"***

Everywhere. Every person we have contact with is a potential recruit. When the department is in a recruiting mode then goals should be set for each member to bring in a set number of qualified applicants. Going back through this discussion, you have to look for members based on needs. Those attending daytime recruiting events obviously would be available to respond to the need for daytime coverage, etc.

Would the recruitment effort be better coordinated with neighboring departments? Hold a 4<sup>th</sup> battalion recruit drive for a specific period twice a year with participating departments working together to attract people into the organizations. The combined press and advertising efforts would reach out to more people. If not battalion wide could we coordinate an event with our neighboring departments, Mumford, Clifton, Churchville?

Hosting information sessions as stand alone events and in conjunction with other things happening in the community allows people to come and see what is going on without

feeling pressured. Opening the training and meeting nights to the public allows people to come and spectate. For some this is a formidable commitment and requires considerable thought and planning. Constant exposure to the concept will make it easier for people to justify, in their own minds, that joining the department is not a bad thing.

***"How do you turn recruits away?"***

Should any potential recruit be turned away? The answer is yes. There are obvious reasons to reject applicants, past criminal activity, positive drug screening, and negative recommendation from existing members. Beyond those reasons, the department may not need a new member at this time that matches the applicant's abilities. There is a financial and time cost to every person you bring in to the department and once an adequate corps of personnel is achieved then adding more people becomes burdensome.

The easiest mechanism of taking care of this is to recruit to a pool or waiting list. It may appear to be counter intuitive when you are desperately trying to increase your numbers, but in addition to allowing the department to screen applicants properly and to control the influx of members, it will also have an effect of creating a demand. This system is not to be abused but should allow for the orderly influx of applicants through a discreet and documented process.

The applicants must be properly screened and routed to the appropriate mentor once they are accepted into the department, the first 6 months will be crucial to the process. They should expect at least 2 one on one meetings with the recruiting officer, chief, or president to gauge how their orientation is going.

To those applicants that are rejected, this news has to be delivered in person and they have to be given the exact reasons why they were rejected and how they can be successful if they apply again. (If they can be successful in applying again). These individuals still volunteered their time but were unable to meet the necessary requirements for the department, they deserve thanks for applying and not a summary dismissal.

To those applicants that are queued on the waiting list they need to be contacted regularly with the status of their position on the list. This needs to be done by the recruitment officer and the person needs to be given accurate expectations of when they can be taken into the system as a recruit. Ideally, if the recruitment effort is directed properly, the department will be actively seeking personnel to fill specific needs rather than collecting a bunch of people together for no specific purpose. The waiting list will then only be needed as the department waits for mentor personnel or equipment to become available.

## **“Breaking down the barriers to recruiting”**

Ask your current members why they would NOT join the department again. Ask members of the community why they do NOT apply to be members of the department. Take that information and view it as barriers to recruitment.

Break down those barriers.

If you are serious about recruiting new members then find out why they will not join and eliminate those objections (or minimize them). Constantly assess the needs of your recruits and keep them interested. Make the fire department a place they want to be.

The department’s needs change over time, as do the recruit’s needs change...the process of recruitment must be dynamic. If you do not change and move forward then your results will eventually diminish.

## Retention

### Why leave?

2 main reasons are cited in the literature for leaving either the Fire Service or the EMS Community:

- *Time commitment*
- *Training Requirements*

The overall amount of time needed by the department is typically fixed. Maintenance and work details will have to be performed regardless of the number of staff. Actual calls take time. You cannot reduce the amount of time that is spent in performing these duties. As the number of volunteers shrink, then the hours per volunteer increases. By increasing the number of volunteers you can more evenly distribute the labor duties and reduce the hour per person that is required.

The training requirements are also fixed as the state or other governance body typically mandates them. What is not fixed is the in-house training and the flexibility of that schedule. By working with the individual members you can customize the training plan to meet their schedules. The EMS organization can continue to support the alternate recertification process and expand it to make it easier for people to acquire their necessary CME credits.

Curriculum should be developed that can be easily and quickly delivered to fulfill training needs. A group of in house instructors should be trained to lead the recruits through various basic activities to get them up to speed and operational efficiency as quickly as the recruit can take the training.

Furthermore, are your efforts fulfilling the two main reasons that the recruit joined in the first place, namely:

- *Satisfaction in helping others*
- *A community need*

Do the tasks they are doing and the training they are taking placing them in a position that they are fulfilling a community need? Are they able to realize a satisfaction from helping others? Retention is about meeting the needs of the recruit.

Then we look at the 6 reasons as to why a person volunteers for the Emergency Services:

- *The experience is rewarding and worth their time*

- *The training requirements are not excessive*
- *The time demands are adaptable and manageable*
- *They are rewarded with a personal sense of value*
- *There is good leadership, minimizing conflict*
- *There is ample support for the organization*

The first three items are covered by the reasons why people leave. Time and training have to be the top issues that are addressed.

How do you reward someone with a sense of personal value? By providing clear, honest feedback and creating a mechanism whereby the recruit can grow at their own pace towards definitive goals that will allow them to help the public. You also have to have a functioning feedback system in place through interpersonal contact that allows leadership to gauge how happy they are in their journey to achieve that personal sense of value.

Good leaders are not born, they are cultivated and made and carefully groomed for the position. The recruit that you take an application from tonight could be the chief someday. Good, fair leadership is always desired, regardless of the organization. Although some people are intuitive about these issues, all leadership candidates need to be trained and accept the precepts of personnel and resource management. More important than being fair, you have to APPEAR to be fair.

Often times, recruits and members feel frustrated when they are constantly battling bureaucracy for what they think are essentials to do their jobs. This is really a two-pronged problem.

In today's fiscal environment there are limited resources to spread among many needs. Municipal organizations have to communicate the resources that are available. The municipal government has to be involved in the organization with an ongoing presence, this indicates the level of support that the individuals have for the Emergency Services.

The second aspect of this is the expectations that are communicated to the recruit when they join and as they grow with the department. If these expectations are managed properly then the level of support provided by the external organizations will be what is expected.

These 6 reasons are not static, they will change as the recruit and the organization grow and change. Some items on the list may become less important as those objections are overcome and replaced with other issues. The object is to constantly evaluate the state of mind of your members and address issues before they grow beyond the ability of management to contain them.

Addressing Specific Problems to Retention

***Time Demands:***

The Volunteer of 40 years ago was part of the industrial family with a single income and an employer that was responsive to the needs of the community. Today, the volunteer is in a two (or more) income family with household and family duties waiting for them when the workday ends. Today's employer has to be more concerned with productivity than community support. As employment changes, the resident of one community now has to travel further to find a job making response from work (if it was allowed) physically impossible.

To accommodate the needs of the volunteer timing has to be flexible. Demands for attendance standards have to be balanced against the ability of all members to attend at a specific time or date. To accommodate both the needs of the community and the volunteer flexible scheduling has to be considered. The days of being on duty 24 hours a day 7 days a week have to give way to squad based coverage for first alarm operations. By committing a week per month (or couple of nights per week) to being the first out crew, the member is provided the opportunity to help the community on a scheduled basis.

Of course the chief officer can always make an "all hands" call when more manpower and resources are required.

#### ***Training Requirements:***

Most of the training requirements are fixed by external agencies, for example the NYS DOH dictates how one becomes certified as an EMT and there is little flexibility to the department or the member. Essential of fire fighting is much the same way when the course is it put on by the County or State agency. The recruit has to be mad aware of these issues during their intake stage and really should be prepared to put up with inflexible training schedules for the first year of their membership as they learn the base skills they will need to address those needs of personal value and community need.

Once the initial training has been achieved the department has to develop a flexible training regiment that allows the member to achieve and practice all of the necessary skills in a flexible manner. Curriculum development designed around individual and small group drills, either self delivered or delivered by a trained corps of junior officers will allow this to occur. Meaningful record keeping is necessary to guide the members through the training process so that they work on true skill development. Flexible goals measured against this training record allow the member to evaluate their progress and work towards achievable standards.

#### ***Increasing Call Volume:***

As EMS becomes a larger component and the public relies on the fire service for more "trouble" calls, the overall volume of calls increases. This trend has been going on since the early 80's and shows not indication of slowing down. As the call volume

increases the demand on the volunteers to attend at these calls also increases, eventually, this demand will become onerous and will cause dissatisfaction.

There are two easy solutions to an increasing call volume; the first is to stop responding to certain types of calls. Reduces the volume, however has lots of other consequences that may negatively impact the department and the community. The second is to split your department into squads (or companies, the nomenclature is less important than the function) that have set duty times. The members now have a say in when their time is utilized by the department and they feel more in control.

This is a difficult concept for fire officers with experience to cope with as they (we) grew up in the fire service where they are always on call. The demands of the new generation are such that they need that schedule control and down time.

This plays into the next factor facing retention;

***Changes in what is expected.***

Both leaders and recruits must have a clear-cut list of expectations and should review that list on a regular basis. As call volumes change, training needs change, or as family and work commitments change, then this list of expectations also has to be modified to reflect reality. Some times the distance between what the member needs and the department needs is too far to bridge, then either expectations have to change or roles have to change. Unfortunately this may be where the department and the member may end up parting, as expectations cannot be met.

Be realistic with all recruits starting out and portray honest expectations to them so that they enter in to the relationship knowing what is expected of them and what they can expect.

## **Tools to Deal with Retention Issues**

### **Leadership**

Retention starts with the leadership of the department. The leaders set the tone and the attitude going forward that all follow. A good leader is fair and addresses the needs of all parties that depend on them. They have to adopt a management style that makes them approachable, yet allows people to respect the decisions they make. A good leader has a vision, which they share with the department and the public; they involve all stakeholders in the planning process to achieve this vision. They set and publish goals that are attainable and will result in the department fulfilling the vision that was set out.

Good leaders use constant, open communication as a tool so that all stakeholders are aware of what is taking place. A department member should be able to answer most of their questions through the leader's communications.

The leader is also responsible for adopting and enforcing department standards, which should be fair for all. Department standards should be based on the best practices of the industry and not based on how the department has historically done things.

### **Department Image**

All staff should be properly outfitted with uniforms. These uniforms should fit properly, should be new and not recycled and be properly adorned with the appropriate insignia. Wearing the uniforms during drills, work details and meetings should be mandatory (or highly recommended). Every member should be provided with a supply of casual "station wear", t-shirts, sweat shirts, jackets etc. This is clothing they can wear anywhere to denote membership in the department. In addition to clothing, license plate brackets, vehicle window decals and parking stickers should be issued immediately after joining.

The new recruit should also obtain a photo id in a badge holder when they join. An announcement in the community newsletter when recruits join, or when members reach milestones is also important. It is tangible recognition for belonging to the organization.

The department should train in the full view of the public. In addition to a great recruitment tool, this is also an opportunity for the members to demonstrate their skills to the people they protect. Get members of the public involved in safe training exercises (timing evolutions, recording data, taking pictures). This will instill in the

public a sense of confidence in the fire department and in your members a sense of pride in belonging.

Have an active fire prevention program. Encourage all recruits to take part in the program. This should be a flagship enterprise that both the department and the community are proud of. This is an opportunity again to get in front of the public with your uniform and spread a good message of safety and prevention.

If a piece of apparatus has chrome, then it should be shiny chrome! All of your gear should be well maintained and free from dirt etc. There should be a well-developed sense of pride in your apparatus looking it's best. Pre-worn gear is a financial fact of life in most departments but that does not mean that it can't be clean and well maintained. If a member's gear does not fit well then it should be replaced with equipment that does fit properly. The members should be proud to put on the gear and wear it in public, and actually look for opportunities to do so.

The department should realize that a key component of the organization is the public that they serve. Keeping the public informed of what is happening in the department is a continuation of the communications that the department leaders promote. A department to community website or newsletter that is frequently update is important to develop the trust that will link the two going forward. With a strong community outreach program and participation in community activities members can take additional pride in belonging.

## **Managing Risks**

On the job health risks are managed through training, operating procedures and proper safety equipment. The safety mindset starts at the top and works its way down to every recruit.

Off the job health risks are managed through medical examinations and lifestyle counseling. The leadership of the department should create an environment of wellness so that all members and their families can benefit from this.

Family concerns and information have to be addressed. Children need to be reassured that their parents are being properly protected. Spouses need to know that their loved one is not being placed in undue risks. Recruits, members and family should be kept up to date on all the insurances that exist for department members both on and off duty. There should be a leadership resource that conveys all the benefits (and necessary procedures for claiming those benefits) when the recruit starts with the department.

Line Of Duty injury and death benefits have to be spelled out as well as any additional coverage the department provides for its members. A spouse needs to know that the family is protected financially in the event a tragedy occurs.

In addition to health and life coverage, the department also has to indemnify the rescuer from liability that may be incurred during the performance of their duties. Through legislative protection and additional insurance coverage the member and their family have to feel as protected as possible. Like all other activities this has to be an ongoing process with regular reviews and updates. These updates have to be clearly communicated to the members when they are performed.

To retain the member, the member and their family has to know that the leadership of the department has the member's best interest in mind and will work toward that goal. Members that are satisfied in this respect will be more inclined to serve longer and more productive careers in the fire service.

### **Other Retention issues**

- Reciprocity of certification
- Diversity issues
- Managing cliques
- Fire and EMS conflicts
- Member emotional support
- Personnel Issues
- Recognition programs
- Incentives

The list goes on. A volunteer emergency service is only volunteer in so far as the members do not get paid. In everything else they must be professional. If the department does not have the resources to address these issues then they have to reach out to an outside organization that can provide these services in a professional manner. This may mean a contract with a professional services firm or reaching out to other service groups in the community and asking for their members for help.

Above all of the preceding advice you need to ask one question:

Are your members having fun?

Is the department a place where they go to serious work but enjoy their time doing it? If the answer is no, then you have to figure out why that is and fix it. Volunteer Fire Departments always had a strong social aspect to them, which has been pushed aside as departments strive to institute more "professional" outlooks and more rules. Maybe we have lost sight of the real goal, which is to help our community in their time of need.

We can achieve that goal by having a motivated, happy work force capable of rising to the challenges that they face, being supported by leaders that are aware of the problems facing today's volunteers and creating new methods of overcoming those challenges.

**Conclusion:**

Numbers being tossed around state that 60% of Volunteer departments are having trouble recruiting and maintaining members in the United States. Volunteerism is on the decline as people lead busier lives. The good news is that if this number is true then 40% of the departments are not having any problem keeping their ranks full.

Passive recruiting no longer is effective, a department has to go out and find new members and bring them in. Active recruiting is a planned process that is successful when it is carefully organized and implemented.

Members stay in departments when they are happy and the department is flexible in meeting the goals necessary for proper member participation. Member retention starts with good leadership and good leaders retain members.

In all things ask:

Will the recruit benefit from the process?

Will the member enjoy their time with the department?

By answering yes to both of these questions, your department will grow.

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Frontier Education Center with funding from:

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Rural & Frontier EMS Town Hall Meeting Summary

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Community Based Needs Assessment: Assisting Communities in Building a Stronger EMS System

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Rural and Frontier Emergency Medical Services Agenda for the Future

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Retention and Recruitment for the Volunteer Emergency Services Challenges and Solutions

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## Recruitment and Short/Long Term Retention

### Overview

The issue facing the Scottsville Fire Department Rescue Squad is the lack of personnel to operate on a 24 hour a day / 7 day a week basis. This issue prevents the delivery of patient care in a timely fashion, for a few reasons:

- When no crew is on duty, available staff has to be assembled, which takes additional time. Sufficient staff would allow duty crews to be available for a larger percentage of the time negating this assembly.
- If an outside agency has to be called into deliver care, their response is delayed as a dispatch allows a set amount of time for a crew to be assembled prior to handing the call off to another agency, and then that agency has to face an extended travel time to get to Scottsville.
- There are no properly trained crew members to first respond (decreasing time to first patient contact) while waiting for a mutual aid ambulance and/or staff to arrive.

The solution to these and other related problems are simple, have more staff available to answer calls for patient care. Obtaining the solution is not so easy. One way to solve the problem is buying a solution, either hiring staff to man our base during the time of day when we miss most calls, or contracting with a commercial agency to cover the calls we do not respond to immediately. This also creates new problems as hiring staff costs money, and contracting with a commercial agency is not going to provide us with coverage in the district unless we pay them to do so. With the recent public debate regarding the cost of the new fire hall, (which was touted as a mechanism to recruit and retain more volunteers) it would be difficult to approach the taxpayers for more money. Existing budgets are insufficient to fund it as they are now. Spending a lot of money on this problem is a solution, but a more practical solution would be to make a concerted effort to increase the number of volunteers. This increase will have expenses attached but not nearly as high as hiring staff or commercial contract options.

### Recruitment Options

There is a need for a large influx of staff into the rescue squad. The staff can be utilized to fill out the duty schedule and to increase our level of outreach activities. The primary goal of the recruitment effort should be to increase the number of qualified volunteer staff. Rather than concentrate our recruitment efforts just to medics, we should broaden our definition of staff and the duties they can perform:

- **Base staff** – these individuals have no patient contact, but serve in a clerical and administrative role, dealing with the necessary paperwork and inventory tasks etc.
- **Drivers** – these individuals are trained to drive the ambulance.
- **Certified First Responders** – the state certified individuals can respond to the scene and administer life saving first aid, or start the treatment process. The

CFR can also ride as an assistant with an EMT to assist in patient care.

- **Emergency Medical Technicians** – the state certified EMT's can respond as the medic on a call for assistance. By broadening the staff roles we can include a larger portion of the population during a recruitment effort. By being more inclusive we can attract individuals that want to serve but were hesitant for one reason or another. Efforts to recruit rescue squad staff from the existing fire department staff have been less than successful; it is therefore necessary to draw upon the public of our district as a source of recruits. Any recruitment effort should address the need for all 4 of the positions that can be filled and welcome any and all that apply for them. It should also be a specific event that has a start and end so that maximum effort can be expended for a short duration. (This is not to say that applicants would not be accepted at anytime, the effort in looking for applicants should be finite). I would recommend that we create a tiered recruiting drive aimed at culminating during EMS week (May 20th – 26th, 2007). During our activities this week we would introduce any new recruits to the public.

### **Recruitment Activities**

Starting in March we need to designate a recruitment officer for the Rescue Squad, they should be equipped with a unique telephone number and be able to answer most if not all questions that arise. All potential recruits should be routed to this person for consistency and for our quality control process. Color posters seeking recruits should be deployed in all public places in our response district. With the recruitment officer's contact information prominently displayed. These should be up by the first week in March. A second set of posters should be prepared to go out and replace these during the first week in April (with a contrasting color scheme) and a final replacement during the first week in May. We should deliver the same message, by 3 different delivery venues.

A lighted sign should be rented and placed in front of the fire station (or other prominent spot in the village) advertising our recruitment drive and contact information for the recruitment officer. All of the churches in the district should be approached about allowing a recruitment message to be delivered during their announcements at their services. This message should be scripted so that the church staff can deliver it or by any member of our department that is also a member of the congregation. A half sheet flyer with contact details should be available to be handed out at the end of the service by one or two members in uniform. This should be done once in March, once in April and twice-in May (if the clergy is willing to allow this frequency). All of the service organizations in the district should be approached about having a speaker attend at their regular meetings in April and May. A 5 – 7 minute recruitment message should be prepared for the first meeting and 2 – 3 minute follow-up message should be delivered at the second meeting. Again, the half sheet flyer should be available for all interested parties.

During the last week in March every employer in the district should be sent a letter asking for his or her cooperation in our recruitment drive. The letter should request permission to provide them with payroll envelope stuffers (our half sheet flyer, again), it should ask their policy on staff responding to emergencies during their work shift and if

they are amenable to these to items, seek permission to have a member address the staff during the next staff meeting or other convenient time. This is aimed primarily at daytime responders; we could assure the employer that we could keep their obligation to one or days a month. The key group of individuals that we should attempt to recruit is the stay at home parent that has all of their children in school. Typically this demographic is looking for an activity to perform that will fill the void of their children growing up. If we can get literature to go home with the students to be given to the parents, this would put us in front of them for another opportunity. If the school was hosting an event where the parents would be coming to the school, we should have uniformed personnel there to meet, greet and hand out information.

[As an aside, if we can get manpower to attend at athletic events at the school, we will have an excellent recruiting opportunity. This is more of an ongoing recruitment tool. ] By the first week of May we should have exposed *most* of the residents of our district with at least one recruitment message. Hopefully we will have touched them more than once. In the three weeks leading up to EMS week we should attempt to reach them at least once more. We should prepare shopping bag stuffers and ask the local merchants to give them to every customer. These stuffers should be also provided to the local restaurants to be included in take out and delivery orders (taped to pizza boxes, etc). This stuffer should be a two-sided affair with our standard recruitment message on one side and an invitation to the EMS week events on the other. The second week of May should see this stuffer mailed to every resident in the District. There should also be advertising in the local Pennysaver and in the Village/Town newsletters if they are coming out at these times.

The sign that was rented should now advertise the EMS week events that are coming up. During EMS Week we should have several outreach events that are also recruitment opportunities. These can include child safety seat checks; blood pressure clinics, blood glucose clinics (with our good friends from Henrietta or Gates), public access heart saver CPR courses or whatever the layperson's course is called now. This culminates in an open house with various activities designed to showcase EMS and fire/rescue with the Scottsville Fire Department.

At the end of this exercise we should have collected applications for potential members. The number of applications and effectiveness of the campaign will be dependant upon the delivery of material and community support that we get. As of the 2000 census there were 2011 households in the Town of Wheatland of which 835 households reside in the Village of Scottsville. Assuming we can get 2% return rate on the applications we should see between 16 and 40 applicants, also assuming a 50% immediate attrition rate of these applicants, we should anticipate our efforts to produce between 8 and 20 members. With no historical data to fall back on, the response rate is based upon statistical averages from literature reviews. We should be prepared to slow down or stop recruitment activities early if response is very good early. We should also be prepared for a more modest influx. Success of this venture may take a medium range view to gauge, as the activities that we do during this period will have a lasting impact on people in the community. Often times, individuals may require a period of time to convince them that EMS is something that they want to do. Reaching out to the community will have a lasting impact.

## Retention – Short Term

Provided we get a reasonable return of applicants and once they have been screened and vetted, we will be faced with the challenge of motivating and retaining the class of 2009. These individuals will be looking for an identity in our organization and a structured period of time to become acclimatized to the department, its rules and procedures, and the personalities that are involved.

Perhaps the hardest part of this process will be keeping them as members. Each new member should be immediately issued a uniform so that they can begin to identify with the organization. This should be provided very early in the process so that they feel it is important for them to belong. I would suggest that we keep it simple to an embroidered polo shirt, simple EMS trousers, standard screen printed T-Shirt and inexpensive Converse duty shoes. The package should be assembled for approximately \$100.00 per recruit. They should sign an agreement to return the clothing if they leave the department in the first year.

Recruits should be immediately set up with an in house training schedule geared towards one of the 4 positions that were discussed earlier. At least 4 months of biweekly training should be scheduled; this will include all recruits taking a full CPR/AED course during this time. The in house training should be goal oriented with the recruits being able to advance at their own pace. Each recruit should be assigned to an officer that will act as a mentor for that recruit. The mentor should be able to answer any question that the recruit has, facilitate any issues that arise and work with the recruit to become acclimatized to the department. Each officer (mentor) should meet one on one with the recruit at least once per month to allow for questions and information exchange. Although a one to one ratio of mentor to recruit is ideal, we lack the mentors to do this initially. The core EMS officers are going to have to be approached about doing the mentor duties. Those that agree will be trained in expectations and have to be guided through the process initially. The single key to success in short term retention will be proper mentoring. (see ***Mentoring Activities*** for more information)

After two months of orientation and in house training, it will be time to break the recruits into groups that will have to attend state training for CFR and EMT courses (as well as EVOC for drivers). Courses will have to be scheduled and the mentors should work with the recruits to get oriented in the courses. Study sessions and practical work sessions should be scheduled throughout the course duration to support the recruit's efforts. During the process, we will need to keep the recruit motivated with additional challenges as well as by providing them with tangible incentives. Providing them with a stethoscope when they start their course and Wek shirt or jacket when the fall weather settles in will be gestures of the department's willingness to continue to work with them. Once they have successfully completed their course work and have achieved their state certification, then they will work with their mentor to enter the clearing process. This process has to be user friendly enough that we can guide the person to cleared status as quickly as possible while maintaining an acceptable level of safety and quality assurance for the department. Once they are cleared the formal mentor/recruit relationship can be dissolved.

## **Retention – Long Term**

The members that have been recruited will leave over time. It is the duration of their stay with the department that we have to influence. These individuals will have come to the department with the goal of helping the community as a volunteer, that mindset has to be cultivated and allowed to grow. People become disillusioned when the mundane and rote overtake the reason that they joined in the first place. With a low call volume, it will be more of a challenge to keep members interested. To retain the new members we must make it easy for them to get value from being a member and make the overall experience “fulfilling”. The members must be treated as team members in a paramilitary organization. The chain of command can never be ignored; however, the members must be given opportunities to act autonomously. Duties have to be delegated to each of the members so that they can have a task to complete and extract a sense of pride in doing a job. Management has to review the goals set out and adjust them so that the tasks do not become onerous and the members do not become bored with the same tasks over time. A full training schedule must be maintained, allowing all of the EMS staff to work and train together. A skills matrix should be developed to allow the Drivers/CFRs/EMTs to practice and perfect their skills in a controlled environment. Accurate and accessible training records have to be kept as a tangible measure of their progress. The training should be kept fresh with a good mix of internal classes and external instructors brought in. Staff needs should be addressed before they become problems, this can occur through formal one on one session with the officers or through informal sessions. These informal sessions can take the form of meals shared together or other activities that can be used as team building exercises. Planned events where the entire team can bond socially are as important as any other activity, these activities have to be organized and scheduled in advance and participation should be encouraged. It is at these events that feedback can occur in a casual setting and the officers can take away issues and address them before they become serious. Pride in the job has to be addressed; this is to be done through recognition of service and extra effort as well as little things such as addressing equipment and uniform needs. Every staff member should be provided with all the tools they need to do their job including new uniforms as they are required (or before). Management’s prompt attention to maintenance and equipment issues, this demonstrates support for the role the members play in the organization. There should be a path for advancement clearly created in the organization, both in terms of management as well as skills development. Some members will be happy doing the role they entered the organization to do; others will need to grow beyond that. A clear path for growth has to be created so that the members can work towards their own personal development. Although hardly inclusive this list allows the management team to start looking at long-term retention goals for the organization. Ongoing recruitment has to be encouraged to supplement the staff that you have as well as replace the members that you lose through attrition. Striving to maintain staffing at 125% (over optimum) will assure the appropriate level of staffing to continue operations in the event of a large group of staff leaving at the same time. The recruits that are taken in today become the mentors of tomorrow.

## **Mentoring Activities**

The mentors in the department should be experienced in the tasks that they are overseeing (i.e. a certified EMT should oversee medics, while a cleared driver could oversee driver candidates). They should also be well versed in the workings of the department from a procedural, operational and corporate point of view. An overview document should be prepared that the mentor and the recruit can reference with key objectives. The mentor should maintain a knowledge checklist on each recruit that they work with. As the recruit becomes knowledgeable in a task then the mentor can record the date of evaluation or knowledge transfer. At the completion of the mentoring experience, all of the key topics should have been covered so that all members of the department can have a reasonable expectation of the knowledge of the recruit. The recruit should also be well prepared to deal with the day-to-day issues of working with the department. All mentors should make themselves available to the recruit through as many mechanisms as is reasonable. (Care has to be executed that the recruit does not abuse this privilege and infringe on the mentor's personal life). They should meet on a regular basis, as a group and in a one on one setting to discuss progress and issues that might arise. The goal is to have an experienced member guide the recruit through the initiation period when they could become lost. It is just as important to wean the recruit from the mentor once they have established a base of knowledge and this can be done by increasing the time between meetings and by breaking the dependency by allowing another mentor to take over once a recruit has achieved a specific level of knowledge. The mentors have to meet as a group to discuss their progress with each other and use this as a knowledge sharing opportunity to trade methods that have worked. Recruits and mentors should have the flexibility to change assignments based on personalities so that a degree of comfort is reached and maintained. Ultimately, the mentor/recruit relationship will form the framework for the recruit's experience with the department.

## **Summary**

People are waiting to be asked to become members of our department. We need to ask them. The primary expenses of the recruitment drive are centered on the costs of producing the printed artwork. The Village should be approached regarding supplementary funding, as they will benefit from the increased manpower. Once the staff is recruited, the real work will be retaining them in the short and long term. Many man-hours will have to be initially invested to keep the recruits motivated, but this investment will pay off once the recruits began to take over the same duties. This document is not meant to be a structured plan for recruitment, but rather a suggested overview of activities that would benefit the department. Each proposed action item would have to be discussed and planned out for maximum effectiveness. Will this proposal work? I cannot answer that question definitively, however, I know that it has a better chance than doing nothing at all.

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**Appendix 8.6**  
**Scottsville Rescue Squad – An Agenda For The Future**

## Scottsville Rescue Squad-An Agenda For The Future

### *Background:*

The Scottsville Fire Department has provided emergency ambulance service to the Scottsville and Wheatland areas since the early 1960's. Until 1992, the ambulance was funded exclusively through donations to the Fire Company through the annual fund drive. Staffing was provided by firefighters that were classified as "Company 2" members. These members had no voting rights and were not allowed to attend Department meetings.

In 1991, two members of "Company 2" petitioned the Fire Company for equal rights and treatment. To no avail, these members petitioned the Village Board of Trustees for the same. Also at the same time, members of the ambulance requested the Village of Scottsville fund ambulance operations. This was due to significantly increased costs in the two areas of insurance, and training.

In June of 1992, the Village of Scottsville created the 'Village of Scottsville Fire Department Rescue Squad' which is allowed under section 209 (b) of General Municipal Law (G.M.L.). The Village of Scottsville through Village taxes and monies received under contract by the Town of Wheatland and Town of Chili funded ambulance operations. The position of 'EMS Captain' was created, who was directly in charge of Departmental EMS operations, EMS budget administration, and EMS personnel. The EMS Captain reported directly to the Village Fire Commissioners (Trustees).

### *EMS Call Volume*

Much like the rest of the Country has seen, the amount of EMS calls has drastically increased over the past twenty-five years. This is likely due to the increasing population of elderly people in our community, as well as a significant increase in consumer expectations of EMS services. In 1991, there were 230 requests for EMS service. Compare this to 2007, there were 347 requests for EMS service. This represents an increase of fifty one percent increase (51%) in 16 years. In 1963 requests for service totaled 70. From 1963 through 2007, there has been a 395% increase in EMS calls. This represents an average increase in call volume of nine percent (9%). Given the rates of increases in requests for EMS service, conservative projected call volume in the year 2013 is forecast to be near 450 requests for service, and in 2018 near 600 requests for EMS service.

### **Recommendations:**

It is recommended that the Village of Scottsville and the leadership of the Rescue Squad plan for future growth in areas of increasing call volume, increased needs for staffing, investigate alternative sources of revenue to keep up with increasing call volumes and rapidly increasing cost of providing the service.

### *Staffing*

The Scottsville Fire Department, Inc. provides staffing for the Rescue Squad under contract. Staff members are all volunteer. There is a strong desire by members to keep a volunteer base for staffing. The minimum crewmembers required on a request for EMS service is two, a certified EMT and a certified Driver. Much like many volunteer fire and EMS departments, we have seen a significant decrease in the number of volunteers. In 1998, there was a total of

thirteen (13) cleared EMT's practicing. Compare this with the 2007 total of six (6), which represents a fifty-four percent (54%) decrease in the number of medics. In the total number of member's category, we have seen a similar trend, with a 45% decrease in membership. Currently, most of the members are not available during the daytime hours during the week. This is due to their full-time jobs. This leads a significant gap in available manpower to respond to requests for service during this time frame. Many of our drivers and medics also work 1 or 2 part time jobs as well, leaving some weekend and evening gaps in coverage.

### Recommendations:

Although there has been a recent influx of new members, specifically EMT's in the past 12 months, the number of volunteers has been steadily decreasing. Recommendations include enhancing the intake and interview process for volunteers, instituting an 'enhanced incentive program' for Rescue Squad volunteers, planning for the need for compensated staff members in the future (specifically daytime Monday through Friday) and creating an inviting atmosphere where people want to volunteer.

- **Enhanced Incentive Program:** This proposal includes providing an incentive or stipend for volunteers to increase participation in emergency operations. This would give volunteers the ability to choose from an 'ala-carte' menu of incentives for participation. The incentives would be of nominal value and would be compliant with US Dept of Labor Opinion Letter dated August 7, 2006 to the IAFC, regarding 'payments' to volunteers. Volunteers would be assigned a nominal dollar value for each emergency response attended or duty shift completed. The volunteer could then apply this 'stipend' to the following list:
  - Cash payment monthly;
  - Deposit into a retirement account;
  - Credit towards Village sponsored health insurance
  - Bank roll money towards purchase of higher ticket items (i.e.-laptop computer for a college student, etc)
  - Bankroll money towards purchase of job related equipment (gear not supplied such as leather bunker boots, light bars, etc.)
- Enrolling in a group life insurance program for all active Rescue Squad members.
- **Intake and interview process:** Currently when members apply to the Fire Co., seldom if ever are personal references checked, along with references from previous fire or EMS Departments. The interview process in not efficient or informative for either the applicant or interviewers. There is also no process or procedure for a new member 'orientation'. Add this to a general culture where new members are not 'accepted' by current members. I recommend that the intake/interview/orientation process be detailed into a policy, with requirements to check references, improvements to the structure of

new member interviews, and creation of an orientation and mentor program for new members.

- With the current and anticipated shortage of volunteers, especially during daytime hours, we must plan for the need for compensated staffing during weekdays particularly during the 6a-6p timeframe. While it is hoped that providing “enhanced incentives” as stated above will solve this problem, we also must be prepared for the possibility that daytime coverage will still be of concern. There are generally two accepted practices to providing staffing—
  - Village Rescue Squad Employees: This would involve hiring of employees by the Village. To provide adequate coverage, more than one employee would need to be hired (one FT, one PT or other combination). Anticipated annual expense ~\$60,000 (12 hrs/day for 5 days)
  - Contract Staffing: Village would contract with an EMS staffing agency for EMS coverage. Adequate coverage would be guaranteed by staffing agency, and they would handle all payrolls, and other related employee concerns. Anticipated annual expense ~\$60,000 (12 hrs/day for 5 days)

It should be noted that the above estimates are based on one-person coverage during the daytime hours. The rescue squad commonly has one volunteer respond for daytime calls, but lacks the 2<sup>nd</sup> crewmember to respond on the ambulance.

- Creating a culture of parity within the department and creating an inviting atmosphere where volunteers will want to respond will not be so easy. For many years, Rescue Squad members have been treated in a less than desirable manner. This ranges from Chiefs to firefighters. This practice needs to stop immediately. While there has been a dramatic improvement in this area in the last 3 years, there is still room for improvement. I have no solutions to this problem at this time

### *Call Coverage*

Significant increases in call volume and significant decreases in members, has led to a decrease in call coverage rates. Until 2002, we enjoyed an exceptionally high rate of call coverage due to members that were available during the daytime weekday hours. Since that time, rates have dropped to less than desirable numbers. In 2002 the call coverage rate was at 93%. The 2007 percentage was 77%. Of the 23% of calls not covered in 2007, 90% of those calls were during the 6am to 6pm Monday through Friday timeframe. Monday through Friday daytimes are the weak point for call coverage.

#### **Recommendation:**

See *Staffing* section in document.

### *Leadership*

Prior to the Village assuming control of EMS operations in 1992, a Director of Operations oversaw the Ambulance. EMS members had no rights in the Fire Company, were not allowed to

attend meetings, or vote on Fire Co matters. The only member allowed in Fire Co meetings was the Director of Operations. In 1992, the Village created the position of EMS Captain, who reported directly to the Village Board of Trustees, and has control over EMS budgets, and personnel.

In early 2008, the Village re-structured the leadership titles to more closely reflect job responsibilities. The position of EMS Chief was created. EMS Captain and Lieutenant positions were preserved. Like all other members of the Rescue Squad, a volunteer holds the EMS Chief position. The job responsibilities are quite extensive, and require about 40 hours a month dedication for administrative duties.

Rescue Squad operations are overseen by the Village of Scottsville Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees are residents of the Village of Scottsville that are elected to three-year terms. Trustee positions are part time. The Mayor of Scottsville chairs the Trustees. The Village appoints a liaison to Fire and EMS operations yearly.

**Recommendation:**

It is recommended that the Village Trustees not change the current structure and titles that was recently adopted. This will create a leadership progression in the Department this is in parity with the FD, and in line with duties and responsibilities.

*Fire Service Filling the Gap?*

Traditionally, fire department operations have complimented EMS operations. When EMS is not able to obtain a crew for the ambulance, the Fire Department is requested to respond on all life threatening calls. In the past five years, the fire department has been requested to respond on 217 'EMS Assist' calls. Of the 217 requests since 2003, the fire department has responded on 4 requests, representing a 2% response rate. Most Urban and Suburban fire departments have embraced EMS response as a valid, legitimate need, and have filled the gap. The Scottsville Fire Department leadership (prior to the Chief Officers in 2008) has generally not embraced EMS, and in fact has taken action to hinder EMS Operations and discourage members from participating in EMS Operations and activities. Additionally, an increase in 'technical' responses dictates the need for more firefighters that are trained at the EMT level.

**Recommendation:**

It is recommended that ALL interior firefighters be trained to the NYS Basic EMT level, all exterior personnel be trained to the NYS CFR level, and all members including administrative personnel and social members be required to have minimum CPR and AED training. This should be done over a multi-year period, with benchmarks to track compliance. Suggested benchmarks would be 25% compliant by year 2010, 75% by 2013 and 100% compliance by 2015. This should also be placed as a requirement for Line Office in the fire department by the year 2010.

*Motor Vehicles and Major Equipment*

The Scottsville Rescue Squad operates two NYS Certified type III ambulances. Ambulance 4619 is a 1996 Ford E-350 with a custom finished Marque ambulance body. Ambulance 4629 is a 2002 Ford E-450 with a custom finished PL Custom ambulance body. The ambulances are on

a fourteen-year replacement schedule. 4619 is due for replacement in 2009, with 4629 being replaced in 2016. Other major equipment includes a 2003 17' cargo trailer, originally purchased as a multiple casualty incident (MCI) response trailer. The Rescue Squad also owns a 199x John Deere Gator utility vehicle with a Med Bed patient carrier, along with a custom aluminum trailer for towing the gator to incident scenes. Discussion has taken place in the past on reducing the number of ambulances in our fleet to one.

**Recommendation:**

The Village continues with purchasing and maintaining on the current schedule. To reduce the fleet to one ambulance would provide minimal cost savings annually. The number of EMS calls is on the increase. Having one ambulance would create the issue of not having apparatus available in the event of mechanical failure or routine maintenance. The incremental cost of maintaining the second ambulance is minimal. If two ambulances are needed in the future, there will be a significant up front cost to obtaining the second ambulance.

Obtaining a response vehicle for EMS operations should also be considered in the future. This would be a 'fly-car' type vehicle where a medic could respond directly to the scene to provide emergency medical care, which would cut response time from time of dispatch to medic on scene nearly in half. Possibilities include acquisition of the retired Fire Chief vehicle when that is replaced.

*Facilities*

In 2003, the Scottsville Fire Department, Rescue Squad and Fire Company moved from the old fire/EMS station on Main Street to the current location on Scottsville Mumford Road. There is significant cost savings to tax payers having fire and EMS facilities collocated. Radio infrastructure, offices, sleeping quarters and meeting spaces are all shared and represent savings having these facilities located in the same location.

**Recommendation:**

It is recommended that the Village continue to house administrative and operational facilities collocated with fire operations to enjoy the cost benefit.

*Funding*

Rescue Squad operations are funded by the Village of Scottsville. Monies are raised through Village tax and through contracts for service between the Village and the Town of Wheatland and the Village and the Town of Chili. Current budget amounts are as follows:

|                      |          |
|----------------------|----------|
| Contractual Expense: | \$20,500 |
| Equipment:           | \$12,000 |
| Vehicle Reserve:     | \$15,300 |
| Total:               | \$47,800 |

The Scottsville Fire Company also periodically assists with large capital equipment purchases with 'Memorial Fund' monies, which are obtained when citizens donate money to the Fire Co. in memory of a recently deceased individual. The last purchase that was made with these funds was new Stryker gurneys 8 years ago.

The Village Trustees have generally provided an annual increase of 2%-3% for contractual and equipment budget lines. During the 2006-2007 fiscal year, the Village increased the vehicle reserve line from \$11,000 annually to \$15,000 annually to address previous monetary shortfalls

at ambulance replacement time. Unfortunately, increases to contractual and equipment budgets have not kept pace with the rapid increases in goods and services.

It should be noted that insurance premiums consist of about 30% (\$6,000) of the contractual budget.

Village trustees have taken preliminary efforts to migrate into 3<sup>rd</sup> party billing for EMS service. Estimates place income at \$105,000 annually when 3<sup>rd</sup> party billing begins. Taken right off the top is the fee for the 3<sup>rd</sup> party-billing provider, which will be approximately \$10,000 annually.

#### **Recommendations:**

It is recommended that the Village continue to pursue billing for EMS service, with a start date of January 1, 2009. This would fill the voids of budgetary needs for the Rescue Squad and provide funding for proposed 'enhanced incentive' program. This would also allow for revenue not expended to be saved in a reserve account designated for Rescue Squad use for anticipated needs in the future for paid staffing in the future. The first 2-3 years of billing for EMS Service will be a learning curve, and budgets and allotments of monies by the Village could then take place if necessary.

#### *Summary*

The Scottsville Rescue Squad has a strong history of providing the finest in pre hospital emergency care to our service area and neighboring towns through mutual aid. Unfortunately, like many other volunteer emergency services across the country, we have suffered crippling losses in the number of volunteers. Couple this with a steady increase in call volume, and EMS call coverage has declined to near unacceptable levels.

Substantial changes in the way we "do business" must take place if we wish to continue to be "open for business" in the future. With creativity and open minds, the Scottsville Rescue Squad can once again be one of the premier EMS providers in the region as we once were.

## **Appendix 8.7 Standards List**

## Scottsville Fire/Rescue Strategic Planning

### REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

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#### **NFPA**

##### **What Are NFPA Standards?**

Consensus standards are developed by specific industries to set forth widely accepted standards of care and operations for certain practices. Standards are an attempt by the industry or profession to self-regulate by establishing minimal operating, performance, or safety standards, and they establish a recognized standard of care. They are written by consensus committees composed of industry representatives and other affected parties. The NFPA has many standards, which affect fire departments. The standards should be followed to protect fire and rescue personnel from unnecessary workplace hazards and because they establish the standard of care that may be used in civil lawsuits against fire and rescue departments.

##### **Application of NFPA Standards to Volunteers**

In most cases, compliance with NFPA standards is voluntary. However, in some cases, Federal or state OSHA agencies have incorporated wording from NFPA standards into regulations. In these cases, the compliance with the standards is mandatory.

Regardless of whether compliance with an NFPA standard is voluntary or mandatory, fire and rescue departments must consider the impact of "voluntary" standards on private litigation. In some states, a department may be liable for the negligent performance of their duties. Even in states that protect rescue workers under an immunity statute, most state laws do not protect fire or rescue departments for grossly negligent acts. Essentially, negligence involves the violation of a standard of care that results in injury or loss to some other individual or organization. In establishing the standard of care for rescue operations, the courts will frequently look to the "voluntary" standards issued by NFPA and other organizations. Although "voluntary" in name, these standards can become, in effect, the legally enforceable standard of care for fire or rescue department. Accordingly, fire and rescue departments should pay close attention to applicable standards.

\*\*The above is an excerpt from the NVFC website at [www.nvfc.org](http://www.nvfc.org)\*\*

- 450: Guide for emergency medical services and systems. **NON COMPLIANT**
- 471: Responding to Haz-Mat Incidents.
- 472: Competence of responders to Haz-Mat Incidents. COMPLIANT
- 473: Competencies for EMS Personnel responding to Haz-Mat/WMD Incidents. COMPLIANT
- 1001: Qualifications for firefighters. **NON COMPLIANT**
- 1002: Fire apparatus driver/operator qualifications. **NON COMPLIANT**
- 1021: Standard on Fire Officer Qualifications **NON COMPLIANT**
- 1026: Standard for IMS Personnel qualifications. COMPLIANT

- 1201: Guide for providing emergency service to the public: **NON COMPLIANT**
- 1221: Emergency Services communications systems. **COMPLIANT**
- 1401: Recommended practice for training reports and records. **NON COMPLIANT**
- 1403: Standard on live fire training evolutions. **NON-COMPLIANT**
- 1404: Standard on FD respiratory protection training. **NON COMPLIANT**
- 1410: Standard on training for emergency scene ops. **NON COMPLIANT**
- 1451: Standard on fire service vehicle operations training. **NON COMPLIANT**
- 1500: Standard of Fire Fighter Health and Safety. **NON-COMPLIANT**
- 1521: Standard on Fire Department Safety Officer. **NON COMPLIANT**
- 1561: Standard on incident mgmt. systems. **COMPLIANT**
- 1581: Standard on medical program requirements for firefighters **NON COMPLIANT**
- 1582: Medical requirements for Fire Fighters. **COMPLIANT**
- 1583: Standards on health related fitness programs. **NON COMPLIANT**
- 1584: Standard on ReHab during incidents and training **COMPLIANT**
- 1600: Standards on Disaster Mgmt and Business continuity programs **NON COMPLIANT**
- 1620: Recommended practice for pre-incident planning. **NON COMPLIANT**
- 1720 Standards on org. and deployment by volunteer FD's. **NON COMPLIANT**
- 1901: Standard on Automotive Fire Apparatus. **COMPLIANT**
- 1971: Standard on protective clothing for structural firefighters. **NON COMPLIANT**
- 1975: Standard on station/work uniforms for fire and emerg. Svcs. **NON COMPLIANT**
- 1801: Standard on thermal imagers. **COMPLIANT**
- 1851: Standard on selection, care and maintenance of structural protective clothing **NON COMPLIANT**
- 1852: Standard on selection, care maintenance of SCBA. **NON COMPLIANT**
- 1936: Standard on powered rescue tools. **COMPLIANT**
- 1952: Standard on surface water operations protective clothing (2010)
- 1981: Standard on open circuit SCBA **COMPLIANT**
- 1982: PASS systems for Fire Fighters **COMPLIANT**
- 1983: Standard on life safety rope, harnesses and hardware **COMPLIANT-**
- 1911: Service testing, inspection, maint of Automotive fire apparatus **COMPLIANT**
- 1932: Use, maintenance and testing of ground ladders **COMPLIANT**
- 1961: Fire Hose - **COMPLIANT**
- 1962: Care, use and testing of fire hose, couplings and nozzles **NON COMPLIANT**
- 1999: Standard on EMS protective garments. **COMPLIANT**

\*\*\*A note of interest on NFPA regulations: NFPA does not recognize “Essentials of Firefighting” or equivalent. Minimum training for structural firefighters is “Firefighter I”\*\*\*

## **OSHA**

- USC 654(a): OSHA General Duty Clause. **COMPLIANT**
- 29 CFR § 1910.156: **COMPLIANT**
- 29 CFR § 1910.132-.140: **COMPLIANT**

- 29 CFR § 1910.146: Confined Space Training: **NON COMPLIANT**
- 29 CFR § 1910.147: Lock out/Tag out procedures: **NON COMPLIANT**
- 29 CFR § 1910.1030: Occupational Exposure to BBP: COMPLIANT
- 29 CFR § 1926.650-.652: Trench Collapse/Rescue Ops: **NON COMPLIANT**
- 29 CFR § 1910.120: Haz-Mat Operations: **NON COMPLIANT**

PESH: PESH has adopted ALL regulations of OSHA.

NIOSH: NIOSH is a research agency and has no responsibility for compliance or enforcement of workplace hazards

#### EMS LAWS and REGULATIONS:

- Public Health Law, Article 30- Emergency Medical Services: COMPLIANT
- Public Health Law, Article 30a- EMS Training: COMPLIANT
- Public Health Law, Article 30b- Emergency Medical, trauma and disaster care: COMPLIANT
- Public Health Law, Article 30c- EMS for Children: COMPLIANT
- HIPAA: COMPLIANT

#### **FIRE/EMS RESPONSE TIME STANDARDS**

Fire: (report of) : Manpower of 10 within 10 minutes 80% of the time. (source: NFPA 1720)  
**WAITING ON INFO FROM CHIEF EMERSON**

EMS: Priority 1 or 2: 8:59 minutes/<=90%  
 Priority 3 or 4: 15:59 minutes/<=90% (Source: Monroe County Bureau of EMS)

|                                 |                      |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| Priority 1: 8.7 minute average  | COMPLIANT            |
| Priority 2: 10.8 minute average | <b>NON COMPLIANT</b> |
| Priority 3: 10.7 minute average | COMPLIANT            |
| Priority 4: 10.0 minute average | COMPLIANT            |

NOTE: It should be noted here that MLREMS and the NYS DOH consider the Scottsville EMS operation a “rural” EMS entity. The standards cited however, are for “suburban EMS” operations. We believe we should hold ourselves to the higher, suburban standard however.

VARIOUS NYS LAWS AND STATUTES: Due to the vast number of applicable laws (Not for Profit, Town, Village, G.M.L., Insurance, etc.) and statutes, I have only listed items we are NOT in compliance with.

- Not for Profit §1402, 519: Duty to file reports-->annual report, report to County Clerk.
- Not for Profit §605: Notice of members for meetings w/ vote. COMPLIANT

- Not for Profit §609: No statute allows for “absentee ballots”. Only proxy voting allowed. COMPLIANT
- GML §204a: Local municipality must be notified in writing of fund raising
- We need a policy relating to Freedom of Information Law (FOIL), and policy for releasing documents
- Need policy relating to the “Open Meeting Law”.

COMMUNICATIONS:

- Narrow-Band Compliance: NON COMPLIANT (Minitor V’s)
- P25 Compliance in future???

## **Appendix 8.8 Major Department Equipment List**

|  |                     |                     |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Apparel</b>                                     | <b>66,448.53</b>    |                     |
| <b>Air Packs</b>                                   | <b>50,126.07</b>    |                     |
| <b>Computer/Laptop Equipment</b>                   | <b>11,756.53</b>    |                     |
| <b>Thermo Imaging Camera</b>                       | <b>12,200.00</b>    |                     |
| <b>RESCUE SQUAD AND FIRE<br/>DEPARTMENTNT</b>      |                     |                     |
| <b>Rolling Stock (Trucks &amp; Other Vehicles)</b> |                     |                     |
| 1996 Marque Ambulance # 4619                       | 79,890.00           |                     |
| 2002 Ford E450 Ambulance # 4629                    | 98,060.00           |                     |
| 2000 Gator 6x4 w/Rear Hitch & Trailer # 4606       | 13,437.81           |                     |
| 1989 Ford Grass Fire Truck #4616                   | 35,000.00           |                     |
| 1990 Pierce Pumper/Tanker #4617                    | 207,277.00          |                     |
| 1995 Pierce Pumper/Rescue #4613                    | 249,205.00          |                     |
| 2000 Pierce Heavy Rescue #4618                     | 290,803.00          |                     |
| 2002 Chevy Tahoe 4C16 Vehicle                      | 29,576.00           |                     |
| 2005 Rosenbauer Pumper #4615                       | 293,144.00          |                     |
| Water Rescue Boat and Trailer #4608                | 2,438.00            |                     |
|  | <b>1,298,830.81</b> | <b>1,298,830.81</b> |
| <b>Radio Equipment Related Communications</b>      | <b>38,054.40</b>    |                     |
| <b>Heart Start/Difibulators</b>                    | <b>25,126.35</b>    |                     |
| <b>Computer Related Equipment</b>                  | <b>18,331.82</b>    |                     |
| <b>Grand Total Rolling Stock Only</b>              |                     | <b>1,298,830.81</b> |
| <b>Date: November 2008</b>                         |                     |                     |

Note: The values listed are the original purchase prices, not replacement prices.

## **Appendix 8.9 Community Outreach Reference Material**

### **Goal: Implement a Community Outreach Program**

To maintain community support, continue Village funding, enhance recruitment, and demonstrate value to our service territory, the Scottsville Fire Department will implement a community outreach program. As an active and critical community component, the fire department needs to regularly communicate the department's mission, values, and commitment to the greater Scottsville/Wheatland/Chili community.

Community outreach, as a strategy, can be accomplished in a variety of ways. Efforts at publicizing department events, participating in community events like the festival and parades, and sponsoring fundraisers that are entertainment (turkey party) all highlight the qualities of the department.

This recommendation takes the approach above a bit further. The goal is to actively approach community organizations and groups and offer speakers for meetings, events, and special occasions. A "speakers group" will be formed of department members that are willing to periodically present on behalf of the department. Individuals will be chosen for their ability to present a positive message about the department and have special knowledge on a subject (Glenn Sickles and fire prevention).

The department will set a goal of making ten (10) presentations in 2009. Standard "talking points" will be prepared about the department to be used as initial material to be interwoven into the particular topic chosen or desired by the organization. Sample topics that we could discuss with organizations include: the difference between department apparatus, safety concerns when responding to a fire or EMS incident, why we cut holes in roofs, homeland security, how mutual aid works, radio systems, 9-1-1, strategic planning, changes in the fire service and EMS, and so on.

Some of the community organizations that should be approached are included in the matrix below. There are many more, but this will serve as a starting point. The potential topics are for example purposes only.

| <b>Organization or Event</b>   | <b>Potential Topics or Presentation Ideas</b>  |
|--|--|
| Wheatland Chamber of Commerce  | Relationship between growth and availability of volunteers for the fire department                               |
| Wheatland-Chili H.S. DWI Program   | Crash Simulation   |
| Rotary Club  | Challenges facing the fire department are like any other business: government mandates, funding, personnel, etc. |
| Lions Club   | Sense of service to the community by providing essential emergency services                                      |
| Blood pressure checks for people in the community and at the Senior Center | Discuss the challenges and rewards of delivering services to the local community                                 |
| Conduct a health fair for  | Discuss issues of safety around the house, the need for  |

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| community members                   | a family emergency plan and how to communicate in an emergency  |
| American Legion                     | Discuss homeland security, personal preparation, and thank them for their service to the country            |
| Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts | Discuss general safety, the steps in family emergency planning, what they can do to be safe in an emergency |
| Faith-based groups                  | Discuss fire safety and general emergency planning  |

To reiterate, the goal here is to reach out to the community with a positive message about the fire department and provide them some information that is valuable to their everyday experience and relative to their interests.

As part of this effort, the "speakers group" will prepare handout products that can be distributed at the presentations. These products will be prepared and approved by the appropriate department official best positioned to deliver a decision on the material (President, Fire Chief, EMS Chief, etc.). Products might include a general description of the department mission and equipment, basic fire prevention steps, basic family emergency plan steps, etc.

## **Appendix 8.10 Training Audit**