



**VILLAGE OF PEWAUKEE  
FIRE AND EMS COST ANALYSIS STUDY  
CHAPTER 4 – MANAGEMENT SUMMARY**

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***Project Overview***

RW Management Group, Inc. was retained by the Village to conduct a Fire and EMS Cost Analysis Study.

The Study provides recommendations and options for the Village to use now and in the future, when assessing Fire-EMS service needs in the Village. Based upon the proposal submitted by RW Management Group, Inc. (RW) in March, 2014, the scope of the project was to conduct a Fire/EMS assessment, assess the current ability and effectiveness of the current fire department and identify and make recommendations regarding the provision of Fire/EMS services for the Village. This study was designed to have an independent third party review current Village Fire-EMS service needs, and provide alternative options and recommendations on fulfilling those needs. The Village also asked for a review of similar communities, to assess their costs associated with the provision of fire and EMS services.

The findings and recommendations are related to the Fire-EMS service needs of the Village, which include an evaluation of the Pewaukee Fire Department (PFD) who currently are contracted with to provide these services. This evaluation includes review of operations, administration, response times for services rendered, equipment, program review, incident analysis, staffing levels and future anticipated service needs.

***Alternative Options for Fire EMS Services***

Based on the evaluation of Fire-EMS services for the Village, RW identified four alternative options for Fire-EMS services that we felt were realistic options for the Village. The four alternative options were:

1. Negotiate a new contract with the City of Pewaukee
2. Contract for services with a different agency
3. Pursue creation of the consolidated fire district
4. Develop a Village paid on call department

**Option 1 – Negotiate a new contract with the City of Pewaukee**

The Village currently has a contract with the City of Pewaukee for Fire-EMS services. This contract was first signed in 2004 and is based on a cost per incident and cost per fire and fuel tank inspection. The contract is automatically renewed for 5 years and was up for the second renewal in 2013. Contract negotiations broke down and the Village made a decision to have a Fire-EMS cost analysis study completed.



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**Option 2 – Negotiate a contract with a different agency**

The Village does have the option to request Fire-EMS services from a different agency and negotiate a contract with that agency. There is the potential interest from other agencies that may have an interest in contracting for Fire-EMS Services for the Village. This option would create the need for the Village to provide a Fire-EMS station within the Village to staff personnel and apparatus.

**Option 3 – Pursue the creation of a Fire District**

The creation of a Fire District capable of taxing citizens for Fire-EMS Services would take special legislation to allow for the creation of a special taxing district. This option would take a longer period of time to complete and would not provide an immediate solution to the provision of Fire-EMS Services.

**Option 4 – Create a Paid on Call or Combination Fire Department for the Village**

The Village does have the ability to create its own Fire Department. This option would also take additional time to put into place. A station, fire equipment and personnel would have to be obtained and put into place.

RW addresses the concerns and recommendations relating to these options in the Fire-EMS Service Recommendations section of this Chapter, immediately following this section.

***Fire-EMS Service Recommendations***

RW completed a comprehensive review of the many issues involved in the delivery of Fire-EMS Services to the Village. Our recommendations are based on an objective view of the Fire-EMS Service delivery, the political atmosphere in the two communities and county, the economics and the realistic options available for the delivery of Fire-EMS Services. Chapter 3 – Cost-Benefit Analysis reviews the multiple comparisons and related economic issues. The findings in that chapter were utilized to provide the recommendations listed here.

RW recommends Option 1 – Negotiate a new contract with the City of Pewaukee. The Village of Pewaukee is currently receiving a high level of Fire-EMS Services. The Village had requested better response times and paramedic services during the contract terms. The City and Fire Department provided a new station, paramedic services and increased career staffing levels to accomplish this request. RW found that the Fire Department is one of the leading departments in the County and the State. They are currently going through the national accreditation process, have an ISO rating of three and may be going to a two, and received high grades in every area that RW reviewed. The only concerns regarding the service found by RW were the need for more communications between Fire Administration and the Village Board and the cost increases that are part of this level of service.



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The issues of cost reduction, rapidly increasing contract costs and administrative communications should be managed through quality non-political contract negotiations. The current contract is limited, focuses on calls for service and inspections, rather than economic indicators such as population and assessed value, along with customer service. Fire-EMS Services are also very resource driven and the contract should be part of the City and Villages long term strategic planning, for a 10 – 20 year plan, rather than a 5 year agreement.

RW also recommends changing the Villages alarm ordinance to reflect the goal of reducing false alarms rather than financial recovery. The current ordinance has caused excessive penalties to some entities that have alarms. There should also be a joint effort between the Village and the Fire Department to with alarm permit holders to help them reduce the amount of alarms and false alarms. The Village and Fire Department should also work together on burn permits and what burning is allowed in the Village, to help reduce the potential for related fires and other false alarms.

Option 2 – Negotiating a contract with a different agency would be the option to use if political differences cannot be resolved between the Village and the City. It is not a given that contracting with a different agency will not have its own political issues. While there may be other communities which would be willing to contract for Fire-EMS Services, it may not be cost effective. While the actual contract may be able to be negotiated at a lower level, a station and apparatus would most likely have to be provided by the Village.

Option 3 – Pursue the creation of a fire district – This is a longer term option, due to the legislative effort that would have to take place to make it happen. Fire-EMS Services are very resource driven. While actual fires are decreasing, they still occur and always will, and each fire creates a need for extensive resources. The idea of pooling these resources or consolidating services, so that they can be moved where they are needed makes the most sense. The political roadblock to this option is the creation of another taxing district.

Option 4 – Create a paid on call or combination fire department for the Village – this option relates directly to the findings in Chapter 3 of this report regarding comparable communities and their cost for Fire-EMS Services. The Fire-EMS expenditures for many communities the same size as the Village is lower. The reason for this is fewer full time Fire-EMS personnel. Having fewer full time Fire-EMS personnel is the only way to substantially reduce Fire-EMS costs, but it will also reduce response times for Fire and EMS incidents. There are also substantial startup costs when creating a new Fire-EMS Department. A station, Fire-EMS apparatus and staffing would have to be put in place.

Other options were examined, such as contracting separately for EMS, which would still leave a void for fire – rescue responses and not really solve any issues. RW determined that the four options presented were the best available options at this time.



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***Benefits***

As a result of implementing RW's recommendations, the Village, the Department and the citizens living in the Village should realize significant tangible benefits, mitigate liabilities, and justify the recommended investment. The following tangible and intangible benefits should be realized as a result of implementation of the study recommendations:

- Improve the confidence and abilities of emergency response personnel to handle emergency incidents, by improving the Fire Department working relationship and communications with the Village.
- Provide a long-term approach to operational and capital needs for the Village and City to use as a planning guide for budgetary and operational considerations. This approach improves efficiencies by reducing repetitive contract negotiation processes and provides for a structured management plan.
- Provide a pro-active approach to planning for the future development of the community by detailed review of the fire department services, which will be revisited through the accreditation process periodically.
- Improve coordination of information between the Village and Fire Department, outside departments, such as adjacent municipalities, police department, public works departments and other organizations.
- Improve coordination and productivity during major incidents and disasters with all involved agencies, including the on scene command posts, Emergency Management and the Emergency Operations Center.
- Provide the Village management with timelier accurate information and decision-making tools, which should result in increased efficiency and effectiveness.
- Stabilize the Departments rate of spending for the next ten years, which will allow the Department to handle the economic downturn and growth of the community and yet keep in line with the current rate of assessed value growth.
- Provide for an objective means of contract negotiations based on valid data and agreeable performance objectives and communications.