WABASHA CITY COUNCIL

Wabasha Public Library

Tuesday, August 26, 2025

Special Council Meeting 3:00 PM

All matters listed under "Consent Agenda" are considered to be routine by the City Council and will be entered by one motion. Unless requested by a Council Member or citizen, there will be no separate discussion on these items. If discussion is required regarding an item, that item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered separately.

1. **Consent Agenda**
2. **General Business**
    1. Approve part-time paramedic
    2. Appoint 2-3 Council Members to Ad-Hoc Personnel Committee to Discuss Ambulance Scheduling and Staffing for 2025, budget 2026
3. **Adjournment**

City Council Special **2. 1.**

Meeting Date: 08/26/2025

ITEM TITLE: Approve part-time paramedic

DEPARTMENT: Administration

PURPOSE:

ITEM SUMMARY:

Approval of Part-Time Paramedic. This is a position that has been vacant since the beginning of the year. We had 1 applicant during that time. The applicant was interviewed, and the interview panel thought he would be a great fit for the service. He is an experienced paramedic, having worked in two different busy EMS systems.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

Approve Nathan Achman for the Part-Time Paramedic position at Class 3 Step 1 $22.78/hr.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve Nathan Achman for the Part-Time Paramedic position at Class 3 Step 1 $22.78/hr, pending passing a background check.

ACTION REQUIRED:

Approve hiring, table hiring, or deny the hiring.

City Council Special **2. 2.**

Meeting Date: 08/26/2025

ITEM TITLE: Appoint 2-3 Council Members to Ad-Hoc Personnel Committee to Discuss Ambulance Scheduling and Staffing for 2025, budget 2026

DEPARTMENT: Administration

PURPOSE:

ITEM SUMMARY:

Attachments

Schedule Memo

CITY OF WABASHA

WABASHA AMBULANCE
SERVING SINCE 1984
129 HIAWATHA DR W
WABASHA, MN 55981

To: Council and Council Ad-Hoc Committee
From: Caroline Gregerson and Ryan Marking

Action Required: Identify 2-3 Council Members for an Ad-Hoc Personnel Committee to discuss Ambulance staffing and scheduled hours in 2025 and in 2026

Summary: At the start of 2025, Director Marking and Administrator Gregerson were looking at models from other rural communities for both scheduling and pay. We had paramedic positions go unfilled due to lack of applicants. This was leading to many unfilled shifts. We learned that our paramedic pay was on average 16% lower than other services. Historically, we've struggled to keep EMTs or staff longer than one or two years. In researching wages for other services, we learned many other rural EMS only services (Mauston, Tomah, Baldwin, Middleton, Dells/Delton, Winona) utilized a 48/96 schedule to better cover the schedule and the scheduled overtime was an incentive for employees to stay in positions longer. Larger Fire Departments nationwide are also switching to this schedule. Red Wing currently uses it and the Rochester Fire Dept Union passed a vote to trial the 48/96. The 48/96-Hour schedule is where crew work 48 hours then have 96 hours off. So, 2 days on and 4 days off on a rotating schedule.

It also led to certainty for the employees in terms of when they would be scheduled. Marking requested that Gregerson approved a trial schedule May, June, July, August, and learn from how it went and determine, with Ambulance Commission discussion, and Council approval, if it should be continued. They also determined with the vacant positions, it would not have an impact on the budget. Summer was chosen because this is typically when we have the most open shifts on the weekends, with volunteers less available.

Call Volume Is Up, but Revenue Runs Two Month Behind
Finally, we are currently 100 calls ahead of where we were last year, August 20th had 8 calls in one day. As of August 22nd, we have the same number of calls so far, as the entire month, with 9 days to go. We do know from the Ambulance Study we commissioned a few years ago that we make money on transfers if we can take them and specifically ALS transfers. YTD we have had 77 Back up calls where 2 calls were going on at the same time and 2 time where we had 3 calls at once.

From a qualitative and revenue perspective we have seen the following:

- Transfers taken have increased over the 3 months from last year. More transfers taken equates to more revenue.
    - 2024 – 26 total transfers taken (16 ALS Taken)
    - 2025 – 50 total transfers taken (32 ALS Taken)
- Revenue from calls generally take 2-3 months to start to come in. Based on July's numbers revenue appears to be trending upwards with the new schedule.
    - Revenue for July was $61,338.50 (Which is $11,435 more than any other month)
- Provides consistent schedule and also provides almost 24/7 ALS coverage.
- Provides consistent coverage on the days the hospital requested Sat, Sun, Mon.
- Alleviates a lot of time spent trying to fill the schedule on a weekly basis.
- Full-time staff like the new schedule

Still Have Open Shifts

At the start of each week, these past few months, we still have an average of 2-3 or 3-4 open shifts that need to be filled. We rely on the Paid On-Calls or Part-Time staff to fill these however, if they are not filled 48 hours prior to the shift we offer it full-time staff. Ryan estimates that last summer, we would start each week with 7-9 open shifts every week, with most of them on the weekend.

Considerations/Cons:

- Overtime is higher than hiring additional part-time staff. However, we have struggled to recruit part-time staff that do not have another full-time job that takes priority over their schedule.
- Cost is less than an additional full-time person and an additional full-time person was not included in the budget.
- Are the shifts leading to any concerns with staff wellness or well-being? Services with far higher call volumes are using this schedule. I monitor types of calls/volumes from day to day and make any necessary adjustments.

Discussion at Ambulance Commission

- Occasionally, there are 4 people on the schedule, two full-time people and two Paid On-Calls. Is that an effective use of personnel resources? **Answer:** *The On Duty Paramedic still responds to every call and if an ALS intervention isn't needed they can then clear and stay available. Additional staff allows us to have built in backup for the transfer or when 2 calls come happen at the same time. Which both cases are happening more often than previous years. Overall, it's a rare occurrence.*
- What percentage of transfers occur at night ? **Answer.** *About 49%*
- Would it be more effective or cheaper to have everyone on an assigned scheduled, including Paid On Calls? **Answer.** *Would need to look at this. Paid on Calls are requested to sign up a month in advance of their shifts.*

Personnel Committee Purpose:

- Provide recommendation to Administrator and Director about continuing the 48/96 schedule for 2025, assuming no budget impact this will not require additional Council approval.
- Provide recommendation to Council for 2026 budget for staffing and hours.