

Orlando City Council Workshop
Council Chambers, City Hall
400 South Orange Avenue
Orlando, FL 32801
Monday, February 12, 2018
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In attendance:

Mayor Buddy Dyer
Commissioner Jim Gray, District 1
Commissioner Tony Ortiz, District 2
Commissioner Robert F. Stuart, District 3
Commissioner Patty Sheehan, District 4
Commissioner Regina I. Hill, District 5
Commissioner Samuel B. Ings, District 6
Chief Assistant City Attorney Kyle Shephard
City Clerk Denise Aldridge
City Clerk Aide Denise Holdridge
Police Officers Chris Realin and Jose Sanchez, Sergeants-at-Arms

Mayor Buddy Dyer called the meeting to order at 10:05 A.M. and welcomed everyone to today's workshop on the subject of Deployment of Fire and EMS Services. Mayor Dyer called on Fire Chief Roderick Williams, who spoke briefly about the current transport model of OFD and how to make it more efficient. He enlisted the services of FITCH & Associates to come up with a new model and asked Ian Womack, consultant for FITCH & Associates, to present it to City Council.

Ian Womack introduced himself and his two partners, Steve Knight and Guillermo Fuentes, before beginning the presentation. He stated the findings of the study they conducted were data driven, with the data harvested for where the community is right now. The community demand, which included EMS, fire related incidents such as fire alarms, fire public assists and structure fires, and special risks such as hazmat and technical rescues, show that OFD responds to 99.9% of its own incidents. The study showed the number of calls, or single incidents, was 57,147 and required 127,917 units (vehicles) to respond.

The historical performance of "travel time" was discussed at the 90th percentile, which means, based on the distribution of resources throughout the City of Orlando, nine out of ten times OFD meets the demand. EMS travel time is at 7.2 minutes and Fire is at 8.5 minutes, with an overall Orlando system at 7.4 minutes.

Mr. Womack focused on two demand challenges: workload and transport. First, he presented a graph showing a 24 hour period in which EMS demand is the primary driver with 7.2 calls per hour at the peak time. The workload, however, is more than just counting 911 calls. It is the time a unit is dispatched to a call, remains on the call and then the call is over. This equals the unit hour utilization. Within a 24 hour shift, there is also maintenance/cleaning of equipment, training, re-stocking supplies, sleeping and eating. If throughout the 24 hour period the increase in calls goes higher than a 30% threshold, studies show there is a reduction in reliability.

Second, he presented data on patient transport calls. Approximately 61% of EMS calls resulted in patient transport, which was 28,342 total. The incidents were within 4-minutes travel time or less. That statistic meant that 39% of incidents occurred at locations outside of the 4-minute travel time.

To ensure a 4-minute travel time, it would require 33 stations and would nearly double the OFD budget. However, a 7-minute travel time would maintain the current performance for all life-threatening EMS responses and all non-EMS incidents. He noted that current travel for fire related incidents is 8.5 minutes at 90%.

One of the areas Mr. Womack concentrated on was staff schedules, considering the peak demand staffing strategies to address workload and growth. Community demand is at its peak between 10:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M. Staffing optimization was determined by a mathematical formula based upon the required number of seats, the hours to be covered, and the annualized use of scheduled and unscheduled leave. The resulting "Relief Multiplier" indicates the minimum personnel needed to staff each seat in the deployment model. For example, a 24/48 schedule (24/7) on an average 48 hour work week requires 4.18 full time employees per seat.

In the model, there are insufficient budgeted positions to sustain the daily minimum of 130. Not enough employees to meet the daily minimum creates excessive overtime costs. However, the potential savings in the staffing model that Mr. Womack presented adjusts the minimum staffing to 122, which aligns the department with current budgeted strength and has the potential to create approximately \$2 million in overtime savings. Adjusting minimum staffing to 119 once the workload is redistributed has the potential to create a total savings of approximately \$3.7 million.

Mr. Womack presented data regarding Medical Priority Dispatch System (MPDS). He stated OFD is fully functional with the MPDS in its communications center, but has not translated the process to its dispatching and deployment strategies. In 2016, OFD averaged 1.9 unit (vehicle) responses per EMS incident. All calls are dispatched as emergency responses with two OFD units responding, regardless of the nature or determinant. This creates two impacts: one, an unnecessary level of redundancy which assumes unwarranted risk; and two, over prioritization of EMS calls reduces reliability and fire suppression readiness. The study recommends ALS engine or truck only to Alpha/Bravo/Charlie (A/B/C) calls, which are lower in priority and transport less than 50%. ALS first response layer would still perform at 7.2 minutes and allow for on scene evaluation. Rescue or peak units would only respond to A/B/C/O that transport more than 50%.

The recommended model design is based upon "travel time" and "work load" or demand. Distribution, or geographic deployment, is based upon desired travel time performance.

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Concentration, or workload deployment, is based upon the demand. The plan first identified the appropriate geographic locations for resources and then placed the number of resources required at each location to answer the demand. Major objectives in the plan design include maintaining current performance, ISO, and CFAI Accreditation benchmarks; address UHU with a more equitable distribution of the workload; stabilize the transport model with a sustainable approach that is independent of a third-party provider; and provide fiscal sustainability and efficiency. Mr. Womack indicated that OFD is in the top 1% of fire departments in the country and do not want this status impacted negatively.

High points of the recommended model include that it maintains ALS first response performance at 7.2 minutes or better to 90% of all life-threatening incidents. It achieves nearly 92% at 8 minutes for all ambulance responses. It has designed surge capacity to handle typical demand surges and stabilizes and equalizes workload. UHU for 24/48 rescues has capacity to absorb growth at .23 overall with immediate general fund savings and potential unit reduction once workload is redistributed. Savings can facilitate capital costs for peak unit deployment and the plan is an efficient and functional deployment.

OFD staff has developed an operational support needs assessment to address the increased work associated with an expanded transport program. The FITCH team has validated the assessment and supports its implementation in concert with the alternatives provided herein. This includes six new full time employees: two sworn and four civilian.

The fiscal impacts (Capital) for the hybrid 8 minute model for six new ambulances, cost \$900,000 for vehicles and \$330,000 for equipment, for a total of \$1,230,000. The \$150,000 cost estimate per unit is based upon pricing within the current Florida Sheriffs Association Cooperative Purchasing Program contract. Adjusting minimum staffing to 119 or 122 will produce sufficient savings to cover entire capital costs of full transport program deployment.

Chief Roderick Williams ended the presentation by speaking on the benefits of the hybrid model. The most significant items to consider were to maintain current ISO and Commission on Fire Accreditation International and balancing workload to increase time for training and rest periods (unit hour utilization). Other benefits included being a fiscally sustainable and easily expandable model that creates a conduit for increasing diversity in civil service ranks and most importantly, no firefighters will be laid off.

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At approximately 11:02 A.M. the workshop was opened for questions and comments. At approximately 11:17 A.M. the workshop was concluded.

A copy of the “Deployment of Fire and EMS Services” presentation is included as supplemental papers to these minutes.

Mayor Buddy Dyer

City Clerk Denise Aldridge