

Idea Paper:

Ideas

- ✚ I believe that the commissioners and city council **MUST** come together and work this out. I suggest we meet regularly for at least 6 months, perhaps a year (monthly) or longer and put all of the problems on the table. If we can resolve those issues, then perhaps an advisory board could be used. But I don't really know what problem we are trying to solve, and we don't have advisory boards for PD, Sheriff, Street, Road and Bridge – so why Fire. During this time we would:
 - Identify and address problems – which I really think are only service response times to the County (Twin Lakes)
 - Develop a capital improvement plan (suggest we use wildland fire/helicopter dollars (see below for details), and perhaps some fundraisers to get people involved; possibly grant dollars if we have a plan) OR
 - Develop a district proposal along with a funding mechanism for both capital needs and running/staffing a 2nd fire station.
 - Agree to focus on better fire and/or better emergency services for all residents of the county
 - Develop a plan for dispatch
 - Discuss the benefit of the fire chief reviewing/approving building plans for both the city and county.All *without* personal agenda, but what is best for our community with public safety being primary.
- ✚ I suggest we take all wildland fire and helicopter standby dollars, deduct actual costs, and set aside the remaining dollars for capital expenses for fire (equipment, bldg south in the county). Every year there is concern about how much those dollars are – and it is always known very late in the budgeting process – so we should just exclude them from the regular budget except where we deduct actual expenses incurred for those events.
- ✚ If there is ANY person in the community who wishes to be a TRAINED volunteer for law enforcement, fire, maybe even road and bridge/street – LET THEM COME FORWARD AND BE TRAINED. PD and Fire have a volunteer program. The Sheriff's department has a volunteer program. Search & Rescue is a VOLUNTEER organization. Nothing prevents a qualified person from volunteering UNLESS they don't wish to invest the time necessary (for both training and volunteering) or are physically incapable of performing the duties.
- ✚ We can develop a “list” of volunteer opportunities. Arrival time of volunteers may be a problem. At a min we could train more people to do traffic control.
- ✚ If the County wishes to develop their own emergency services program through the Sheriff's office (it appears the Sheriff's office has already implemented such a plan), and not use the city FD, then I would ask to have the money that city residents pay for fire services returned to the city. (867 * \$57.11? Per year).
- ✚ Same thing about money if the County decides to have an MOU to use fire services on request.

If we renegotiate a new IGA

1. The IGA should NOT require a budget person in April. None of us have enough information on revenue patterns to begin budgeting for the next year in April.

2. Commissioners should be involved with the fire department budget (invited to meetings, actively participate, have received budget requests prior to the meeting as council does). I don't know how the commissioners go through their budgeting process, but they do pay county and city resident dollars towards fire and do need to be involved. Council has invited them to participate – they should do so.
3. We need to be in sync with dates for the budgeting process – all information needs to be with both entities prior to finalizing any budget (city or county).
4. During the last IGA discussion we were told that the monthly reports and quarterly reports provided by the fire chief were adequate – yet we still hear they don't get reports – let's determine what is needed and provide it.
5. If there is misunderstanding about what needs to be done when, let's fix it. I believe the IGA indicates we need to give a budget before the year starts – for THAT UPCOMING year, not the year beyond. If the commissioners think we are to provide a budget for 2011 at the end of 2009 – we need to discuss and resolve.
6. “control” seems to be an ongoing issue – and I am not sure why. I do not know what the City does wrong that causes the commissioners to believe they need to “own” it. It looks to me like it might be more of a 50/50 split of control if we look at dollars. I would hope this could be more easily addressed in the regular meetings I propose. Still, the County “controls” a lot of other departments that both city and county residents pay for – I don't see the problem with the city managing the FD. This really only came up in the past few years when the State authorized counties to have a fire department. Before that fire departments were by law run by the city.
7. I think the issues with the IGA are timing, input, reporting, and control.

I don't really know what is *broken*. Most of the things I hear and have read are not true, half truths, or not really to the point.

What I support

- ✓ I support a well-trained professional fire department (which includes newly trained to years of training)
- ✓ I support all law enforcement officers doing the jobs they are trained for and required to do – these are needed responsibilities. If we feel law enforcement officers can become trained to do other duties, I then question if we need those officers as officers. Example – on an “incident” all resources are needed – law enforcement, medical, fire, and support crews (road and bridge, street, & volunteers at a min. for traffic control We needed them all – and if the law enforcement personnel were fighting fire or providing medical support, who would have been doing their job?).
- ✓ I support developing a Capital Improvement plan that will get us to a fire station south of town (off Hwy 24, but not Twin Lakes – which is too far from Mt. Massive & Beaver Lakes sub divisions).
- ✓ I support a district – with an advisory board – ONCE we determine the type of fire protection this County wants to have.
- ✓ I support the city maintaining control of the FD – the County has many entities they manage, the city has few – we have the time to manage the FD, and again – what exactly is broken that we are trying to fix.
- ✓ I support removing dispatch from under the Sheriff, and setting up a board of “users” to oversee. We need to move towards a trained staff who can provide initial medical advice (lay them down, sit them up, use a cold/warm compress, . . . until help arrives), ask the right questions, and then can provide better details about the

patient. I also believe dispatch needs to follow AGREED UPON protocols all the time.

- ✓ I support qualified employees in all roles.

What I don't support

- I don't support a Public Safety Officer being in charge of "all" or part of the 1st responders.
- I don't support an advisory board – UNTIL the commissioners and council have been able to work things out between themselves. An advisory board will have the potential for the same animosity as we see between commissioners & council, but adds a layer before it gets to council or commissioners – and we (Commissioners & Council) still have the financial responsibility.
- I don't support cross training – I believe it will lead to mediocrity. Fire, law enforcement, and medical personnel have different personality types that draw them to one of those professions – and generally are not interested in providing the other services.
- I don't support law enforcement having the tools or being trained much past first aid. If they arrive on scene, they have traffic responsibilities to handle. Also, if they take on the role of medical, they cannot perform any law duties associated with any alcohol, drugs, or any other type of evidence on scene, nor can they tell any other law enforcement officers of this type of information.
- I don't support the Sheriff's office having a policy that sends a sheriff out to the far reaches of the county to determine if there really is a fire – and then 20 min. later calling fire – who is also 20 min. out.
- I don't support an initial advisory board of 2 commissioners, 2 council, and 1 tie breaker person. We tried that before, and could not agree on the tie breaker – as the county wants the control. Also 2 council members cannot vote or represent council, but 2 commissioners can, so communication breaks down.
- I don't support the Sheriff's office taking on responsibilities he/she is not statutorially required to perform. The Sheriff is a law enforcement officer with a responsibility to be the fire warden for wildland fires and maintain a jail. That responsibility doesn't necessarily suggest he fight the fires, but he coordinate fire fighting efforts (state, local, etc.)

Additional thoughts:

If we want to do cross training, let's consider all departments for such efforts – perhaps we should consider keeping the highly trained law enforcement and fire/rescue and train them to do road work, and snow plowing. HOWEVER, all the jobs require some consistency and if there are incidents, jobs may not get done in a timely fashion – so those response times will slow. There is also an issue of training. Training time is built into schedules for fire/rescue and medical personnel. I don't know if training is built into the schedule of Road and Bridge or Street Dept. INITIALLY there would be a LOT of time spent on training. Personally I feel those departments do a good job, work long hours, and probably have no extra time to take on add'l tasks – as I think is true for all the depts. we are talking about. We might find there are "volunteers" who would do snowplowing in the city and county as well.