

# Shared Fire Services Final Report

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## II. Introduction

Process began in October 2011 with the cities of Nowthen, St Francis and Ramsey initiating discussions. At first meeting it was decided to open discussions to a more regional group to include Oak Grove and Bethel. Meetings began as monthly until February at which time the frequency was expanded to 2 times per month.

Resolutions were passed by each community in October verbalizing goals:

- Provide basic city services in an efficient manner
- Working cooperatively across community borders
- Establish Joint Fire Study Group to look at the feasibility of a Shared Fire Service Group.
- Group would formally report back to all communities by April 1, 2012 with a recommendation to the feasibility of the study.

Study Group was made up of the following from each community:

- Administrator
- Elected Official
- Fire Chief
- Member of respective fire dept.

Interviews of 5 established fire districts were made acquiring details how each were formed and governed. Other details included the handling of capital (buildings and equipment), major maintenance to buildings, merging of personnel, makeup of Governance Boards, how large purchases were handled (vehicles, other capital) and who owned such assets, level of services provided, who provides professional services (Finance, HR, etc.) Also researched was the availability of grant opportunities for the feasibility studies through the State Fire Marshal's Office.

Group elected Mayor Jerry Tveit of St Francis as the group chair with Ramsey Councilmember Sarah Strommen being elected as Vice Chair.

Guest speakers were invited to address the group. Nyle Zikmund of SBM (Spring Lake Park, Blaine, Moundsview) and Scott Crandall of West Metro (New Hope and Crystal) both made detailed presentations of their respective organizations.

A combined press release was created and released from all 5 communities. (See attachments)

Demographics of each community were generated and shared including: population, land mass, valuation, Fire Dept. details, budget details.

Cost Share models were generated and details from each community were provided to run these models using current budget numbers. An effort was made to refine each community's budget numbers so that the cost share models would be comparing each community with like information. Issues such as

capital purchases, debt service, reserves for capital expenses were items that the group agreed to pull out of the budget numbers to allow “Apples to Apples” analysis of the models. After review, the group decided that a more detailed analysis of the cost-sharing variables was necessary to provide the level of detail required to make a final decision by policy boards.

Community Administrators met to draft an outline of the final report to each community.

### **III. Benefits of Shared Services:**

#### **1. ISO Impact (Service Improvement to Communities)**

A community ISO rating is important as in one form or another has a direct impact on the amount of property insurance premiums that are paid both by residential and commercial/industrial. Below is a summary of the ratings of all 5 communities:

- Hydranted communities (Ramsey and St Francis) Class 5 for structures within 1000 ft of hydrant
- Non-Hydranted communities (Except Bethel) Class 7 for structures within 5 miles of fire station, structures outside the 5 mile distance are at a class 10
- Bethel is currently a class 9, as the water shuttle has not been performed. Staff is contacting ISO for a verbal opinion on the water shuttle outcome

It is important to mention that if communities join as one structure, all must meet the requirements of the water shuttle evaluation to maintain the class 7 rating in the non-hydranted area. The goal of the Study Group is to assure the ISO rating in all communities at least stays the same, with the opportunity to achieve a better rating through this effort.

Initial review has indicated that the geographic locations of existing stations within the proposed Joint Fire Service Area may positively impact the ISO ratings (and insurance ratings) of properties in adjacent communities. Citizens save money!

#### **2. Standardized Training**

Currently each of the departments has their own training officer, training coordinator or training group. Each department sets their own schedule of drills – some taught by members of the department and others taught by schools, business’s (Medics Training, FIRE Inc., etc.) and individuals brought in from outside the department.

In the past years there has been an effort to train more with neighboring departments. There are a number of benefits in doing this. Sharing of ideas and sometimes training budget monies are just a couple. Getting to know the surrounding area department’s equipment and personnel helps things go smoother when working together on mutual aid calls. All of these would be realized in a “shared fire service”.

Having a training group made up of members from each city would allow the entire group to standardize the training schedule. A particular drill could be run several times at different locations. This would allow firefighters several options to attend mandatory trainings depending on their schedules.

### **3. Capital Purchases- Buying Power.**

The Joint Fire Service Area may see a cost savings by joining together. The recent purchase of Self Contained Breathing Apparatus by the city of Oak Grove is an example of group buying power. The city of Oak Grove joined Minnetonka, Eden Prairie, Hopkins, Brooklyn Park and other fire agencies to present a Joint Purchase Agreement for the acquisition of air packs. By joining forces with this larger group, the City of Oak Grove was able to reduce the purchase price for the air packs by approximately \$40,000.00. Another example is the purchase of turnout gear. Currently each department involved buys only a few sets of gear per year. This creates challenges in getting sales representatives to do long term quotes for only a couple of sets of fire gear. With multiple cities consolidating together, this Joint Fire Service Area may have a large enough quantity to see a cost savings by buying multiple sets of gear with the increased number of firefighters.

Along these lines, savings may also be seen in the need to potentially not have as much capital equipment. Currently ISO requires that fire departments have back up apparatus. As this is a very costly proposition, many cities do not have back up engines and tankers sitting in their stations. If the Joint Fire Service Area were to form, some capital equipment could slide into this role. For example St Francis would no longer need to have 2 engines at their station. However with ISO wanting a spare engine, this other engine could be kept and used by all 5 cities as a “spare” engine per the ISO standards. This “spare engine” would then benefit all the cities.

### **4. Human Resources: Employment Pool – increase in employment pool**

With the exception of Ramsey, all the Cities involved in this study are considered bedroom communities meaning that people live here but do not work here. This community dynamic makes it difficult for fire departments to find people who are willing to serve and available during the daytime. The initial time commitment required of new hires also limits the number of people available and interested for fire departments to hire. A collaborative effort between the fire departments increases the geographical area of service and may increase the employment pool by creating opportunities for people who may live in one participating community but work in another.

Firefighters who work in one community and live in another could potentially report for duty in 2 to 3 cities. This would lead to better service and possibly a reduction in fire personnel through a better use of resources resulting in a reduced cost to taxpayers. By not being restricted by cities borders, more firefighting equipment would be accessible and this could result in insurance benefits to business and home owners as well as quicker response times.

## **5. Allocation of Capital**

One possible advantage of a Joint Fire System between multiple cities is the ability to use a larger economy of scale to leverage the allocation of Capital, both equipment and staff, to achieve more efficient results. By thinking in a broader sense, it may be possible to delay large purchases and re-locate other capital equipment so other cities may not have to make those purchases at all. This should result in lower cost and better customer service for all cities involved. One ladder truck for the 5 district region, vehicle and equipment sharing, collaborative training, joint Fire Chief and Joint Human Resources. Sharing buildings and equipment saves money.

By managing the staffing properly, it is possible to increase the availability of the firefighters by allowing them to report to other fire stations, while, at the same time decreasing the headcount. It stands to reason that if more firefighters are available, then less would be needed over all.

## **6. Response Times**

The Study group's goal for response time is to minimize the amount of time it takes from receipt of the 911 emergency call to the arrival of Fire Services. To accomplish this, a more regional concept of delivering services can be implemented. For example, currently the Bar None treatment facility, whose address is in Oak Grove, is actually closer to the St Francis Fire Station. By utilizing the closer fire station, the response time should be shortened. Another example would be the northeastern portion of Oak Grove could be served by the City of Bethel due to the shorter distance. Response times should be shortened. Using the regional concept, the responding fire station wouldn't necessarily be from that community, but simply from the nearest fire station, which ever community it may be in. Of course on larger incidents multiple stations would be responding to supply adequate apparatus and manpower. A map of all communities and the 5 mile drive distance from each fire station is included in this report.

## **7. Long Term Operational Savings**

As this process moves forward, care should be taken not to expect immediate budget reductions. There is considerable effort needed to make the transition from several departments into a single structure. Vehicle identification, uniforms, turnout gear, vendor selection, training needs are but a few of the issues that would need a plan for changing to a common style. The phrase "Getting everyone on the same page" could be used for the effort of consolidating different organizations into one. Once the initial change is made, there can be changes in operations that can provide some savings to all involved. Common training facilitators and training supplies is an example of the administrative budget that could be positively impacted. Operational budgets may be impacted by lessening the need for each community to carry inventory of additional hose, nozzles and other equipment, rather a central inventory system that could be utilized by all stations within the district may be an excellent method to both keep needed inventory levels while also assuring these inventory levels are kept at an acceptable level without excess. After analysis, possible changes in the number, type and location of apparatus may also offer some longer term savings to the Joint Fire Service Area.

Our fire fighters already train together and work together on mutual aid calls. Why not standardize the equipment used, and policies so that they could report to the station that is closest to them when they are needed.

**8. Perception of Communities working together to save money:**

Perception of Communities working together to save money:

In years past every city has seen their tax bases and local government aid shrink considerably. The initial transition of a joint fire effort could actually raise our respective budgets the first one to two years. But as the joint fire group evolved, and as most current models show, a true financial savings can be recognized by working together. With the correct formula each city involved would contribute equitably. This would lessen the financial strain by redundancy in the procurement of equipment, training and personnel we all budget for currently. Also taking this step would change “mutual aide assistance” calls to “our” department responded accordingly.

**9. Opening the Door for Further Cooperative Ventures**

As the Joint Fire Service Study Group has been working towards possible areas of sharing, we have noticed there are potentially other areas of sharing that have not been discussed yet. The five cities that have dedicated time to faithfully attend the shared services meetings have learned how far we have evolved in cooperative emergency services. Particularly on the “naturalness” of mutual aid on how it operates very well today; whereas many, many years ago there were such parochial issues that outside assistance felt like a failure.

Some of our committee cities are already visiting about other areas of sharing, cooperating, or generally doing things together to ultimately save money. This is partially a symptom of the time, and partially through the efforts of getting fellow appointed and elected officials together. Regardless of the reasoning, this effort is allowing committee participants to better recognize avenues of sharing.

**IV. Issues**

**1. Firefighter Relief Association**

A Firefighter Relief Association is typically setup by fire departments to receive funds from the state and the municipalities for funding a retirement pension plan for firefighters. The organization is usually a nonprofit organization and is legally separate from the fire department itself, although both work closely with each other. In addition to funding a pension plan, some relief associations hold fundraisers to help financially support the fire department by purchasing needed equipment from fundraising proceeds. Each relief association has its own bylaws and mission. Pension plans, net assets, rules for receiving pensions and requirements for being part of the relief association vary greatly between each organization. Due to these differences, firefighters have expressed concerns that if the relief association’s combine their pension benefits will decrease or the new association rules will change somehow that would affect their pension dollars.

Some of the obstacles include:

- Loss of pension value due to more personnel sharing in the pot or due to differing benefit amounts joining into one will then lower the benefit amount per member.
- Fears that service years will be lost and firefighters will have to start their pension cycle over again.
- Some fear that focus will shift to less fundraising efforts. i.e.: annual community fundraising events sponsored by the relief association.
- Obstacles which cannot be identified
- Municipal contribution to the pension funds vs. hourly pay rates

SBM Fire Chief Nyle Zikmund who is an expert in the shared services model said; there are a number of ways to make it work. Some have completely merged and others have maintained separate relief associations.

History has shown from previous shared services attempts in other regions that the relief association can be a major obstacle to overcome. Many have successfully mitigated these known and unknown obstacles by maintaining open, honest and clear communication among all parties. Identify and correct all possible misperceptions to avoid a complete disruption, expect the unexpected and to be patient. This process will take some time to complete. A more detailed look into the firefighter relief associations is needed to clearly identify the best ways to fit the relief association/s into a shared services model that works for all the members.

## **2. Allocations of existing Capital & Debt**

A possible barrier to overcome during further study of any type of shared services effort could be the allocation of existing capital resources and/or existing or future debt obligations from participating communities. Additional effort needs to be put forth to discuss with all community participants on exactly where their community property stays/goes. Observations, NOT DIRECTION, by participants on the group have indicated there COULD be a better physical placement of existing resources in another geographic location to BEST serve our citizens. There must be a transition plan on how any equipment ownership transitions occur.

The next phase of the study should examine all current and future debt relating to the physical buildings should be kept with each community. Also the group should address normal maintenance and repair of facilities should be budgeted into any type of future budget of a shared service. Finally the group should address any major upgrades in buildings/property that should be financed.

## **3. Increase in Budgets for some –**

Creating new public service system structures and delivery models is no easy feat. Cutting costs alone is not reform or redesign. Redesign, by its very nature, is not neat or easy. Some new ideas may not produce the outcomes planned; others may take years to generate significant cost savings, but it has been proven that redesigns are possible when they protect public service outcomes and save taxpayer

dollars. Should the communities decide to proceed with the next phase of this study, final projected short-term and long-term costs will be determined.

**4. Identity issues-Department names etc.:**

If the Joint Fire Service Area is formed there may be some concern about loss of identity and heritage. A fire department is made of many individuals but the core belief of any department is “Protect life first and Property second, in the safest, quickest and most efficient way possible “.

We would have to emphasize the importance of the common goal while making all parties feel a part of something bigger than what a name represents. We need to re-assure the group it’s still the combined efforts of all that make a difference, not the patch on the sleeve or the emblem on the truck.

**5. Governance – people and structure**

Should the product of this study be some type of a Shared Fire Service Area, than a governing entity would need to be created. Two great challenges in this process would be determining the make-up of a governing body and ensuring that each City is fairly represented on that governing body. There are examples of Shared Fire Service boards ranging from a composition of elected officials to appointed citizens to a mixture of both. After it is decided who the governing body will be comprised of the next issue will be how much authority they have over personnel, budgeting and operations; as well as how that relationship works with the individual Cities. These decisions will be the most challenging and difficult for elected officials to make as they must not only be agreeable now, but sustainable for years to come.

**6. Benefits – Consistency of pay, etc.**

There are obvious items relating to pay and benefits (if any) to move forward with any type of sharing service. The communities in the group currently have different pay structures. For example some communities may pay for each hour of service, whereas some communities may only pay on call. These will need to be identified specifically, addressed in parts and then potentially as one. There may be some inconsistencies that we are currently unaware of at this time.

**7. Perception of loss of “Local” control:**

We are all proud of our communities and may become very protective when we discuss not having a “local” fire department with our community name on the door. For communities may not be as concerned about the name on the emergency vehicle. Regardless, this could be portrayed as loss of local control by some individuals. This perception must be managed with all of our communities exploring these ideas to genuinely help our customers/citizens for the long term. Each community has a financial responsibility which is a huge part of our decision making process; both now and in the future. If some type of shared services is a reality, communities setting their budgets would need to

communicate with other communities about fiscal concerns. Major financial decisions will be a joint/cooperative decision verses a singular board decision. This different way of doing “business” may be portrayed as a loss of local control. Part of the financial control issue will be addressed during any further process of a Joint Fire Service Area. The perception must be kept in check. We must all remember that at the time of your emergency, NO ONE cares about the name on the side of the emergency vehicle; they care about the quality and quantity of care.

#### **8. Division of Buildings, Equipment, and future repairs**

Part of moving forward with the shared services will include the decision on how to handle the ownership of existing buildings and equipment and also how to pay for on-going maintenance. Research has shown that existing fire districts questioned utilize 3 basic methods of ownership:

- Fire District owns the buildings and equipment. Although from the dept.'s researched, this method represents the minority, it works efficiently for the communities that have chosen this model. One detail that would need attention is to find an equitable process to divide the communities past purchases and investments. Currently there is a difference in how much each community has invested in their fire service.
- Cities continue to own the buildings and equipment and budget for improvements and repairs. This model represents the majority of those researched. Using this model the individual cities would have more decision authority as to improvements and replacement.
- When major equipment and apparatus is replaced, the replacement becomes the property of the fire district. Prior to that the individual communities maintains ownership.

As far as maintenance to equipment and buildings are concerned, these costs can either be the responsibility of the host community, or the cost can be incorporated into the Joint Fire Service Area operating budget. Districts questioned have had shown both ways can be utilized successfully.

#### **9. Differing levels of service**

One of the goals of shared services is to provide the same level of service at a better value to the general public. Among the communities exploring the shared services option, Bethel and St. Francis provides a different level of service to its citizens, by responding to general medical emergencies and rescues as opposed to Oak Grove, Nowthen and Ramsey who respond only to major medical/rescues or unless requested by police or ambulance.

In general, major medical/ rescues are many times considered cardiac related where CPR is likely or where a major injury is suspected such as traffic crashes. A general medical emergency is considered in most cases non-life threatening in nature. However, these types of emergencies could also include suspected stroke, diabetic reactions or other similar type emergencies where some level of intervention maybe necessary to save or preserve the quality of life.

The barrier is how much more the communities who wish to continue increased care levels would need to pay compared to those that will not increase service levels.

A study that is more detailed is needed to determine how increased levels of service will fit within the shared services model and how the costs would affect the individual municipality's budget share.

## **V. Other Operational Issues**

### **1. Software used by Fire Service**

Currently across Anoka County Fire Departments there are 3 distinct software being used:

- Fire House
- Image Trend
- SBM

Anoka County Police and Fire agencies have secured funding to consolidate the records management system at the county to allow all depts., both Police and Fire, to use the same records system and in turn share information across community lines. To date, Police and Law Enforcement can share but the Fire Service cannot. It has not been decided if the new system will allow multiple software's to be used by the Fire Service. This system is expected to go online within 2 years. As related to the Shared Services group, both Fire House and Image Trend are used, although it would be essential for communities involved to use the same software within all facilities.

### **2. Radios**

If the merger of Fire Departments were to occur, there would have to be updates made to the communications devices for the various fire departments. The departments have separate tactical channels in the truck and portable radios. The tactical channels allow cities to talk within their own cities and stay off the main channel. Then all the fire fighters carry fire pagers. These pagers are set up based on the city tones and station tones. If the merger were to occur, the pagers that the fire fighters carry would need to be updated to have a fire department "all call" feature added. Lastly the base radios on the trucks and in the stations would have to receive program upgrades as well. Other complications that may arise is based on the sheer size of the new department, potentially over 160 square miles, there may be a need for 2 TAC channels. This would be something that would have to be worked on.

### **3. Security**

Fire Hall Security is accomplished by key pads for Ramsey and Nowthen, while Oak Grove and St. Francis use key fobs. Services for the fobs are purchased through a security company which has a significant cost. Although both systems are effective, a standardization of security would be desirable.

### **4. Equalization of Training Issues**

Working together in a "shared fire service" would allow the firefighters in the entire group to be trained equally, both in level of training and method of training. One instructor could train the entire group on a

particular discipline – if there is a location big enough to house everyone at one time or in smaller groups in different locations at different times. Either way the training on that topic would be equal throughout the group.

One of the possible obstacles of the training group could be finding a common day and time to conduct drills. Right now each department has their own system that is working for their daytime firefighters and their nighttime firefighters. This was a “known” when they joined the department. For example: Oak Grove holds drills, meetings and work details on Wednesday evening for “nights” and Monday morning for “days”. Having to move your day and time could cause problems for some firefighters like – work issues, day care, other obligations with church, sports, and other volunteer activities etc., etc., etc.

## **5. Standardized SOG's**

SOG's refer to Standard Operating Guidelines, which is a set of guidelines used by each fire department to determine how a task or situation should be handled. Every department has differing guidelines which makes operations with other departments somewhat challenging.

For example: Department A has red helmets for probationary firefighters and yellow helmets for seasoned firefighters. Department B however, considers yellow helmets a probationary firefighter and a red helmet signifies an officer.

Standardizing Operational guidelines across municipal borders is a valuable tool to improve interoperability and overall operational safety.

The Anoka County Fire Protection Council has recently formed a standards committee who are tasked with creating standardized operational guidelines on a county wide basis. The goal is to get all departments in Anoka County on the same page regarding SOG's so that errors and compromised safety can be avoided.

A shared service agreement will help further standardize operational guidelines between local stations and personal where specialized SOG's are needed given a unique community risk that will keep firefighters and the community safe.

## **6. Standardization of Equipment**

Currently there is differing equipment from city to city of equipment in use. If the Joint Fire Service structure were to happen, standardizing some of the equipment may take time and be costly. One primary example is in the use of Self Contained Breathing Apparatus or SCBA. These are the air units that fire personal wear when entering a hazardous environment. Currently Oak Grove and Bethel use the Scott brand SCBA. Ramsey uses a MSA brand and St Francis uses a Dragger brand SCBA. If the cities were to form a Joint Fire Service Area, one brand would need to be identified and utilized. Along these lines, even simple items would need to conform. Everything from hand line nozzles, fire hose sizes, helmets and colors, the fire gear we wear and even our department uniforms would need to be

standardized. These issues will not have to be done immediately for this joint agreement to occur, but will need to be planned for and budgeted to accommodate.

## **VI. Cost Share Methodology**

Usually when local governments provide a service to the community, that community bears the entire financial burden and everyone within the community benefits from that service. The full cost of providing such service is not easily determined because administrative, legal and support expenses are frequently absorbed into the city's overall operational costs. When more than one community share in providing emergency services the cost of providing such service may seem greater because the absorbed costs is now accounted for. Elected officials must assure that each community, assume its fair share of the cost; Thus, acting in the best interest of their respective communities.

Studies from other regions with shared service agreements have indicated that it is imperative to look at the long term economic impact to determine a cost share methodology in order to ensure long term success of a Shared Fire Services group.

The study group believes that due to the enormous flexibility of the available cost share formulas, a suitable formula can be established to achieve the goals of a Joint Fire Service Area. It is however, imperative that shared goals and objectives are established within the cost share methodology prior to establishing a suitable cost share formula. A more in depth study and information must be gathered in order to accurately assemble a comprehensive cost share methodology and a subsequent cost share model.

In general, a cost share methodology should include the following factors:

- Determine the goals and ideals each community has related to shared services
- Keep cost apportionment formulas fair, simple and logical to ensure the public accepts and supports the endeavor
- Analyze and set long term benefits
- Anticipate the future expansion of shared services
- Determine which factors should be used within a cost share formula

Those who benefit from a service should pay in direct proportion to the level of benefit. However, social and political concerns may also enter the price-setting process. Therefore, the task of determining a cost share formula will likely take a great deal of analysis and negotiation.

A number of elements to be considered within a cost share formula may include any combination of the following:

### Population

Based on the U.S. census, the residential population of a given service area can be proportioned to determine service benefits.

### Valuation

Usually, higher-valued structures carry a greater risk to the community from loss by fire. Assessed value holds merit simply because a third party, typically the county assessor determines the value of a property.

### Service Demand (Call Volume)

An element which includes a three to five year average of calls within each municipality and proportions those calls by the whole to determine the cost share to a particular jurisdiction.

### Area (geographical boundaries)

The cost of services can be apportioned based on the geographic area served relative to the whole. This element is not widely used within cost share formulas. To be effectively fair, each service area should be very similar in size and development.

### Fixed Rate

A fee schedule is used to base on the type or level of service desired by a particular community. Fixed rates are rarely used in shared service ventures due to the ever-changing risks (i.e. population, jobs, commerce and structures) within each community. A fixed fee may be a suitable factor to consider for those communities who wish to continue higher levels of service relative to the whole.

### Weighted-Element Allocation

As part of the cost sharing methodology, it may be determined that a particular element plays a larger factor in a cost share formula than other elements. The cost share formula would then weight more heavily on one element over another to establish a suitable cost share formula for all governmental entities.

## **VII. Summary and Recommendations**

Residents want their government to get the greatest possible outcome for every tax dollar they spend. The Shared Fire Services have identified some consolidated resources that would provide the best use of the tax payer's dollars. Based upon the information contained in the report, it is the consensus of the committee that there is value in proceeding to further evaluate the feasibility of a shared fire service for the communities involved.

**VIII. Attachments:**

Agenda's

Agenda November 3

**Joint Fire Service Study Group Agenda**

**November 3, 2011**



Introductions

Background of last 2 meetings

Map of area involving discussions

Chair and Vice Chair Appointments

Group Goals to be completed by April 1st

Task List

- Gather demographics of each community
- Population
- Land Area
- Commercial, industrial, residential makeup
- Service Levels provided
- Call Volume
- Operating budget
- Current Building and Equipment facilities
- Current FD Retirement plan
- Cities contribution
- Other

Schedule of meetings through April 1st

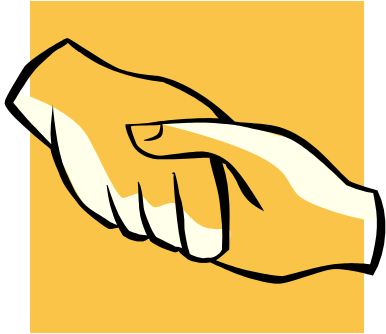
Adjourn



Agenda December 1

Joint Fire Service Study Group Agenda

December 1, 2011



Introductions

Detail memberships, voting members

Select Chair and Vice Chair

Old Business

- Fire Districts and budgeting large projects (roof replacement, tuck-pointing)
- Existing agreements from area districts
- Model agreements from LMC

Use of electronic (email) for documents for future meetings

Review of Press Coverage

Individual Cities review of assets, demographics

Grants availability

Calendar of meetings through April

Next Steps

Adjourn



## Agenda January 4

### Joint Fire Service Study Group Agenda

January 4, 2012  
(Happy New Year!!)



#### Introductions

#### Guest Presentations

Chief Scott Crandall West Metro Fire District  
Chief Nyle Zikmund SBM Fire District

#### Questions from group

Distribute Star Tribune article (Brooklyn Park)

#### Old Business

Discuss Assessor's information for each community:

- Business/Commercial
- Residential
- Institutional

Discuss Capital Plans, Future Expenditures, Population forecasts for each community

#### Next Steps

Review balance of meeting schedule

Adjourn



Agenda February 2

Joint Fire Service Study Group Agenda

February 2, 2012



Cost Share Model Review

Generating Per Capita Figures (Need detail of debt service of buildings and equip from each community)

ISO Conversation Update

Discussion on creating Regional Map with Fire Station Locations and Response

Grant Application via MN State Fire Marshal's Office

Final Report Prep

Next Steps

Review balance of meeting schedule

Adjourn



Agenda February 16

Joint Fire Service Study Group Agenda

February 16, 2012



Cost Share Model Reviews

ISO Conversation Update

Final Report Update

Next Steps

Review balance of meeting schedule

Adjourn



Agenda March 1

Joint Fire Service Study Group Agenda

March 1, 2012



Final Report Review

-Consider addition of Executive Summary Points

Review of Regional Maps

Cost Share Model Reviews

Next Steps

Review balance of meeting schedule

March 15

March 29

All meetings at Ramsey City Hall 3:30-5:00

Adjourn



Agenda March 15

Joint Fire Service Study Group Agenda

March 15, 2012



Review Final Report Draft

Update on ISO comments

Next Steps

Review balance of meeting schedule

Adjourn



Agenda March 29

Joint Fire Service Study Group Agenda

March 29, 2012



Review Final Report Draft

Review Draft Power Point

Room Layout for presentation

Final Vote moving forward

Select Presenter

Adjourn



## Minutes

### Minutes November 3

#### Joint Fire Service Study Group November 3, 2011

Attendees: Matt Hysten, Rick Juba, Curt Hallermann, Mark Korin, Sarah Strommen, Dave Arcand, Corrie LaDoucer, Kurt Ulrich, Tim Brown, Dean Kapler

Introductions were made by all present. Communities present were Bethel, Oak Grove, Nowthen, St Francis and Ramsey.

A quick review of the powerpoint from the previous meeting was made. Dean was directed to:

- For the districts that the cities own the buildings, how do districts budget for large maintenance issues like roof replacement/repair, tuckpointing, etc.
- Get copies of agreements from districts
- Contact the League of MN Cities for any model agreements for fire districts

Kurt will work on a press release, Dean will distribute for comment

Kurt will re-do resolution, Dean will distribute

Email distribution list completed other than for Kevin Robinson

Meeting schedule agreed to on 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each month. Next meeting Dec 1<sup>st</sup> at 3:30 pm at Ramsey

Dean will send each community an information needed list. This includes:

- Buildings, equipment, Demographics (population, square miles), emergency run data, current staff and list of certifications, budgets including reserves for large purchases, current dept retirement plan, service levels provided.

Group agreed to invite one more member from each communities fire dept.

Chair and Vice Chair to be appointed next meeting.

Respectfully submitted on November 8, 2011

Dean Kapler

## Minutes December 1



### **Shared Fire Service Study Group Minutes from December 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting**

**Attendees:** Matt Hysten (St Francis), Jerry Tveit (St Francis), Rick Juba (Oak Grove), Kevin Robinson (Oak Grove), Curt Hallermann (Oak Grove), Mark Quackenbush (Oak Grove), Sarah Strommen (Ramsey), Kurt Ulrich (Ramsey), Dean Kapler (Ramsey/Nowthen/St Francis), David Arcand (Bethel), Corrie LaDoucer (Nowthen), Bill Schulz (Nowthen)

#### **Introductions**

Introductions were made around the room

#### **Detail Memberships and Voting Members**

Kurt Ulrich reviewed the cities present and the memberships including the members that would be voting on decisions of the group (Elected and Administrative from each city).

#### **Nominations for Chair and Vice Chair**

Jerry Tveit (St Francis) was nominated by Matt Hysten and seconded by Sarah Strommen (Ramsey). Unanimous vote yes.

Sarah Strommen (Ramsey) was nominated by Kurt Ulrich (Ramsey) and seconded by Rick Juba (Oak Grove) Unanimous vote yes.

#### **Review of Joint Powers Agreements**

Secretary Dean Kapler passed out packets including documents from the five fire districts. Group directed Secretary to distribute the same information electronically to all members along with minutes from meeting.

#### **Budgeting Major Maintenance projects**

Secretary shared information from the five districts. Basically a mix of city budgeting and district budgeting of major maintenance projects (re-roofing, tuck-pointing, etc.)

#### **League of MN Cities Model Agreements**

Secretary shared the League of MN Cities website has several model agreements for contracted services but not any that deal specifically with fire district agreements. Group was encouraged to visit the League's website.

#### **Press Releases**

Group discussed the press release that was in local papers and TV. Consensus was the current distribution was adequate.

#### **Demographics of each Community**

Representative of each city made short presentation of details of their community. It was agreed each community would use Assessors Office Data and provide to Secretary the following:

- Amount of Business/Commercial
- Amount of Residential
- Amount of Institutional

Each community will also provide the following:

- Capital plans (fire service) within a 10 yr. plan
- List of all vehicles and trailers
- Planned future expenditures of \$25,000 or more or significant capital plans (ex. Wells)
- Any notable issues or other purchases
- Current Population and 2030 forecast

#### **Grant Recipients for Shared Services**

Secretary informed group that in January the MN State Fire Marshal's Office will have a list of 8 recipients of grants for the purpose of joint ventures. Secretary was directed to find out details on next round of grants.

**Next Steps**

Look at creating a mission statement.  
Reduce cost while continuing current level of service  
Look at each depts. budget  
Possibly reduce number of firefighters  
Create map with fire stations identified  
Population breakdown in each community  
Define Shared Services along with options

**Objectives of Shared Services**

Group gave ideas:

- Continue level of service or improve
- Consolidate resources, such as vehicles
- Assure ISO numbers will remain constant or improve
- Issues of future budgeting for continued services, revenues vs. expenditures
- Concerns of increased fire service budget if entering into shared agreement
- Concerns of cutting manpower
- Possibility of utilizing Duty Crews to handle smaller calls
- Issues of Identity of new dept.
- Issues of combining relief associations, how to merge, options.
- Priorities: relief, equipment, name of dept.
- Make sure agreement is expandable for others to join

**Guests for next meeting**

Secretary was directed to ask Nyle Zikmund (SBM) and Scott Crandall (West Metro) to join next meeting. If members have specific questions for guests, give to secretary ahead of time to be given to guests.

**Next meeting dates and times**

January 5 3:30-5:30 (extra time for guest presentation)  
February 2 3:30-5:00  
March 1 3:30-5:00  
March 15 3:30-5:00

**Adjournment 5:06**

Respectfully submitted  
Dean Kapler, Secretary

## Minutes January 5



### Shared Fire Service Study Group Minutes from January 5 Meeting

**Attendees:** Matt Hysten (St Francis), Jerry Tveit (St Francis), Kevin Robinson (Oak Grove), Curt Hallermann (Oak Grove), Mark Quackenbush (Oak Grove), Kurt Ulrich (Ramsey), Dean Kapler (Ramsey/Nowthen/St Francis), David Arcand (Bethel), Bill Schulz (Nowthen), Kim Swenson (St Francis), Jason Tossey (Ramsey), Brian Kirkham (Bethel), Shane Swedeen (Ramsey), Richard Wiitala (Bethel), Todd Miller (Bethel), Harlan Meyer (Nowthen)

**Guests:** Chief Nyle Zikmund of SBM Fire and Scott Crandall West Metro Fire

#### Introductions

Introductions were made around the room

#### Presentation by guests:

Chief Scott Crandall West Metro

- Gave his background in fire service, came from city of Crystal, gave demographics of each community (3 stations, 46,000 population, 1541 calls for service annually, provides basis EMS services along with all fire responses)
- Process took about 7 years, in 1998 decided to form a fire district
- Discussed the Board of Governance
- Meets quarterly with board
- Has worked for years to send the “right” response to incidents
- District currently in a bit of a “muck”. A good strong governance document is necessary to avoid problems in future.
- Annual budget has been reduced each of the past 4 years. Currently at 1.8 million.

Chief Nyle Zikmund SBM Fire

- SBM organized in 1944 as a non-profit fire corporation
- Discussed the populations of each community with Blaine the largest at +70%
- Works under a contract with each community
- Joint Powers Agreement is 50% market value and 50% call volume
- Board of Directors made up of appointments from each council with Blaine having more members due to population and % of contract. No elected officials on the board or full-time city employees
- Operates out of 4 fire stations, recently closed 2 stations and built others

#### Questions by Group:

- Term of SBM contract: 10 year with automatic continuation
- Both Chiefs agreed that a clause in contract to make getting out very costly will push communities to work through their differences
- JPA may not save operational costs, but will on capital equipment costs
- West Metro: Factors of concern; philosophical differences between communities has been an issue, currently using a 3<sup>rd</sup> party to resolve. Community response has been much better by utilizing resources better
- SBM Factors of concern: Conflict back in 90-91 dealing with buying new stations and equipment. Had to fall back to JPA to resolve some personnel issues
- Both Chiefs agreed to needing to give the Fire Chief unprecedented support to work with the other communities
- Governance Board must be the conduit of communication to individual councils
- West Metro: When dealing with power and control, problems are typically with the local politicians
- The Board of Directors/Governance Body must have the power to govern the agreement (Copy of Governance agreement will be sent to all members of the study group)
- Pension issues: SBM’s relief never changed. Chief Zikmund stated there are a number of options to use and all can be very equitable. There is also a state wide plan to look into. (West Metro) agreed to bring one communities pension program up to the level of the other at the beginning of the agreement.

- Identity Issues: (West Metro) many members threatened to quit, very few did. Worked a lot on team building. In some cases it takes certain people to leave to move forward.
- Reasons this group should move forward: Service to the community #1, As a dept probably the most basis of liability in the community, Take care in setting up the Governance Board

**Questions given by member prior to meeting (Written responses by both Chiefs)**

**1) What were the biggest challenges/benefits in establishing and how did those challenges/benefits change over time?**

(WM)

- Challenges: Pension legislation, short implementation timeline, start-up funding, employee buy-in.
- Benefits: reduction in fleet while maintain ISO rating, Leveraged strength, personnel pool, resources, greater response capabilities.
- Challenges/benefits over time: Governance/Council power struggles, employee buy-in this took 5-10 years.
  - Reduction in fleet costs, reduction in operational costs, leveraged strength.

(SBM) Dept originally organized as a non-profit in 1944 and has remained in that status since.

Original issues included funding and response. Funding switched from dues and membership to contracts with the townships in 1948-49. Issues in the late 1980's included ownership of assets and makeup of Fire Board. Fire Bond to build 2 new stations a purchase 8 pcs of apparatus caused changes to contract and bylaws resulting in;

- All assets being transferred to the cities that created a Joint Powers Agreement establishing a formula for voting share and ownership share.
- Fire Board transitioned from all 7 members being FD members to 5 of the 7 being community representatives (Blaine 3 and SLP and Moundsview 1 ea), Term limits for all (2-3 year terms), no full time city or FD employees or elected officials.
- Fiscal control of FD transferred to City Manager group (new hires, use of any reserved, annual budget approval)
- Contract changed to perpetuating automatic renewal every 10 years.

Essentially the FD operates much like a concession with staff providing the expertise to manage operation. FD manages and cares for all buildings and equipment (leased back to us via the contract)

**2) Were there any unanticipated challenges/benefits? What were they?**

(West Metro)

- Unanticipated challenges/benefits: Governance/Council power struggles, budgeting and dissolution.
- Leveraged strength, personnel pool, resources, greater response capabilities.

(SBM)

Benefits included the creation of environment where political forces are minimized, efficiency opportunities an optimized and appropriate levels of checks and balances are in place.

Fire Board oversees budget management, policy, personnel, and Fire Chief.

City Managers/Administrators oversee overall finance and Fire Chief.

Challenges include balancing various needs and interests of different communities.

**3) What key advice would you give to communities establishing joint fire services today?**

(West Metro)

- Ensure the JPA provides clear authority to the board of directors, questions of authority of the board can derail the organization to the point of dissolution.
- Board members must understand their role on the board is the interest of the Joint entity not their individual community (this is hard to do).
- Ensure fair process is employed and the interest of the organization is focused on accomplishing its mission.
- Ensure the customer is represented on the board.
- Communicate and communicate more.
- Engage stake holders, clarify mutual expectations.

(SBM)

- Do it! Demands on Fire Depts and specifically fire chiefs, especially volunteers are unattainable and thus the organization and eventually the community are subjected to increased risk (training, personnel issues, response, etc.)
- Fire Chief must be given a high degree of support to facilitate changes.
- Cost savings will result more on the capital side than the operational side but service and quality will improve dramatically. It is possible that operating budgets will increase (but by joining forces this may minimize impact)

**4) How did you handle communications to the community? What was the response?**

(West Metro)

- a. Local media, city publications and websites, council meetings, Town meetings.
- iii. Response was minimal, some individuals called with questions such as "Will I have to pay for service?"

(SBM)

- 1) When we transitioned to the new model in 1991 which included the sale of bonds, changing the board and transferring assets as well as when we closed 2 stations in 2006 and consolidated into a single station (for that area) we used the same approach; media, cable, newsletter, mailings and open houses.
- 2) In both cases, response from the public was minimal (although they voted for the bonds 70.3% to 29.7%) to virtually non-existent when we closed the 2 stations. I concluded that as long as someone showed up in a reasonable amount of time and did a professional job, people had few other concerns.

**Assessor's Information**

Discuss Assessor's information for each community:

- Business/Commercial
- Residential
- Institutional

**Community Plans, expenditures, etc.**

Discuss Capital Plans, Future Expenditures, Population forecasts for each community

**Next Steps**

Secretary was directed to complete the following:

Put information into a spreadsheet

Run cost comparisons with a model

Biggest needs by each community Top 5 of each Service and Capital by Jan 19th

**Next meeting dates and times**

February 23:30-5:00

March 1 3:30-5:00

March 15 3:30-5:00

**Adjournment 5:32**

Respectfully submitted

Dean Kapler, Secretary

## Minutes February 2



### Shared Fire Service Study Group Minutes from February 2 Meeting

**Attendees:** Dave Arcand, Curt Hallermann, Matt Hylen, Rick Juba, Dean Kapler, Brian Kirkham, Corrie LaDoucer, Harlan Meyer, Kevin Robinson, Ron Schliecher, Sarah Strommen, Shane Swedeen, Jerry Tveit, Kurt Ulrich

#### **Cost Share Model Review**

Discussed different cost share models and details from each city.

Discussion of different ways to fund capital equipment

- suggestion to pull out capital equipment and building expenses
- pull out buildings and maintenance
- pull out vehicles but leave in PM and regular maintenance
- Use equipment that has at least a 10 year life

Run same numbers using Anoka/Champlin cost share model

Discussion on providing medicals vs not providing

#### **Generating Per Capita Figures**

Need detail of debt service of buildings and equip from each community

Generate on all communities both individually and as a complete

#### **ISO Conversation Update**

Review of factors that affect the insurance rating

#### **Discussion on creating Regional Map with Fire Station Locations and Response**

Fire Chiefs will work to put together map showing response area's.

#### **Grant Application via MN State Fire Marshal's Office**

No money currently available for grants

#### **Final Report Prep**

Suggestion of scheduling additional meetings. Discussion on April 1<sup>st</sup> deadline.

Suggestion to outline content of final report, id key topics.

- ISO impact, impact to property owners
- emphasize customer service isn't decreased
- Per Capita numbers
- Costs

City Administrators to meet and come up with draft for final report

Discuss future topics that would come up

Next meeting for administrators scheduled for Feb 9th

#### **Next Steps**

Staff Direction:

- Run Cost Share Models pulling out capital items and \$\$ going into capital reserves. Pull out Medical Responses for applicable communities to make fair comparisons.
- Chiefs Arcand, Hallermann and Kapler to conduct conference call with ISO representatives and get detailed information of impact on rating if combining services
- Administrators to meet Feb 9<sup>th</sup> to draft contents of final report

#### **Review balance of meeting schedule**

- Next meeting February 16th

Adjourn 5:06



## Minutes February 16



### Shared Fire Service Study Group Minutes from February 16 Meeting

**Attendees:** Dave Arcand, Curt Hallermann, Matt Hylan, Rick Juba, Dean Kapler, Corrie LaDoucer, Kevin Robinson, Ron Schliecher, Shane Swedeen, Jerry Tveit, Kurt Ulrich, Kim Swenson, Bill Schulz

#### **Cost Share Model Review**

Reviewed cost share models beginning with Isanti model, Anoka/Champlin, Lake Johanna  
Staff was directed to pull Medical Response numbers from Bethel and St Francis Budget and re-run models

#### **ISO Conversation Update**

Reviewed current ISO ratings from each community  
Reviewed call by Fire Chiefs to ISO representative. Concern of water shuttle was discussed in detail. Staff will contact local ISO representative to find out details of either getting evaluation complete or possibly a "desktop" analysis

#### **Final Report Update**

Kurt Ulrich did an overview of the meeting held by administrators. Went through goals, barriers, how to proceed.  
Reviewed steps that have happened to date.  
Made assignments within the group to generate a paragraph on each topic. Deadline February 27<sup>th</sup> to Kurt Ulrich.

#### **Next Steps**

Create regional map (Dean)  
Re-run cost share models without Medical Response costs (Dean and Shane)  
Research consultant fee (Kurt)

Decision to hold additional meetings. Remaining meeting schedule:

March 1  
March 15  
March 29

Adjourn 5:10



## Minutes March 1



### Shared Fire Service Study Group Minutes from March 1 Meeting

**Attendees:** Dave Arcand, Curt Hallermann, Harlan Meyer, Matt Hysten, Rick Juba, Dean Kapler, Corrie LaDoucer, Kevin Robinson, Ron Schliecher, Shane Swedeen, Jerry Tveit, Kurt Ulrich, Kim Swenson, Bill Schulz

#### **Final Report Paragraph Review**

Each member went over their assigned paragraph. Comments were made and changes will be implemented.

#### **Review of Regional Map**

Review of Regional Maps. Decision to look at driving radius's were made and will be implemented.

#### **Review of Cost Share Models**

Group went over several different cost share models and discussed the unique differences of all.

#### **Final Report Update**

Kurt Ulrich did an overview of the meeting held by administrators. Went through goals, barriers, how to proceed. Reviewed steps that have happened to date.

Made assignments within the group to generate a paragraph on each topic. Deadline February 27<sup>th</sup> to Kurt Ulrich.

#### **Consultant Fee**

Kurt Ulrich researched to find that an average cost of a consultant will be approximately \$30,000-50,000

#### **Next Steps**

Re-do regional map (Dean)

Implement changes to Final Report (Dean)

Remaining meeting schedule:

March 15

March 29

Adjourn 5:10



## Minutes March 15



### Shared Fire Service Study Group Minutes from March 15 Meeting

**Attendees:** Dave Arcand, Harlan Meyer, Rick Juba, Dean Kapler, Kevin Robinson, Ron Schliecher, Jerry Tveit, Kurt Ulrich, Kim Swenson, Jeff Harapat

#### **Final Report Review**

Latest draft of Final Report gone through and suggestions for change made.

#### **ISO Update**

Dean reviewed a phone conversation with ISO representative dealing with the hauled water exercise and Bethel area. ISO rep's comment was Bethel area "should" fall under the class 7 after implementing a shared service.

#### **Powerpoint Presentation Discussion**

Group discussed main themes of the final presentation. Dean will implement and bring back to March 29<sup>th</sup> Meeting.

#### **Remaining meeting schedule:**

March 29

Adjourn 4:48



## Minutes March 29



### Shared Fire Service Study Group Minutes from March 29 Meeting

**Attendees:** Corrie LaDouccer, Dave Arcand, Rick Juba, Dean Kapler, Kevin Robinson, Matt Hylan, Heidi Nelson, Ron Schliecher, Jerry Tveit, Kim Swenson, Sarah Strommen, Shane Swedeen, Todd Miller, Bill Schulz, Curt Hallermann

#### **Final Report Review**

Final draft of Final Report gone through. Group was ok with material.

#### **Powerpoint Presentation Discussion**

Group went through powerpoint and changes were discussed. Changes will be implemented.

#### **Final Vote**

Group voted 9-0 to approve the materials

Group voted 7-2 to bring a recommendation to further pursue the joint effort to all 5 communities. (Oak Grove had concerns about costs of consultants)

#### **Presenter at 5 city meeting**

City Administrator Matt Hylan was selected as the primary presenter for the April 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Adjourn 5:05



**RESOLUTION RESCINDING RESOLUTION #XXXXXXX AND ADOPTING THIS RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A JOINT FIRE SERVICES STUDY GROUP**

**WHEREAS**, local governments have an obligation to the local taxpayers to provide basic City services in an efficient manner; and

**WHEREAS**, fire protection services are a common local service provided by the communities of western Anoka County; and

**WHEREAS**, the opportunity exists for several local communities to work cooperatively to provide the same or better service level at a reduced cost to taxpayers; and

**WHEREAS**, it was the consensus following a joint fire service discussion with the Cities of Bethel, Nowthen, Oak Grove, St. Francis and Ramsey, to appoint members to a formal study group to continue the exploration process of a possible joint fire service among the cities.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF XXXXXX, ANOKA COUNTY, STATE OF MINNESOTA; as follows:**

That the City of XXXXXX hereby supports the establishment of a joint fire services study group to study the feasibility of developing a joint fire service organization that would service multiple western Anoka County communities in a cost-effective manner.

That the aforementioned study group will be charged with the duty of analyzing the benefits of a joint fire service and potential barriers to implementation.

That it is expected that the group would provide a written report back to the participating communities on the findings of said study with a recommendation on how to proceed, no later than April 1, 2012.

That the City of XXXXXX hereby appoints an elected official, Councilmember XX XXXX, and an appointed official, City Administrator XX XXXX as members of the joint fire services study group to work cooperatively with the appointed members from the Cities of Bethel, Nowthen, Oak Grove, St. Francis and Ramsey to study a joint fire service organization. In addition, a fire service representative, Fire Chief XX XXXX, is appointed as an ex-officio member.

The motion for the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Councilmember XXXX and upon vote being taken thereon, the following voted in favor:

- Councilmember XXXX
- Councilmember XXXX
- Councilmember XXXX
- Councilmember XXXX
- Councilmember XXXX
- Councilmember XXXX

and the following voted against the same:

None

and the following were abstained:

None

and the following were absent:

None

Whereupon said resolution was declared duly passed and adopted by the XXXX City Council this the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of November 2011.

\_\_\_\_\_  
XXXX, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
XXXX, City Clerk

Press Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact information:**

Kurtis Ulrich  
City Administrator  
City of Ramsey  
(763) 433-9845

**Western Anoka County Communities to Establish  
Joint Fire Services Study Group**

**November 7, 2011 – Anoka County, Minnesota** – Five Anoka County communities announced today the formation of a study group to look at the feasibility of joint fire services.

Recent informal discussions between elected and appointed officials of several western Anoka County communities have resulted in a plan to study the feasibility and benefits of a developing a joint fire service organization that would service these western Anoka County communities in a cost effective manner. The Joint Fire Services Study Group will be charged with the duty of analyzing the benefits of a joint fire service and potential barriers to implementation.

The City Councils of Bethel, Nowthen, Oak Grove, St. Francis and Ramsey, will be asked to consider the appointment of members to a formal study group to continue the exploration of a possible joint fire service among the cities. In addition to an elected and administrative official from each community, a fire department representative will be appointed from each community as an ex-officio member.

Mayor *Jerry Tveit*, the *St. Francis* representative to the group, stated, “Local governments have an obligation to the local taxpayers to provide basic City services in the most cost effective manner.”

There are several joint fire services already operating effectively in Anoka County, including the Anoka-Champlin, Centennial, and Spring Lake Park-Blaine-Mounds View fire departments. The group will study whether the opportunity exists for these five communities to work cooperatively to provide the same or better service level at a reduced cost to taxpayers.

Mayor Mark Korin from Oak Grove stated, “This effort will give our communities a chance to look at a structure that could improve services and make the best use of the limited resources that City’s have today.”

Ramsey Fire Chief Dean Kapler noted, “Currently each City in the study runs independent fire services, except the City of Nowthen, which contracts with the City of Ramsey. Further, he added that “no decision has been made about whether a combined fire service is a good idea, but we need to examine this option to see if it provides an opportunity.”

The group will be charged with providing a written report of findings back to the participating communities with a recommendation on how to proceed, no later than April 1, 2012.

###



## Lists of equipment and personnel of each community fire department

### **Bethel**

12 Firefighters  
1 Fire Station  
2008 Engine  
1979 Engine  
1992 Tender/Tanker  
1983 Grass Truck

### **Nowthen**

10 Firefighters  
1 Fire Station  
1989 Engine  
1989 Tender/Tanker  
2008 Grass Truck

### **Oak Grove**

Firefighters  
2 Fire Stations  
2001 Engine  
2001 Engine  
1995 Tender/Tanker  
1992 Tender/Tanker  
2006 Grass Truck  
2001 Grass Truck  
(2) J-5 wild land fire rigs  
1994 Rescue Rig

### **Ramsey**

42 Firefighters  
2 Fire Stations  
2007 Engine  
1999 Engine  
1994 Tender/Tanker  
1989 Tender/Tanker  
2003 Ariel Ladder  
2003 Grass Truck  
1989 Grass Truck  
2004 Rescue Rig  
2002 Rescue Rig

### **St Francis**

22 Firefighters  
1 Fire Station  
2000 Engine  
1993 Engine  
1990 Tender/Tanker  
1998 Tender/Tanker  
2007 Grass Truck  
2002 Rescue Rig