



EMS Municipal Relationships

EMS Municipal Relationships



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Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Local Government Relations
- Types of Municipalities and EMS Agencies
- Municipal Talking Points
- Best Practices
- Questions and Answers
- *Handouts available at www.emsconsult.com*

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Municipal Entities

67 counties and more than 5,100 other types of Governmental Units

- 1st Class Townships (~90)
- 2nd Class Townships (~1,500)
- Boroughs (~960)
- Home Rule Charter (~75)
- Second Class Cities (Pgh. & Scranton)
- Third Class Cities (~50)
- School Districts (~500)
- Municipal Authorities (~2,000)

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What type of relationship do you have with your local government and elected officials?

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Relationship Status

- None!
- Only when contacted and necessary!
- Minimum communication?
- Annual, Quarterly or Monthly Reports?
- Attend Municipal meetings?
- Public safety Committee?
- Ride along opportunities?
- Submit articles for Municipal web site, newsletters, etc.
- Attend / sponsor community events

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Act 7, 8, 9 of 2008

Municipalities have the power and right to designate their primary EMS agency

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3 Bills – 3 Acts One Purpose!!!

Signed into PA Law on and effective

May 17, 2008

- SB-7 of 2008 – 2nd Class Townships
- SB-8 of 2008 – Boroughs
- SB-9 of 2008 – 1st Class Townships
- Applies also to Home Rule and others

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Act 7 of 2008

“The township shall be responsible for ensuring that fire and emergency medical services are provided within the township by the means and to the extent determined by the township including the appropriate financial and administrative assistance for those service”

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Act 7 of 2008

b) The township shall consult with the fire and emergency medical services provides to discuss the emergency service needed of the township.

(c) The township shall require any emergency services organizations receiving township funds to provide to the township an annual itemized listing of all expenditure of these funds before the township may consider budgeting additional funding to the organization

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What do these laws mean to you?

They provide a great opportunity to begin or enhance discussions with your elected local, state or federal officials!!!

The laws do not mandate municipal subsidies!!

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EMS Municipal Subsidies

- ***Municipal subsidy levels vary widely from community to community***

–None

–Partial

- Indirect expenses such as volunteer workers comp or other ins. premiums, fuel, building / utility costs, other
- Direct - annual donation or other type of subsidy
- General Fund / Local Services Tax / EMS Tax
- Annual amounts may be based upon budget

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EMS Municipal Subsidy

- ***Keep in mind that most municipalities have limited resources !!!***
- ***We are the “new kids on the block”***
- ***You are competing for funding priority with every other existing municipal service***

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Best Practices

- Be prepared!
- Be careful not to deliver an *ultimatum* !!!
- Elected officials have alternatives!!!
 - Contracting with other for profit / non-profit entities
 - Contracting with mutual aid companies
 - Splitting service area;
 - Consolidation

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CAUTION:

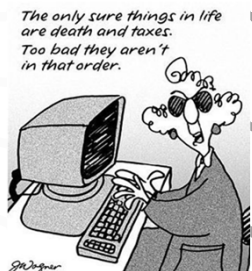
Remember the old saying....
Be careful on what you ask for
...because you might just get it!!!

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EMS and Taxes

- Four (4) primary ways that municipalities can help support an EMS agency with tax revenue
 - General Revenue Fund
 - EMS Tax (Max ½ mill)
 - All or some of the Local Services Tax
 - And....



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Municipal Authorized EMS Fees

Ross/West View EMS - 2022

- Ordinances which authorized imposition and collection of a special emergency ambulance fee
- Municipal subsidy planning process began 10 years earlier!
- Initial and gradual increase of municipal subsidy from \$90,000 to \$300,000
- Developing relationships, trust and support

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Ross/West View EMS Authority

- ~\$55.00 mandatory fee for all residents (including renters) in 2022
- Businesses - Sliding scale based upon occupancy
- Fees to be collected by RWVEMS – not the municipalities!
- Initial collection rates between ~12% and ~52%
- 2024 – now targeting property owners - using a local tax collection firm

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Ross/West View EMS Authority

- Agreed to give up all subscription revenue, municipal subsidies and all resident co-payment and deductible billing revenue for all residents who pay the annual fee
- Expected Net Annual Revenue: \$850,000

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MESA – “Municipal Emergency Services Authority (MESA) of Lancaster County”

- Created in 2023 for the purpose of administering Emergency Medical Services jointly with the Boroughs of Elizabethtown and Marietta, and the Townships of Conoy, East Donegal, Mount Joy, and West Donegal
- Annual fees based upon annual budget
- Fee assessed to all property owners except for schools and churches

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MESA – “Municipal Emergency Services Authority (MESA) of Lancaster County”

Occupancy Classification	Annual Fee / Unit
Residential Occupancies	
Standard Dwelling Units (Single, Duplex, Towns, Apts)	\$85.00
Assisted Living Units	\$460.00
Commercial/Business	
Number of Full-Time Employees	\$10.00
Institutional/Educational	
Acute Care Nursing Beds	\$285.00
Resident Student	\$15.00
Public Assembly	
Event Venue Occupancy	\$5.00

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MESA – “Municipal Emergency Services Authority (MESA) of Lancaster County”

- Fees billed by MESA – not municipalities!
- Patient has no out of pocket costs, if insurance pays
- Patient pays 50% of EMS charges, if no insurance coverage
- Patient pays 50% of any EMS related deductibles

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Pike County EMS Matching Grant Program

- Pike County implemented a EMS Matching Grant for to local municipalities in 2022
- The program, which is a permanent line item in the County’s budget, doubles a municipality’s annual EMS contribution up to a maximum of 2 mils. (\$2.2m)
- Combined with local funds, the County’s Matching Grant Program generate ~\$4.4m million annually for EMS
- *“A Sustainable Funding Source Delivering Results”*

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Municipal Talking Points



Presented By:

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Overview of EMS Services

- Emergency Medical Services
- Non-Emergency Ambulance Transports
- Alternative (wheelchair van) Transports
- Critical Care Transports
- Disaster Management
- Rescue Services
- Tactical Ops / Support
- Public Safety and Public Training
- Standby and Community Events



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Levels of Ambulance Service



- First Responder Services (FR)
- Basic Life Support (BLS)
- Advanced Life Support (ALS)
- Critical Care (CCT)

Transportation can be provided via Ground or Air Units

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TYPES OF EMS PROVIDERS



- EMR
- EMT- B
- AEMT
- EMT- Paramedic
 - Critical Care EMT-P
 - Community Paramedic
- Pre-Hospital Registered Nurse
- Physicians

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Best Practices

- Provide a ***brief*** overview of the services that you provide!
- Share some ***concise*** operational, financial and administrative facts
- ***Focus on the strengths and the quality of your services such as: 24 x 7 coverage, clinical and response benchmarks, training overview***

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Best Practices

- **Be honest about your organization!**
 - Weaknesses
 - Staffing and Manpower Trends
 - Other
 - Financial Information
 - Revenue trends
 - Expenses (Capital, Administrative and Operational)
 - Future Projections

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Best Practices

- ***Focus on the issues related to 24 / 7 coverage including “the cost of readiness”***
- ***Do you what your actual costs are? Per call; per hour***
- ***What is your Unit Hour Utilization?***
- ***Productivity levels?***

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Best Practices

- Describe the challenges that are facing your organization
- What has your organization done to help address or solve these challenges?
- What are your short- and long-term needs?
- Expect pushback!

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EMS in PA Facing Huge Challenges

- Staffing Issues and declining volunteers
- Increased cost for equipment, personnel and training
- Increased cost of expensive new technology (Auto CPR devices, stretchers, ECG monitors, etc.)
- Flat or declining reimbursement
- Low levels of tax support or subsidy
- Issues related to excessive mutual aid coverage



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Staffing Issues

- Volunteer vs. Career
- Pay Issues – Competitive?
- Scheduling and Fatigue
- Working Multiple Jobs
- Low enrollment in EMS training programs
- Declining interest in a public safety career



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Do EMS Providers Get Paid What They Are Worth?

- Lowest wages compared to other public safety professionals!
- Less than 1/2 as compared to Registered Nurses!
- Post pandemic EMS wages have not been substantially increased as compared to other wage earner categories who do not provide life saving care!

	2023 Wages (National 50% - 75% percentiles)	Hourly Rates	Annual
EMT		\$18 - \$22	\$38K - \$46K
Paramedic		\$25 - \$30	\$53K - \$64K
Fire Fighter		\$27 - \$36	\$57K - \$75K
Police Officer		\$34 - \$44	\$72K - \$92K
Registered Nurses		\$41 - \$50	\$86K - \$105K
Dental Hygienist		\$42 - \$49	\$87K - \$100K

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Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics <https://www.bls.gov/>

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EMS Revenue Crisis

- While EMS agencies in Pennsylvania are required to respond to all emergency dispatches, EMS agencies are not always reimbursed for their services
- For the most part, EMS agencies are only reimbursed if they transport a patient to the hospital – but many (~25-35%) patients are treated on scene and are NOT transported
- Even if the EMS agency transports a patient to the hospital, the reimbursement rate often does not cover the cost of providing the service
- Decreasing revenue and increasing system costs = Escalating Crisis

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local News
EMT enrollment shortage continues

Unsustainable funding model, shrinking workforce leave ambulance services in critical condition

Bethlehem-based ambulance service closing

EMS service closed, highlighting statewide shortage of volunteer emergency responders

Pa. Ambulance Service Exploring Options to Avoid Closing

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S.R. 6 Report and Recommendations "Fire and EMS are in a Crisis - Right Now. "

The Senate Resolution 6 Commission, a special bipartisan, bicameral legislative commission developed 27 recommendations in 2018 to improve the delivery of emergency services and to develop related legislation.

Five (5) Key Municipal related recommendations:

- (3) Ensure minimum Fire & EMS coverage through government partnerships
- (4) Correct EMS Reimbursement Rates to allow for competitive compensation
- (14) Simplify the process to regionalize Fire & EMS services
- (16) Educate municipal officials about Fire and EMS Crisis and Needs
- (17) Create permanent communication and cooperation links among Fire and EMS Providers

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Some Positive Changes....

But Change is Slow

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WHERE
DO WE GO
FROM
HERE?

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Best Practices

- ***We all know that the EMS system is in crisis!***
- We need to find "outside of the box" creative solutions
- Identify your EMS organization's needs
- Be prepared! Plan to meet with your local elected officials to discuss your needs and their expectations!
- **All options** should be identified and discussed to help rebuild a sustainable EMS system that provides high quality EMS care in a safe and timely manner!

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Current EMS System is not sustainable!

- ***New Revenue Sources are Needed!***
- ***Medicare Reimbursement Changes?***
- ***Treatment / No Transport Fees?***
- ***Community Paramedic Services?***
- ***Consolidations or Mergers?***
- ***Municipal Subsidies (Taxes or Fees)?***

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Best Practices

- ***Obtain a better understanding and recognize that this is an ongoing political and financial process!***
- ***Education is key component of the process!***
- ***Set realistic goals and objectives!***
- ***Adjust or limit your expectations!***
- ***Expect pushback!***

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**Key to Success:
Effective Communication!**

the power of
communication

relationship value customer success loyalty

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Questions??

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THANK YOU !!!

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THANK YOU !!!

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