

#1

**The FINANCE COMMITTEE held a meeting on  
Monday, November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025 beginning at 6:16 P.M**

**COM DEV PRESENT:** Chair Mitchell, Oswald, Lipian, Callahan  
**FINANCE PRESENT:** Chair Tollett, Cerra, Schneider, Siwierka, Davis  
**OTHERS:** Armstrong, Stewart  
**EXCUSED ABSENCE:** Schneider  
**OTHERS PRESENT:** Law Dir Deery, Safety Svc Dir Pyanowski, Mayor Brubaker,  
Finance Dir Pileski, Fin Dir Farrell, Planner Schoenig, Engineer Schneider,  
Parks Dir Reardon, Fire Chief Pronesti, Water Dist. Supt Rothgery

**1. The matter of approval of meeting minutes from the Finance Committee  
Meeting, from November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025 as circulated on 11/14/2025.**

Motion made by Mr. Cerra and seconded by Mrs. Siwierka to approve the 'said' Meeting Minutes.

**MOTION CARRIES**

**3. The matter of a moral claim as presented by Jessica Stewart and David Schrauf  
for damage received from a water main break at their residence, 514 Stafford Dr.**

Referred By: Safety Svc Dir Pyanowski

Applicant, Jessica Stewart of 514 Stafford Dr. introduced herself. She stated she is here regarding the incident that happened at her home on the morning of September 24<sup>th</sup> from a City water main break. She feels that due to almost a 2-hour delay in shutting off the water was a direct result that caused damage to her home. The City was notified by a resident on the street prior to 6AM and several other residents had called in. The water had been coming out in excess on the city side between her home at 514 and neighbor at 524 for several hours. It flooded the entire street and underground. They had woken up that morning at 7 AM and they didn't realize what was happening and they heard a truck at around 7:30. That is when they saw the massive amount of water which had accumulated in the street. As she went downstairs to go outside to speak with the crews to see what was going on, that's when she saw a foot and a half of unsanitary and unclean water which had been accumulating throughout her entire basement. They let the city workers know what was going on in their basement and the city workers said they had to shut the water main off and they had to wait for the rest of the crews to arrive. Ms. Stewart stated that the crews didn't have a sense of urgency. They asked if there was anything they could do to slow down the water from coming into the house. They realized they weren't able to go to work. The other crews arrived and were able to shut off the water at around 8:00. The first call was reported at 6:00 AM and the water was not shut off until 8:00 AM. There was a massive amount of water from this water mainline break. The sanitary sewer which happens to be in front of her house was filled and flooded almost to the top. After the water was shut off, they had to wait for the lines to be cleared. The city crews were trying to determine the best way to get down into where this break had happened and started.

Once the line was cleared, the water recessed from the basement level and it was brown sewer water. The lower level of the home where this brown sewer filled was a finished area of the home and was recently upgraded. Nothing in that lower level room was able to be salvaged. The water reached into the utility area where the furnace and AC is and reached those. She contacted a restoration company to come out as well as an HVAC company because the water reached up to the furnace. The carpet, baseboards were removed and they started the cleaning process. When she asked the city workers how and why this happened, they didn't have an answer. She was handed a claim form by one of the workers and she felt once she filled everything out properly and included photos and documentations and followed all the instructions, she felt that the City would realize that this was no fault of hers and the it was a city issue and the city should reimburse her for the expenses. Her main concern was for reimbursement for the structural items. She still never received any answers as to why this happened and any assurance that it won't happen again. Ms. Stewart has had to take on this big financial cost, but no explanation as to why it happened and if it will not happen again.

Law Dir Deery said this claim was reviewed and the main issue was that it was not turned into the property owner's insurance which is required by city policy and State Law, revised code, Chapter 2744. If damage is covered by insurance then the City is limited to reimburse the deductible. The report by Asst Dir Loesch indicated that the submission of the claim form and supporting documents was very detailed with photos and receipts. It is a property owner's right not to submit to insurance, legally the city is limited to reimbursing the deductible. In this case, the deductible is \$1,362.00, the damages amount to a lot more than that. If this was submitted to insurance and if it was denied, they would have that proof and then it would be subject to further review.

Ms. Stewart said that she is a licensed insurance agent for 17 years. And if she files this as an insurance claim, this will stay on her record for the next five years and the company could increase her rates without any notice and could be dropped. She feels because of the lack of time for response and if she were to file to see if it's covered, it would still affect her, whether it's paid or not, it will stay on her record.

Mrs. Siwierka asked who made the first call and who did they make that call to? Ms. Stewart said a neighbor called at 6:00 A.M. She asked if she can see where the calls began. (there was no answer as to where the initial call was made to).

Mrs. Siwierka said if the call went to the Police Dept., it would've been recorded of the call and the police dept would call the appropriate city department. We need to find out where the initial call went.

Chair Tollett said the Ohio Revised Code dictates the City on things like this. He doesn't think Council has gone outside of the law for a moral claim.

Dir Pyanowski said if the call came in at 6:00 and the crews don't start until 7:00 and they would've had to be called in early for this emergency. The crews arrived to the incident at 7:30 and that's part of the reason for the delay.

He said he will get her more information as to what happened and how it was corrected to give her piece of mind.

Mrs. Mitchell said that this was terrible and she feels council should do the right thing. Law Dir Deery said part of the reason for the State Law is so that a property owner does not make a claim and not turn around and also make an insurance claim and that is why proof is required that the claim has been submitted.

In this situation, the facts are there. Receipts are there is not much in dispute as to when, how and why things happened and the damages that incurred. The State Law states that if insurance is there it must be submitted and the claimant is limited to only having the deductible reimbursed.

Mrs. Davis asked if they can go back and submit to their insurance or can they reject the claim because they waited so long?

Ms. Stewart said she has a year to file a claim. She feels that if a call was received that there is an enormous water mainline break that the city should have an emergency protocol for that. If there's not, that is a concern.

Dir Pyanowski said as far as emergencies for the Fire Dept., they are on duty 24/7. For plowing, they have crews set and ready when there is a weather event in the forecast. This is a little different and crews are not on duty 24 hours a day and this wasn't a planned break. He just wants to say that this is the normal response time and he apologizes, but, he disagrees that their response was delayed.

Mrs. Siwierka said she agrees with Mrs. Mitchell and that the city needs to take another look at this. there is still no clarity as to where did the initial call go and how was that handled. She doesn't feel its good customer service that someone pulls a piece of paper out of their back pocket to hand it to her. She recommends that this be re-referred back to the Safety Service Dir and to sit down with the appropriate departments and Ms. Stewart and bring something back to the committee, and maybe something different than all or nothing. In the past there have been situations where the homeowner signs off on the claim.

Law Dir Deery said, yes, there have been releases, but, the insurance has always been submitted and confirmed. The purpose of a moral claim is an extraordinary measure. She said that there is no disagreement as to the fact that it happened in the City's right of way. The bottom line, it was a watermain break, there was no negligence. Now that this is a moral claim, if the committee feels that they would like to advance this to council for the full amount or a partial amount. She is here to guide committee and ultimately council as to what State Law says as far as what political subdivisions are financially responsible for.

Mr. Oswald said we're caught in the middle, he's sorry and he was hoping there could be a way for a medium point and look into this a little bit more and it's worth that.

Mr. Callahan said he actually witnessed the situation earlier that morning and again once the crews arrived. It wasn't a weather condition, this was a break everyone is sleeping and don't know their basement is being filled with water. Ms. Stewart has been reasonable, she is only asking for reimbursement for the structural damage, not about her furniture and other personal property. He agrees with Mrs. Siwierka and Mrs. Mitchell. This is a moral situation and he supports some type of compromise.

Mrs. Siwierka made a motion that they send this back for further review to the SSD Office, Law Office and any applicable departments to ascertain facts and details of the incident and bring back to committee. Mrs. Davis seconded that motion.

Law Dir Deery said the amount of the claim is \$13,442.84. The Law Dir's Office has determined that the claim should be honored as is standard, regardless of the amount, if it is the deductible of the full amount that is requested, the Law Office would prepare a release denying legal responsibility. She also said that the Law Office doesn't have any additional information to add to this claim. They have already determined that the claim should be addressed in some manner, it is the amount at issue and that would be for committee and ultimately for council to determine.

Mayor Brubaker added that instead of sending the claim back, they will dig into the details on the why and that could take some time before they have an answer. He feels since committee and council has the authority to approve the moral claim as requested by the proponent. They will still look into the issue of the cause of the break.

Chair Tollett clarified that it's the Mayor's recommendation to vote on the full amount or a partial amount?

Mrs. Siwierka asked to withdraw her motion and Mrs. Davis withdrew her second on that motion.

**Mrs. Siwierka moved that we pay this as a moral claim with all the parameters that are necessary. She feels this is a good lesson learned here on mechanisms of getting crews to whatever emergencies happen.**

**That motion was seconded by Mrs. Davis.**

*There was no further discussion and Chair Tollett read the committee report and asked for a motion.*

**Motion made by Mrs. Siwierka, seconded by Mrs. Davis to authorize an ordinance to for payment of the 'said' moral claim in the amount of \$13,442.84.**

**MOTION CARRIES COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN**

#### **4. The matter of delinquent grass mowing bills to be certified to the Lorain County Auditor and to be assessed as liens to the properties.**

Referred By: Safety Svc Dir Pyanowski

Dir Pyanowski said this is a list of outstanding lot mowing charges that need to be certified to the County Auditor to be assessed to the properties as tax liens.

*There were no questions and Chair Tollett read the committee report and asked for a motion.*

**Motion made by Mr. Cerra, second by Mrs. Siwierka to authorize a resolution to certify said charges as liens to the LC Auditor's Office.**

**MOTION CARRIES COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN**

**5. The matter of a fee ordinance update for the Water Distribution Dept.**

Referred By: Operations Mgr. Rothgery

Water Dist. Supt. Rothgery said they need to update the costs for all items pertaining to Water Distribution. They have added a tariff line because some of the water meter companies have threatened to add those charges to the cost of the meters and some of the brass parts that they use. That may or may not happen. But they needed to adjust the prices of those items as well as other things. There are new types and styles of meters. Prices mostly went up due to the cost of everything else.

*There were no further questions and Chair Tollett read the committee report and asked for a motion.*

**Motion made by Mrs. Siwierka, second by Mr. Cerra to authorize an ordinance authorizing updates to the 'said' fees. Emergency Clause is requested.**

**MOTION CARRIES COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN**

**6. The matter of applying for an ODNR Grant for The North Rec Park Swimming Pool.** Referred By: Parks & Rec Dir Reardon

Parks Dir Reardon said they have already applied for this grant and are asking that this be passed as an emergency. They have up to 30 days to add the ordinance to the grant application. This grant is for the north park swimming pool project. It's not 100% complete yet. They will do a small pool study to see what the amount of money that is needed to put into the pools for them to last another 20 to 25 years. At north park, the baby pool/tot pool has not been operational for 3 years so they will take that tot pool out and replace it with a splash pad. Also do some mechanical work and add some shade structures around the pool and do some work on gutters and interior walls. That project is a little over one million so they are asking for \$500,000 to go toward those projects. If that grant is awarded it would be a 2027 project. Once awarded they would have 18 months to complete it. This is a 50% matching grant and they would use their 2016 one half percent income tax funds for the matching part of it.

*There were no questions and Chair Tollett read the committee report and asked for a motion.*

**Motion made by Mr. Cerra, seconded by Mrs. Siwierka to authorize an ordinance to apply for and accept, if offered, the 'said' grant. Emergency clause is requested, due to grant deadline.**

**MOTION CARRIES COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN**

**7. The matter of applying for and accepting a loan from the State of Ohio Infrastructure Bank for the urban paving project.**

Referred By: Engineer Schneider



Engineer Schneider said they are looking to apply for a loan through the State Infrastructure Bank for the Abbe Road project from Sheffield Village to State Route Rt 57 and State Route 57 from Chestnut Ridge to Cleveland Street.

It's an Urban Paving project that is funded by ODOT and is an 80/20 split. The Urban Paving only covers certain items of the project, mainly the surface course and pavement markings, anything above and beyond is the City's responsibility. When we receive these federal funds, we're required to bring the project up regulations, which includes handicap ramps and guardrails and they were able to get money from the state for this part of the project. They are looking to apply for 1.45 million dollars. The most current estimate is 1.35 million dollars for the City's portion. The over project is roughly 3.5 to 4-million-dollar project. The City will pay around a third of the total cost.

Mr. Oswald brought up the idea of a traffic light at Stafford Drive and Abbe Road. There was a temporary light there when they were working on the sewer project in that area. Could there be a study to see if we can get a temporary or permanent traffic light there?

Engineer Schneider said that would not be part of this project.

*There were no further questions and Chair Tollett read the committee report and asked for a motion.*

**Motion made by Mrs. Davis, seconded by Mr. Cerra to authorize an ordinance to apply for and accept, the 'said' loan. Emergency clause is requested.**

**MOTION CARRIES COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN**

#### **8. The matter of an agreement with McCaulley & Company for the year 2026.**

Referred By: Mayor Brubaker

Mayor Brubaker said this is the annual contract for grant writing and lobbying. They increased their fee by \$24,000 and it's paid for out of the 2016 one half percent income tax out of economical development fund and the cost is \$144,000.

*There were no questions and Chair Tollett read the committee report and asked for a motion.*

**Motion made by Mr. Cerra, seconded by Mrs. Siwierka to authorize an ordinance to enter into professional service agreement with McCaulley & Company for 2026.**

**MOTION CARRIES COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN**

#### **9. The matter of updating the Sanitation rates beginning for the year 2026.**

Referred By: Safety Svc Dir Pyanowski

Dir Pyanowski said that there was a vote to maintain our Sanitation Dept and now we have to increase the rates to pay for the services going forward. The consultant recommended a 5% increase over the next 3 years in order for the fund to stay solvent. He is asking this committee to make that approval.

They have found two sanitation trucks thru Best Equipment and won't have to wait 18 to 24 months because they are available and we will purchase those so we can build up the fleet in the sanitation department. That is why we have proper rates to support the department and have functional and safe equipment. This increase will help us to continue to maintain it.

These new trucks would help jump start the new fleet. They did budget for it last year and they have waited until everything is finalized. Some of the money would come from what is left over in 2025 funds and some in the 2026 budget. Dir Pileski asked that those funds to be put in the 2026 temporary budget so they can get the trucks purchased.

Dir Pileski said he is fine with that as long as the 5% increase passes.

*There were no further questions and Chair Tollett read the committee report and asked for a motion.*

**Motion made by Mrs. Davis, seconded by Mr. Cerra to authorize an ordinance to authorize the 'said' rate increase for 2026, 2027 and 2028 at 5% per year.**

**Emergency clause requested.**

**MOTION CARRIES COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN**

**10. The matter of Amendments to the 2025 Permanent Appropriations Ordinance.**

Referred By: Finance Directors Pileski and Farrell *[Standing Referral]*.

*There were none this evening.*

**2. The matter of the 2025 Ambulance Feasibility Study.** *(this matter was moved to the end of the meeting)*

Referred By: Safety Service Dir Pyanowski

Chair Tollett thanked Dir Pyanowski and Fire Chief Pronesti for all the work that was done on this project. He urged committee members to read the booklet that was provided to everyone, as it contains a lot of information.

A representative from Fitch & Associates is here to give a Power Point Presentation of the Feasibility Study. A condensed version of this EMS Study which was presented to the Finance Committee on November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025, is attached herewith and made a part thereof and designated as 'Exhibit A'.

Steve Knight, Partner with Fitch & Associates, 105 Glen Tillium Drive, Ashville, NC. Mr. Knight began by thanking everyone for allowing his company the opportunity to put together this project for the City of Elyria. Fitch & Associates has been around for forty years as a public safety consulting firm. They have had three phases to this project and are now concluding with this presentation. They have concluded a quantitative data assessment and an analysis for a comprehensive GIS station location assessment and the summary document which everyone should have, which is the feasibility study. Large takeaways in assessing the EMS system as it exists today. The current provider, Lifecare provides excellent services and are meeting their contractual obligations. EMS services are challenged around the country and often there is a need for some public subsidy or public funding. As the city collects the \$126 for non-transport, it's recommended the city require some enhanced fiscal transparency. They also looked at EFD and Lifecare, which have similar response time performance. The factors of supply chain challenges and hiring challenges, if the city elected to move forward with municipal based fire-based EMS, would take a multi-year implementation.

The response time and contractual ties will establish what a system should be accomplishing and be accountable for. The industry shows if they can get to a call in 5 minutes or less there is a less significant impact on mortality. The industry speaks to a response time of five minutes or less which is significant for the small portion of calls that fall into high-risk mortality which is around 15% of the calls.

With the use of cell phones, it takes longer to get the location than 30 years ago when landlines prepopulated the 911 dispatcher's CAD screen with an address.

The National standard for life support paramedic services is eight minutes, for basic life support and fire related activity is four minutes. Elyria as an agency is at 6.5 minutes and Life care is at seven minutes on travel time at the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile.

Looking at EMS system, fire departments, there is no market space for a fire department, it's an essential service provided by government which builds and staff a number of stations and are available when an emergency call comes in.

There are more costs in the readiness for waiting for emergency, rather than a demand model, which is what most private EMS agencies offer. A readiness model covers geography and a demand focuses on where the calls are occurring. A blended scenario, which is what Elyria provides and understanding that relationship from a policy perspective, they get to decide how often to go to EMS calls and at what severity will be covered based on the perceived risk and then the ambulance backs it up. Following a national call triage process and recommendations and there were 8 million calls in the study. Basically 53% calls would be triage as an advanced life support call and about 47% would be triage at basic life support call. Many communities use that ALS to BLS component based on risks to decide which calls the fire department should engage on and which calls maybe the ambulance can handle individually. If you do move forward with a fire-based plan because all the pieces would be under the same governance and municipal umbrella and you could have flexibility to decide how to distribute resources based on risks. If you operated your own system, you could also entertain reducing the number of calls where you send large fire apparatus on EMS calls down by about another 17% from where you are today, which would be predicated on having an ambulance available and responding in a comfortable timeframe.

They looked at a fourth station and they tested several locations; East Broad St and Reaser Point Crossing, 300 Weston Way and 330 East Broad, which provide about 8% better than other locations. If there is a fourth station the travel time can be improved by one minute and 90% of incidents can be covered within six minutes.

When looking at the evaluation of the current fire department deployment, again looking through, is there capacity to take on and absorb EMS work through existing resources. The answer is no. In order to meet the desired response time of the investment that was made in the station, the assumption is that a vehicle is actually there and available to respond. When you combine and look at the current staffed and typical deployment is four resources a day which is a lean deployment. This says that the City doesn't have the capacity to take on EMS without adding additional resources and could not run it any leaner that it is currently being run.

Looking at the current EMS deployment, Lifecare deploys from either one or two stations.



What they deploy as typical day, there are three resources dedicated for the City and then another 12-hour truck that is turned on when things get busy. He will call that three and a half units. That is three 24-hour units and a 12-hour truck.

From their analysis they are recommending to negotiate a full fourth unit in deployment. The assessment of a fire-based EMS system, which would be predicated on the policy choices and how to deploy them. If to deploy from the three fire stations like the fire dept model is today, they recommend five ambulances 24-hours a day to cover the system. The City could choose a leaner scenario with four resources and a peak load, four and a half. And if want to only deploy from two locations, you could replicate Lifecare's performance and could run at three and a half units.

Other than policy choice of how the City wants to deploy, the assumptions are the same, same workload, same geography. The fire dept wouldn't have one obligation of a plan that lifecare doesn't, everyone would deploy in a similar manner in order to meet the expectations for service.

They looked at a billing assessment. Lifecare provided the payer mix, vast majority of the calls is Medicare, then Medicaid, which are capitated cost centers, which contributes to the EMS systems nationally being challenged to be financially viable. There are multiple pages of analysis in the report, but the average net collection that was estimated was \$582.00. The total net revenue to the system was estimated at 4.2 million dollars. They audit and had a ground and air ambulance billing company in their portfolio for many years and they've retained their expertise on these estimates. They are at a plus or minus 5% when they don't have the background detail. They did present their estimates to Lifecare and they acknowledged that it seems reasonable. *slide 17 of the Power Point Presentation shows [The Estimated Current EMS System] values and [The Estimated Fire-based Feasibility] values.*

The revenue would be 4.2 million, added in the cap of \$400,000, which is what the City contributes for the non-transport calls. The net revenue associated with the City of Elyria in their estimate is about 1.1 million dollars. That profit margin seems reasonable. From a sustainability standpoint, if the city feels comfortable that they're a viable company to continue to provide services. Looking at the fire-based feasibility side and start with 4.2 million that's available, they estimated the direct labor as if they were firefighter EMTs and firefighter paramedics. They backed out \$400,000 of the total expenditures of around 3 million and the positive impact of the general fund under this scenario would be about 1.2 to 1.3 million dollars. There would be new positions that would be recommended; an EMS administrator and an EMS administrative assistant, along with other things like pre-billing, QA/QI to a higher level, compliance, etc. The start up costs are the top table on slide 18. The city would decide how many units to start with.

Along with the purchase of vehicles, reserve capacity will also be needed.

Those startup costs range from 2.5 to 3.5 million and the recurring costs are on the bottom of that table on slide 18.

The pros and cons for the fire-based EMS model were discussed and recommendations for preserving the status quo, from the last slide were discussed.

That concluded the presentation.

Chair Tollett reminded everyone that 31 percent of all the calls are non-transport calls which the city pays for. Also, the fire department has given/administered some type of medicine of some sort to just under 700 calls this year because they were the first responders to the call. He asked if anyone has questions.

Mr. Callahan asked if weather and time of the day is factored into the response time? Mr. Knight said no, not specifically. If there is a winter storm, it's aggregated over the entirety of the time of day and encapsulates all of those events.

Mr. Armstrong said the City is getting to the scene and administering meds and doing what they can even before EMS arrives and the city still has to pay.

Chief Pronesti said the fire dept get there 30 seconds before on average or sometimes have a substantial amount of time on scene with the patient. 640 times in 2025, from their reports, they have administered a drug that was on board the fire department apparatus. Even when Lifecare gets there and the treatment has already been started by the Elyria paramedic. They are already on scene and already did an assessment and providing what needs to be done.

Mrs. Davis asked if the City is billing the patient for the \$126 non-transport fee?

Dir Pyanowski said, no, it's not collectable. It's the transport fee set by Medicaid and that is what was agreed in the contract. When Lifecare goes to the residence and lift someone back onto their couch and leave, the city gets that bill for \$126.00. That amount was agreed upon with a cap of \$400,000 per year.

Law Dir Deery said, should the city do this internally, we would need 3 and a half units and to deploy from 2 stations, would those be the current stations?

Mr. Knight said, yes, the city's current stations could work as long as they can accommodate them 24 hours a day. That configuration gives the city a better advantage and that's where the one-minute improvement comes because the stations aren't necessarily in the best locations for EMS. One of the stations could accommodate extra staffing, but the others would need some facility improvements.

Mrs. Siwierka said this study is footed in solid evidence that the city needs to look at and the best-case scenario would to have some sort of community input and committee. The committee could study it, now that we have a road map. Most communities have fire departments responding and billing and there's a revenue stream. This study should be done in a comprehensive way, not just council and administration. We need to sit back and take a look, this is a long-term investment.

Mrs. Mitchell agrees this is something we need to study. She sees no harm in forming a committee of perhaps fire dept. employees, council and community members.

It's fine to say we have a study and we should do something with it, but we also have to look at what we can afford to do.

Chair Tollett said we need to figure out a committee so that in 2026 we hit the ground running with a committee. And February 2028 will be here before we know it and we have to give a 180-day notice to Lifecare if we get out of the contract.

Mrs. Davis asked what that start-up number is?

Mr. Knight said those costs are estimated between 2.5 and 3.5 million dollars.

Chief Pronesti said they will need the committee of Elyria residents to look at it. We don't know the cost, Dir Pileski doesn't know the cost, we just don't know. The call volume to the fire dept is going up because residents just don't know who to call. It will take 3 years to get an ambulance. He is asking for everyone to take a break, don't put this on the shelf, create a committee. And not look at the monetary cost yet. There are ideas and everyone needs to look at the ideas.

Mr. Lipian agrees, this is a great opportunity to come in at the right time and not put it on the shelf. An increase of a better response time could be the difference between life or death. He agrees that it would be helpful to have a committee to look at how feasible it could be.

That concluded the discussion on this topic.

Chair Tollett said as they go into 2026 they will set up a committee and move forward with that process.

**Motion made by Mrs. Davis and second by Mr. Cerra to adjourn the Finance Committee Meeting at 8:15 P.M.**

**MOTION CARRIES**

**That concluded this evening's meetings.**

**The Next Finance Meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025.**

Respectfully Submitted by,   
Colleen Rosado, Secretary/Administrative Assistant



“EXHIBIT A”



**FITCH**

ASSOCIATES

## EMS FEASIBILITY STUDY

*Elyria, OH- Commission Workshop Briefing*

**November 24, 2025**

### About **Fitch & Associates**

We've designed, developed, and managed some of the world's most innovative Fire/EMS systems, and we bring the energy, focus, and experience that drive decision-making and action.



We seek to partner with communities willing to ask the tough questions, that seek transparency and public input, and are interested in planning for the future in a sustainable manner aligned with community expectations.



Forty years of experience implementing innovative, customized solutions in the public safety and healthcare arenas, providing consulting services in thousands of communities in all 50 states, every Canadian province, and 12 other countries.



## Project Deliverables

Phase 1  
Quantitative  
Data Analyses

Phase 2  
Comprehensive  
GIS and Station  
Location  
Analyses

Phase 3  
EMS Feasibility  
Study  
Summary  
Report

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## Key Takeaways

LifeCare, the current EMS provider, is providing inadequate services and following industry best practices.

Fiscal sustainability within EMS services is a challenge and often results in a need for public subsidies.

As the city pays for services, such as the \$125 per hour transport call, and/or further public subsidies as the future, the city should require fiscal transparency within the LifeCare contract.

The City's Fire Department and LifeCare have very similar response time performance.

If desired, the City could operate the EMS system that is both operationally and fiscally sustainable.

Consider a multi-year implementation strategy.

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## Evidenced-based Clinical Research on Response Time

- Summary of research is that a response time of five minutes or less provides a positive impact on the risk of mortality in patients with a high risk of mortality
- Between six minutes and 12 minutes, the impact on mortality was relatively unchanged.
- The takeaway is that there is flexibility to establish response expectations at the local level.

Author	Density	Sample Size	Response Time Threshold	Does Response Time Impact Patient Outcome
Blackwell (2002)	ALS Urban	5,424	5 minutes	Yes < 5 minutes; No > 5 minutes
Pons (2005)	ALS Urban	9,559	4 minutes & 8 minutes	No < 8 minutes; Yes < 4 minutes in intermediate/high risk of mortality
Blackwell (2009)	ALS Urban; BLS MFR	746	10:59	No > or < 10:59
Blanchard (2012)	ALS Urban	7,760	8 minutes	No > or < 8 minutes
Weiss (2013)	Metro/Urban and Rural	559	N/A Continuous Variable	No relationship between time and clinical outcomes
Pons (2002)	ALS Urban	3,490	8 minutes	No > or < 8 minutes after controlling for severity of injury
Newgard (2010)	ALS Urban	3,656	4 minutes & 8 minutes and Golden Hour	No time intervals were statistically related to mortality including response time, on-scene time, transport time, or total EMS time
Band (2014)	ALS Urban; BLS MFR	4,122	N/A Continuous Variable	Adjusted for severity of injury, no significant difference between PD and EMS. In patients with severe injuries, gunshot, or stabbing more likely to survive if transported by POLICE.

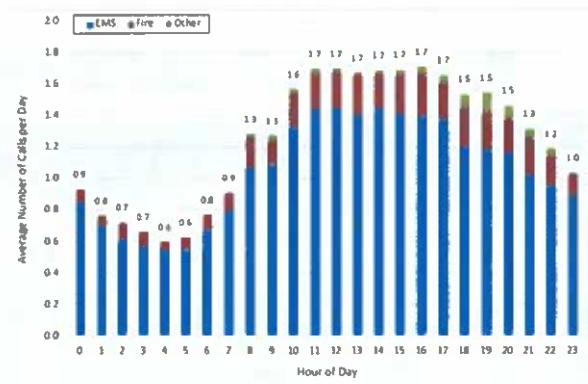
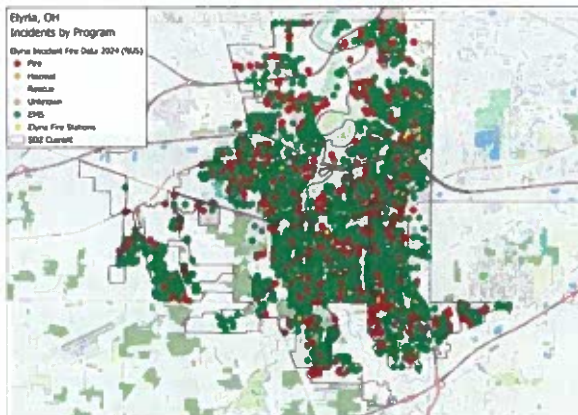
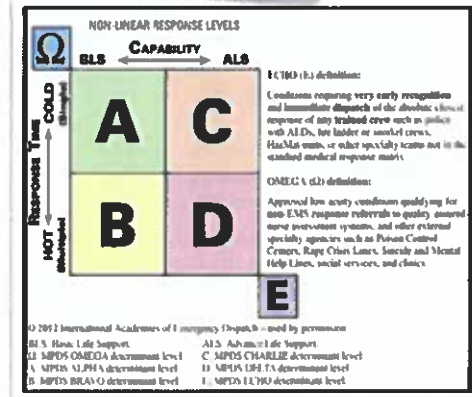
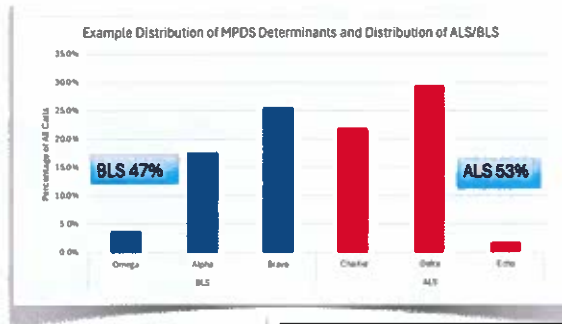
## Response Time Performance

Performance Category	Guidance (Minutes)	Elyria (Minutes)	Rating	Assessment of Current Performance
Dispatch Time/Call Processing				
NFPA 1710/1225	1.10	2.1	Excellent	Excellent; Well aligned with nationally observed best practices
CFAI	1.00			
National Observed Best Practice	2.00			
Turnout Time				
NFPA 1710 (EMS)	1.00	2.1	Good	Good; aligned with an above average fire department performance, but has an opportunity to improve by 38 seconds and meet nationally observed best practices
NFPA 1710 (Fire Related)	1.50			
CFAI	1.33			
National Observed Best Practice	1.50			
Travel Time				
NFPA 1710 (EMS - ALS Level)	8.00	6.5	Good	Good; aligned with an above average fire department performance. Policy should establish desired independent performance objectives or national standard.
NFPA 1710 (EMS BLS and Fire Related)	4.00			
CFAI	5.20			
National Observed Best Practice	≤9.0			

LifeCare has a similar travel time performance of 7.0 minutes to 90% of the incidents within Elyria.

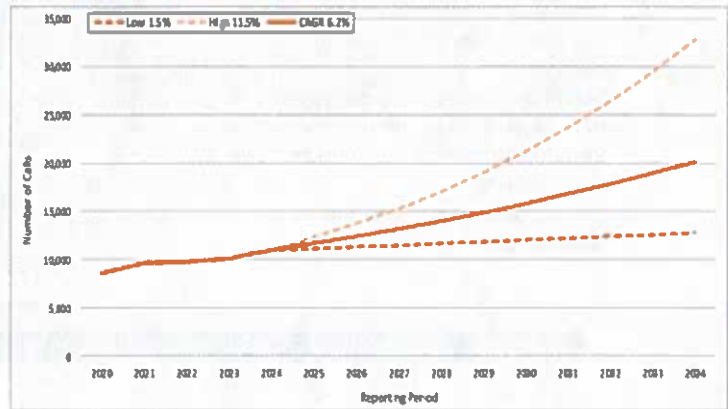
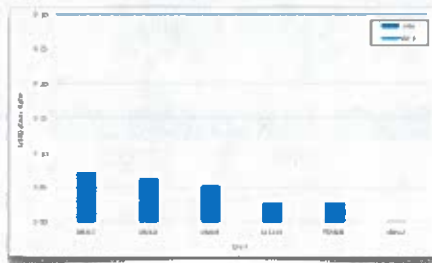
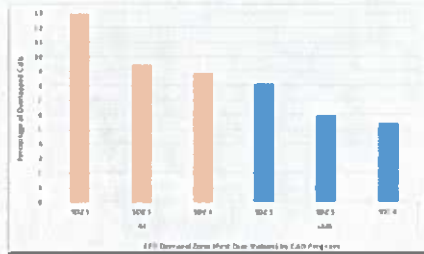
## Summary of EMS System Design

- Readiness Model – Fire Services
- Demand Model – Private EMS Services
- Combination System – First Response and Ambulance Services
- Generally, there is a tendency to over-resource fire first response when the ambulance service is performance is longer
- If the City deployed their own EMS services, or were confident in the contractual performance, the City could reduce the utilization of fire resources on EMS incidents by 17%.



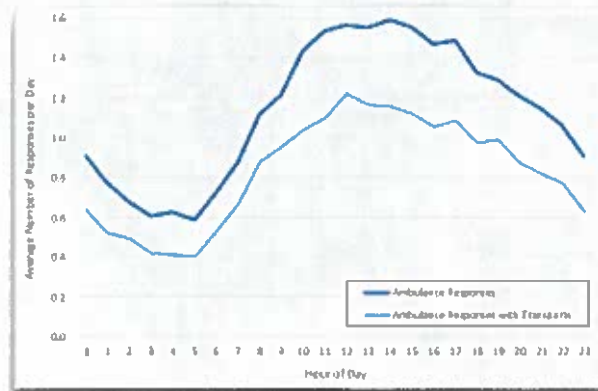
## Distribution of Incidents by Call Type

## Fire Department System Resiliency



## Assessment of EMS Patient Transports

- ~69% of EMS calls result in a patient transport

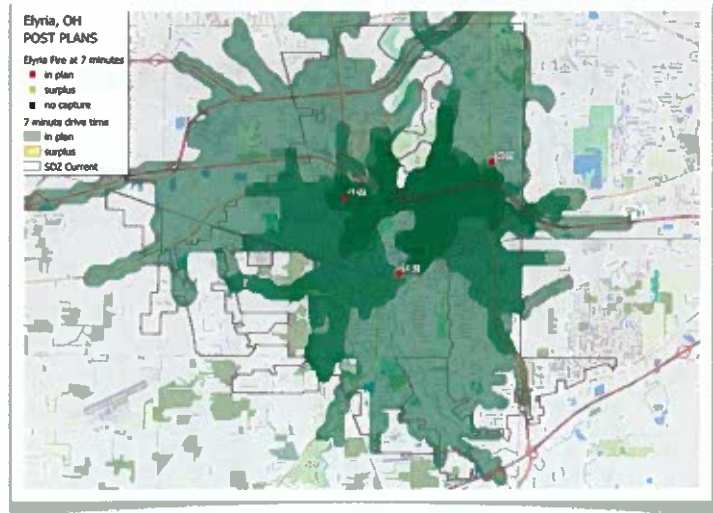


Response Disposition	Number of Responses	Estimated Average Busy Minutes per Response	Estimated Total Busy Hours	Average Responses per Day	Response Percentage
Transport	7,293	60.0	7,292.0	19.9	68.6
Transported	7,293	60.0	7,292.0	19.9	68.6
No Transport	3,399	30.0	1,669.5	9.1	31.4
Cancelled	651	30.0	315.5	1.8	6.1
Patient Refused Care	620	30.0	310.0	1.7	5.8
Command	550	30.0	275.0	1.5	5.2
Treated and Released	460	30.0	230.0	1.3	4.3
Lift Assist	268	30.0	134.0	0.7	2.5
Unknown	218	30.0	109.0	0.6	2.1
Not Treated	198	30.0	99.0	0.4	1.3
DOA	105	30.0	52.5	0.3	1.0
No Patient Found	74	30.0	37.0	0.2	0.7
Medical Alarm	71	30.0	35.5	0.2	0.7
Second Unit	44	30.0	22.0	0.1	0.4
False Alarm	43	30.0	21.5	0.1	0.4
Public Assist	29	30.0	14.5	0.1	0.3
Standby	25	30.0	12.5	0.1	0.2
Third Party Caller	21	30.0	11.0	0.1	0.2
Mutual Aid	13	30.0	6.5	< 0.1	0.1
Check	4	30.0	2.0	< 0.1	< 0.1
IV Start/Restart	3	30.0	1.5	< 0.1	< 0.1
Hazmat Drill	1	30.0	0.5	< 0.1	< 0.1
Total	10,692	30.0	8,964.5	19.9	100.0



## 7-Minute Travel Time

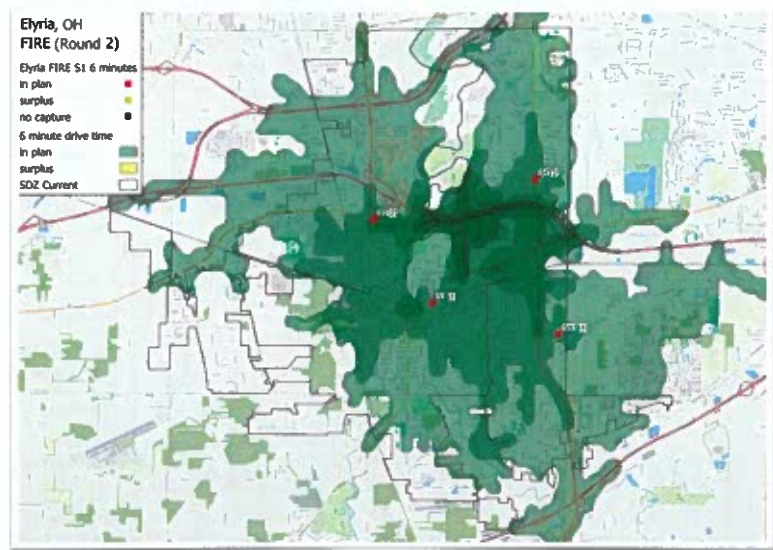
- ❑ Three staffed stations are required to maintain the current travel time performance.
- ❑ GIS analyses use the average road speeds, so it is not uncommon for the historical performance to outperform the modeling.
- ❑ Current historical performance is between 6.5 minutes and 7.0 minutes.



Rank	Station	Drive Time (Min)	Station Capture	Total Capture	Percent Capture
1	S1	7	7,498	7,498	68.23%
2	S3	7	1,184	8,682	79.01%
3	S4	7	799	9,481	86.28%

## Consideration of a 4<sup>th</sup> Fire Station Location

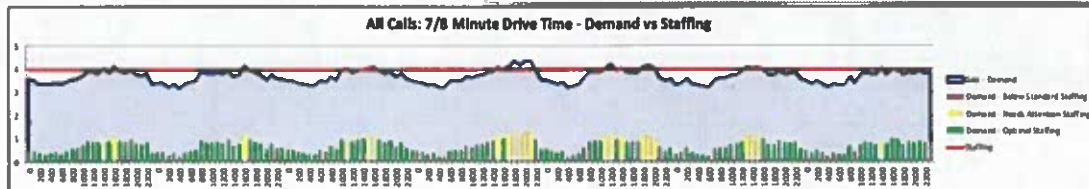
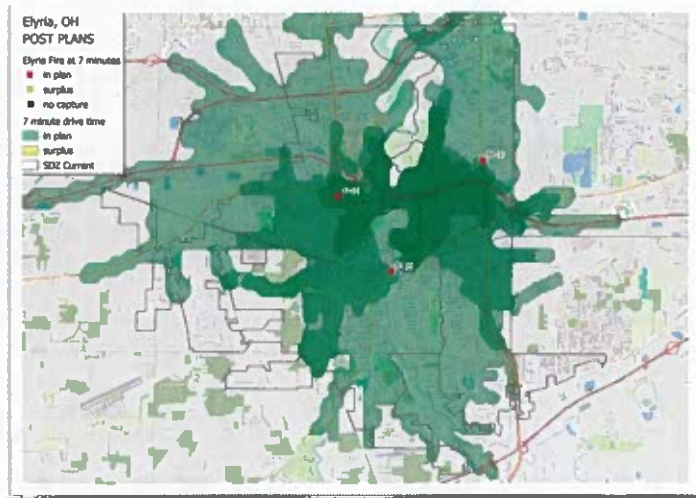
- ❑ This analysis tested three locations for a potential fourth location. In no order of priority, the locations tested were East Broad Street and Reaser Pointe Crossing, 300 Westin Way, and 330 East Broad Street.
- ❑ The East Broad Street and Reaser Pointe Crossing provided the greatest benefit over the other locations.
- ❑ Adding a fourth staffed station, would support an approximate 1-minute improvement in travel time performance.
- ❑ A four-station solution achieves greater than 90% of all incidents within 6-minutes or less





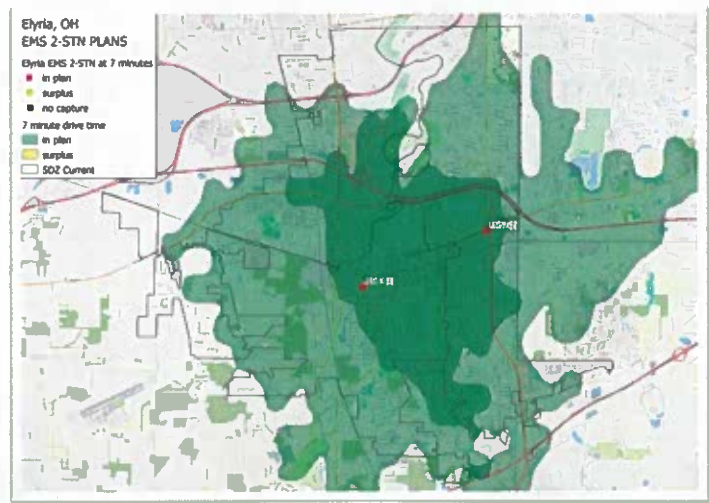
## Evaluation of the Current FD Deployment

- ☐ For the current call volume, the department is sufficiently resourced to maintain response times and performance.
- ☐ This is the leanest configuration that could be recommended and may require reinvestment in the future if the demand for services increase.
- ☐ There is limited capacity to increase the commitment to EMS with the existing resources.



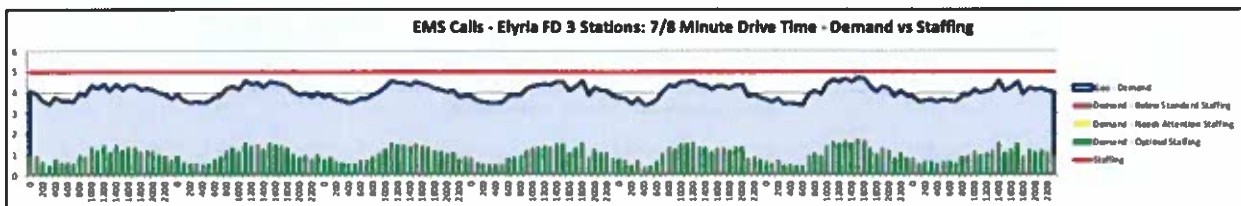
## Evaluation of the Current EMS Deployment

- ☐ For the current call volume, four ambulances should sufficiently resource maintaining response times and performance.
- ☐ A leaner deployment of three 24-hour resources and a peak load unit during the day may be a consideration if the desired response time performance is met.



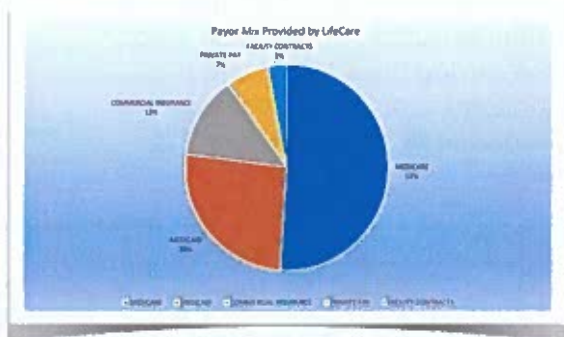
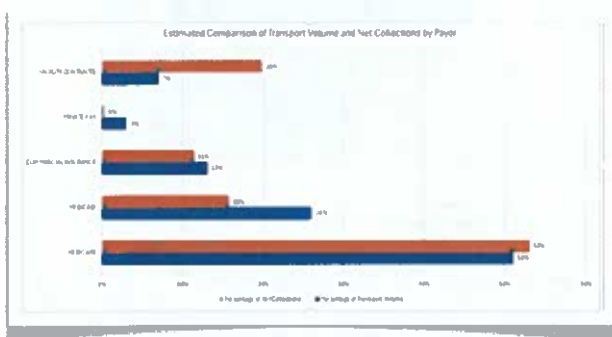
# Assessment of a Fire-based EMS System

- ❑ With a fire-station based deployment, and the current total EMS volume, five ambulances should sufficiently resource maintaining response times and performance.
- ❑ A leaner deployment of four 24-hour resources and a peak load unit during the day may be a consideration if the desired response time performance is met.
- ❑ A two station or post configuration could mirror the observations from LifeCare if the city were not restricted to utilizing existing fire station locations.



## Billing Assessment

- The average net collection per trip was estimated at \$582.
- The largest payor groups are Medicare and Medicaid.
- Total estimated system revenue \$4.2m.



# Evaluation of Estimated Fiscal Sustainability

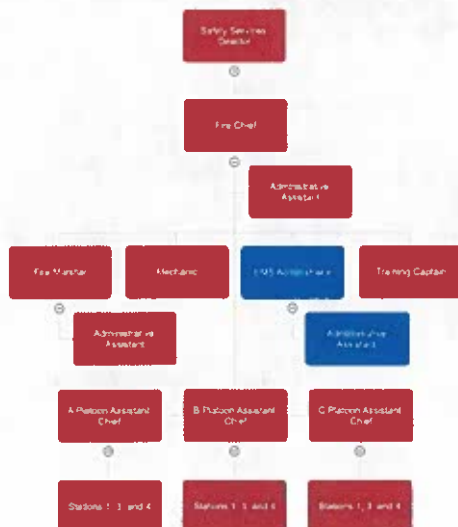
## Estimated Current EMS System

Budget Description	Value in Dollars (3.5 Units and 1 Supervisor)
Revenue (Transports Only + \$400k)	\$4,641,423
Direct Labor (Field plus Fringe)	\$2,184,670
Overhead, Materials, and Depreciation	\$1,313,040
Total Expenditures	\$3,497,710
Net Revenue (income/(loss))	\$1,143,713

## Estimated Fire-based Feasibility

Budget Description	Value in Dollars (3.5 Units and 1 Supervisor)
Revenue (Transports Only)	\$4,241,423
Direct Labor (Field plus Fringe)	\$2,371,075
Overhead, Materials, Depreciation plus 5% Billing Costs	\$991,175
Estimated Non-Transport Charges (\$126/non-transport)	(\$400,000)
Total Expenditures	\$2,962,250
Net Revenue (Income/(loss))	\$1,279,173

## EFD Projected Costs and Additional Administrative Capacity



### Start-Up Costs

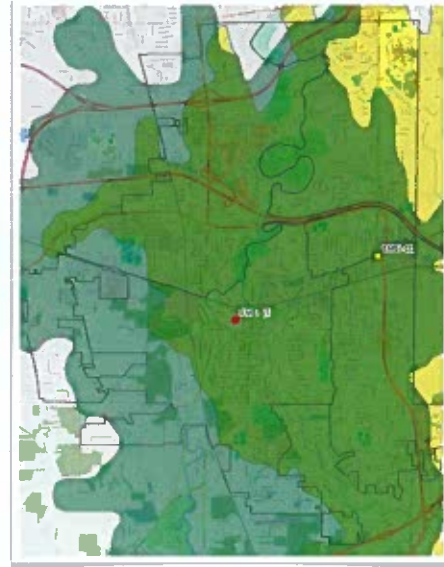
Description	3.5 Units	4 Units	4.5 Units	5 Units
Total Vehicles Needed	5	6	6	7
Vehicle	\$1,701,500	\$2,041,800	\$2,041,800	\$2,382,100
Capital Equipment - ALS	\$722,490	\$866,988	\$866,988	\$1,011,486
Disposable Equipment - ALS	\$34,925	\$41,910	\$41,910	\$48,895
Consumable Supplies	\$27,758	\$33,310	\$33,310	\$38,862
Capital Start-Up Costs	\$2,486,673	\$2,984,008	\$2,984,008	\$3,481,343

### Recurring Costs with Depreciation

Budget Description	Value in Dollars (3.5 Units and 1 Captain)	Value in Dollars (4 Units and 1 Captain)	Value in Dollars (4.5 Units and 1 Captain)	Value in Dollars (5 Units and 1 Captain)
Revenue (Transports Only)	\$4,241,423	\$4,241,423	\$4,241,423	\$4,241,423
Direct Labor (Field plus Fringe)	\$2,371,075	\$2,709,800	\$3,048,525	\$3,387,250
Overhead, Materials, and Depreciation	\$991,175	\$1,109,329	\$1,109,329	\$1,227,483
Estimated Non-Transport Charges (\$126/non-transport)	(\$400,000)	(\$400,000)	(\$400,000)	(\$400,000)
Total Expenditures	\$2,962,250	\$3,419,129	\$3,757,854	\$4,214,733
Net Revenue (Income/(loss))	\$1,279,173	\$822,294	\$483,569	\$26,690

## Alternative Response Times to Reduce Costs

- At 9 minutes, the system is no longer geographically constrained and becomes workload-controlled.
- Therefore, no fiscal advantage exists to elongating response time to 9 minutes or beyond.
- Finally, the relative efficiency provided by a longer response time of 9 minutes may not be sustainable if 24-hour shifts are utilized.
- The calculated UHU for this deployment is 34.4% and exceeds the upper threshold of 30% for 24-hour resources.



## High-level Pros & Cons for Fire-based EMS Model

### PROS

- ✓ Enhanced control, accountability, and transparency of services.
- ✓ Improved response times by approximately 1-minute.
- ✓ Potential for up to \$1.2m in net positive fund impact to the general fund.



### CONS

- ✗ Directly competes with long-standing service provider and employer that is performing well.
- ✗ Considerable fiscal investment and potential for future fiscal liabilities.
- ✗ May require new facility investments to accommodate ambulance resources and personnel.



## Recommendations for Preserving the Status Quo

- The two-station method used by LifeCare meets the contractual obligation of 9 minutes at the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile.
- An additional requirement of a fourth unit assigned to the city full-time will improve the level of service and decrease fire department time on task for EMS.
- Requiring additional resources provided to the city may result in a need for public subsidy if LifeCare is challenged to maintain fiscal sustainability.
- The city should require fiscal transparency within the LifeCare contract.



## Questions?

Steven Knight, PhD



