

Held

August 6, 2012

OPENING OF MEETING

Mr. Ritter called the meeting to order at 5:31 PM. Mr. Deters, Ms. Rinehart and Mrs. Harlow were in attendance.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Rowan requested the Board meet in Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the employment and compensation of public employees or officials. Mr. Deters made such motion and Ms. Rinehart offered the second.

Mr. Deters. "Aye"

Ms. Rinehart. "Aye"

Mr. Ritter. "Aye"

The Board returned from Executive Session at 6:10 PM. Mr. Rowan said there was nothing to report.

Mr. Ritter said this presentation is part of the benchmarking project for all departments. This analysis is typical with a new executive and timely because of the bad hand dealt to us with the budget.

BENCHMARKING/SWOT ANALYSIS FOR FIRE

Chief Smith introduced Deputy Chief Silvati, Assistant Chief Niehaus, EMS Division Chief Brown and Training Division Chief Walls. He said they have prepared a comprehensive report, which was an exhaustive amount of work to find data in our own organization and in others, which may or may not keep such data.

Deputy Chief Silvati said they have previously presented the benchmarking to the Financial Advisory Committee and this is now a SWOT analysis.

He discussed some of the department's strengths:

- Public trust and support
- Professional and competent personnel
- Exceptional EMS services
- ISO Rating
- \$19.8M property saved past three years
 - 21.6M property involved in fire
- Combo staffing system FT/PT
 - Effective/efficient
- Fire/EMS levy history

He presented some weaknesses:

- Dated vehicles and facilities
- Increasing response times
- On-duty staffing
 - 40 to 43 actually needed
- Too much cross-staffing of apparatus/units

He offered opportunities for the department:

- Revenue enhancement
 - EMS billing
 - Expand contract agreements
 - Education/training programs
 - (e.g. paramedic certified courses)
- Public/community education
- Shared services w/other depts.

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- e.g. group purchasing
- Economic development with improving economy (when?)

He presented the following as threats to the department:

- Potential loss of public trust and support if fire levy is reduced
- Continuing anemic economic recovery (reduced revenues)
 - Weak housing market
 - Erosion of tax base
 - Lack of economic development
- Increased demand for emergency service
 - + 30% last 10 years
 - e.g. aging population
- Increase in cost for services:
 - Rising cost of equipment etc.
- Potential cutbacks of personnel, or closing fire stations will affect response times
- Perception equals reality, but not factual
 - "Cadillac" fire/EMS service

Deputy Chief Silvati spoke about the tax destitution. He said that at 9.06 mills, Colerain Fire is higher than other communities, but they are not funded by the General Fund or TIFs. He offered some comparison with Green Township (GTFD):

- CTFD's area of protection is 54% larger
- CTFD responds to 54% more emergency calls
- To effectively meet the demand for service as compared w/GTFD, CTFD has 16 more personnel on duty
- CTFD sends more resources to emergencies = arguably higher quality of service
- CTFD's FT/PT ratio is lower than GTFD
- CTFD responds to more ALS type medical calls (1,000)
- If GTFD had same number of on-duty personnel:
 - 2011 expenses would have been \$14M
 - require 13M levy or combo of levy/TIF/General Fund
 - (using GTFD 24/365 cost, reference benchmark report)

Deputy Chief Silvati offered some reasons for Colerain's millage:

- Larger area to protect
 - Largest township in Ohio
- Higher volume of calls
- Second to West Chester in highest population
 - WC's property valuation is almost twice that of ours, which allows them to have same budget as CTFD with lower levy mileage
- Staff more emergency units and have more on station due to higher volume of calls
- ALS medical runs are higher than the national average (26.5% v. 39%)
- FD never used Township fund or TIF revenues
- Unique challenges in the Township
 - Navigating Colerain Ave.
 - Rumpke Landfill
 - We protect the emergency communications hub for the county
 - We protect Sheriff's HQ, aviation unit, and shooting range which includes bomb ordinance disposal
 - Approximately 18 miles of I-275, RR highway, & Rt. 27
 - Approximately 12 miles of the Great Miami River
 - Higher demand in section 8 communities for service

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- We proposed to the citizens, based upon the community risk assessment, the necessary level of emergency services – and the voters said yes, overwhelmingly!

Division Chief Walls offered information about staffing. He said that staff is cross-trained on apparatus. He cited a 2010 report from the National Institute of Standards & Technology that said completion of all tasks on the fireground with four-person crews: (on average) 7 minutes faster (nearly 30%) than two-person crews and 5.1 minutes faster (nearly 25%) than three-person crews. The quicker adequate numbers of firefighters arrive, the quicker critical tasks are completed, which in return reduces property loss and increases victim survivability.

Chief Smith said that staffing is very complex and can be confusing as they play “musical trucks” all day.

Division Chief Walls offered a comparison from Austin, Texas with three-person versus four-person staffing:

- Smaller number of multiple alarms
- Lower fire damage and dollar loss
- Fewer injuries/deaths for civilians and firefighters
- Fewer workers compensation claims
- Lower civil liability
- More property saved
- Efficiency
 - 73% more efficient in two-story residential fire
 - 66% more efficient in ladder company evolution

Deputy Chief Silvati spoke about the ramifications of a hypothetical reduction of \$1 million in the department’s budget:

- Close fire station(s)
- Reduce staffing
 - Fewer firefighters and paramedics in stations
- Combination of both
 - Reduce quality and efficiency of emergency services

He cited the effects of this as:

- Impact on quality of service
- Loss of operating efficiency
- Erode public support
- Potential to reduce ISO rating
 - e.g. Atlanta went from ISO 2 to 4
- Higher fire loss
- Increase response times due to more CTFD units unavailable for emergencies
- Impact quality of EMS service by eliminating ALS units (first responder)
- Increase in Workers’ Compensation claims
 - Fewer people for labor intensive tasks
- Impact safety of both citizens and firefighters/paramedics

Chief Smith said that they have not done hard calculations, but figure the staff reductions would be 6-7 per 24-hour shift.

Mr. Ritter asked about changing the mix with part-paid employees.

Chief Smith said that we have top-notch personnel, but there is a lot of risk associated. The full-time employees have a higher level of experience and, therefore, safety. We have the highest part-time/full-time ratio in the region.

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Mr. Ritter asked about hypothetical reduction's effect on response time and if the ISO rating could be reduced and have an effect on residents' insurance premiums.

Deputy Chief Silvati said they don't have data yet about the insurance. As for response time, it is at least four minutes from Station 109 to Station 102.

Chief Smith said there will also be a domino effect as the second or third unit is delayed more and more. They will try to quantify this.

Division Chief Brown spoke about response time data. He said they have the same number of people and vehicles, but more runs.

Chief Smith said that we are an older community and getting more and more complex EMS calls. The trends are steadily increasing over the last 30 years. In looking at the combined response times, there are not enough resources to make every run in four to six minutes. He said they are benchmarking with other departments on the cost of 24/7/365 service and said that no other has our part-time/full-time ratio.

Mr. Ritter commended the department for this cohesive and comprehensive presentation.

Mr. Deters said the trends are toward more service calls. He said we need to think about where we are going and how we can make it work.

Mr. Ritter said that we need to look at this holistically, but we can't "rob Peter to pay Paul."

Ms. Rinehart said that we can't take money from the fire department and must explain what will happen with two or three simultaneous calls.

Chief Smith said that nothing surprised them with the numbers. He said their overall cost is higher than others and they know there is not an endless stream of funds. He said there are no glaring numbers, where they thought that they weren't measuring up in an area.

At 7:10 PM, Mr. Ritter made a motion for a five-minute recess and Ms. Rinehart offered the second. The Board reconvened at 7:15 PM.

BENCHMARKING/SWOT ANALYSIS FOR POLICE

Chief Meloy said he asked the staff for their top three items in each category of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

He listed the following as among the strengths of the department:

- Community engagement
- Services provided to the community
- Training provided to the officers daily
- Proactive in identifying problems and initiating solutions (Driving Angels, CARE)
- Fiscal Responsibility and innovation
 - In year five of a five-year levy
 - Adding to staff with second and third stations, within budget and continue to sixth year
 - The court officer program has saved \$12,000 already

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He listed the following as weaknesses:

- Manpower
 - 11 deputies lost from service
 - They have added the nuisance abatement/code enforcement duties
 - However, the reserve officer program is able to provide the same quality officer and they're not paid
- Perception of the agency that they can't provide the necessary level of service
 - Education can help with this
- Lack of cost control
 - Communication center/911 fees are \$18.30/call
 - Weekend staff has saved \$13,000, even after costs
 - Hamilton County Sheriff's contract/future costs

He cited the following as opportunities:

- Continue the accreditation
 - Less than 3% of agencies meet this standard
- Sharing services and working with other agencies
 - Staff for the everyday and use shared services for the large incidents
- Work environment
 - Chief Meloy's goal is to make Colerain a career destination, not a place for training/gaining experience

He listed the following threats:

- Budget
 - Lost \$230,000 from the TPP
- Perceptions/expectations from the community
 - Fewer services available from social services agencies, put more demand on the police department
 - Perception versus reality regarding crime data in the media
 - Actually worse in 1993 than it is now
- Vacant and blighted properties
 - Broken window theory – negative perception of neighborhoods
 - This also drives demand

Chief Meloy discussed some barriers and hidden strengths.

For barriers, he listed:

- Funding
 - Funded solely through levy
 - Must pass levy in 2013 to continue current level or enhance service
- Personnel
 - Identify, appoint and train remaining reserve officers
- Maintain respect of community leaders
 - An element of the population continues to degrade the quality and level of service provided by the department

For hidden strengths, he listed:

- Respect of the prosecutor and other agencies
- Working with the community to make the community safer
 - Community Resource Center
 - Northgate Mall station
- Flexibility and willingness to change
 - 12-hour patrol shifts

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- o Contract adjustments
- o Willingness of personnel to see the "bigger picture"

In summary, Chief Meloy said that they will always work to improve and won't settle.

Mr. Ritter suggested he look at the qualitative data off-line with the SWOT.

Mr. Rowan commended both departments for a job well-done on this project. He said that we will not put it on a shelf, but will use it to educate and substantiate. It will steer our future and we will make decisions based on the data. He said this is a great beginning.

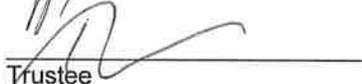
ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Board, Ms. Rinehart motioned for adjournment. Mr. Deters offered a second.

- Mr. Deters. "Aye"
- Ms. Rinehart. "Aye"
- Mr. Ritter. "Aye"


 Fiscal Officer


 Trustee


 Trustee


 Trustee