



**CITY OF BARABOO, WI  
OPERATIONS STUDY**

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**CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION**

***Project Overview***

RW Management Group, Inc. was retained by the City of Baraboo to conduct an operations study of the Baraboo District Ambulance Service.

The Study will provide recommendations and options for the City and BDAS to use now and in the future, when assessing department needs. Based upon the proposal submitted by RW Management Group, Inc. (RW) in May, 2013, the scope of the project was to perform an Operations Study to assist the City and BDAS in developing a long-range plan for administrative and managerial improvements. This study was designed to have an independent third party review current service administration, operations, rules, regulations, personnel procedures, operating procedures and provide recommendations on future departmental needs, both short and long term. Further, an evaluation of the overall organization and staffing levels of the service was reviewed and a recommended timeline for implementation if needed. Part of the review was an analysis of equipment and vehicles to assess equipment based on the services offered and make recommendations on future equipment needs. Finally, the City desired to have a review of the financial management of the service to determine fiscal needs and determine impacts on future levy projections.

The findings and recommendations are related to the BDAS operations, administration, and response for services rendered, related human resources, and equipment and program review. The review included the following categories:

- Governance and Administration
- Assessment and Planning
- Goal and Objectives
- Financial Resources
- Programs
- Physical Resources
- Human Resources



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***Project Work Tasks***

To complete the objectives set forth by the City, RW evaluated the operations of BDAS. RW met with and gathered the needs and concerns of service personnel. RW also met with City and District administration to further understand the growth potential of the City and contracted areas to determine the relationship between the projected growth of the City/District and needs of the Department.

The following presents an overview of the work tasks completed by RW during the project.

- Developed a project team of appropriate users and stakeholders to oversee and participate in the project.
- Conducted a Project Planning Meeting with RW Project Manager, the Project Team and key project personnel. Defined scope and mission, discussed work plans, established liaison responsibilities, coordinated project schedules and confirmed other general arrangements.
- Obtained and reviewed documentation provided by the project team pertaining to the project.
- Conducted a community focus meeting to elicit input from members of the community.
- Conducted interviews and on-site observation to evaluate the current, and future, needs and standards of performance of the Department internally and in relation to other surrounding departments. In conducting this study, we met with representatives from the following agencies:
  - City of Baraboo Mayor
  - City of Baraboo Administrator & Other City Administrative staff
  - City of Baraboo Fire Chief
  - City of Baraboo Police Chief
  - BDAS Board of Directors
  - BDAS Line Personnel
  - BDAS Administrative Operational Staff (Lt's, Captain's & Chief)
  - BDAS Office Manager
  - BDAS Billing Coordinator
  - BDAS IT Captain
  - BDAS Attorney
  - BDAS Medical Director
  - St. Clare Hospital Administrator
  - Neighboring EMS Agencies
  - Neighboring Municipal Leaders



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Interviews and observations primarily focused on the following:

- Current EMS operations, staffing and levels of service
  - EMS workload, call volume and activity
  - Administrative Organizational Structure
  - Department Policies and Procedures
  - Analysis of By-Laws, regulations and rules of the Department
  - Facilities
  - Major Equipment
  - Future Growth
  - Community relationships
- Prepared for and facilitated a project status meeting to discuss the results of the interviews and on-site observations with the Project Team.
  - Reviewed the present EMS workflows and processes to analyze and develop potential organizational and operational requirements. This review was based on the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services (CAAS) categories and criteria. The performance indicators that were examined include the following:
    - Governance and Administration
    - Assessment and Planning
    - Goals and Objectives
    - Financial Resources
    - Programs
    - Physical Resources
    - Human Resources
    - Essential Resources
    - Training
    - Clinical Standards
    - External System Relations
  - Determined any public safety industry standards and trends related to the Department's operational requirements. During the development of all recommendations, RW considered many factors and standards as a basis for recommendations, including:
    - National Highway Safety Traffic Administration (NHSTA)
    - National Fire Service Accreditation Program (NFSAP)
    - National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)
    - Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA)
    - National Fire Administration (NFA)
    - Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
    - Insurance Services Office (ISO) Rating Schedule
    - Local Fire Protection Ordinances
    - State of Wisconsin Statutes and Administrative Code



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- Developed a comprehensive EMS organizational analysis, utilizing the information provided by the documentation received, the interviews and on site observations. The projected growth and level of service needs were considered during the development of these recommendations. Recommendations included:
  - Effectiveness, efficiency and performance of current EMS operations
  - Efficient utilization of station resources
  - Administrative growth and organizational structure
  - Review and analysis of the “corporate culture”
  - Review of Department policies and procedures
  - Analysis of Personnel and staffing needs
- Facilitated a Recommendations Meeting to present preliminary recommendations and obtain feedback from the Project Team.
- Listed and described the findings and recommendations on the EMS governance and administration, assessment and planning, goals and objectives, financial resources, programs, physical resources, human resources, essential resources, training, and external system relations, and all other items evaluated and analyzed during the project.
- Assembled the Study document. Performed a detailed quality assurance review of the document to ensure that the document meets the expectations of the Project Team and conforms to RW's standards.
- Prepared and delivered the draft Study to the Project Team for review.
- Facilitated a Study Review Meeting with the Project Team one (1) week after initial delivery to answer questions regarding the content of the Plan. Made any changes to the Plan based on the discussions at the Study Review Meeting. Produced and delivered the final document copies to the Project Team.
- Presented the findings and recommendations of the Study to the City Council.

#### ***Overview of the Current Demographics and Environment***

The City of Baraboo has a population of approximately 12,048 in 2012. The City of Baraboo is located in Sauk County, 40 miles northwest of Madison and is approximately 8 miles south of Wisconsin Dells. The City has experienced a progressive rate of growth, with its population growing steadily over the last decade. Baraboo has a diverse landscape with rural lands, subdivisions, commercial establishments, industrial parks and municipal buildings and a large seasonal tourist population. The City is surrounded by and BDAS has mutual aid agreements for EMS response with; Dells-Delton EMS, Sauk Prairie Ambulance Reedsburg Ambulance, Spring Green Ambulance and Camp Douglas Ambulance. The BDAS was established January 1, 1993 under Section 66.30 Wis. Statutes to provide EMS services to the City of Baraboo, Village of



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North Freedom, Village of West Baraboo, Township of Baraboo, Township of Excelsior (portion), Township of Fairfield, Township of Greenfield, and Township of Sumpter (portion) At the present time, the department has approximately 52 employees of which approximately 25 are part time. Positions include the Chief, 2 Captain's, 3 Lieutenants, various office personnel, training personnel, field paramedic personnel, etc.

#### ***EMS Operations Review and Administrative Study***

To present the findings and recommendations that resulted from the engagement, RW has prepared this document; commonly referred to as the ***EMS Operations Review and Administrative (Study)***.

The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2 – Operational Recommendations: This section lists the findings and presents recommendations on the current and future issues associated with organizational aspects of the Department. This section is outlined in the following sections:
  - Governance and Administration
  - Assessment and Planning
  - Goals and Objectives
  - Financial Resources
  - Programs
  - Physical Resources
  - Human Resources
- Chapter 3 – Implementation Plan by Priority: This chapter contains a phased implementation for the recommendations made in the ***Study***.
- Chapter 4 – Budget Examples: Several examples have been provided to reflect different scenarios and the effect that each scenario would have on the bottom line budget.
- Chapter 5 – Management Summary: A summarized version of the ***Study*** is presented, highlighting the projects objectives and recommendations.
- Chapter 6 – Glossary: A glossary of terms is presented for reference.



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### CHAPTER 2 – OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

#### ***Operational Overview and Recommendations***

As stated earlier, the objectives of this project were to evaluate the Baraboo District Ambulance Service (BDAS) on behalf of the City of Baraboo and make recommendations for the Department's short/long term organizational and administrative needs. The Report includes findings and recommendations relating to the Governance and Administration, Assessment and Planning, Goals and Objectives, Financial Resources, Programs, Physical Resources, Human Resources and the potential for future regionalization possibilities of the BDAS. This section evaluates the Department's present EMS organizational and administrative needs, and makes recommendations relating to the categories listed above. This review was based on the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services. (CAAS)

The BDAS overall is doing a very good job of maintaining high standards in providing emergency medical services. Department personnel displayed professionalism and were very cooperative throughout the review.

#### ***Governance and Administration***

##### **Findings**

The BDAS is an organization established by Section 66.30 of Wisconsin State Statutes. The governing authority is the Baraboo District Ambulance Service Commission Board of Directors and is responsible for Department over-sight, performance program approval, and ensuring policy compliance by the Department. Bylaws were created to provide the governance guidelines for operations. There are communication processes in place between the District Commission and the EMS Chief to help guide the Commission and Department in: policy making, planning, compliance with legal requirements, and the department's vision and mission. RW Management has concluded that at times there seems to be inconsistency in communications and miscommunications between the members that sit on the Commission Board and how they report back to their respective Boards and Councils. This has created trust issues as well as a fragmented structure for the EMS Chief to interface with the various agencies when conducting business.

RW Management found a significant concern among Commission members regarding the voting rights on the Commission. Currently, all contributing members do not have consistent voting privileges on the Commission. There are eight (8) participating municipalities and at any given time, four (4) of the municipalities do not have voting privileges, therefore creating a situation of taxation without representation. The bylaws authorize seven (7) voting Commissioners and one (1) non-voting commissioner. The City of Baraboo receives four (4) votes and the other seven (7) municipalities receive three (3) votes. St. Clare Hospital appoints a member to fill the non-voting position.

The relationship between BDAS and St. Clare Hospital has deteriorated over the past several years. The hospital agrees that BDAS provides quality patient care for the patients that it delivers to St. Clare and likewise for the patients that are transferred to other medical facilities from St. Clare. There have been several issues of different nature that have been presented



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and have not been completely resolved to date. Interfacility transport capability, expectation and requirements appear to be misunderstood. The BDAS Medical Director was not chosen by St. Clare and appears to be an ongoing source of concern. Acceptance of BDAS Medical Protocols by St. Clare's has created concern and misinformation in treatment capabilities and concern of improper medication administration.

BDAS is what is known as a “municipal third service”, which means that it is non-fire and non-law enforcement, but still represents municipal services. The service has approximately 52 total personnel functioning in Administrative, office, billing, infrastructure, training and line EMS personnel. BDAS responds to approximately 4,500 calls for service a year (based 2012 statistics) of which approximately 1,500 are interfacility transports. (hospital to hospital).

BDAS has eight (8) fully equipped, State Inspection approved ambulances; One (1) fully equipped Rope Rescue Trailer; One (1) Rope Rescue Pick-up Truck; Three (3) Durango First Response Intercept Units; and One (1) Jeep Cherokee (Chief's Vehicle)

#### Recommendations

- Develop a communications process that will provide a level of trust among **ALL** members of the BDAS Board.
- Establish a template that will provide for a more informative process to report back to member Boards, and Councils on the various actions of the District Commission monthly meetings.
- Restructure the Baraboo District Ambulance Service Commission Board structure that will establish a process for **ALL** members to have proportional voting privileges at all meetings of the Commission as soon as possible. This could be accomplished simply by allowing all members one (1) vote and the City of Baraboo's 4 votes would be weighted at a value of two (2) votes each.
- Establish regular meetings with stated agenda items prior to the meeting, with St. Clare administrative and medical operational staff to address the following: (RW would be interested in mediating a meeting that would assist both parties in discussions that would allow for an improved relationship in the future.)
  - Interfacility Transports
  - Medical Treatment Protocols
  - Medical Direction
  - BDAS Resource Allocation and Community Responsibilities
  - Establish an acceptable format for a constructive run review process
  - Realities of EMS reimbursement models



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#### ***Assessment and Planning***

RW reviewed area characteristics, EMS risk assessments and response strategies, and planning within the Department. The following findings and recommendations are based on planning concerns and risk management criteria that will impact outcomes and provide for the basic needs to complete the mission of the Department.

#### **Findings**

The City of Baraboo has a population of approximately 12,048 which covers an area of approximately 6 square miles. BDAS also covers an additional seven (7) Townships, Towns and Villages, adding approximately 6,700 in population.

BDAS currently has approximately fifty two (52) total employees with one (1) Chief, 2 Captain's, 3 Lieutenants, various office personnel, training personnel and field paramedic personnel. The Department operates one (1) station in the City of Baraboo and one (1) station in Richland Center. The Department also operated a Station in the Town of Germantown prior to 2013. Consideration is being given to returning to the Town of Germantown in 2014. RW feels that with the different contractual agreement from the one that was previously in place there are many reason to return. The expansion to this area has many features. First, BDAS is being asked by the Town of Germantown to come to the area as opposed to what may appear to be an unwanted advance to an area. Second, the potential to increase other sections of the service most notably the interfacility transports will bolster BDAS overall. Therefore, this opportunity is well worth pursuing and should be executed if the due diligence is positive.

The Department has long outgrown the facilities in the City of Baraboo. There are no sleeping quarters in the station. The Department has rented a house down the street for personnel to sleep and relax when not performing duties specific to the needs of the service. (Note: More specific information regarding the facilities will be detailed in the Physical Resources section.) Also, the station was found to be inadequate for vehicle storage, equipment storage, training, administrative services. (Note: More specific information regarding the facilities will be detailed in the Physical Resources section.) The Department is currently paying over \$75,000.00 per year in building related expenses. There have been questions raised on how the Department will be able to pay for a new facility. It should be noted that a significant amount has been allocated in the budget for the current multiple location cost that would easily cover the cost of a new or renovated location.

RW Management, Inc. reviewed the current station location and feels that it is in a relatively good location for good response times. It provides access to main roads for response to contracted coverage areas.

The Department's Emergency Patient Care Reporting (EPCR) is outdated and not compatible with the Wisconsin Ambulance Run Data System (WARDS). This incompatibility results in extra work for EMS and office personnel to transfer patient records into the WARDS system.



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The BDAS Commission has begun the process of developing a strategic plan. This is the first time that this has been attempted and has been a slow process to date. The group has taken a break from the process due to extremely busy summer schedules as well as their interest in the recommendations from this report being released in September. The Department does not have a long-range plan, which includes stations, vehicles and personnel for the next three (3) to five (5) years. This study is being looked at as a tool to help provide the basis for the long range strategic plan.

A formal risk assessment has not been completed for Community related concerns, EMS related issues or weather related issues.

There are no current annexation issues or concerns with neighboring communities. The Department has the wherewithal to manage growth, but would have resource allocation issues to manage moderate growth. The City of Baraboo has made efforts for quite some time to establish a Boundary Agreement with the Town of Baraboo. An agreement of this type would strengthen the understanding of boundary lines between the two communities.

The records management system, specifically the Electronic Patient Care Reporting system (EPCR) needs considerable time to maintain and is constantly in a state of flux. The manufacturer has not progressed in the marketplace as other vendors have made significant improvements without financial impact. The system requires an inordinate amount of time from the internal IT personnel to keep the system in operation.

Regionalization of EMS services is something that needs to be discussed in the future. Cost of providing EMS services are continuing to grow as the true volunteer systems are no longer able to attract people. It is no secret that combining resources has the potential to significantly reduce costs and in many cases increase services. There are some natural community links in this region that would lend itself to the establishment of EMS Regions. It would be premature to specify services or communities at this point; however the sooner that discussion begins on this topic the sooner potential saving can be realized. This is an effort that must come from municipal leaders rather than the service Directors themselves because they are too close to the issue and will get bogged down in the minutia instead of making it happen.

#### **Recommendations**

- Establish a policy for the evaluation of risks in weather response and difficult medical management situations.
- Create an algorithm based evaluation form for establishing various risks that will encompass both weather and medical response criteria.
- Continue to move forward with the Strategic Planning process that will assure a usable document is created. Establish a specific completion date for finalization of the process.
- Establish a community risk evaluation to predict and plan for community specific hazards that could impact the resources of the service.



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- Investigate the logistics of changing the EPCR to a system that will work well for the service and meet the State mandates for reporting to the Wisconsin Ambulance Reporting Data System (WARDS). ImageTrend is the vendor of choice to meet all of the requirements and should be considered as soon as possible.
- Open discussions with neighboring municipal leaders (Mayors, Presidents, etc.) on the level of interest in regionalizing EMS services. Commission a full feasibility study that will provide the detail to make an informed decision.

#### ***Goals and Objectives***

RW performed an evaluation of the BDAS goals and objectives, and has made recommendations for future documentation.

#### **Findings**

The BDAS and Commission do not have written goals and objectives that have been identified. The Commission has created a Mission Statement and has recently revised that statement as part of the Strategic Planning process. The BDAS management process appears to be unclear at times, and the organizational structure is reported to be confusing to line personnel. Many staff members felt disconnected with “management”, this feeling can in some ways be attributed to the lack of staff meetings or a consistent method for communicating with employees.

Further, the “Management Team” was found to be in name only with very little opportunity for regular meetings. Rationale for this current situation was stated, that meetings were held in the past with no productive outcomes and constant re-visiting of past discussions with no outcomes. Another contributing factor has been an effect of the budget reductions that have taken place the past few years. Overtime expenses were reduced and this meeting was terminated. Therefore, the meetings just stopped happening and a significant method for how the service operational issues and direction has been lost. Now individual meetings occur between the Chief with Captain’s and Lieutenant’s on key operational topics without the benefit of full management team input and problem solving. It is then the responsibility of those individuals to pass the information down to others. This has created concern among staff that they have done something wrong or there is no trust with management team personnel. The perceived result is there is a general lack of interest in what this group of individuals has to say. The appearance of very little involvement from key staff has been interpreted as there is no reason to make suggestions or work on committees, because the decision has already been made and they should just do what has been directed. This opens the door for misstatements, personal agendas and information that may appear to be completely different by the time it reaches the last person on the information chain.

Standard operating guidelines are in place AKA “Policy & Procedure Manual”. However, there is very little resemblance from what is stated in the P&P’s and what actually occurs daily in practice. Perception among staff is that “selective” application of the P&P’s are used depending on the individual. Further, the acknowledgement of outdated and ineffective P&P’s sets the service up for certain liabilities.



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BDAS staff is involved in Regional, State and National initiatives and professional organizations. This is important to stay on the cutting edge of information and technology. This involvement also serves as a method for networking, which develops resources for mentoring and idea sharing.

#### Recommendations

- RW Management recommends BDAS develop formal written goals and objectives. This can be accomplished by the development of a committee representing the BDAS Commission, upper management and line personnel to define goals and objectives. Once completed, everyone that serves on the Commission and BDAS staff needs to be familiar with the mission and goals of the Department and how the Department is going to achieve its goals.
- The Department needs to re-enforce the defined goals and objectives with members through a required learning/training program to ensure consistency and compliancy with all Department policies.
- Immediately create a plan for reworking the P&P's to assure that they reflect actual current operational activities.
- Establish a process that will provide a better method for communicating information throughout the entire organization.
- Determine the makeup of the core management team and establish a process for regular meetings (at least monthly). Define a process up front with clearly defined criteria for meetings structure and establish expectations for outcomes.
- Develop a process to determine management meeting effectiveness with a review of tasks, charges and assignments from the meetings to rate of completion.
- Establish a plan for the scheduling of REGULAR monthly FULL staff meetings.
- Create a process for those unable to attend the staff meeting to assure an accurate dissemination of information that was covered at the live meeting. (Recommend videotaping of staff meeting.)
- Define the current organizational structure and disseminate an organizational chart to all staff with clearly defined position responsibilities that appear on the chart.
- Continue the participation in professional organizations to maintain current knowledge of issues and innovations.



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#### ***Financial Resources***

RW reviewed how the Department managed financial issues.

#### **Findings**

The EMS Chief develops the initial budget with input from the Business Manager and other officers. No specific formal process to obtain input from line personnel could be identified. The budget then is presented to the BDAS Commission for review, discussion and ultimate approval.

Financial reports are provided to the Chief by the Business Manager as well as the reports that the Chief runs on his own. The Officers are responsible to input data into the Purchase Order Log, for each area of the budget that they are assigned to. This assists the Officers in understanding how much money has been expended in each of their line items. It was unclear as to who specifically reviews the reports and what criteria are used to determine the value and effectiveness of the information provided. An independent audit is conducted annually by an outside CPA firm.

The EMS Chief reviews the purchase order log as well as invoices for expenses incurred by the Department on a monthly basis and submits them to the Commission for approval and then on to the Business Manager for processing and payment.

The financial stability of the service is at a critical point. The reserves that were established by the BDAS Commission have been significantly reduced due to unexpected levy shortfalls. The reserves were established for vehicle replacements and for the acquisition of a new building that would meet the needs of the current operation. The current fleet of emergency vehicles is in desperate need of upgrade. Several of the vehicles have exceeded the normal life expectancy for operating in a 9-1-1 response system. Significant outlays will be needed for the purchase of several new units and to reestablish reserve funding for future purchases. Further, the practice of purchasing used ambulance is a risky proposition. It does nothing to establish a solid well defined replacement plan and has a tendency to further disrupt the process. The responsibility that is accepted by the service to provide prompt and safe transport can be jeopardized in an effort to “just get by”.

It is the responsibility of all of the agencies represented on the BDAS Commission to provide EMS to their respective communities. This requirement has been satisfied with the existence of the BDAS Commission. However, ambulance revenue from 9-1-1 calls are insufficient to meet the budgetary needs of the service with the charge of providing high quality Paramedic level services to the citizens and visitors to the district. In an effort to enhance revenues the service has expanded their scope to provide Critical Care Paramedic interfacility transports, which is one area where revenues have the potential to exceed costs.

Further, the Service has reached out to offer services in other communities, with the most recent effort being in the Town of Germantown. Much was learned with that venture and it eventually ended and produced a loss and the contract was not renewed. Consideration is currently being given to a return to the Town of Germantown. RW feels that, with an improved



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contractual agreement from the one that was previously in place, there are many reasons to return. The expansion to this area has many features. First, BDAS is being asked by the Town of Germantown to come to the area as opposed to what may appear to be an unwanted advance to an area. Second, the potential to increase other sections of the service most notably the interfacility transports will bolster BDAS overall. I am aware that there is some apprehension by some of the Commission members. This is natural when you have what some Commission members felt was a bad experience and then are being asked to do it again. However, I believe that there is almost \$200,000.00 **more** subsidy that they are willing to pay this time compared to the approximately \$50,000 last time. If there still is apprehension consideration could be given to a proposal that would guarantee a fixed number of loss if that number were reached it would be shared by the Town of Germantown and conversely, a fixed number for profit could be established and if that number were to be reached then a refund to the Town of Germantown could be made. Therefore, this opportunity is well worth pursuing and should be executed if the due diligence is positive.

The Service also created an EMS State approved training center. There are many advantages to have a department controlled training center: increased flexibility in training offerings and times, community exposure and the potential for additional revenue.

The BDAS Commission has not been aggressive in seeking additional revenue streams. It is well known in the EMS industry that the cost of readiness far exceeds the potential revenue opportunities to recover the costs. Therefore, government subsidies are the only method that a service has to be made whole. (See Chapter 4 Budget Examples for examples of service offerings and projected revenue needs to support the offerings)

The BDAS Commission establishes the fees charged for emergency medical calls with input from the EMS Chief. The Department is responsible for processing these fees and submitting them to all third party paying agencies. The Billing Coordinator is responsible for the collection of information from the EPCR and processes each claim utilizing proper bookkeeping techniques. The rate of collection has been maintained at a high level by the Billing Coordinator. The workload of the Billing Coordinator far exceeds the norm in the EMS industry for the number of transports billed per year. The additional responsibility of the Billing Coordinator with the addition of providing billing services for Pardeeville District Ambulance Service has been overwhelming. Given the complexity of medical billing, especially as it relates to Medicare billings and the increased scrutiny of the government and third party payers has led many EMS departments to seek the services of a third party biller.

#### **Recommendations**

- Immediately establish a plan that will adequately replenish reserve funds.
- Establish a monthly review process with specific benchmarks for flagging predetermined criteria for the review of monthly financial documents.
- The EMS Chief should include officers and line personnel in the budget process, and use it as an opportunity to develop future Chief Officers. An example would be to ask all



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department employees to submit their own budget requests (wish lists) for the upcoming year, and then organize a summit of key personnel to prioritize the requests.

- Develop a workable process, for reporting back to all personnel, that outlines what items were placed in the budget and the rationale.
- Develop a revised vehicle replacement program that differentiates the replacement of 9-1-1 response vehicles and interfacility transport vehicles, using a shorter projection period.
- Immediately reevaluate the workload of the Billing Manager and investigate all options for billing, to include but not limited to the following:
  - Continue as is with additional personnel resources
  - Review the effectiveness of current billing software
  - Consideration of external patient care reporting system
  - Consideration of outsourcing billing related tasks

### **Programs**

This area is defined as the services, activities and responses provided by the department for the community, and supported by the mission, goals and objectives of BDAS.

### **Findings**

The EMS response that is performed by the BDAS is supported by 8 Ambulances, 1 Rope Rescue Trailer, 1 Rope Rescue Pickup Truck, 3 Dodge Durango intercept units, and 1 Jeep Cherokee (Chief's Vehicle) All responding personnel are familiar with the Incident Command System (ICS), and have had Emergency Vehicle Operators Course (EVOC) training.

The department can improve on their public educational opportunities. They are active and do a good job when asked to talk to the schools or participate in public awareness programs. However, there currently is no written public education program that allows BDAS to have a proactive community program.

The department has a very unique responsibility as a result of providing first response EMS to Devils Lake State Park. This response area is heavily populated with year round tourists. There are many hazards in the park. The main hazard that requires a highly trained specialized rescue team is when people climb the many rocks and bluffs in the park. Every year there are accidents and significant debilitating injuries, rarely involving trained and experienced climbers. Most accidents involve inexperienced people unfamiliar with standard safety precautions and those who have been using alcohol. The BDAS Rope Rescue Team is regarded as one of the best units in the State that provide this service. Maintaining this level of expertise requires constant training.



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BDAS provides Paramedic level Emergency Medical Services, Critical Care Paramedic (CCP) interfacility transports. BDAS also contracts with requesting municipalities for 9-1-1 service. BDAS provides exclusive CCP transports for Richland Center. This program has been very successful and is being reviewed for expansion.

RW discovered a safety concern in the Richland Center staffing model. Public Safety entities (EMS & Fire) obtain many of their efficiencies as a result of staffing personnel to 24 hour shifts. It is well known that EMS personnel that respond to 9-1-1 emergency calls are well stimulated to respond at any point in their shift when the pager goes off. However, with interfacility transport only models, the stimulus that provides the adrenaline rush is not there. Couple that with round trip transports from that location that take on average four (4) to six (6) hours with 3 – 4 calls per day, is the formula for a fatigue induced accident. The Department should be open to increased opportunities in Richland Center to provide 9-1-1 service which could reduce the above concern and allow for crew rotations.

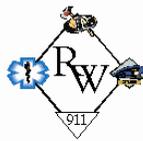
It was stated earlier and is worthy of repeating now, that without interfacility transports as part of the service model BDAS would be in significant financial peril at the current subsidy level.

BDAS has an understanding and operates within the parameters of the Incident Command System (ICS). The City has a well-defined disaster management plan and hold regular informational and training meetings which BDAS participates in on a regular basis. BDAS staff has most of the required National Incident Management System (NIMS) training with plans to train select staff in the higher level optional trainings.

BDAS has taken the initiative to establish its own in-house training center. The center has met all criteria and has full approval from the State EMS office. The training has been reported to be on a very high level, frequently exceeding the results of the regions Technical College.

#### **Recommendations**

- Develop a risk assessment tool to evaluate personnel fatigue at the Richland Center Station.
- Maintain disaster training with Emergency Management and define all roles for response and EOC duties when called upon.
- Assure that all staff become trained in all of the required NIMS training.
- The training division of BDAS should develop a written departmental training program with a twelve month calendar of events. This will allow for all department members to plan for and attend training on a regular basis.



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#### ***Physical Resources***

This section evaluates the Department's fixed facility, apparatus and maintenance and related personnel needs.

#### **Findings**

The Department currently has one (1) station in the City of Baraboo and one (1) station in the City of Richland Center. The City of Baraboo facility has been completely outgrown by the Department. The increase in offered services and the significant increase in call volume has created significant logistical issues. The design of the facility is not adequate for full time personnel. There are no rooms for sleeping, training, meetings or storage of supplies. The garage facilities are not adequate for the needs of the service and the response model it operates under. Some emergency vehicles are located in rented garages in the area and some emergency vehicles are kept outside. This is an ongoing issue in the winter with inclement sub-freezing weather.

The department has been forced to rent a house approximately one (1) block from where the response vehicles are located, which creates response time delays, especially at night. In the winter, in inclement weather, there is a safety issue for personnel responding from the rented house to the EMS garage. They are required to run over an untreated parking lot with the potential for slip and fall injuries. Further, with the service located in several different locations around the City, duplication of costs for utilities, maintenance, furnishings, etc. places an additional financial drain on the Department. Parking for EMS personnel is also inadequate for the amount of personnel on duty regularly. Over \$100,000.00 dollars has been spent in the past several years to research and design a future location for a new building. At the time of this writing, no location or building plans are being discussed. The City of Baraboo has a long range plan for a City Hall and Public Safety building. However, the needs of BDAS require a more aggressive relocation plan.

The location of the station is acceptable for the Department's coverage area. The current location allows for easy access and response for the majority of department personnel and allows for acceptable apparatus response to incidents. Call statistics and actual incident response time for specific map locations were reviewed and utilized to form the basis of an ideal response area.

The ideal standards of response to emergency medical responses are 4-6 minutes from the time that the call is dispatched until the unit arrives on the scene. This standard is consistent with the standards of the following agencies;

- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)
- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)
- American Heart Association Guidelines for Defibrillation and CPR
- National Standard of Care for EMS Response
- Journal of American Medical Association



## CITY OF BARABOO, WI OPERATIONS STUDY

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### CHAPTER 2 – OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services (CAAS)
- American Ambulance Association (AAA)

These established national standards for response have proven to be valid and will be utilized in legal cases as being the benchmark to which services will be judged. The Department currently meets these standards with the current station location for most of the response area and response times are good.

The Department has a certified vehicle maintenance service and emergency repair for all apparatus. A schedule is established and appears to meet the need for service and reliability of emergency apparatus. The Department equipment resources were adequate and well maintained. There was regular preventive maintenance and repairs on the equipment and an inventory control system was in place.

A vehicle replacement schedule was presented to the BDAS Commission in June of 2013. RW does not feel that it adequately address the growing needs of the service and will be stressed by an underfunded reserve account.

After a review of the computer hardware it was noted that the Department is behind in a computer equipment replacement program. Varying types and age of equipment place an additional burden on IT. The process of keeping servers, workstations and other supporting equipment operational is time consuming and often leaves office personnel unproductive while waiting for repair or rebooting. Currently the City of Baraboo utilizes an intergovernmental agreement for IT services. BDAS could consider a similar arrangement.

#### **Recommendations**

- Immediately develop an aggressive plan for station relocation that meets the needs of the BDAS with hard dates for implementation
- A full review of Computer hardware needs to be completed with a replacement plan put in place. Consideration should be given to utilizing new technology such as the “Cloud” which has become a widely accepted method to store documents offsite in a safe environment.
- Revise the vehicle replacement plan that adequately reflects the needs of the service.
- Develop a physical resource plan for the training center.
- Research the vehicle maintenance program to assure that the selected service center understands the needs of an emergency ambulance service and is competitive with pricing. This process should include documentation that the dealership mechanics that perform the actual service are EVT Certified.



## CITY OF BARABOO, WI OPERATIONS STUDY

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### CHAPTER 2 – OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

#### ***Human Resources***

RW reviewed the development and utilization of human resources for the Department. The Department's organizational chart, policies and standard operating guidelines, management structure and style, turnover, wages, recruitment and retention were examined to provide a basis for the completion of this section.

#### **Findings**

There is currently no designated personnel manager for BDAS. It is clearly an area where the Department struggles. Personnel related issues occupy a large amount of management time. Many staff raised concerns that issues with employees are not dealt with by management. This perception exists as a result of the previous management's (prior to 2010) lack of effort to protect the privacy of the people involved. RW found that the process of dealing with personnel issues is being managed in a professional manner. With the change in management in 2010 the disciplinary process is between management and the person or person's involved and corrective action or discipline is between those individuals. Management does not discuss the process with anyone else. Therefore, if information about the process is made public, it is the employee that makes the decision to share it with others. The level of personnel privacy appears to meet or exceed the legal standards for the management of employee information. Currently, the Chief confers with the HR specialist associated with the Corporate Attorney's office on HR issues, as well as Policies & Procedures. This is an inefficient and costly method for dealing with HR issues.

RW was asked to look into a recent concern over the Departments turnover being higher than what some perceived to be normal. We found that the current management style is significantly different from the previous management. This has caused concern among some of the current personnel and may have been a contributing factor with some of the Departments previous Captains to leave the service. In the previous administration the Captains were very much in charge of running the shifts and many aspects of the department. The current Chief is more hands on and recognized that the service was top heavy. Adjustments were made in the way of schedule changes, duty changes and responsibility changes. The Captains were moved to 24 hour shifts from their previous 8 hour per day 40 hour per week positions. This was a difficult transition for many of them.

One of the major weaknesses of the Department is communication. The management team does not function as a true team. The management staff all seems to work independently and sometimes out of sync with others in the Department. This is a result of the lack of and lately no management team meetings. The Chief meets individually with his administrative staff, but not as a group. Rationale for this was stated as "it is easier to talk one on one and they never accomplished anything at the meetings". They discussed the same thing at every meeting with no usable outcome. With no management meetings, department direction is unclear. Coupled with the fact that no regular staff meetings are held, the message that does come from management is not well understood or executed as a result.



## CITY OF BARABOO, WI OPERATIONS STUDY

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### CHAPTER 2 – OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Human resource policies, along with job descriptions for all personnel are all in need of revision or development. The Department also has standard operating guidelines in place which are currently being reviewed and updated. There was a concern that policies were not always followed and evenly enforced.

Recruitment, selection, discipline, probationary period, and promotion policies are in need of review. The department would benefit from a third party consultant to advise them in modern-day practices in order to provide fair and equitable opportunities for all department members.

Upon review of the wages & salaries within BDAS, the service has fallen out of the competitive range which has had an impact on recruitment and retention of current employees. It has been over three (3) years since wage adjustments were last given to staff. RW found that generally the staff is very proud of the fact that they are members of BDAS. However, at some point noncompetitive wages have an impact on retention. A full salary review was not requested from RW as part of this review. However, due to the importance of this issue for employee retention, RW reviewed the wages in the region and used related EMS industry sources to provide salary recommendations for the future. RW has proposed updated wage and salary ranges, which can be found as a Salary Addendum to this report.

There are positions that have morphed into more responsibility than they were originally intended to cover. One of those positions is the "IT" position. It is not our intent to single out specific positions, however this position has many tentacles that are in many ways in need of further refinement and delineation of duties. This position is one that needs regular availability to personnel with normal business office hours to enhance the effectiveness and efficiencies that the position would bring.

The Department has a written new member orientation program. The Department has a written Employee Handbook in place, but needs to be reviewed by management on a more frequent basis to assure that it reflects current practice.

A written physical/fitness program is not in place at this time or a fitness for duty for employees that are returning from injury. The Department does not have a written risk management policy for medical or weather related issues or an assessment tool in place for gauging risk. No career development plan in place.

The Organization chart is outdated and in need of restructuring to address changes in how the department operates and a clearer picture of what the responsibilities for each position on the chart is identified. RW has proposed a restructured Organizational Chart and can be found as an Organization Chart addendum to this report.

No post-accident incident plan (PAIP) was found to be in place in the event of an incident that causes injury to a staff member.

The Department does not conduct exit interviews when members of the department resign.



## CITY OF BARABOO, WI OPERATIONS STUDY

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### CHAPTER 2 – OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Recommendations

- RW recommends that the Department determine the availability of HR resources with neighboring EMS agencies for HR services and if possible develop a cooperative agreement for sharing. This would provide the Chief with someone who has human resource knowledge and ability. Another option would be to seek a Human Resources firm within Baraboo or within a short distance to Baraboo to manage personnel related issues. Lastly, would be to develop a part-time position within BDAS to manage personnel related issues.
- RW recommends that the Department develop a Health and Safety Committee that will develop a written health and fitness program for the Department. Mandatory physicals should be part of the health and fitness program. Further, the Department should develop a fitness for duty policy that defines various health and physical conditions that would be used for return to work after injury or illness or used for cause in testing an individual that is believed to be impaired. Creating a Health and Safety Committee would create the proper structure for managing this function.
- RW also recommends that the Department develop a career development program, and begin putting together a risk management and safety program for the Department. This should include developing standards, criteria for evaluating risks associated with responding to calls in inclement weather and when advance medical procedures may need to be administered during transports.
- RW strongly recommends the development of the management team and establish a process for regular meetings. (At least monthly, possibly more often initially to catch up on processes.) Define a process up front with clearly defined criteria for meetings structure and establish expectations for outcomes. The management team needs to understand that when consensus cannot be reached among the committee that the Chief is the tie breaker and is responsible for the final decision.
- RW strongly recommends an immediate review and rewrite of the Department Policies and Procedures. This process must include an evaluation of current practice, validation that current practice is valid and then development of policies that reflect good management practices. This recommendation can most easily be accomplished by the development of a P&P committee that defines the outlined processes and then forwards their work to the Management Team for ratification and dissemination.
- Establish policies that clearly define developmental process with promotional criteria, qualifications needed, etc.
- Develop a process that will monitor department turnover and an evaluation process that will determine reasons for the turnover. As part of this process, implement a survey tool that will be used for exit interviews of employees that leave the service.



## CITY OF BARABOO, WI OPERATIONS STUDY

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### CHAPTER 2 – OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- The administrative staffing recommendations will be found in an addendum to this report. RW will provide a recommended organization chart as part of this addendum.
- Develop a progressive discipline system that establishes rules pertaining to employee conduct, performance, and responsibilities so that all personnel can conduct themselves according to certain rules of good behavior and good conduct. The system should include; a purpose, policy, training, discipline steps for each offense, and an investigation team/process that is fair and unbiased.
- Provide human resource training that includes review of SOGs, Protocols, P&P's with all members.
- Create a service PAIP that addresses procedure of the steps that need to be taken in the event of an incident that causes injury or death to a staff member.



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**CHAPTER 3 – IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

***Implementation Plan by Priority***

To properly and successfully implement the recommendations made for department operations, administrative services, policies, and other related recommendations, certain key components must be addressed. Without the implementation of these components, overall services, productivity and organizational buy-in will be tempered and system performance will suffer.

The following implementation plan lists, by priority, those requirements that satisfy the principles of comprehensive delivery of EMS service. The plan has been developed also considering the benefits that have a high overall return to the residents, the Department, the City and the Ambulance District. Using this approach, BDAS will not only be moving toward sound department services, practices and systems, but they will also be implementing changes in operations, services and technology that yield the highest returns first. The exact details and dates for some of these changes are left up to the project team to determine the specifics of how the current corporate culture is, and the immediate need.

**Fiscal Year 2013**

The goal for the first year of implementation should be to begin planning for the comprehensive implementation of the recommendations. The following areas to be implemented during the remainder of this year include:

- Define a Project Team made up of members from the City of Baraboo, Ambulance District Commission and EMS Service Administrative personnel. This team will provide oversight of the EMS Operations and Review Study recommendations and of the planned organizational changes to occur with internal and external resources to coordinate efforts.
- Provide for project management to oversee the entire project for the next three (3) years. The project manager will be responsible for keeping the project on track and moving ahead. This may be the EMS Chief or the EMS Chief with the services of outside management from a firm such as RW Management Group, Inc.
- Restructure the Baraboo District Ambulance Service Commission Board structure that will establish a process for **ALL** members to have proportional voting privileges at all meetings of the Commission as soon as possible. This could be accomplished simply by allowing all members one (1) vote and the City of Baraboo's 4 votes would be weighted at a value of two (2) votes each.
- Immediately establish a plan that will adequately replenish reserve funds.
- Immediately reevaluate the workload of the Billing Manager and investigate all options for billing, to include but not limited to the following:
  - Continue as is with additional personnel resources
  - Review the effectiveness of current billing software



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**CHAPTER 3 – IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

- Consideration of external patient care reporting system
- Consideration of outsourcing billing related tasks
- Immediately develop an aggressive plan for station relocation that meets the needs of the BDAS with hard dates for implementation.
- RW strongly recommends an immediate review and rewrite of the Department Policies and Procedures. This process must include an evaluation of current practice, validation that current practice is valid and then development of policies that reflect good management practices. This recommendation can most easily be accomplished by the development of a P&P committee that defines the outlined processes and then forwards their work to the Management Team for ratification and dissemination.
- Establish regular meetings with stated agenda items prior to the meeting, with St. Clare administrative and medical operational staff to address the following: (RW would be interested in mediating a meeting that would assist both parties in discussions that would allow for an improved relationship in the future.)
  - Interfacility Transports
  - Medical Treatment Protocols
  - Medical Direction
  - BDAS Resource Allocation and Community Responsibilities
  - Establish an acceptable format for a constructive run review process
  - Realities of EMS reimbursement models
- Establish a plan for the scheduling of REGULAR monthly FULL staff meetings.
- Define the current organizational structure and disseminate an organizational chart to all staff with clearly defined position responsibilities that appear on the chart.
- Develop a risk assessment tool to evaluate personnel fatigue at the Richland Center Station.
- Open discussions with neighboring municipal leaders (Mayors, Presidents, etc.) on the level of interest in regionalizing EMS services. Commission a full feasibility study that will provide the detail to make an informed decision. (This will be ongoing over several years.)

**Fiscal Year 2014**

The goals for the second year of implementation are to begin work on a physical resource plan, and planning process and recommendations within the budget and resource constraints. The following areas are to be developed during this year:



## CITY OF BARABOO, WI OPERATIONS STUDY

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### CHAPTER 3 – IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- Establish a template that will provide for a more informative process to report back to member Boards, and Councils on the various actions of the District Commission monthly meetings.
- RW recommends that the Department determine the availability of HR resources with neighboring EMS agencies for HR services and if possible develop a cooperative agreement for sharing. This would provide the Chief with someone who has human resource knowledge and ability. Another option would be to seek a Human Resources firm within Baraboo or within a short distance to Baraboo to manage personnel related issues. Lastly, would be to develop a part-time position within BDAS to manage personnel related issues.
- Develop a communications process that will provide a level of trust among **ALL** members of the BDAS Board.
- RW strongly recommends the development of the management team and establish a process for regular meetings. (At least monthly, possibly more often initially to catch up on processes.) Define a process up front with clearly defined criteria for meetings structure and establish expectations for outcomes. The management team needs to understand that when consensus cannot be reach among the committee that the Chief is the tie breaker and is responsible for the final decision.
- Continue to move forward with the Strategic Planning process that will assure a usable document is created. Establish a specific completion date for finalization of the process.
- RW Management recommends BDAS develop formal written goals and objectives. This can be accomplished by the development of a committee representing the BDAS Commission, upper management and line personnel to define goals and objectives. Once completed, everyone that serves on the Commission and BDAS staff needs to be familiar with the mission and goals of the Department and how the Department is going to achieve its goals.
- The BDAS District Commission to define and develop goals and objectives for the EMS department.
- Establish a policy for the evaluation of risks in weather response and difficult medical management situations.
- Create an algorithm based evaluation form for establishing various risks that will encompasses both weather and medical response criteria.
- Establish a community risk evaluation to predict and plan for community specific hazards that could impact the resources of the service.
- Investigate the logistics of changing the EPCR to a system that will work well for the service and meet the State mandates for reporting to the Wisconsin Ambulance Reporting Data



## CITY OF BARABOO, WI OPERATIONS STUDY

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### CHAPTER 3 – IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

System. (WARDS) ImageTrend is the vendor of choice to meet all of the requirements and should be considered as soon as possible.

- The Department needs to re-enforce the defined goals and objectives with members through a required learning/training program to ensure consistency and compliancy with all Department policies.
- Establish a process that will provide a better method for communicating information throughout the entire organization.
- Develop a process that will monitor department turnover and an evaluation process that will determine reasons for the turnover. As part of this process implement a survey tool that will be used for exit interviews of employees that leave the service.
- Develop a progressive discipline system that establishes rules pertaining to employee conduct, performance, and responsibilities so that all personnel can conduct themselves according to certain rules of good behavior and good conduct. The system should include; a purpose, policy, training, discipline steps for each offense, and an investigation team/process that is fair and unbiased.
- Provide human resource training that includes review of SOGs, Protocols, P&P's with all members.
- Create a service PAIP that addresses procedure of the steps that need to be taking in the event of an incident that causes injury or death to a staff member.
- The EMS Chief should include officers and line personnel in the budget process, and use it as an opportunity to develop future Chief Officers. An example would be to ask all department employees to submit their own budget requests (wish lists) for the upcoming year, and then organize a summit of key personnel to prioritize the requests.
- Develop a workable process for reporting back to all personnel that outlines what items were placed in the budget and the rationale.

#### **Fiscal Years 2015**

The goal for the remaining years of implementation is to continue implementing the strategic plan and recommendations within the budget and resource constraints. The following areas are to be developed during these years:

- Collaborate for the funding and selection of an outside agency to perform a feasibility study to identify all of the pros and cons and develop a plan that would identify time lines, cost, implementation logistics and intergovernmental agreement processes.



**CITY OF BARABOO, WI  
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**CHAPTER 3 – IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

- Establish a community risk evaluation to predict and plan for community specific hazards that could impact the resources of the service.
- Develop a revised vehicle replacement program that differentiates the replacement of 9-1-1 response vehicles and interfacility transport vehicles, using a shorter projection period.
- The training division of BDAS should develop a written departmental training program with a twelve month calendar of events. This will allow for all department members to plan for and attend training on a regular basis.
- Assure that all staff becomes trained in all of the required NIMS training.
- Develop a physical resource plan for the training center.
- Research the vehicle maintenance program to assure that the selected service center understands the needs of an emergency ambulance service and is competitive with pricing. This process should include documentation that the dealership mechanics that perform the actual service are EVT Certified.



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**CHAPTER 4 – BUDGET EXAMPLES**

***Budget Examples***

Chapter 4 presents budget examples and costs associated with different delivery models. Throughout the commissioned Operations Study RW heard many times that “BDAS should not be doing transports, they are a drain on the budget”; “What if the city ran its own EMS program?”; “What would the City’s tax levy be without the interfacility transports?”. This section will provide some examples to illustrate and answer these questions. The budget examples are based on 2012 BDAS budget and financial records that were made available to RW by BDAS and are being used with their permission. Adjustments were made for personnel needs in the City only examples.

***Example One (1)***

This example is based on the premise that interfacility transports are a drain on the budget and should be eliminated. It illustrates that removing interfacility transports from the BDAS delivery model would increase the amount needed from the municipalities by just under \$907,000.00.

**BDAS SAMPLE BUDGET – NO INTERFACILITY TRANSPORTS**

<b><u>Income</u></b>	\$1,639,625
Write off	<u>\$794,300</u>
<b>Total Income/Revenue</b>	<b><u>\$845,325</u></b>

**EXPENSES**

Wages	\$1,517,611
Other	\$422,750
Equipment Replacement	<u>\$5,000</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b><u>\$1,945,361</u></b>

**Total Revenue** **\$845,325**

**Net Revenue Loss** **(\$1,100,036)**



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**CHAPTER 4 – BUDGET EXAMPLES**

***Example Two (2)***

This example illustrates what the budget would look like if BDAS were only covering the City of Baraboo for 9-1-1 calls and any other type of call within the City limits. The per capital tax levy would be \$113.92 per capita.

**BDAS SAMPLE BUDGET – PROVIDING COVERAGE FOR THE CITY OF BARABOO ONLY**

<b><u>Income</u></b>	\$1,152,500
Write off	<u>\$591,500</u>
<b>Total Income/Revenue</b>	<b>\$561,000</b>
 <b><u>EXPENSES</u></b>	
Wages	\$1,481,793
Other	\$385,750
Equipment Replacement	<u>\$55,000</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,922,543</b>
 <b>Total Revenue</b>	 <b><u>\$561,000</u></b>
 <b><u>Net Revenue Loss</u></b>	 <b><u>(\$1,361,543)</u></b>
 <b>TOTAL TAX LEVY PER CAPITA</b>	 <b>\$113.92</b>



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**CHAPTER 4 – BUDGET EXAMPLES**

**Example Three (3)**

This example illustrates what the budget would look like if the City of Baraboo were to operate its own service including startup costs for 9-1-1 calls and any other type of call within the City limits. The per capital tax levy would be \$157.92 per capita.

**BDAS SAMPLE BUDGET – PROVIDING COVERAGE FOR THE CITY OF BARABOO ONLY**

<b><u>Income</u></b>	\$1,152,500
Write off	<u>\$591,500</u>
<b>Total Income/Revenue</b>	<b>\$561,000</b>

**EXPENSES**

Wages	\$1,481,793
Other	\$344,150
Initial Startup Expenses	\$572,500
Equipment Replacement	<u>\$60,000</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$2,448,443</b>

<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b><u>\$561,000</u></b>
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<b><u>Net Revenue Loss</u></b>	<b>(\$1,887,443)</b>
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<b>TOTAL TAX LEVY PER CAPITA</b>	<b>\$157.92</b>
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## CITY OF BARABOO, WI OPERATIONS STUDY

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### CHAPTER 5 – MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

#### ***Project Objectives***

The City of Baraboo determined the need to conduct an Operational Study of the Baraboo District Ambulance Service. The Study will provide recommendations and options for short and long-range planning needs. Based upon the proposal submitted by RW Management Group, Inc. (RW) in June 2013, the scope of the project was that the City of Baraboo wanted to address the operations, financial, facility needs, organizational makeup, delivery service models, community relationship, opportunities for regionalized service models and governance. RW performed an extensive review of every aspect of BDAS.

The findings and recommendations are related to the physical facilities, response times and related human resources and equipment of the Baraboo District Ambulance Service. The review included the following categories:

- **Governance and Administration**
- **Assessment and Planning**
- **Goals and Objectives**
- **Financial Resources**
- **Programs**
- **Physical Resources**
- **Human Resources**

#### ***Operational Recommendations***

There are recommendations relating to the governance and administration, assessment and planning, goals and objectives, financial resources, programs, physical facilities, human resources, external resources. These recommendations relate to potential organizational and operational requirements. This review was based on the Center for Public Safety Excellence Categories Program Criterion, Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services and the National Standards of Care Models. The recommendations are in order based on the above categories.

- Develop a communications process that will provide a level of trust among **ALL** members of the BDAS Board.
- Establish a template that will provide for a more informative process to report back to member Boards, and Councils on the various actions of the District Commission monthly meetings.



## CITY OF BARABOO, WI OPERATIONS STUDY

### CHAPTER 5 – MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

- Restructure the Baraboo District Ambulance Service Commission Board structure that will establish a process for **ALL** members to have proportional voting privileges at all meetings of the Commission as soon as possible. This could be accomplished simply by allowing all members one (1) vote and the City of Baraboo's 4 votes would be weighted at a value of two (2) votes each.
- Establish regular meetings with St. Clare administrative and medical operational staff to address the following: RW would be interested in mediating a meeting that would assist both parties in discussions that would allow for an improved relationship in the future.
  - Interfacility Transports
  - Medical Treatment Protocols
  - Medical Direction
  - BDAS Resource Allocation and Community Responsibilities
  - Establish an acceptable format for a constructive run review process
  - Realities of EMS reimbursement models
- Establish a policy for the evaluation of risks in weather response and difficult medical management situations.
- Create an algorithm based evaluation form for establishing various risks that will encompass both weather and medical response criteria.
- Continue to move forward with the Strategic Planning process that will assure a usable document is created. Establish a specific completion date for finalization of the process.
- Establish a community risk evaluation to predict and plan for community specific hazards that could impact the resources of the service.
- Investigate the logistics of changing the EPCR to a system that will work well for the service and meet the State mandates for reporting to the Wisconsin Ambulance Reporting Data System (WARDS). ImageTrend is the vendor of choice to meet all of the requirements and should be considered as soon as possible.
- RW Management recommends BDAS develop formal written goals and objectives. This can be accomplished by the development of a committee representing the BDAS Commission, upper management and line personnel to define goals and objectives. Once completed, everyone that serves on the Commission and BDAS staff needs to be familiar with the mission and goals of the Department and how the Department is going to achieve its goals.
- The Department needs to re-enforce the defined goals and objectives with members through a required learning/training program to ensure consistency and compliancy with all Department policies.



## CITY OF BARABOO, WI OPERATIONS STUDY

### CHAPTER 5 – MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

- Immediately create a plan for reworking the P&P's to assure that they reflect actual current operational activities.
- Establish a process that will provide a better method for communicating information throughout the entire organization.
- Determine the makeup of the core management team and establish a process for regular meetings (At least monthly). Define a process up front with clearly defined criteria for meetings structure and establish expectations for outcomes.
- Develop a process to determine management meeting effectiveness with a review of tasks, charges and assignments from the meetings to rate of completion.
- Establish a plan for the scheduling of REGULAR monthly FULL staff meetings.
- Create a process for those unable to attend the staff meeting to assure an accurate dissemination of information that was covered at the live meeting. (Recommend video tapping of staff meeting)
- Define the current organizational structure and disseminate an organizational chart to all staff with clearly defined position responsibilities that appear on the chart.
- Immediately establish a plan that will adequately replenish reserve funds.
- Establish a monthly review process with specific benchmarks for flagging predetermined criteria for the review of monthly financial documents.
- The EMS Chief should include officers and line personnel in the budget process, and use it as an opportunity to develop future Chief Officers. An example would be to ask all department employees to submit their own budget requests (wish lists) for the upcoming year, and then organize a summit of key personnel to prioritize the requests.
- Develop a workable process for reporting back to all personnel that outlines what items were placed in the budget and the rationale.
- Develop a revised vehicle replacement program that differentiates the replacement of 9-1-1 response vehicles and interfacility transport vehicles, using a shorter projection period.
- Immediately reevaluate the workload of the Billing Manager and investigate all options for billing, to include but not limited to the following:
  - Continue as is with additional personnel resources
  - Review the effectiveness of current billing software
  - Consideration of external patient care reporting system



## CITY OF BARABOO, WI OPERATIONS STUDY

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### CHAPTER 5 – MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

- Consideration of outsourcing billing related tasks
- Develop a risk assessment tool to evaluate personnel fatigue at the Richland Center Station.
- Maintain disaster training with Emergency Management and define all roles for response and EOC duties when called upon.
- Assure that all staff becomes trained in all of the required NIMS training.
- The training division of BDAS should develop a written departmental training program with a twelve month calendar of events. This will allow for all department members to plan for and attend training on a regular basis.
- Immediately develop an aggressive plan for station relocation that meets the needs of the BDAS with hard dates for implementation
- A full review of Computer hardware needs to be completed with a replacement plan put in place.
- Revise the vehicle replacement plan that adequately reflects the needs of the service.
- Develop a physical resource plan for the training center.
- Research the vehicle maintenance program to assure that the selected service center understands the needs of an emergency ambulance service and is competitive with pricing.
- RW recommends that the Department determine the availability of HR resources with neighboring EMS agencies for HR services and if possible develop a cooperative agreement for sharing. This would provide the Chief with someone who has human resource knowledge and ability. Another option would be to seek a Human Resources firm within Baraboo or within a short distance to Baraboo to manage personnel related issues. Lastly, would be to develop a part-time position within BDAS to manage personnel related issues.
- RW recommends that the Department develop a Health and Safety Committee that will develop a written health and fitness program for the Department. Mandatory physicals should be part of the health and fitness program. Further, the Department should develop a fitness for duty policy that defines various health and physical conditions that would be used for return to work after injury or illness or used for cause in testing an individual that is believed to be impaired. Creating a Health and Safety Committee would create the proper structure for managing this function.



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### CHAPTER 5 – MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

- RW also recommends that the Department develop a career development program, and begin putting together a risk management and safety program for the Department. This should include developing standards, criteria for evaluating risks associated with responding to calls in inclement weather and when advance medical procedures may need to be administered during transports.
- RW strongly recommends the development of the management team and establish a process for regular meetings. (At least monthly, possibly more often initially to catch up on processes.) Define a process up front with clearly defined criteria for meetings structure and establish expectations for outcomes. The management team needs to understand that when consensus cannot be reach among the committee that the Chief is the tie breaker and is responsible for the final decision.
- RW strongly recommends an immediate review and rewrite of the Department Policies and Procedures. This process must include an evaluation of current practice, validation that current practice is valid and then development of policies that reflect good management practices. This recommendation can most easily be accomplished by the development of a P&P committee that defines the outlined processes and then forwards their work to the Management Team for ratification and dissemination.
- Establish policies that clearly define developmental process with promotional criteria, qualifications needed, etc.
- Develop a process that will monitor department turnover and an evaluation process that will determine reasons for the turnover. As part of this process implement a survey tool that will be used for exit interviews of employees that leave the service.
- The administrative staffing recommendations will be found in an addendum to this report. RW will provide a recommended organization chart as part of this addendum.
- Develop a progressive discipline system that establishes rules pertaining to employee conduct, performance, and responsibilities so that all personnel can conduct themselves according to certain rules of good behavior and good conduct. The system should include; a purpose, policy, training, discipline steps for each offense, and an investigation team/process that is fair and unbiased.
- Provide human resource training that includes review of SOGs, Protocols, P&P's with all members.
- Create a service PAIP that addresses procedure of the steps that need to be taking in the event of an incident that causes injury or death to a staff member.
- Open discussions with neighboring municipal leaders (Mayors, Presidents, etc.) on the level of interest in regionalizing EMS services. Commission a full feasibility study that will



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provide the detail to make an informed decision. (This will be ongoing over several years.)

- Collaborate for the funding and selection of an outside agency to perform a feasibility study to identify all of the pros and cons and develop a plan that would identify time lines, cost, implementation logistics and intergovernmental agreement processes.

#### ***Implementation Plan by Priority***

##### **Fiscal Year 2013**

The goal for the first year of implementation should be to begin planning for the comprehensive implementation of the recommendations. The following areas to be implemented during the remainder of this year include:

- Define a Project Team made up of members from the City of Baraboo, Ambulance District Commission and EMS Service Administrative personnel. This team will provide oversight of the EMS Operations and Review Study recommendations and of the planned organizational changes to occur with internal and external resources to coordinate efforts.
- Provide for project management to oversee the entire project for the next three (3) years. The project manager will be responsible for keeping the project on track and moving ahead. This may be the EMS Chief or the EMS Chief with the services of outside management from a firm such as RW Management Group, Inc.
- Restructure the Baraboo District Ambulance Service Commission Board structure that will establish a process for **ALL** members to have proportional voting privileges at all meetings of the Commission as soon as possible.
- Immediately establish a plan that will adequately replenish reserve funds.
- Immediately reevaluate the workload of the Billing Manager and investigate all options for billing, to include but not limited to the following:
  - Continue as is with additional personnel resources
  - Review the effectiveness of current billing software
  - Consideration of external patient care reporting system
  - Consideration of outsourcing billing related tasks
- Immediately develop an aggressive plan for station relocation that meets the needs of the BDAS with hard dates for implementation.
- RW strongly recommends an immediate review and rewrite of the Department Policies and Procedures. This process must include an evaluation of current practice, validation that current practice is valid and then development of policies that reflect good management



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practices. This recommendation can most easily be accomplished by the development of a P&P committee that defines the outlined processes and then forwards their work to the Management Team for ratification and dissemination.

- Establish regular meetings with St. Clare administrative and medical operational staff to address the following: RW would be interested in mediating a meeting that would assist both parties in discussions that would allow for an improved relationship in the future.
  - Interfacility Transports
  - Medical Treatment Protocols
  - Medical Direction
  - BDAS Resource Allocation and Community Responsibilities
  - Establish an acceptable format for a constructive run review process
  - Realities of EMS reimbursement models
- Establish a plan for the scheduling of REGULAR monthly FULL staff meetings.
- Define the current organizational structure and disseminate an organizational chart to all staff with clearly defined position responsibilities that appear on the chart.
- Develop a risk assessment tool to evaluate personnel fatigue at the Richland Center Station.
- Open discussions with neighboring municipal leaders (Mayors, Presidents, etc.) on the level of interest in regionalizing EMS services. Commission a full feasibility study that will provide the detail to make an informed decision. (This will be ongoing over several years.)

#### **Fiscal Year 2014**

The goals for the second year of implementation are to begin work on a physical resource plan, and planning process and recommendations within the budget and resource constraints. The following areas are to be developed during this year:

- Establish a template that will provide for a more informative process to report back to member Boards, and Councils on the various actions of the District Commission monthly meetings.
- Develop a communications process that will provide a level of trust among **ALL** members of the BDAS Board.
- RW strongly recommends the development of the management team and establish a process for regular meetings. (at least monthly, possibly more often initially to catch up on processes) Define a process up front with clearly defined criteria for meetings structure and establish expectations for outcomes. The management team needs to understand that when



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### CHAPTER 5 – MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

consensus cannot be reached among the committee that the Chief is the tie breaker and is responsible for the final decision.

- Continue to move forward with the Strategic Planning process that will assure a usable document is created. Establish a specific completion date for finalization of the process.
- RW Management recommends BDAS develop formal written goals and objectives. This can be accomplished by the development of a committee representing the BDAS Commission, upper management and line personnel to define goals and objectives. Once completed, everyone that serves on the Commission and BDAS staff needs to be familiar with the mission and goals of the Department and how the Department is going to achieve its goals.
- The BDAS District Commission to define and develop goals and objectives for the EMS department.
- Establish a policy for the evaluation of risks in weather response and difficult medical management situations.
- Create an algorithm based evaluation form for establishing various risks that will encompass both weather and medical response criteria.
- Establish a community risk evaluation to predict and plan for community specific hazards that could impact the resources of the service.
- Investigate the logistics of changing the EPCR to a system that will work well for the service and meet the State mandates for reporting to the Wisconsin Ambulance Reporting Data System (WARDS). ImageTrend is the vendor of choice to meet all of the requirements and should be considered as soon as possible.
- The Department needs to re-enforce the defined goals and objectives with members through a required learning/training program to ensure consistency and compliancy with all Department policies.
- Establish a process that will provide a better method for communicating information throughout the entire organization.
- Develop a process that will monitor department turnover and an evaluation process that will determine reasons for the turnover. As part of this process implement a survey tool that will be used for exit interviews of employees that leave the service.
- Develop a progressive discipline system that establishes rules pertaining to employee conduct, performance, and responsibilities so that all personnel can conduct themselves according to certain rules of good behavior and good conduct. The system should include; a



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purpose, policy, training, discipline steps for each offense, and an investigation team/process that is fair and unbiased.

- Provide human resource training that includes review SOGs, Protocols, P&P's with all members.
- Create a service PAIP that addresses procedure of the steps that need to be taking in the event of an incident that causes injury or death to a staff member.
- The EMS Chief should include officers and line personnel in the budget process, and use it as an opportunity to develop future Chief Officers. An example would be to ask all department employees to submit their own budget requests (wish lists) for the upcoming year, and then organize a summit of key personnel to prioritize the requests.
- Develop a workable process for reporting back to all personnel that outlines what items were placed in the budget and the rationale.

#### **Fiscal Years 2015**

The goal for the remaining years of implementation is to continue implementing the strategic plan and recommendations within the budget and resource constraints. The following areas are to be developed during these years:

- Investigate the level of interest among the municipal leaders to explore regionalization for the area.
- Collaborate for the funding and selection of an outside agency to perform a feasibility study to identify all of the pros and cons and develop a plan that would identify time lines, cost, implementation logistics and intergovernmental agreement processes.
- Establish a community risk evaluation to predict and plan for community specific hazards that could impact the resources of the service.
- Develop a revised vehicle replacement program that differentiates the replacement of 9-1-1 response vehicles and interfacility transport vehicles, using a shorter projection period.
- The training division of BDAS should develop a written departmental training program with a twelve month calendar of events. This will allow for all department members to plan for and attend training on a regular basis.
- Assure that all staff becomes training in all of the required NIMS training.
- Develop a physical resource plan for the training center.



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- Research the vehicle maintenance program to assure that the selected service center understands the needs of an emergency ambulance service and is competitive with pricing. This process should include documentation that the dealership mechanics that are performing the actual service are EVT Certified.



**CITY OF BARABOO, WI  
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CHAPTER 6 – GLOSSARY**

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AAA	American Ambulance Association – An association organized to provide assistance and networking to emergency medical service providers.
ALS	Advanced Life Support – An emergency medical response unit with EMT-Paramedic personnel and equipment. This unit is equipped to provide emergency cardiac and drug intervention care.
AMBULANCE	Ambulance – Specially built vehicles to respond to emergency medical incidents.
APPARATUS	Apparatus is commonly used to describe multiple types of fire trucks or emergency response vehicles like ambulances.
BDAS	Baraboo District Ambulance Service.
BLS	Basic Life Support – An emergency medical response unit with EMT personnel and equipment. This unit is equipped to provide basic emergency medical care.
CAAS	Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services – An evaluation process developed to measure emergency medical service providers to established and accepted national standard criteria.
CCP	Critical Care Paramedic – A Paramedic that has additional training for the management of complex medical issues used during interfacility transports.
CFAI	Commission of Fire Accreditation International – National Fire accreditation process, which has become a part of the Center of Public Safety Excellence.
CPSE	Center for Public Safety Excellence - Evaluation process that measures fire departments to established and accepted national standard criteria. The International City /County Management Association and the International Association of Fire Chiefs were both committed to the development of these standards.
EMS	Emergency Medical Service - This term is utilized to cover the multiple tiers of emergency medical response, from first responder to Paramedic.



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EMR	Emergency Medical Responders – (formerly First Responders) Individuals, who have completed an approved first responder course and subsequent refresher courses, maintains current CPR for healthcare provider’s certification, hold a current certificate from the State of Wisconsin, be credentialed with a first responder service and follow approved protocols.
EMT-P	Paramedic – Individual that has extensive training to provide emergency medical interventions.
EPCR	Electronic Patient Care Report – System used to collect patient information in the field remotely.
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency – A federal government agency responsible for the regulation of disaster management, planning and training.
ICS	Incident Command System – Nationally accepted system for the management of personnel and resources at large Public Safety incidents.
ISO	Insurance Services Office Rating Schedule – System used to rate fire departments for insurance rating purposes.
MABAS	Mutual Aid Box Alarm System – A Wisconsin statutory system in place for the coordination of fire and EMS mutual aid throughout the State of Wisconsin.
MUTUAL AID	Mutual aid is utilized frequently in fires that exceed the capabilities of a department’s equipment or available manpower to appropriately fight a large fire. Mutual aid requires a specific request for assistance by the incident commander.
NFPA	National Fire Protection Association - An association organized to reduce the burden of fire on the quality of life by advocating scientifically based consensus codes and standards, research and education for fire and related safety issues.
NFA	National Fire Academy – A national fire academy located in Emmitsburg, Maryland.
NHTSA	National Highway Traffic Safety Administration – Develops the National Standards and Training curriculums for EMS.



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NIMS	National Incident Management System – Nationally accepted program for the management of personnel, resources and equipment at major disaster related incidents.
NIOSH	National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health – An institution responsible for conducting research and making recommendations for the prevention of work related illnesses and injuries.
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Agency – The main federal agency charged with the enforcement of safety and health legislation.
PRE-PLANS	The documentation fire departments use to plan building response and incident management for target threats or specific hazardous locations.
VHF	Very High Frequency - The radio frequency range from 30 MHz to 300 MHz.
WARDS	Wisconsin Ambulance Run Data System. Data collection system for the State of Wisconsin that is required as the EMS depository for all EMS services.



**CITY OF BARABOO, WI  
OPERATIONS STUDY  
SALARY ADDENDUM**

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***Project Overview***

As part of the Operations Study, specifically the review of employee turnover, recruitment and retention, RW found that the BDAS service has fallen out of the competitive range which has had an impact on recruitment and retention of current employees. Cost of living (up to 1.5%) and Merit (up to 1.5%) wage adjustments were last given to staff in January 2012. RW found that generally the staff is very proud of the fact that they are members of BDAS. However, at some point non-competitive wages have an impact on retention. A full salary review was not requested from RW as part of this review. However, due to the importance of this issue for employee retention, RW reviewed the wages in the region and used related EMS industry sources to provide salary recommendations for the future.

Below is a position by position recommendation on salary ranges for the future. This will re-establish BDAS as providing a competitive wage structure and will allow for the retention of current employees as well as the recruitment for future employees.

**EMT-Basic – Based on 56 Hour work week**

Current Rate: \$10.03

Proposed: \$9.75 - \$11.65

**IV Tech - Based on 56 Hour work week**

Current Range: \$10.24 - \$12.74

Proposed: \$10.50 - \$13.00

**AEMT - Based on 56 Hour work week**

Current Range: \$10.24 - \$11.03

Proposed: \$10.75 - \$14.00

**Paramedic - Based on 56 Hour work week**

Current Range: \$10.09 - \$12.50

Proposed: \$13.95 - \$15.00

**CCP - Based on 56 Hour work week**

Current Range: \$11.27 - \$15.23

Proposed: \$14.50 - \$17.00

**Lieutenant – Based on 56 Hour work week**

Proposed Range: \$15.50 - \$18.75

**Captain - Based on 56 Hour work week**

Current Range: \$14.55 - \$14.92

Proposed: \$16.75 - \$20.25



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**Certified Ambulance Coder - Based on 40 Hour work week**

Current Rate: \$18.54

Proposed: (Option 1) - \$18.25 - \$26.50/hour

(Option 2) - Salary from \$40,560 to \$55,120

**Human Resources/ Coordinator - Based on 48 hour work week**

Proposed: (Option 1) - Part-time employee from \$19.50 - \$22.50/hour

(Option 2) - Part-time contracted entity from \$20,000 - \$25,000

**IT/Logistics/Procurement Coordinator – Based on 48 Hour work week**

Current Salary: Previously a Captain's position that is being re-titled.

Proposed: \$24.50 - \$30.50

**Training/ QA Coordinator - Based on 48 hour work week**

Current Salary: \$52,500

Proposed: \$59,000 – \$68,000

**Financial Coordinator - Based on 48 Hour work week**

Current Salary: \$67,558

Proposed: \$67,500 – \$74,250

**Assistant Chief - Based on 48 Hour work week**

Current Salary: Proposed new position (Currently Operational Captain)

Proposed: \$68,900 – \$79,500

**Chief - Based on 48 Hour work week**

Current Salary: \$77,250

Proposed: 79,000 – 95,000

**Training Center Instructors**

Course Instructor: \$16.00 - \$18.00

Class Instructor: \$14.00 - \$16.00

Lab Instructors: \$12.00 - \$14.00

