

Town of Ridgefield
Fire Commission Special Meeting
Fire Department Headquarters
6 Catoonah Street; Ridgefield, CT
May 11, 2016 – 6:30 pm
UNREVISED/UNAPPROVED

Commissioners Attending: Rudy Marconi
Maureen Kozlark
Robert Hebert
Steven Zemo

Absent: Barbara Manners

Representing RFD/OEM: Chief Kevin Tappe
Assistant Chief Jerry Myers

AGENDA

1. Personnel Update – Retirements, hiring, testing
2. High School Interns and other department activities
3. EMS Report: EMS Provider of the Year; Quality Surveys
4. Staff Tracking Criteria for Eight Man Minimum
5. Strategic Plan Report
6. Approval of Meeting Minutes: 2/17/16

Mr. Marconi called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm.

1. Personnel Updates – Retirement, hiring, testing

Chief Tappe explained that he expected five (5) staff openings within the next few months due to existing vacancies, retirements, etc. Human Resources has a hiring list for EMTs but not for Paramedics. HR is currently planning a written test just for paramedics to be administered in the near future. It is hoped that replacement staff can be hired in time to send them to the Fall 2016 Recruit Academy if needed.

2. High School interns and other department activities

Chief Tappe explained that two high school interns have started working with the department for about the next month. The department has also been involved in community activities such as an RVNA fund raiser, National Day of Prayer, Spring Stroll, Touch a Truck and an exhibit for the Aldrich Museum.

3. EMS Report: EMS Provider of the Year; Quality Surveys

Chief Tappe explained the Danbury Hospital's annual awards program and announced that Emergency Medical Dispatcher Richard Brown will be honored as the Ridgefield Fire Department's Provider of the Year on Friday, May 13, 2016. A/C Myers explained the results in the patient care quality surveys which have been received. We continue to score in the upper levels of the sample group. Commissioner Zemo expressed concern over some HIPPA

violations or if the survey company is selling database information to other contractors. He was assured that they are not. R. Hebert questioned the reasons for the surveys and A/C Myers explained that Medicare will be looking for these figures to maintain current Medicare reimbursement.

4. Staff Tracking Criteria for Eight-Man Minimum

Chiefs Tappe and Myers explained a list of criteria for tracking different items to track the efficiency of the change to a minimum staffing of eight personnel. The tracking will start soon prior to July 1, 2016 and will continue after the minimum is raised to eight on January 1, 2017. A discussion ensued about possible additional items to be tracked such as weather, percent of the day that all units are committed, and comparison against the current days staffing (6, 7, or 8), miles per call as compared to response time. Commissioner Hebert noted that this will take a lot of time and didn't want to burden the existing staff. It was suggested by Commissioner Marconi that maybe an intern from WCSU may be available to help track all of this information. Commissioner Zemo suggested that there may be existing software in existence that could be utilized to track and compare information.

5. Strategic Plan Report

Chief's Tappe and Myers explained the status of the department's Strategic planning findings. A PowerPoint program was reviewed (attached) showing the data, analysis, and recommendations of the planning committee. It was shown how the senior population is growing and how that population, and therefore the resulting EMS calls, will increase through 2030. It was also discussed that Station #2 may be in the wrong location and thoughts should be given to relocating Station #2. Headquarters was also discussed and it was noted that there are many options regarding relocating fire headquarters, refurbishing the existing building and possibly adding onto the existing building. There was some discussion of a third station closer to the Rte 7/35 intersection. There was also discussion about the number of EMS calls generated by Laurel Ridge Care Facility and Ridgefield Crossings. The Commissioners discussed possibly meeting more often to work towards the strategic planning goals. R. Marconi asked that a copy of the PowerPoint program be sent to each Commissioner.

6. Approval of Meeting Minutes: 2/17/16

The minutes of the Fire Commission meeting of 2/17/16 were distributed and reviewed. **M. Kozlark motioned and S. Zemo seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the Fire Commission meeting of 2/17/16. Motion passed 4-0.**

M. Kozlark moved and S. Zemo seconded a motion to adjourn. Motion passed 4-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Wendy Gannon Lionetti

Ridgefield Fire Department



Strategic Planning Report 2015

Mission



Review statistics and project the needs of Ridgefield in regards to fire and EMS services in the future, through 2030.

Process



Committee appointed:

Two management (Tappe, Myers)
Two Career reps (J. Drake, K. Brown)
Two Volunteer reps (T. Pambianchi, J. Benziger)

Process



- Research areas:
- Town demographics
- Incident volume – Non-EMS – EMS
- Incident locations
- Response times
- New building construction
- Projected calls
- Projected construction

Process



- Document review
- Data collection
- Statistical analysis
- Future projections

Document Review



- U.S. Census – 2000, 2010
- Congressional Research Service
- FEMA – Report to Congress
- Town of Ridgefield – 2010 Plan of Conservation & Development
- Town of Ridgefield – 1999 Plan of Conservation & Development
- Town of Ridgefield – Building Dept Records
- Town of Ridgefield – Tax Assessor Records
- National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS)
- EMS Charts data

Document Review



- Int'l City Managers Association (ICMA)
- Int'l Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC)
- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)
- The Fire Protection Research Foundation
- Fire Protection Handbook
- State of CT – Department of Health – Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS)

Statistical Data



- Response distance
- Incident locations
- Response times
- Population
- Age of population
- Change of demographics
- Incidence of fires
- Calls by day of week, month, etc.
- Time out of service for other calls

Assumptions



- Ridgefield's character will remain predominately residential (Planning document)
- Population is predicted to increase at approximately 1% per year (Planning document)
- Elderly population (>65 yo) will increase at the rate of 3% per year (Planning document)
- Town will continue to attract age restricted housing
- Traffic will continue to increase on main roads (State highways) and adjacent vicinity roads

Findings



Population:

Ridgefield is currently ~ 25,000 pop.

Senior population (>65 yo) is currently ~ 4,080
(16% of overall population)

Population density is near downtown area and
Rt 35 corridor

Findings



Building Construction:

31% increase in rental units since 2009.

45 new single family residences built since 2009.

273 building permits issued in past 10 years for
residential occupancies

Only 27 commercial building permits issued in same 10
year period

Findings



Number of Calls:

Non-EMS calls have remained relatively stable for the
eleven year period 2004-2014.

Average of 1115 per year. Some years higher and
some lower.

Overall call volume has increased by 73% in the eleven
year period

Findings



Number of Calls:

EMS calls have increased by 144% over the eleven year period, 2004-2014.

2004 – 905 EMS calls

2014 – 2217 EMS calls

Findings

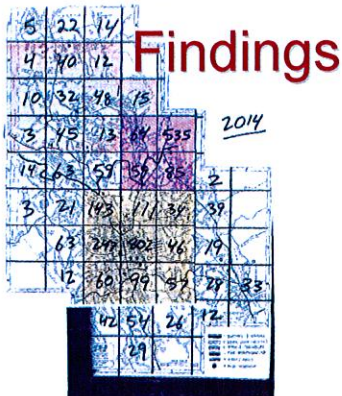


Location of Calls:

50% of calls within one mile of fire headquarters

25% of calls within one mile of Rt 7/35 intersection

10% of calls within one mile of Ridgebury station



Findings



Findings



RESPONSE TIMES

Total Response Time (TRT) =

- Alarm time
- Dispatch time
- Turnout time
- Travel time

Findings



RESPONSE TIMES

Alarm time - between caller dialing 911 and answer by police dispatch

Dispatch time - between police dispatcher receiving call and fire dispatcher toning it out

Turnout time - between call being toned out and resources responding and on the air

Travel time - from leaving the station until arriving on the scene

Findings



Recommended Travel Times:

- NFPA - 4 minutes (1st engine company)
8 minutes (full assignment - 12)
- ISO - 3.2 minutes (1st engine company)
4.9 minutes (ladder company)
- CFAI - 5 minutes (1st engine company)
10 minutes (full assignment - 10)

Findings



Ridgefield Travel Times:

2014 - E1 - 4 mins. mean
E2 - 7 mins. mean

Findings



AVERAGE TRAVEL TIMES

HEADQUARTERS TRAVEL TIME	LOCATION	STATION 2 TRAVEL TIME
16	100 RIDGEWAY RD	4
5	642 DANFORTH RD	8
5	1 ELMAN ALLEN HWY	16
9	918 NORTH SALEM RD	8
2	341 WEST AVE RD	14
2	70 PUMPING STATION RD	13
7	84 REVERE DRIVE	15
6	242 SOUTH SALEM RD	15
1	188 WEST LN	15
1	5 SILVER SPRING RD	18
1	17 WILTON RD WEST	15
1	1 MOO RD	17
11	35 KNOTTS COURT	13
15	35 PINE MOUNTAIN RD	5
16	32 BARNUM PL	7
17	586 BARBACK HILL RD	12
7	700 NORTH SALEM RD	3
11	TIME BETWEEN STATIONS	11

Findings



EMS calls to Ridgefield Crossings (104 units):

2009	180 calls	1.73 per unit
2010	185 "	1.77 " "
2011	209 "	2.0 " "
2012	202 "	1.94 " "
2013	249 "	2.55 " "

Findings



ACTUAL NUMBER OF EMS CALLS FOR PATIENTS > 65 YO (2010 - 2014)
PROJECTED NUMBER OF EMS CALLS FOR PATIENTS > 65 YO (2015-2030)

YEAR	POP > 65 YO	# CALLS > 65 YO	% OF EMS CALLS	% OF >65 YO POP
> 65 YO				
2010	3300	1026	50.00%	31.00%
2011	3495	1062	52.00%	30.00%
2012	3690	1068	51.00%	28.00%
2013	3885	1155	55.00%	30.00%
2014	4080	1243	59.00%	30.00%
2015	4275	1282	59% +	30% ??
2020	5250	1575	59% +	30% ??
2025	6225	1867	59% +	30% ??
2030	7200	2160	59% +	30% ??

Findings



EMS calls will double within 15 years for
population > 65 yo ALONE !!

2014 - 9 hours on the road per day for EMS
5.1 is for >65 yo patients

2030 - 16 hours on road per day for EMS
8.9 hours on the road for >65 yo patients

Recommendations



Total Response Time:

- have 911 screen available to fire dispatch
- combine dispatch between agencies in one location
- develop NexGen technology to reduce time in lookup
- decrease number of response profiles
- examine policy regarding non-emergency calls
- re-train dispatchers regarding immediate dispatch and delayed pre-arrival instructions

Recommendations



Total Response Time:

- establish in house pre-alert tone
- post monthly response times for each shift (competition)
- establish automatic aid with surrounding communities
- consider purchase of a traffic light control system
- improve traffic control measures, e.g. left turn lanes, alley entrances, etc.
- public education regarding yielding to emergency vehicles

Recommendations



Total Response Time:

- consider staffing two ambulances (staff minimum = 8)
- investigate relocating Station #2 closer to downtown area
- investigate the addition of a satellite ambulance station close to the Rt 7/35 area (public/private partnership)
- investigate re-purposing fire apparatus
- consider renovation of Station #1 rather than relocating
- consider acquiring neighboring property at Station #1 for additional bays and/or parking

Conclusion



The population of Ridgefield will continue to grow older and will place an increased demand on emergency services. We are already seeing that increased demand.

Fire stations and EMS stations are not properly located to efficiently serve the public.

As demand for services continue to increase, current staffing levels will not be able to keep up with the increase.