

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

TOWN OF BETHLEHEM, NEW YORK

MAILING ADDRESS: 15 W. POPLAR DRIVE, DELMAR, NEW YORK 12054
TELEPHONE: (518) 439-9144
FAX: (518) 439-0454

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

To: Distribution List

From: John A. Lutz, Commissioner, Elsmere Fire District
Charles A. Wickham, Commissioner, Selkirk Fire District
David A. Scoons, Commissioner, Delmar Fire District
John P. Mahoney, Commissioner, North Bethlehem/Elmwood Park Fire District
Walter W. Eck, Jr. Commissioner, Slingerlands Fire District
Dan Klob, President, Bethlehem EMS
Steven Kroll, Chief Operating Officer, Delmar EMS

Date: August 25, 2010

RE: Request for Proposal – Fire and EMS Districts’ Collaborative Planning Project

PROJECT OBJECTIVES: The Town of Bethlehem’s five fire and two ambulance (EMS) districts (herein referred to as “BFED”) are seeking a proposal for consulting services to address each fire and EMS district’s role and responsibilities in addition to its equipment, facilities, manpower, training and education needs for the next five to ten years. Greater collaboration is sought in improving the operational efficiency, effectiveness and actual cost of providing fire protection and emergency medical services to the residents of the Town of Bethlehem. Specific recommendations regarding each of these areas and answers to the combined fire and EMS districts’ questions (See Exhibit 1), based upon actual and projected needs of the BFED and its neighboring districts are the desired outcomes of this consulting engagement. See Exhibit 2 for a geographical map of the fire districts involved.

PROPOSAL TIMETABLE and LOGISTICS. Proposals must be submitted via email and six printed copies to Mr. George Kaufman (gkaufman@elsmerefire.org), EFD Administrator, no later than 5 pm on Friday, September 17, 2010. Proposals shall include a detailed scope of work, request for information, proposed hours, rate and total project cost (including estimated expenses). Four related professional references and contact information from New York State fire districts (or surrounding eastern states) in which the consultant has completed similar planning projects is required. The project will be awarded to the successful consultant no later than October 1, 2010. Each proposal shall include a work schedule with expected completion date no later than December 31, 2010.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Additional information regarding the proposal process is available from Mr. George Kaufman at 518-439-9144.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

PROJECT: The principal objective is to evaluate each fire and EMS districts' role and responsibilities in addition to its equipment, facilities, manpower, training, education, response time, mutual aid and projected coverage area needs for the next five to ten years.

GEOGRAPHIC AREA: Entire Town of Bethlehem in Albany County.

PARTNERS: Town of Bethlehem Fire and EMS Districts (Delmar, Elmwood Park, Elsmere, Selkirk and Slingerlands Fire Districts plus Bethlehem and Delmar EMS Districts).

GOALS and OBJECTIVES:

Greater collaboration is sought in improving the operational efficiency, effectiveness and actual cost of providing fire protection and emergency medical services to the residents of the Town of Bethlehem.

Specific recommendations regarding each of these areas and answers to the following specific questions (See Exhibit 1), based upon actual and projected needs of the BFED and its neighboring districts, are the desired product of this consulting engagement.

HISTORY OF PROJECT: There is a long history of efforts to collaboratively work together between the Town of Bethlehem's fire districts through mutual aid response protocols and standard operating procedure (SOP) development, firefighter assistance and survival training (FAST) team development, "group purchasing" of fire hose, evacuation ropes, etc. and shared New York State fire fighter training programs. To date, however, each fire and EMS district is responsible for its own capital equipment, standard operating procedures and facility planning and procurement without a defined and mutually agreed upon Town-wide master plan for the role and responsibilities of each fire and EMS district.

Leading up to this RFP were several meetings between the respective fire and EMS districts and then with the Town of Bethlehem Supervisor, Sam Messina, to discuss and develop a consensus that a town-wide fire and EMS district plan was necessary.

BACKGROUND: Details regarding each District are available through their respective websites: www.elsmerefire.com, www.selkirkfd.org, www.delmarfire.com, www.slingerlandsfirerescue.org and www.bethlehemambulance.com. Additional information can be obtained through each District office directly and through the Town of Bethlehem Emergency Management Office.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF EACH FIRE DISTRICT:

DELMAR: The Delmar Fire District (DFD) responded to 313 calls for assistance during 2009. The District is affiliated with the Delmar Volunteer Ambulance Service and specializes in emergency medical services. The ambulance service answered 2,150 calls for assistance during 2009.

The District has approximately eighty members. Station One is located at 145 Adams Street and houses Engine 21, Truck 20, Squad 24, and three ambulances. Station Two on Feura Bush Road houses Engine 22, pick-up truck 25, and one ambulance.

DFD responds to fire calls in three adjoining fire districts under automatic dispatch daytime and 24 hour mutual aid agreements.

The District has a large commercial infrastructure that includes a 775,000 square foot Owens Corning fiberglass manufacturing plant. The District is also home to a bulk cryogenic air separation facility producing large quantities of liquid oxygen, nitrogen, argon, and gaseous oxygen. The District is home to a commercial corridor with several shopping centers, a major supermarket, a lumber yard, six gasoline filling stations, a propane refill station, a 100 unit assisting living facility, five residential homes for disabled adults, the Town Hall complex, public library, public works garages, and a large town park that includes several swimming pools and several large office complexes.

DELMAR EMS: The Delmar Volunteer Ambulance Service (dba Delmar EMS) works in conjunction with the Albany County Sheriff's Office (ACSO) EMS Unit to provide emergency medical services and transportation to the residents of the Delmar, Elsmere, and Slingerlands Fire Districts, as well as mutual aid to Bethlehem Volunteer Ambulance which covers the Selkirk Fire District. Delmar EMS has four ambulances (built in 2000, 2002, 2004, and 2009) and is an EMT-I level agency.

Delmar EMS has developed a hybrid staffing model to meet the growing needs of the community. Delmar EMS is 100% volunteer from 6:00 pm to 6:00 am every day. The majority of the volunteers are members of the Delmar Fire Department. More than 40 EMTs, EMT-Is, and EMT-Ps participate in Delmar EMS, including mutual aid participants from several other area fire departments. Another 20 firefighters participate as drivers. Paid EMT staffing for two full ambulance crews is provided under contract by the ACSO between the hours of 6:00 am and 6:00 pm. Each call in the ambulance district is met with a dual response -- a Delmar EMS ambulance and a fly car-based ACSO EMT-P. The crews join together to provide care on calls requiring advanced life support.

Delmar EMS is supported by a combination of third party billing revenue and tax funds provided by the Delmar, Elsmere and Slingerlands Fire Districts. Delmar EMS currently utilizes the emsCharts electronic medical record platform and is currently implementing the LUCAS 2 automated CPR compression system to improve the care of persons suffering cardiac arrest.

Delmar EMS hosts continuing education programs for many area EMS agencies.

Delmar EMS has equipped the Delmar Fire District's Squad 24 to provide initial firefighter rehab and MCI response.

ELMWOOD PARK: The Elmwood Park Fire District operates its fire protection from one station through the North Bethlehem Fire Department (NBFD) located at 589 Russell Road, Albany, NY, (518) 489-6556. NBFD has approximately 50 members and responds to approximately 600 calls a year, which covers portions of the towns of Bethlehem, Guilderland, and New Scotland. Currently the fire apparatus includes one engine (E-66), one engine-tanker (ETA-64), one squad (S-63), and one EMS vehicle (EMS-62), and a reserve engine (E-67). Population of the district is 4,500 and covers approximately 5.5 square miles. Our district consists mostly of residential single and multi-family dwellings, some agricultural farms, four churches, two senior residential facilities and a day facility for the learning disabled. Our specialty is delivery of first response EMS and firefighter REHAB.

ELSMERE: The Elsmere Fire District (EFD) is one of five fire districts in the Town of Bethlehem. The District is mainly residential in character, serving approximately 8,500 citizens and 3,400 residences. The residential makeup includes a nursing home facility, assisted living facility and senior housing. There are about 350 commercial establishments within the District, mainly along Delaware Avenue. Some commercial and light industrial is present along the District's Route 9W corridor. There are several shopping centers with major supermarkets, a home improvement center, a public elementary school, and a residential home for disabled adults. Its fire company, Elsmere Fire Company "A", is composed of 80 active volunteer firefighters and responded to 376 alarms in 2009. Its present apparatus includes two engines (Engines 31 and 32), one 100' aerial platform (Truck 30) and one general purpose/hazardous material unit (Squad 33). Squad 33 carries other fire suppression equipment and performs other fire suppression and public education related functions in addition to hazardous materials response. It operates out of its main station at 15 West Poplar Drive and Delmar Station #2 located on Feura Bush Road. As such, it performs fire suppression and ventilation, aerial and truck company operations, hazardous materials and other related fire fighting activities. It operates within the Town of Bethlehem with mutual aid provided by Delmar, Selkirk, Slingerlands and North Bethlehem.

SELKIRK: The Selkirk Fire District (SFD) was established in 1928. It encompasses roughly 29 square miles, or about 58 percent of the Town of Bethlehem. The District provides fire and rescue services through an all-volunteer staff of approx. 75 firefighters operating out of three stations. The District maintains 4 engines, 1 ladder, 1 engine tanker, 1 rescue, 2 brush units, 1 mobile air unit, 1 fire police unit, 1 fire boat, 1 misc. vehicle, 2 foam trailers and 2 chief vehicles. The Department answered approximately 300 calls for 2009. The district includes the Hudson River, NYS thruway, CSX railroad yards, several petroleum product terminals and storage facilities, industrial and commercial properties. The balance of the District is mainly residential varying from rural to suburban in character. The residential population of the service area is approximately 9100 people. See Selkirk Fire District 2010 Report on its web site www.Selkirkfd.org for further information. The Adm. Building is located at 126 Maple Ave. in Selkirk (P.O. Box 5 Selkirk N.Y. 12158) 518-767-9951.

SLINGERLANDS: The Slingerlands Fire District does not maintain a district website; however the Slingerlands Fire Department does maintain a website. The address is: www.slingerlandsfirerescue.org.

The Slingerlands Fire District is one of the five Fire Districts located within the Town of Bethlehem. The Slingerlands Fire Department was established in 1927 and incorporated in 1928. There are two fire stations. Station No.1 is located at 1520 New Scotland Road. This is the main station. District and Department Offices and all emergency response apparatus are housed at this location. Station No.2 is located at 1144 New Scotland Road (within the boundaries of the City of Albany). This location is currently used to store an antique pumper (Engine E14) and for general storage. Present apparatus includes two Engines (Engines E11 and E12), one Heavy Rescue (Rescue R16), two Miscellaneous Emergency Response Vehicles (MERV M13 and M18) and three Chiefs vehicles (C101, C102 and C103). There are forty-five (45) active volunteer firefighters that respond to approximately 200 alarms annually. The Slingerlands Fire District primary response coverage areas are located within both the Towns of Bethlehem and New Scotland. The total response coverage area encompasses 5.9 square miles and the residential population within this area is approximately 4100 people (2000 Census). The fire district consists mostly of residential single and multi-family dwellings. In addition, there is a church, a public elementary school, a residential home for disabled adults, a shopping center with a major supermarket, a strip mall, two gasoline filling stations, and several commercial and light industrial occupancies located along the District's Route 85 (New Scotland Road) corridor. Services provided include fire suppression and ventilation, vehicle extrication and specialized rescue operations and other related firefighting activities. Mutual aid is provided to and received from the Delmar, Elsmere, Selkirk, North Bethlehem, New Salem, Onesquethaw and Voorheesville Fire Departments.

BETHLEHEM EMS: The Bethlehem Volunteer Ambulance Service (Bethlehem EMS) works in conjunction with the Albany County Sheriff's Office (ACSO) EMS Unit to provide emergency medical services and transportation to the residents of the Selkirk Fire District which encompasses roughly 29 square miles, or about 58 percent of the Town of Bethlehem. Bethlehem EMS also provides mutual aid to the Delmar Volunteer Ambulance which covers the Delmar, Elsmere, and Slingerlands Fire Districts. Bethlehem EMS operates three ambulances and is an EMT-B level agency. Bethlehem EMS has supplemented it's on call personnel with paid staffing provided under contract by the ACSO. One paid ACSO EMT/Driver is provided 24/7 to serve as either a primary (first-out) or secondary (second-out) crew member as needed. A second EMT/Driver is provided on Mondays between the hours of 6:00am and 6:00pm, as well as Thursdays between the hours of 6:00am and 6:00pm. Each call in the ambulance district is met with a dual response - a Bethlehem EMS ambulance and a fly car-based ACSO EMT-P. The crews join together to provide care on calls requiring advanced life support. Bethlehem EMS is supported by a combination of third party billing revenue and tax funds provided by the Selkirk Fire District. Bethlehem EMS recently began utilizing a live web based responder alert notification system via "iamresponding.com" which allows personnel at the station, or remotely from a smart phone device, to view who is responding for any given incident, and where they are responding to. Bethlehem EMS is currently in the early stages of transitioning to a paperless "e-PCR" program via the emsCharts electronic medical record platform.

EXHIBIT 1

TOWN OF BETHLEHEM FIRE and EMS DISTRICT PROPOSED AREAS OF STUDY

The following is a list of specific areas to be evaluated in this study. We welcome additional or alternate suggestions to improve this study from proposed consultants. Specific recommendations leading to the enhanced efficiency, operational effectiveness and cost reduction or avoidance are sought for each of these areas of study.

1. Training:
 - A. Evaluate and recommend a Town-wide standardized training curriculum and subject matter for firefighters and EMS personnel. This shall include the cross-training of firefighters for mutual aide operations.
 - B. Recommend improvements for the documentation of training and training records.
 - C. Establish standards for Fire Officer(s) and Firefighters. Qualifications should be based upon education, experience and competency requirements. Review the possibility of levels of firefighters based on training accomplishments, competency level, physical wellbeing and firefighter acumen, i.e. Firefighter I, Firefighter II.
 - D. Current and future use of/needs for the fire training tower and facility on Center Lane.
2. Upgraded in-house record keeping consistent with NFPA and ISO standards.
3. Town-wide preplanning, inspections and operations review for mutual aid companies.
4. Review of fire dispatching as a part of the Town dispatching system in conjunction with the requirements of NFPA and ISO.
5. Review of town-wide and district delivery needs for engine, ladder and service company operations based on NFPA and ISO requirements and determine the feasibility of specialized services.
6. Review of districts need for collaboration with regard to purchase and use of standardization of tools and equipment.
7. Review of current mutual aid agreements and assignments and possibility of added or upgraded agreements. Consider 24/7 mutual aid components, and review issues to increase manpower availability.
8. Evaluate the present and future equipment and facility needs for fire, rescue and EMS operations. Evaluate current Fire station locations (deployment study), including personnel, and mutual-aid departments. Determine if our current stations are located to deploy our resources in the most efficient manner.

9. Evaluate the organizational and management structure for both Administrative and operational functions.
10. Develop a 10-year master plan for continued fire and EMS services in the Town of Bethlehem.

EXHIBIT 2

TOWN OF BETHLEHEM
FIRE DISTRICTS MAP
PROPOSED AREAS OF STUDY

