

Running head: CONSOLIDATION OPTIONS TO MEET THE STRATEGIC

Consolidation options to meet the strategic operational objectives for the Endicott and Johnson
City, NY fire departments

Stephen F Hrustich
Endicott Fire Department
Endicott, NY

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

I hereby certify that this paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and that appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expressions, or writings of another.

Signed: _____

Abstract

The research problem is that the fire departments of the Villages of Endicott and Johnson City, NY have both significantly reduced on duty staffing over the past two decades, hindering operational effectiveness of both agencies. The purpose of this applied research project is to identify a plan or model that would reduce fire suppression, rescue service and EMS operational deficiencies within the municipalities. Descriptive research was utilized to explore the dynamic field of collaboration, consolidation and operational change within the fire service and their effects on personnel and organizational culture. The following questions were answered: What types of operational models are available for the two municipalities to consider that can address deficiencies with the current protection schemes? What are the suppression, rescue and EMS service deficiencies that would need to be addressed in each municipality? What, if any, are the similarities and differences in the suppression, rescue and EMS service operations between the two agencies? What, if any, are the organizational concerns of the fire suppression personnel in each municipality related to adopting a new fire suppression, rescue and EMS model?

The project culminated in a set of recommendations for both municipalities that address deficiencies within their organizational models that negatively affect strategic operational objectives. The results indicated that both agencies should continue with mutual aid efforts that were instituted in late 2009 using this as a foundation for progressively higher levels of collaboration. Increasing cooperation through additional partial and functional consolidation efforts would address deficiencies in staffing, specialized rescue operations and training. Through these continued initiatives the municipalities would be better prepared to assess a final phase of collaboration to address a long term solution to staffing that would entail a merger of both organizations or the creation of a joint fire district.

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Introduction

The research problem is that the fire departments of the Villages of Endicott and Johnson City, NY have both significantly reduced on duty staffing over the past two decades, hindering operational effectiveness of both agencies. The purpose of this applied research project is to identify a plan or model that would reduce fire suppression, rescue service and EMS operational deficiencies within the municipalities. Without additional investigation and research into this problem both municipalities are at a distinct disadvantage to make informed decisions, formulate a solid plan and effectively utilize the personnel and funding resources to combat this problem. As current economic issues affect the size, makeup and response capabilities of the fire department the importance of solid applied research in the approach to this problem will help prevent time and effort wasted.

Descriptive research was utilized to answer the following questions: *What types of operational models are available for the two municipalities to consider that can address deficiencies with the current protection models? What are the suppression, rescue and EMS service deficiencies that would need to be addressed in each municipality? What, if any, are the similarities and differences in the suppression, rescue and EMS service operations between the two agencies? What, if any, are the organizational concerns of the fire suppression personnel in each municipality related to adopting a new fire suppression, rescue and EMS model?*

Research procedures included a review of fire and business entities that have utilized different operational models, shared services, consolidations and mergers to bolster service levels. A comprehensive literature review of current trade journals, business texts, fire management and planning texts as well as fire department documentation was performed to investigate current trends and operational models. Questionnaires and consultation with fire

service focus groups from both agencies were utilized to cultivate personnel concerns with operational and cultural change. Research results were based on interpretation of the relevant documentation from the literature review and an analysis of data derived from questionnaires distributed to shareholders within both fire departments. The project culminated in a set of recommendations for both municipalities that address deficiencies within their organizational models that negatively affect strategic operational objectives.

Due to the economic crisis across the United States, fire departments nationwide are experiencing unprecedented change to their budgets, service levels and staffing which negatively impact their operational readiness. The significance of the research is based on the timely response to investigate opportunities and develop a roadmap which assists both municipalities in meeting the challenges of firefighter safety, continuing high service levels and reducing or removing deficiencies within their operational models. Research and evaluation of collaborative efforts and alternatives that allow the Endicott and Johnson City fire departments to meet strategic operational objectives directly correlates with the United States Fire Administrations (USFA) second and third operational objectives which address improving local planning and preparedness and improving the fire and emergency services' capability for response to and recovery from all hazards.

Background and Significance

The Villages of Endicott and Johnson City lie five miles apart and are located in the Town of Union in central upstate New York. Both municipalities are home to an aggregate 31,990 residents according to 2000 census figures with 13,038 living in Endicott and the remaining 18,952 residing in the Village of Johnson City and associated Westover fire protection district (United States Census Bureau, 2000). The Villages of Endicott and Johnson City are

ranked 22nd and 19th respectively by size of all the 574 Villages in New York State and are both governed by a mayor-council form of government (New York State Education Department, 2009).

Both EFD and JCFD have a rich history of proud service to their respective communities brought on by strong manufacturing and electronics industries in the area during their formative years. Despite residing within the same township and separated only by Endwell fire district, both the Endicott and Johnson City fire departments had an almost non-existent working relationship (Appendix A). That abruptly changed in June of 2009 when the governing boards of both Villages voted to enter into an Intermunicipal agreement (IMA) to share a fire chief. In an effort to share services to cut the increasing costs of fire department administration, government officials took the unprecedented action of entering into the IMA which was the first of its kind in the Empire state. In August of 2009 a mutual aid agreement was penned between Endicott and Johnson City for response to structure fires in both municipalities. Mutual aid agreements with the majority of neighboring agencies were drafted and signed in the fall of 2009 however the Johnson City fire department was not successful in reaching written agreements with the City of Binghamton and Prospect Terrace Fire District both of which connect to their eastern border. Although a written agreement between these two agencies did not come to fruition the Broome County mutual aid plan did allow for the request of assistance and response from Binghamton Fire Department's (BFD) 122 man career department and Prospect Terrace's volunteer agency. Prior to these 2009 mutual aid agreements being set in place the JCFD had no written plan developed with Broome County Emergency 911 Dispatch Center for requests for assistance to large fires and other emergencies.

There are a number of issues that have negatively affected the staffing levels of both fire departments over the past quarter century. The area was home to a variety of blockbuster companies such as IBM, Lockheed Martin and BAE Systems that were strongly tied to the defense and computer industries. Outsourcing and a pullback in defense spending starting in the mid 1980's left the communities reeling with a large loss of population, tax base and high paying white collar jobs. The municipalities have both felt the pinch of the economic meltdown and face serious financial concerns over long term sustainability. The Village of Endicott faced a dire economic future in 2004 when a 1.33 million dollar shortfall surfaced in their annual budget (New York State Comptroller's Office, 2007). Government officials in Endicott were forced to approach the State of New York for deficit funding to stay solvent and meet the demands of payroll during that period. An audit by the New York State Comptroller's office looked at all operations within Endicott and made suggestions to control spending some of which had significant effect on fire department operations. In 2004 the Village of Endicott offered a retirement incentive to reduce fire department staff and instituted a no overtime policy to stop backfilling a non-contractual 6 man minimum staffing level that was observed during that time period. The retirement incentive was taken by seven members of the department and staffing was reduced to 34 full time personnel inclusive of the chief and deputy chief which was the contractual limit in place at that time. The 2004-2009 collective bargaining agreement (CBA) between the municipality and IAFF Local 1280 Endicott Firefighters did not address a minimum staffing level and to date there has been no movement by either party to negotiate a new contract. Following the expiration of the current CBA and associated contractual department staffing level on June 1, 2009 the Village of Endicott has further reduced fire department staffing through attrition and voluntary separation.

In December of 2007 the Village of Johnson City appointed a dissolution study committee “as a result of a citizen-initiated petition drive concerned about high property taxes in the Village” (Johnson City Dissolution Study Committee, 2009, p. 2). The Village of Johnson City and its fire department have been under heavy public scrutiny after a new collective bargaining agreement was signed in July of 2007 covering the fiscal years of 2007 through 2011 which gave firefighters a 41% increase in base salary over that timeframe. Public outcry over the lucrative contract only amplified the existing fears of tax increases for the Village and raised the stakes for the dissolution plan. As time passed a noticeable division emerged between proponents and opponents of dissolution and resulted in heated exchanges at public hearings, board meetings and on the street. Further pressure was placed on local leaders needing to cut costs for the upcoming 2009- 2010 fiscal year and they moved to abolish six firefighter positions from the ranks of the JCFD. This resulted in an immediate challenge from IAFF Local 921 regarding the validity of that action due to contractual language within the CBA. These legal proceedings have made their way through the New York State Judicial system and are nearing their finality when they will be heard by the New York State Appellate Division in mid-2011 with a decision expected by early fall. The final decision in this matter will have heavy and lasting implications both within Johnson City and throughout the State of New York. A negative decision for the municipality will result in a payout of back pay and benefits for 6 firefighters that will amount to close to 1.25 million dollars plus legal fees. Conversely a decision which affirms the abolition could have statewide implications as numerous municipal entities seek the same relief through abolition of civil service firefighter positions. Also during this timeframe the Village of Johnson City eliminated the open assistant fire chief’s position from the department’s organizational hierarchy.

The JC dissolution process concluded with a public referendum in November of 2009 after two years of study and planning and was rejected by a razor thin margin of 40 votes (Center for Governmental Research Inc., 2010). This left Johnson City leaders in a difficult position of finding ways to curtail spending while trying to deliver the same services that the residents came to enjoy. In early 2010, two new committees were formed to examine additional shared services and fire service delivery options, the latter being known as the Fire Study Committee (FSC). As an investigative committee the FSC was made up of the fire chief, two Village trustees, board member of JCFD Local 921 and 4 members of the public which resided in the Village. After numerous meetings and review of critical items such as the Johnson City Dissolution Plan, service delivery options, investigation into service solutions a report was made back to the Village of Johnson City board in October of 2010 which outlined possible solutions and recommendations to the fire service delivery in Johnson City (Appendix A).

Both the EFD and JCFD still operate under antiquated fire service delivery models that have changed very little over the past 40 years while the municipalities have gone through significant transformations in respect to population makeup and density, financial condition and viable commercial businesses and long term sustainability. Both the EFD and JCFD have responded to the changing needs of the communities by developing EMS first response capabilities at a basic life support (BLS) level and specialized rescue for water and confined space which have significantly increased call volumes in both municipalities. The loss of personnel as well as sharp reductions in minimum shift staffing and overtime assignments has changed the operational readiness of both the EFD and JCFD. Significantly lower numbers of firefighters are on-duty due to sustained negative change in economic conditions as well as sharp increases in health care and pension costs which prevents the municipalities from hiring

additional personnel. These issues have culminated over the past two decades to exert pressure on the daily delivery of fire, rescue and EMS first response and expose operational deficiencies in both fire departments. Lasting effects are also noticeable in the type, quality and duration of company level fire and EMS training.

The negative impacts on daily staffing levels due to severe economic pressure, dissolution process in Johnson City and the uncertainty regarding the future have significantly impacted the moral and culture of each organization. Sick time use has steadily increased over the past three years which exacerbates the staffing problem and has a direct relationship to the operational effectiveness of both organizations. It is evident that the service delivery models of both municipalities have serious deficiencies that must be addressed and that long term financial viability and sustainability of both Villages is questionable. The immediate future also holds a number of significant hurdles for both Villages as they face looming property tax losses through reassessments of large industrial complex in Endicott, large commercial mall in Johnson City as well as a property tax cap set in place by New York State (J. MacDonald, personal communication, October 5, 2010). Any of these scenarios could develop into an un-survivable event for either or both Villages and result in another round of dissolution votes that would merge them into the Town of Union. Only through research and detailed analysis will the Villages be able to develop a suitable solution to their fire service, rescue and EMS first response delivery whether it be standalone changes for each department or a unified approach between the EFD and JCFD.

Literature Review

A comprehensive literature review was conducted to gather pertinent subject material related to operational models, consolidation, shared services and the effects of organizational and

cultural change. Data and information was collected from a number of sources including the Learning Resource Center at the National Fire Academy, trade journals, texts and a wide variety of electronic sources. A number of instruments were utilized including questionnaires and focus groups to assess the views, organizational culture and sentiment of personnel in both the EFD and JCFD. The culmination of all sources and instruments provided the necessary background and documentation to address the four research questions developed for this applied research project.

Internal change within fire departments has produced some fruitful efforts toward staffing challenges that fire departments are facing. Eberth (2008) posits that there are many ways to make a fire department and these include full time, combination departments augmented by volunteer or part time firefighters and volunteer only units. Eberth states that historically combination departments have been utilized as a transitional phase from all volunteer to all paid departments and this final transition are normally attributed to a major fire or disaster in the community. In Corning, NY internal organizational changes such as adding part time forces to augment full time firefighters when they are short staffed has allowed the municipality to provide fire and EMS services to its 10,500 residents (Eberth, 2008). The advantages of this organizational model allow the municipality to train a small cadre of part time firefighters to high quality standards while addressing escalating overtime and personnel costs but note that disadvantages include turnover due to the low wage paid to part timers (Eberth).

Fire department operational models must be reviewed and change over time to adjust to meet the continued change of the service needs in a municipality. Sustainability of Lima, Ohio's model developed in the 1970's is questionable and efforts must be made to address firefighter safety, overtime costs and an aging workforce (Rutz, 2010). Noting a large half million shortfall

on interest income and a million dollar reduction in funding from the state is driving a major reorganization within the fire department. Acknowledging the need for urgency, Lima understands that “acting sooner than later matters” and “acting with a sense of purpose and design, and not reacting, matters” (Rutz, p. 1). Fire station closures are imminent in the reorganization plan but the size of the workforce will increase and personnel reassignment will be allow for operational changes that include increasing the number of firefighters riding on some apparatus.

Organizational change occurs in fire departments for many reasons that include federal and state mandates, collective bargaining and arbitration and local municipal practices but is most successful when “preparation meets opportunity” (International Association of Fire Chiefs & National Fire Protection Association [IAFC & NFPA], 2010, p. 259). The IAFC & NFPA (2010) find that implementation of business models regarding organizational change has been unsuccessful in the fire service at the local level. The authors also note that all change requires cost analysis and budgeting of financial and personnel resources. Resistance to change can be expected and analysis should be conducted regarding cost/benefit and the effects on personnel and the organization. The driving component for successful organizational change is effective communications through different initiatives describing the reasons for change and the overall benefit to the organization (IAFC & NFPA). These initiatives include websites, scheduled meetings, frequently asked questions, status of action items and relation to success stories with similar significance.

The work of Snook & Johnson (1997) examines a wide array of cooperative services arrangements that include shared services agreements, consolidations, contracting and mergers. The popularity of these actions has increased since the 1970’s for a variety of reasons however

the underlying motivation has been largely related to two major concerns of staffing shortages and fiscal considerations. A keen understanding of the future of the fire service is shown in a prophetic statement made by retired Fire Chief Raymond Picard over four decades ago at fire service conference in 1966.

The cost of doing business is still going up. Fire departments have to respond to increasing demands on staffing, they have to contend with the increasing power of unions, and they have to meet the increasing demand for accountability from the public and policymakers. They are faced with all this while tax limitations erode their budgets, and the private sector nips at their heels. (Snook & Johnson, 1997, p. 5).

The Michigan Suburb Alliance (2006) coins the term Continuum of Collaboration to define the range of cooperative options open to fire departments. This model starts with smaller projects such as mutual aid agreements that are not overly complex and builds to intricate consolidations and mergers that require keen leadership and trust. By using these less complicated forms of collaboration to establish trust, respect and confidence within the entities involved the more complex options along the continuum can be attempted with greater potential of success. Due to the complexity of these latter forms of collaboration such as full consolidation and mergers they “are often precipitated by emergency situations” that sharply increase the need for a more intensive approach with brings greater benefits (Michigan Suburbs Alliance, 2006, p. 7).

Cooperative services can start small and utilize components such as mutual aid, automatic aid and initial action agreements (Snook & Johnson, 1997). These types of instruments, normally reciprocal in nature, are commonly used by fire departments and can provide for escalating levels of assistance during an emergency. Although noted as a viable

alternative to providing better fire protection coverage, closer examination shows distinct benefits and disadvantages to these cooperative service agreements. Snook & Johnson (1997) find that the benefits include their simplistic nature, provide an avenue to develop strong working relationships and that they can become a precursor to higher levels of cooperative effort. The author's also uncovered disadvantages with mutual and auto aid agreements in that they can lead to an incomplete solution that piece meals fire protection, don't guarantee closest unit response and can leave gaps in coverage where valuable time is lost waiting for equipment and manpower.

During the same timeframe, Granito (1997) finds additional negative issues with mutual aid agreements that include functionality and tactical efficiency of firefighting teams coming from different entities. Differences in training, equipment and command functions between departments will lead to reduced efficiency when compared to a single department response. Granito (1997) posits that the use or misuse of mutual aid does not forego the responsibility of the agency to provide adequate fire protection levels for its residents. Planning and training are two crucial factors to successful mutual aid agreements (Salka, 2008). Differences with environmental variables, tactics, strategies and people can normally be addressed with strong planning and training with the other agencies in the alliance to provide more efficient and safer operations.

The Michigan Suburb Alliance (2006) finds that mutual and automatic aid agreements are the least complex types of collaboration used in the fire service and are often a product of convenience. Agreements are easily and quickly generated between entities and are palatable in the political arena and can help produce the manpower and equipment needed to handle escalating incidents. They do come with detractors as inequities can develop through the

overuse of mutual aid by one entity which can lead to a cost burden for other participants in the agreement (Michigan Suburbs Alliance, 2006).

The use of mutual aid is commonplace not only in the fire service but also in other venues such as commercial business, educational institutions and other public sector agencies in state and local governments. The University of Texas' Office of Risk Management utilizes a wide variety of resources that include subject matter experts in finance, security, human resources, health and safety, procurement and information systems. The mutual aid plan facilitates the use and sharing of these resources as a risk management method to assist in recovery efforts of the institution (University of Texas, 2002). Dupage County in Illinois drafted and enacted a mutual aid plan in 2005 for public works sector to provide assistance where needed in the event of a disaster (Watson, 2007).

Consolidation is the next level of collaboration between entities and comes in various forms that serve a number of different purposes. "Consolidation allows for better use of scarce resources, the reduction of duplicative efforts and greater staff flexibility and capability" (Snook & Johnson, 1997, p. 17). Snook & Johnson further categorize consolidation efforts into partial, functional or operational depending on the needs of the departments involved. A partial consolidation allows two entities to remain legally separate while creating an arrangement that handles a particular situation such as staffing. Likewise, functional consolidation again allows for separate entities while one or more particular functions analogous to both organizations are combined and handled jointly through one organization. Common examples of fire department functional organization include areas such as vehicle maintenance, training departments and dispatch. Operational consolidation again allows two entities to remain legally separate while coming together operationally to form a single organization. Service delivery in an operational

consolidation is performed as if the organizations existed as one. This offers some distinct advantages over partial and functional consolidation as assets are utilized as though no district boundaries exist and allows for “standardization of policies and procedures as well as equipment and operational practices, bringing better efficiency to the fire scene” (Snook & Johnson, p. 17).

Consolidation options can address a number of issues affecting fire agencies including financial concerns however cost savings should not be the sole reason to enter into a consolidation effort (Rielage, 2010). The consolidation process needs the support and cooperation from governmental leaders, fire executives, labor organizations as well as the public they serve. Rielage (2010) finds that it is critical to assess the various strengths and weaknesses of each department to avoid pitfalls which include the creation of weak, ineffective consolidated organizations that do not build in value for the public through better service, response time and financial stability.

Snook & Johnson (1997) examine the provision of contracting for fire protection as a viable form of collaboration and cooperative service agreements between entities. Described as a short term consolidation with clear terms and accountability the use of contracts is common however the duration normally lasts for less than 5 years. The advantages of this arrangement are predefined term and performance standards that can trigger renegotiation or termination of negatively performing contracts. The contractual accountability can provide reassurance to municipalities or agencies that are reluctant to enter into an agreement with non-proven service providers. Common performance standards include “response time criteria, resource allocation, representation in intergovernmental affairs, chain of command issues, and a host of “who’s responsible for what” items” (Snook & Johnson, 1997, p. 19).

With many municipalities in dire financial trouble some are considering outsourcing their public safety by contracting with county or state entities (Giusti, 2010). Once considered a sacred cow, cost saving or cost avoidance measures within the public safety sector have gained interest as municipalities have cut from all other departments and have nowhere else to turn. Still there is a reluctance to give up control of public safety by smaller entities even after exhausting all budget strategies. While commonplace in the business world, outsourcing or contracting is considered a contemporary management tool to reduce costs while enabling an organization to concentrate on core components of its mission (Daft, 2010). Selected functions or activities are frequently outsourced by organizations to other entities that can perform these functions with greater savings or efficiency.

Mergers are often seen as the final phase of cooperative services or collaboration ending when two or more departments legally become a new single entity (Snook & Johnson, 1997). Mergers normally take place after agencies enter into some form of functional or operational consolidation to be sure that the working relationship is beneficial and viable. Snook & Johnson (1997) see a distinct advantage to mergers in that they compel the new agency to develop a strategic plan that address operational inadequacies and service levels. With the complexity of contemporary organizations and the variety of laws that govern consolidations and mergers the task is daunting to complete. However the benefits reaped by a successful merger include increased efficiency, better overall service levels and a stronger organization.

Foster (2010) finds that the greatest challenge to a successful merger is combining the cultures of two distinctly different entities. Identification of the model to be followed as well as integration of operational and management components from two agencies are critical first steps in what can take multiple years to complete. Lochard & Olsen (2006) point to the dramatic

increase in mergers over the last two decades but finds that conflict can be found in many of these newly formed entities. Research into the root cause of conflict pointed to leadership and people issues that arise within the new organization. Conflict identification and resolution is a critical factor in keeping the merger on track. “Mergers, by their very nature of combining two or more dissimilar organizations, are prone to conflict” (Lochard & Olsen, p. 57). The authors tout that serious conflict is likely to occur and leadership and managerial courage are the tools to manage and maintain cooperation. Fourteen warning signs that identify problem areas for mergers include; multiple operating plans, absence of a conflict resolution plan, no rumor control plan, substandard leadership selection process, organizational subcultures not addressed, lack of detailed plans, lack of recognition of known deal killers, obstacles not acknowledged by senior leadership, no transition plan in place, reasons for merger not fully disclosed, lack of support by elected officials, elected officials deeply involved in operations, elected officials allowing or supporting dissident groups and a rush to complete the merger (Lochard & Olsen).

Guidance from the Local Government Efficiency Program in New York assists municipalities with development and implementation of substantial cost saving measures including governmental reorganization, dissolutions, intermunicipal cooperation and regional service delivery (New York State Department of State, n.d.). The New York State Commission of Local Government Efficiency states that cost drivers such as healthcare and public employee pensions must be addressed for state and local governments to remain viable and competitive (New York State Commission on Local Government Efficiency, 2008). The 2008 report also depicts the changes and relaxation needed in state law to make it easier for local government entities to perform consolidations, mergers and dissolutions in an effort to reduce costs and improve efficiency. First term Governor Andrew Cuomo states that “this is a time of crisis for

our state” and that we must transform government by reducing its size, spending habits and mandates to reduce the ten billion dollar deficit (White, 2010).

A final approach with regard to sweeping change in fire department organizational modeling is found in New York State Village and Town law using a joint fire district model. Article 22-A of New York State Village law (Appendix B) and Article 11-A of New York State Town law (Appendix C) allow for the creation of joint fire district between one or more incorporated villages and a township. When found by participating entities that it is the best interest of the municipalities to form a joint fire district a public hearing is required as well as numerous detailed steps to form, create a governing board and organize the new agency. Following this process creates a new entity for the provision of fire protection through dissolution of existing agencies within the newly formed district. Once formed, these public corporations are governed by Town and General Municipal law of New York State and receive their funding through taxing districts within the town (DiRaddo & Kornfield, 2009). A popular organizational model for fire protection within the state, fire districts account for 867 suppression entities within New York (New York State Commission on Local Government Efficiency, n.d.).

Joint fire districts within New York State can be comprised of multiple areas within a town and/or villages. Provisions in New York State Town law allow for the staffing of these entities to be solely volunteer, paid or a combination system utilizing both volunteer and career personnel (DiRaddo & Kornfield, 2009). The latter of these staffing models has been utilized to address a wide variety of departmental operational deficiencies that include; increasing call volume, staffing shortages, specialized response types, EMS response, changes in district geography, increased service delivery needs, changes in staffing demographics, increasing

demands for fire department support and management, regional response opportunities and service costs to the public (Hasse, 2008).

Crosby (2008) examines the importance of reviewing a fire departments mission as an exercise to defining its reason for existing. Through this process fire department leaders can also assess the motivational factors of individual firefighters in an effort to build a solid foundation for organizational success. Different management theories indoctrinated into the fire service over the years have blurred the vision of the mission and affected operational elements. A mission centered organizational approach changes the focus to center all operational components toward supporting the mission (Crosby). “Successful businesses have a keen awareness of their central reason for being” and “have a laserlike focus on achieving their mission” (Crosby, p. 18). Mission centered approaches help organizations to develop solid performance goals and standards which can support their vision and values.

Operational deficiencies exist in all facets of business within the public and private sector. US Airways has developed multiple programs to address safety and operational deficiencies in the aviation industry including the Safety Event Reporting and Aviation Safety Action Reporting (ASAP). The corporation states the “goal for both programs is to improve safety and identify operational deficiencies by facilitating an open line of communication between the workgroup and management” (US Airways, n.d., p. 1). Immediate action and commitment of directors, management and their resources is paramount to maintaining a proactive approach to safety and reducing operational deficiencies.

A common phrase in the fire service relating to change is “300 years of tradition unimpeded by progress” (Tresemer, 2007, p. 26). Change in any organization can be frightening to leaders as well as employees as they face shifts in familiar operations and cultural norms.

Particular to the fire service, many organizations block attempts by administrators and employees alike to bring a change in attitudes toward adopting new ways to look at old problems (Tresemer). This type of thinking is a deterrent to efficiency and results in better alternatives being shelved in an attempt to preserve the status-quo. There are a number of key indicators that signify the need for change in a fire service organization and they include; extended response times, reduced staffing, responsibilities that outpace capabilities, internal conflict, mission creep, controversy and lack of budget support (Scott et al., 2005). Any or all of these items represent significant challenges for the organization to tackle. When it is clear that change is needed the department must determine the underlying root cause of the problem as well as investigate all options and the organizational effects of their implementation. “Dashboards” can help a fire department benchmark their organizations performance as it relates to community expectation (Scott et al., p. 11). These tools can provide relevant financial and operational data to administrators from across the entire organization. This can be beneficial as an organization adjusts its strategies and re-evaluates its operations to implement changes necessary to meet the desired goals.

Both the EFD and JCFD face service deficiencies within their scope of operations that need to be addressed in each municipality. A comparison of average daily staffing by month for each agency for the 2009 - 2010 calendar years (Appendix G) show a continued decline in staffing for each agency over the past year albeit for different reasons. The Village of Johnson City abolished 6 firefighter positions in 2009 mid-year and additional retirements have caused a drop in the average daily staffing from 7.07 to 5.90 firefighters. During the same period, the EFD had two resignations but also saw a continued increase in sick time from usage that dropped daily staffing levels from 6.37 to 5.55 firefighters. These reductions in staffing levels have

impacted strategic operational functions of both the EFD and JCFD. Differing policies between both agencies in their staffing profile (Appendix E) which address daily minimum staffing lead to specific brownout procedures determined by agency standard operating procedures (SOP). The comparison of collective bargaining agreements between the two agencies (Appendix E) also delivers background on terms that deal with sick time accrual, non-sick time use incentive and payout of unused sick time at retirement which may account for differences in the sick time usage in both departments.

Fluctuations in daily staffing levels affect a myriad of operational issues that include service delivery, incident command, mutual aid, standards of cover, operational assignments and quality of training. A vintage document from MMA Consulting Group, Inc. (1993) indicates two challenges to providing adequate fire suppression services in Endicott. The first being the “nature of construction in the Village calls for a larger initial attack force than is available in the on-duty crew” and secondly “that the cost of full-time protection is escalating in a depressed economy” (MMA Consulting Group, Inc., 1993, p. 24). Delivery of fire suppression and rescue services in both municipalities relies on small on-duty crews in both municipalities with a full recall of off duty personnel and predetermined mutual aid assignments as described in the agency staffing profile (Appendix E) for larger incidents requiring more manpower.

National standards of cover for fire suppression crews of career fire departments are determined by the NFPA 1710 standard which addresses time objectives through a four minute timeframe for the first arriving engine company and a eight minute timeframe for the full alarm assignment, 90% of the time (National Fire Protection Association [NFPA], 2004). Emergency medical response on a BLS level is also incorporated into the standard with a four minute response time and departments need to meet the time objectives for fire and EMS response

ninety percent of the time (NFPA, 2004). While both agencies currently meet the NFPA 1710 standards for initial engine response and BLS medical response time with Endicott at 92.3% (Hrustich & Griswold, 2011) and Johnson City at 96.6% (Hrustich, 2011). Large scale incidents in both municipalities require the response of mutual aid companies and off duty call backs which fall short of the 14 to 15 firefighters on a full alarm assignment and these levels are not reached until a second alarm. NFPA 1710 standards for staffing levels for engines and ladder trucks is four firefighters or a combination of four firefighters that operate as a single unit (NFPA). Apparatus staffing levels vary in both municipalities but are governed by similar standard operating procedures (Appendices Q & R).

Identifying deficiencies to an organizations training program requires asking pointed questions regarding fire department effectiveness and operational readiness (Dugan, 2008). The importance of selecting and maintaining committed training officers is paramount to sustaining high quality training programs. Dugan finds that the most important aspect of any training program is relating the aspects back to fire department operations and standard operating procedures. Training and equipment deficiencies impact firefighter safety and operational effectiveness of fire departments (Mills, 2006). Operational deficiencies within a fire department have strong ties to the quality and type of training firefighters receive.

Deficiencies are evident in the training programs of both fire departments primarily due to the on duty staffing levels which hinder company level training assignments. Declining staffing levels (Appendix G) within both departments allow for minimal practical hands-on training outside of initial engine company operations at the scene of a structure fire. Both departments are unable to field enough personnel to meet NFPA 1403 standards for live burn training. On duty crews are also left to deal with high volume of medical calls (Appendix E)

which exacerbates the training problem by forcing members to constantly be pulled from the training ground for first response duties. The Village of Johnson City abolished the position of assistant fire chief in 2009 who oversaw the departmental training program as the municipal training officer (MTO). The EFD operates with a fire captain as the MTO however he is assigned to a specific shift with little oversight and interaction with the department as a whole. New York State Office of Fire Prevention and Control determines annual training requirements which requires all firefighters are enrolled in and meet a 100 hour in service training program requirements (New York State Office of Fire Prevention and Control [NYS OFPC], 2008). While firefighters from both departments continue to accumulate sufficient training hours to meet the standards set forth by New York State for career the quality of the training has suffered due to reduced staffing and oversight.

Due to the proximity of both municipalities there are considerable economic, demographic and historic variables that would lend themselves to operational similarities between the two agencies. Each Village spends roughly 30% of their general fund budget on fire protection which is delivered by two departments staffed with a cadre of full time career firefighters. The fire department budgets for the EFD and JCFD were \$4,307,638 and \$4,221,621 respectively for the fiscal year starting June 1, 2010 (Appendix E). Of the top twenty five populous Villages within New York State only Endicott and Johnson City are protected by fully career fire departments. Of the remaining twenty three Villages seventeen operate with only a volunteer staff while six utilizes a mixture of career and volunteer staffing also known as a combination system (Reilly, 2010).

Hazard analyses of both fire departments response districts are closely similar when reviewing industrial, commercial and residential occupancies. Both the EFD and JCFD have

large industrial complexes in the 150 acre Huron facility in Endicott and BAE Systems facility in the Westover Fire Protection District which present operational concerns for large scale fire and hazardous material incidents. The BAE facility while smaller in stature than the Huron facility boasts the largest wooden structure east of the Mississippi and is constructed of heavy timber with a triple bowstring truss roof (C. Soule, personal communication, September 23, 2010). Both Villages also have century old central business districts (CBD) that utilize common wall construction in mostly three story ordinary construction that feature residential living over commercial occupancies (Town of Union Planning Department, 2009). Residential housing in both communities is primarily wood frame built between 1900 and 1960, although the north side of Johnson City does incorporate newer construction and upscale homes (Town of Union Planning Department). Johnson City continues to see marginal new construction, however new building construction in the Village of Endicott is essentially non-existent. Examination of 2010 Construction Report Questionnaire from Endicott submitted to Broome County shows the bleak picture with no new construction with the Village (Appendix F). Both organizations protect senior housing and nursing home facilities in their respective districts. Fixed hazardous materials storage facilities are present in both Endicott and Johnson City and pose operational considerations requiring mutual aid response from an organized hazardous materials team from Broome County (Broome County Office of Emergency Services, 2001). A Conrail rail line dissects both communities on an east-west axis presenting hazardous materials traffic directly through the center of each Village. The JCFD also protects a 3 mile stretch of interstate highway that also dissects community and subjects it to over the road hazardous material hauling.

Similarities and differences between the EFD and JCFD are evident when reviewing documents pertaining organizational makeup and operations. The 2010 organizational charts of

the EFD (Appendix H) and JCFD (Appendix I) show the similarity in the administrative and operations levels within both departments. The backstory regarding organizational makeup of both fire departments is that reductions to suppression forces have been significant over the past quarter century with Endicott losing twenty positions and Johnson City losing twenty three positions through attrition and abolition. These losses also included four mid-level supervisory fire lieutenant's in both departments. In 2009 the Village of Johnson City also abolished the assistant fire chief's position through a lengthy court process (Fire Chief, 2010). The EFD and JCFD both utilize a small administrative division of the fire chief and fire marshal to lead the department and the operation divisions are comprised of fire captains leading four groups or platoons of fire lieutenants and firefighters. The EFD builds in an additional level into the organization with five fire inspectors which demonstrate a long standing commitment to code enforcement in the municipality.

In June of 2009, collaboration between the two municipalities lead to the sharing of a fire chief through an intermunicipal agreement (IMA) for command and administrative functions of both fire departments. On July 1, 2009, Endicott Fire Chief S. Hrustich assumed command of both the EFD and JCFD. One result of sharing a fire chief between both organizations was the update of JCFD's standard operating procedures (SOP) in respect to operations and safety across a wide platform which now shares considerable commonality with Endicott. The largest of these operational changes came to the fire suppression activities of the JCFD and now directly mirror the EFD's SOP's for fire ground operations, incident command, rules of engagement, apparatus staffing assignments and mutual aid policies. While changes to the JCFD's documentation in these areas resulted in change to the suppression operations of the fire department it also formally documented these practices where prior there was little in the form of operational

SOP's. Prior to the fall of 2009 there were no formal mutual aid agreements in the JCFD for receiving to providing mutual aid. Today written mutual aid agreements are in place with Endicott, Endwell and Vestal.

Even with sharing a fire chief between both agencies many of the operational similarities and differences between the EFD and JCFD have been fostered over a rich history of service to their respective municipalities. There are differences in fire suppression, rescue and EMS operations of the EFD and JCFD that result from infrastructure differences in the two municipalities. The JCFD operates out of two fire stations, namely fire headquarters and a satellite station on the south side of the Village. The EFD closed a satellite station in 2002 in an attempt to rein in infrastructure costs and now operates out of a single station in the center of their response district. Both agencies are also dispatched and operate on a different radio frequency; EFD operates on VHF and JCFD on UHF, which compounds operational issues during mutual aid response. In late December of 2010 the EFD completed a complex two year radio consolidation project in conjunction with five adjacent volunteer agencies to increase interoperability, operations and safety (Chellis, 2010).

Specialized rescue services are identical in both organizations in that they each provide confined space, high and low angle rope rescue and water rescue services (Appendix E). Endicott was first to implement a confined space and rope rescue team starting in 1996 and Johnson City followed suit in 2005. The EFD provided confined space rescue services via contract to businesses in a neighboring community as a way to generate revenue however stopped this practice in 2005 as capabilities decreased due to lower manpower levels. Conversely, Johnson City has had a long standing presence on the local waterway for water rescue while Endicott removed their boat from service in the early 1970's and just recently

redeveloped a water rescue team in late 2007. The services and operations of specialized rescue are so closely matched between both departments they even operate identical 20 foot airboats on the Susquehanna River that makes up their southern border.

Distinct similarities also exist between the EFD and JCFD in their EMS response and operations. Limited in their approach and scope both departments have developed BLS first response to their respective districts and currently operate under a diminishing level of service depending on daily staffing levels. This is evident in run cards established with Broome County Office of Emergency Services who provides dispatch services for all fire and EMS agencies within the county (Appendix J). Dispatch protocols are dependent on variables relating to incident severity, detail and patient age as determined by call takers at the dispatching agency. Examination of alarm response for 2010 (Appendix E) shows that EMS responses amount to slightly greater than 70% of the call volumes for both departments. On a national level, 2009 statistics show that fire department calls for medical response amount to 65% of their overall volume (National Fire Protection Association [NFPA], 2010).

While both agencies operate a BLS first response service for emergency medical services within their respective districts there are significant differences between the agencies programs. Endicott started their program in September of 1997 with seven EMT's and eighteen certified first responders (CFR). Over time the EFD's program has evolved to bring all certifications up to the level of EMT-B (EMT Basic) and now consists of twenty three EMT-B and two Paramedics (Hrustich & Griswold, 2011). The JCFD first instituted their BLS first response program in 1999 and consisted of twenty eight CFR's. While contractual language in both agencies state that new hires must gain and retain status as an EMT-B to maintain employment with the agency the JCFD currently only has two EMT-B and eight CFR's operating in their

EMS response program (Hrustich, 2011). The notable deficiencies are two-fold and correspond to reductions in staffing which now limits the response for medical calls based on manpower levels and call severity (Appendix J). The reduction in staffing has reduced the number of available certified medical first responders in the JCFD and the program faces shifts when only one or no medically trained personnel are available due to vacation, sick and personal time. Legacy contractual bargaining clauses in Johnson City allow for two personnel on vacation during the same shift (Appendix E). While decades old practices in the JCFD for vacation had minimal effect when staffing levels were at twelve personnel per shift in the 1990's significant impact are seen in today's fire suppression, rescue and EMS operations. Deficiencies also exist in the JCFD first responder program as their response from two stations in the district means splitting the two trained members by putting one in each fire station. This forces a response with one medical trained member and one that is not medically certified (driver) which cannot assist on the call.

The EFD has managed to keep personnel in their first response program pipeline by providing a contractual EMS stipend of one thousand dollars per year to those individuals that maintains their status as an EMT-B (Appendix E). Review of the 1993 consolidation study hatches the conceptual idea of EMS first response in noting that "the Village of Endicott can benefit from on-duty firefighters responding to life threatening medical emergencies with little added cost to the residents" (MMA Consulting Group, Inc., 1993, p. 24). EMS first response program development in both communities has had significant impact on the overall operations of both fire departments as call volumes of both departments have increased over 450% from the years before EMS first response was instituted.

Willing (2002) distinguishes difficult change in an organization as that which affects the central function or mission, involves altering time honored traditions or culture, occurs quickly rather than having a gradual phase-in and does not garner the support of top leaders. The difficulty in change arises from the perceived negative effects that change can have on people and the organization as a whole. Noting that change is inevitable, Willing finds that it is best to give stakeholders time to digest change implementation but also understands that is not always possible in today's fast paced world. Utilizing change models can be beneficial to orchestrating successful change in an organization. Two general models of change focus on either the change itself or the effects that change will have on the people in the organization. The components of successful implementation of difficult change include great ideas, functional plans and commitment from all stakeholders. However, even after meeting all these elements difficult change can fail due to unforeseen factors and events that include; bad timing, inadequate resources, unprepared leaders and extreme adverse effects on culture that cannot be overcome (Willing).

Organizational change can have profound effects on employees of an organization. Decker, Wheeler, Johnson, & Parsons (2001) report that employees can bear the brunt of organizational change by increases in stress and decreases in morale that can be directly attributed to the change. Companies trying to maintain a competitive edge due to economic conditions and increasing market pressure are implementing wide spread organizational change in a survival effort. These all out changes to remain viable also have the unwanted effects of morale problems and job satisfaction concerns with employees. Decker, et.al also found that other factors such as employee gender, job classification and length of employment had little influence on survey

results which helps to solidify their position of organizational change and its effects on employee morale.

Even with the best intentions of keeping communication open and stakeholders informed there will be holdouts within the organization that resist change and consolidation efforts (Ling, 2001). While job preservation is the primary key component of addressing the needs of employees during consolidation there are still individuals that will attempt to derail planning and implementation and hinder the consolidation process. Ling is painfully direct in that he suggests that attempts must be made to address these individuals to get their commitment and buy-in or develop a plan to remove them from the organization through retirement incentives or buy-outs. Even by directly addressing negative employees, consolidation efforts still face many hurdles with specific employee groups that may be affected more than others. Control and identity issues are two items that some employees will not be able to overcome and make the decision to leave the organization (Ling).

Many cities across the country are finding it increasingly difficult to maintain services while not running up taxes or the debt load on its taxpayers. In Dunmore, Pennsylvania with a population of close to 14,000 residents they have reached the summit in regard to their taxable debt limit and funding fire department operations (Reiter, 2010). With large half million dollar cuts to the fire departments budget they have been forced to place a 2 million dollar referendum on the ballot to fund department operations for 2011. Borough leaders have acknowledged the problem is not unique to Dunmore and that this has brought renewed interest in attracting additional volunteers to their combination system as well as looking at consolidation options with the City of Scranton (Reiter). The referendum was overwhelming voted down in May, 2010 by 85% of the voters in the borough. Borough leaders stated that service cuts are certain

and the municipality will likely face bankruptcy which can lead to renegotiation of contracts with police, fire and other labor organizations (Reiter).

Peters (2000) finds that businesses large and small fall into the fatal trap of waiting out poor economic times by not investing time, money and sweat equity towards their future. This inaction to retain what little property and resources they have left becomes a death spiral in which there is no relief. The refusal to initiate new strategies, incorporate change and chase opportunity leaves businesses with no options for survival. Peters utilizes the mantra that while change is difficult, it is better than death.

The literature review concluded with the processing of an organizational assessment questionnaire delivered to shareholders of both the EFD and JCFD (Appendices K & L). The assessment sought out the views of the membership of both organizations to provide insight on organizational makeup, response services, assessing the need for change, organizational culture and employee concerns over organizational change. Members were asked to provide information on their years of service and rank to develop trends or shared common values across different groups within the organization. Results of these assessments (Appendices O & P) offer a collective perspective of each organization as they evaluate future opportunities to meet the service demands placed on the departments. Interviews with focus groups in both organizations were held in late December 2010 and early January 2011 to gather their views on the results of specific portions of the organizational assessment questionnaire.

Procedures

This applied research project was developed to investigate consolidation and collaboration options for the Endicott and Johnson City fire departments to address operational deficiencies within both organizations. The descriptive research method was utilized in this ARP

to analyze specific documents and data to answer four research questions and offer the recommendations noted at the conclusion of this project. The material, instruments, content and delivery was prepared under the regulations governing applied research from the Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP) at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Md. Applied research guidance was derived from the EFOP operational policies and procedures white paper as well as the Publications Manual of the American Psychological Association. Descriptive research was utilized to explore the dynamic field of collaboration, consolidation and operational change within the fire service and their effects on personnel and organizational culture. A comprehensive literature review included a wide variety of fire service books, manuals, periodicals, research documents, New York State, Town, Village and General Municipal law as well as works from public and private sector business. Sources were obtained through multiple venues that included the Learning Resource Center at the National Fire Academy, the New York State Fire Academy Library located in Montour Falls, NY and a vast number of electronic resources.

Data was gathered in a variety of formats that included standard operating procedures (SOP), pay scales and collective bargaining agreements, incident response characteristics, organizational assessment questionnaire and discussions with focus groups from both agencies. Utilizing this documentation to review agency specific operations helped to pinpoint and understand operational deficiencies in the suppression, rescue and EMS service operations within each department and underlying causal factors that contributed to these issues. The analysis of working documents from both organizations provided valuable insight into developing similarities and differences in the suppression, rescue and EMS service operations between the two agencies. The organizational assessment questionnaire and personnel interviews were

utilized to gain the personal perspective of agency stakeholders in respect to agency demographics, operations past and present, organizational culture and perceived views regarding organizational change and its effects on employees.

Identical four page organizational assessment questionnaires were developed in early October for both agencies and tested on two subject groups that evaluated and provided feedback on 20 original questions. Following recommendations of the test groups, the questionnaire received 4 revisions and three additional questions were added to gain additional insight into employee perception into organizational change. Through this feedback an additional page of descriptions was add to the questionnaire to explain the differences between internal change only, functional consolidation, operational consolidation, merger and dissolution and creation of a new entity (Question #18). An information letter (Appendices M & N) was also provided with the questionnaire to explain the research, objectives of the questionnaires and how the data would be utilized to examine employee views regarding operational readiness, organizational changes, job satisfaction and future organizational planning.

Questionnaires were hand delivered to each member of both agencies starting in early December along with an informational letter describing their purpose and function. Endicott personnel received thirty questionnaires with 24 returned or 80%. Johnson City personnel also received thirty questionnaires with 21 returned or 70%. Submission of completed questionnaires was anonymous to encourage maximum rates of return and honest, candid answers. The returned questionnaires were collated by agency and the data tabulated for inclusion in the results section of this applied research project.

Following the validation of data from the assessment questionnaires, interviews with focus groups consisting of firefighters and fire officers took place in late December 2010 and

early January 2011 to ascertain the reasoning behind overall agency response to the different aspects of the questionnaire. Original plans for this applied research project included personal interviews with different employees selected from the workforce of both agencies. Due to the sensitive nature of the subject matter and the possible effects that it would have on organizational structure it was determined that focus groups provided a level of security for personnel that would not be afforded by individual interviews as their views would not be individually listed in the research project. This group association was common practice for them as they operate in a cohesive nature while performing their duties and allowed for substantial candid conversation.

Assumptions and Limitations

Assumptions in regard to this applied research project revolve around the governing boards of both municipalities wanting to work toward a unified approach to providing fire, rescue and EMS services within the service areas of both the EFD and JCFD. While these discussions are ongoing the consensus to move forward with a unified approach has not been solidified. Governing board makeup, party affiliation and allegiance to different factions of the community are all variables that would have an impact on decisions regarding organizational change of both fire departments.

In addition the research gathered the personal views of the members of both fire departments individually through an organizational assessment questionnaire however this does not necessary correlate to a group consensus regarding items such as organizational makeup, response services and cultural change through reorganization. As both entities operate under the auspices of two distinct IAFF chapters, consensus in these organizations is gained through a democratic process which is subject to influence from group dynamics. Therefore individual feelings and reactions toward these issues may not be representative of the labor organizations

views and perceptions toward operational service deficiencies and the need for organizational change.

The background and significance of this applied research project addresses the dire economic conditions in both Endicott and Johnson City however the project did not investigate ways to change or alter the underlying economic conditions as a way to address the need for change in both fire departments. These activities were outside the scope and duration of the research project and better left to the leaders and financial managers within both municipalities. Another noted limitation of the research was the fact that document investigation and data collection was limited to the EFD and JCFD and did not incorporate other entities located in the area that may have shed light on larger scale collaboration or sharing of services.

Finally, while the literature review was comprehensive in its approach to finding options for different operational models it could not locate a single document regarding fully career fire departments that moved to some form of a combination career and volunteer system. Understanding that the nonexistent literature on this subject likely points to a situation where this form of organizational change has rarely or ever occurred. It is far more likely to believe that fire departments with staffing or serious operational deficiencies may have simply chosen different paths of collaboration, consolidation or mergers to address these issues. Increasing economic pressure on local fire departments to collaborate, consolidate, merge or take an increasing regional approach to providing services may provide future literary resources on this subject matter.

Results

What types of operational models are available for the two municipalities to consider that can address deficiencies with the current protection models?

Rutz (2010) finds that operational models need to be reexamined to address deficiencies that develop over time. Stagnation can occur within organizations that don't react to changes in their response area and the needs of their community. A review of the literature shows that there are a wide variety of options open to both municipalities in respect to changes in their current organizational or operational models to address deficiencies. Eberth (2008) finds that makeup of fire departments can vary widely and that making internal changes within an organization can help to address operational deficiencies and provide critical services. Organizational change does come with associated costs that are not only financial in nature but also incorporate personnel costs due to management and training (IAFC & NFPA, 2010). An agency can reap the benefits of organizational change if properly positioned for the opportunity and effectively communicates the need for changes to its stakeholders.

Collaboration can start small with mutual aid agreements between one or more agencies to help meet operational concerns and successful implementation can lead to building trust, respect and confidence between participating partners (Michigan Suburbs Alliance, 2006). The comprehensive work of Snook & Johnson (1997) reviews small works of collaboration to complex organizational mergers and note that the major driving force toward these efforts are staffing and fiscal concerns. Mutual and automatic aid agreements are normally reciprocal in nature and their use within the fire service is recognized as a commonly accepted practice (Snook & Johnson). The advantages of these cooperative service agreements are they provide for needed resources during escalating emergencies while showing minimal impact to each

department in relation to cost and commitment. Snook & Johnson also note that disadvantages exist in that mutual aid agreements can lead to an incomplete solution that piece meals fire protection and can leave gaps in coverage. Granito (1997) adds that functional and tactical efficiency can be compromised when multiple departments operate under a mutual aid umbrella due to differences in training, equipment and command functions. Salka (2008) points to planning and training as two critical factors of success when deploying forces under mutual aid agreements. Differences in environmental variables, tactics, strategies and people can normally be addressed through planning and training to provide for more efficient and safer fire operations.

There are many forms of consolidation models that allow for better use of resources and reduction in duplication of services (Snook & Johnson). The authors categorize consolidation models into partial, functional and operational depending on the purpose and scope of the agreement. Important to note is that all consolidation categories allow each organization in the alliance to legally retain their organizational identity and all resources remain a component of their original agency. Snook & Johnson define and describe consolidation models with respect to their intent and function. Partial consolidation allows for two or more entities to draft an agreement that addresses a particular situation such as staffing. Functional consolidation looks to functions analogous to multiple agencies and drafts agreements that allow a single agency to handle tasks such as vehicle maintenance, training and dispatch. Operational consolidation takes cooperative effort to a new level by allowing multiple agencies to form a single organization that operates as a single entity. While legally remaining separate, assets are utilized as if no boundaries exist and standardization of policies and procedures allow for better overall efficiency (Snook & Johnson). Rielage (2010) finds that consolidations can bring effective

solutions to functional, operational and financial issues however the latter should not be the sole reason for exploring consolidation. Bringing organizations together in a consolidated effort without assessing the strengths and weaknesses of each agency can result in ineffective consolidated organizations that don't provide added value in operational effectiveness to the communities that they serve (Rielage).

A viable form of cooperation and collaboration is found in the contracting for fire protection services between entities (Snook & Johnson). Contracts provide for negotiating definitive terms, duration and performance standards which help to address accountability within the contracted area. Viewed as a short term consolidation, Snook & Johnson cite the use of contracts as common with the fire service. Giusti (2010) notes that the dire economic finances of municipalities across the nation have many looking at outsourcing or contracting services for public safety. Daft (2010) posits that the use of outsourcing or contracting allows entities to maintain a focus on their core mission.

Mergers are considered the final phase of cooperative services or collaboration and differ from consolidations as the conclusion of the action results in a single entity (Snook & Johnson). While building in a significant amount of complexity, mergers normally take place after other smaller collaborative efforts or consolidations. A distinct advantage of mergers over consolidations is they force the new entity to develop a strategic operational plan that looks to the future (Snook & Johnson). While a merger of two or more entities requires a significant amount of effort the rewards can be great with increased efficiency, better service levels and a stronger organization.

Foster (2010) finds that the greatest challenge to a successful merger is the combining the cultures of two distinct agencies. Noting a dramatic increase in mergers over the last two

decades, many are laced with conflict due to leadership and people issues that arise (Lochard & Olsen, 2006). As serious conflict is likely to occur with a merger the planning and management to immediately address issues is imperative. Lochard & Olsen point to fourteen distinct warning signs that signal that a merger is in trouble which include multiple operating plans, absence of a conflict resolution plan, no rumor control plan, substandard leadership selection process, organizational subcultures not addressed, lack of detailed plans, lack of recognition of known deal killers, obstacles not acknowledged by senior leadership, no transition plan in place, reasons for merger not fully disclosed, lack of support by elected officials, elected officials deeply involved in operations, elected officials allowing or supporting dissident groups and a rush to complete the merger.

Joint fire districts as defined by New York State Town, Village and General Municipal Law can be comprised of multiple areas that exist with a town and/or village entity (DiRaddo & Kornfield, 2009). Combining one or more municipal fire districts and/or fire protection districts into a joint fire districts are a popular organizational model in New York accounting for 867 fire suppression entities within the state (New York State Commission on Local Government Efficiency, n.d.). Unlike consolidations and mergers, creation of a joint fire district utilizes numerous legal maneuvers by towns and villages to dissolve current entities and incorporate contiguous areas into a new larger entity. Provisions within the law exist regarding developing various organizational models to utilize paid, volunteer or a combination system to address the staffing needs of the district.

What are the suppression, rescue and EMS service deficiencies that would need to be addressed in each municipality?

A number of suppression, rescue and EMS service deficiencies are evident following a detailed review of pertinent literature, departmental documentation and data from both agencies. Some of these deficiencies are agency specific while others find commonality between the two organizations. Daily staffing levels (Appendix G) have shown to have the largest impact on suppression, rescue and EMS operations in both agencies and have led to the development of SOP's relating to apparatus staffing (Appendices Q & R) and EMS response (Appendix J). Variable daily staffing levels in both the EFD and JCFD have a direct correlation to operations in both fire departments and subsequently result in operational deficiencies to suppression, rescue and EMS services. Fire suppression forces in both departments are subject to varying numbers of personnel and equipment availability due to staffing levels that produce brownouts of apparatus and fire stations. Operational assignments at all levels of the organization are subject to daily changes that can present challenges in respect to tactics and strategy.

National standards of cover for fire suppression and EMS are structured around the NFPA 1710 standard which sets response time and resource criteria for career fire departments. Focused on meeting a goal for 90% of incidents the standard sets a four minute initial response time for first arriving units for fire and BLS EMS medical incidents (NFPA, 2004). Both organizations have had success in meeting the requirements for initial response set by NFPA 1710 with the EFD at 92.3% (Hrustich & Griswold, 2011) and the JCFD at 96.6% (Hrustich, 2011). Deficiencies are noted in regard to NFPA 1710 with the number of personnel staffing apparatus (Appendices Q & R) especially in the Village of Johnson City where they operate out of two fire stations.

Both agencies operate EMS BLS first response programs for medical emergencies within their respective districts. Fluctuations in daily staffing levels (Appendix G), contractual

language for vacation policies (Appendix E) stress the operational delivery of this service. EMS first response at a BLS level is majority of the call volume of both agencies representing 72.4% of total responses in Endicott and 69.3% in Johnson City (Appendix E). On a national level, 2009 figures for EMS response represents 65% of fire department responses (NFPA, 2010). Response brownouts due to staffing levels in both agencies (Appendix J), short staffing of apparatus with only one trained EMS member and loss of trained personnel in the JCFD jeopardize long term viability of these programs.

Training and equipment deficiencies impact firefighter safety and operational effectiveness of fire departments (Mills, 2006). Identifying deficiencies to an organizations training program requires asking pointed questions regarding fire department effectiveness and operational readiness (Dugan, 2008). The importance of selecting and maintaining committed training officers is paramount to sustaining high quality training programs. Dugan finds that the most important aspect of any training program is relating the aspects back to fire department operations and standard operating procedures.

Deficiencies are evident in the training programs of both fire departments primarily due to the on duty staffing levels which hinder company level training assignments. Declining staffing levels (Appendix G) within both departments allow for minimal practical hands-on training outside of initial engine company operations at the scene of a structure fire. On duty crews are also left to deal with high volume of medical calls (Appendix E) which exacerbates the training problem by forcing members to constantly be pulled from the training ground for first response duties. Both departments lack cohesive oversight regarding their training programs due to the abolition of the assistant chief's position who was the MTO in Johnson City and the fact that the EFD operates with a fire captain as the MTO who has little contact with other platoons in

department. These issues have had a profound effect on the quality of the training that both departments have received that go towards meeting the New York State Office of Fire Prevention and Control annual 100 hour in service training requirements (New York State Office of Fire Prevention and Control [NYS OFPC], 2008).

What, if any, are the similarities and differences in the suppression, rescue and EMS service operations between the two agencies?

Reviewing documentation and statistics from both agencies provide insight into similarities and differences in the suppression, rescue and EMS service operations between the two agencies. The close proximity of both municipalities (Appendix A), organizational models (Appendices H & I) and the past history of each organization lend themselves commonalities in size, makeup and operations. Each Village spends roughly 30% of their general fund on fire department personnel and operations (Appendix E) and staffs their departments with a small cadre of full time firefighters. Reilly (2010) finds that of the twenty five most populous Villages in New York State, Endicott and Johnson City are the only entities protected by fully career departments.

Hazard analysis of both agencies determines that the response districts are closely similar in respect to industrial, commercial and residential occupancies. Both municipalities have large industrial complexes within their response districts that present significant concerns for large scale fire and hazardous materials incidents (Appendix E). Turn of the century Central Business Districts (CBD) within both Villages consist of mostly three story ordinary construction featuring common walls and residential over commercial occupancies (Town of Union Planning Department). Significant portions of the residential housing both municipalities are similar in age, size and construction however Johnson City does have a portion of its district with newer

upscale homes. A common rail line dissects both Villages and presents hazardous materials traffic through the center of each response district.

Organizational charts of both agencies (Appendices H & I) show distinct similarities in organizational structure within both the administrative and operations divisions. Reductions in manpower over the past quarter century are significant with the EFD losing 40% and the JCFD 43% of their personnel. Regardless of this reduction in staffing the operations divisions have seen little change in their structure. Both agencies did see a reduction in four first line supervisory lieutenants' positions during that timeframe. Administratively both departments are identical, led by a chief and fire marshal this after the Village of Johnson City moved to abolish the vacant assistant fire chief's position in 2009 (Fire Chief, 2010).

In June of 2009, leaders from both Villages entered into an IMA to share a fire chief which took place in July of 2009. This change resulted in a new working relationship which previously never existed between the agencies. A direct result of this new agreement was the updating of SOP's in the JCFD that directly mirror EFD documentation for fire ground operations, incident command, rules of engagement, apparatus staffing and mutual aid policies. Formal mutual aid agreements were drafted for Johnson City with surrounding departments that included Endicott, Endwell and Vestal.

Similarities and differences in fire suppression, rescue and EMS operations were also born from the rich history of service both agencies provided to their municipalities. Differences exist in infrastructure; namely the number of fire stations (Appendix E) and radio communication frequencies which present unique challenges to each department. Endicott responds out of a single station and Johnson City utilizes two stations in their Village. This creates a difference in the staffing profiles for both agencies (Appendix E) and results in two

man engine and ladder crews in the JCFD where the EFD maintains a single four man engine (Appendices Q & R).

Operationally both departments are extraordinarily similar in their offerings of ancillary services to their respective protection districts. Specialized rescue services are identical in both organizations as they each provide confined space, high and low angle rescue and water rescue (Appendix E). Both the EFD and JCFD operate BLS EMS first response programs for medical emergencies within their communities. Due to decreasing manpower levels (Appendix G) both agencies struggle to maintain the level of these services and are forced into brownout situations when daily staffing is low (Appendices J, Q & R).

While program offerings with respect to fire suppression, specialized rescue and EMS have definite consistencies among them, development and organizational culture have produced some distinct differences, especially in the EMS BLS first response program. Program development and evolution has moved twenty three firefighters in the EFD to an EMT-B level and also includes two paramedics which represents 83.3% of personnel trained in EMS response (Hrustich & Griswold, 2011). Conversely, the JCFD has lost 6 trained EMT-B's through abolition and now has two EMT-B's and eight CFR's which represents 33.3% of personnel trained in EMS response (Hrustich, 2011). These differences are significant and have a profound effect on operations, program management and delivery.

What, if any, are the organizational concerns of the fire suppression personnel in each municipality related to adopting a new fire suppression, rescue and EMS model?

Willing (2002) finds that difficult change within an organization can often be traced back to perceptions by personnel regarding perceived negative effects that change can have on the people and organization. Noting that change is inevitable in all organizations the format and

speed of change are important factors in determining its success. Stakeholder commitment and strong functional planning need to be taken into consideration when incorporating changes into organizations especially those with strong cultures and traditions. Willing also notes that unforeseen elements can derail organizational change due to factors that cannot be overcome.

Many companies trying to maintain a competitive edge find themselves making wide spread organizational change in an effort to survive in tough economic conditions. Decker, et.al identifies negative aspects of sweeping change on employees of an organization that include increased stress and decreased moral. This backlash of unexpected negative consequences of implementation of change throughout the organization can be directly tied back to the change process.

Ling (2001) states that even through strong planning and implementation some personnel will struggle with change and will resist its efforts. The primary concern for stakeholders is job preservation during any consolidation effort, even by meeting these concerns there will be holdouts that will attempt to derail and hinder plans. Addressing these individuals to gain commitment to change or incentivizing them to leave the organization is necessary to move forward on a positive course. Change may affect diverse factions within the organization in different ways and control and identity issues that develop can often be associated with employees' decision to leave the organization (Ling).

The fire department in Dunmore, Pennsylvania faces sweeping change as they near their taxable debt limit at the same time they are experiencing a loss in volunteer participation within their agency (Reiter, 2010). Acknowledging that they are not alone as they face this problem, borough leaders face tough decisions to move their municipality toward large scale operational change. Renewed interest in consolidation and organizational change by attracting additional

volunteers are various subjects that have been brought to the table. An overwhelming rejection of a two million dollar referendum in May, 2010 to fund fire department operations will lead to service cuts and renegotiation of labor contracts through bankruptcy (Reiter).

Simply sitting out difficult change can back organizations into a corner that is difficult to escape. Peters (2000) identifies a fatal mistake of many businesses is pulling back investments of time, money and energy as they attempt to wait out poor economic times. Planning and initiating new strategies, innovation and organizational change to meet changing demands helps to posture the organization to accept new opportunities that arise. Peters delivers a strong statement regarding change in that while change is difficult, it is better than death.

In an effort to measure organizational concerns and gather job related data regarding the views of members of both the EFD and JCFD an organizational assessment questionnaire was utilized (Appendices K & L). The assessment sought detailed information on organizational makeup, response services, assessing the need for change, organizational culture and employee concerns over organizational change. Thirty questionnaires were delivered to both organizations with a return rate of 80% for the EFD and 70% for the JCFD. Results were tabulated and included (Appendices O & P) to review similarities and differences as well as a collective perspective of each agency as they evaluate future opportunities and the possibility of organizational change. While the appendices contain all the data extracted from the assessment questionnaires in depth analysis of the following data presents interesting deltas and common traits within both the EFD and JCFD.

The EFD respondents had an even split of 41.7% of members with 10 years or less and 41.7% with over 20 years of service. Conversely, the largest respondent class from the JCFD was between 11 to 20 years of service and resulted in 75% of the total. Education levels were

similar in that the majority of respondents had some college or an associate’s degree with 75% of both EFD and JCFD members falling into these categories. Rank representation for firefighters was even with 16 for both organizations while the EFD had 8 fire officers and the JCFD had 4. Overwhelming numbers, 70.1% in the EFD and 85% in the JCFD saw fire suppression as their principle duty in the department. Job satisfaction ratings were broken down by rank and organization and are represented graphically in Figures 1 and 2.

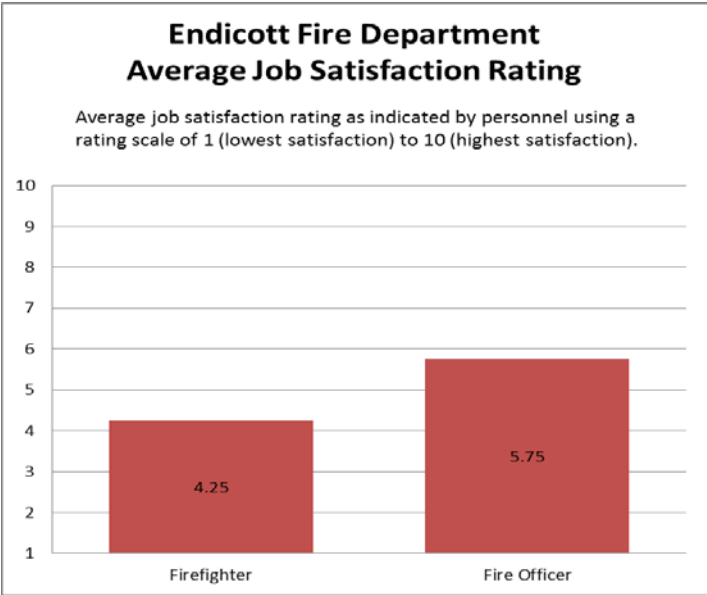


Figure 1

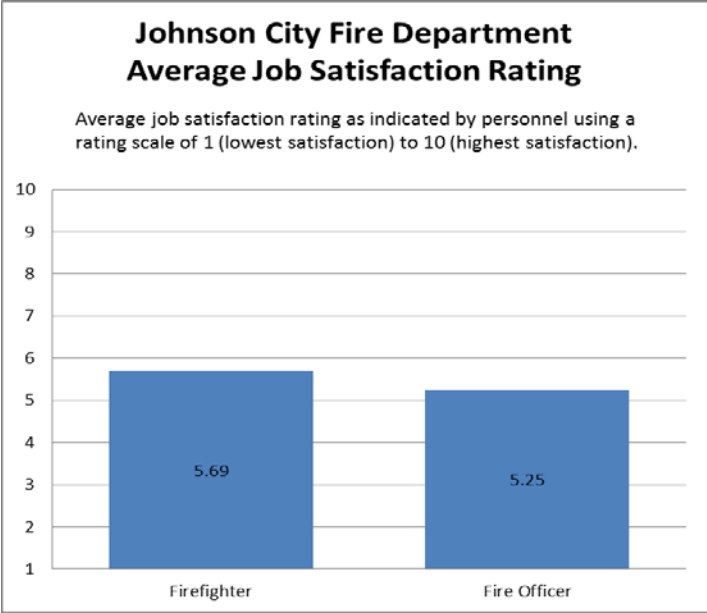


Figure 2

Reviewing these graphs we see a noteworthy difference in the job satisfaction ratings of firefighters in the EFD with considerable lower ratings than firefighters in the JCFD. However, ratings for EFD fire officers and JCFD firefighters and fire officers remained constant within a half point difference separating those three groups.

A remarkable difference is brought to light when evaluating questions #6 & #7 which deal with how firefighters view their pay and benefits in relation to other fire departments within New York State. Respondents from the EFD favored a rating of disagreement in some form by 62.5% regarding pay and 58.3% regarding benefits. The JCFD respondents choose a rating of agreement in some form 100% of the time for both pay and benefit comparison. This dissimilarity between the organizations and how they view pay and benefit structures within their agency was noted for additional commentary in the discussion section of this project.

Both agencies favored disagreement in some form when asked if their job had seen little change since their start date with EFD at 79.1% and JCFD at 65%. However, both agencies overwhelming noted, EFD at 91.6% and JCFD at 100% that they were in disagreement in some form when asked if their respective fire department had seen little change since their start date. Both agencies were in disagreement of some form when asked if professional development opportunities existed in their organization model with EFD at 75% and JCFD at 70%. Looking at services offered by the fire department since firefighters started with the organization the overall trend for both agencies was in the form of disagreement that services were as good as when they started with EFD at 62.5% and JCFD at 70%. When asked if services were better than when they first started, respondents from the EFD tended to agree with 58.3% while JCFD respondents disagreed at a level of 65%. Respondents of both agencies viewed staffing levels as the single most important element affecting firefighter safety, recognized by 83% of the EFD and

65% of the JCFD. Notably training was chosen by the both organizations as the second most important element affecting firefighter safety.

Respondents from both agencies were asked about their views regarding future challenges, operational considerations and the need for agency adaptation to meet the changing needs of the community. Overwhelmingly both agencies were in strong agreement that the fire department faces significant challenges in the future with the EFD responding at a rate of 91.6% and the JCFD at 100%. Notable differences were seen in the agency assessments when asked if the fire department would be able to continue current service levels. The EFD strongly favored agreement in some form at 83% while JCFD was fairly evenly split with 45% in agreement and 55% disagreeing in some form. Respondents from both agencies believed that the fire department must adapt to changes in the municipality with the EFD at 83% and JCFD at 90%. When asked what the most significant reason for the need for adaptation responses varied per agency but tended to favor issues with the economy. Respondents at the EFD chose this answer 58.3% of the time and change in demographics was second at a rate of 20.8%. JCFD respondents were more evenly split with 40% choosing the economy and 35% selecting a loss in tax revenue.

Respondents from both agencies were asked their views on organizational adaptation to respond to changes in service needs in their communities. Members were given a wide variety of choices as well as detailed explanations of what the adaptation would likely mean to the organization. These choices and explanations were provided on the final two pages of the organizational assessment questionnaire (Appendices K & L). Figures 3 and 4 are graphical representations of the selections of responses by EFD and JCFD respondents.

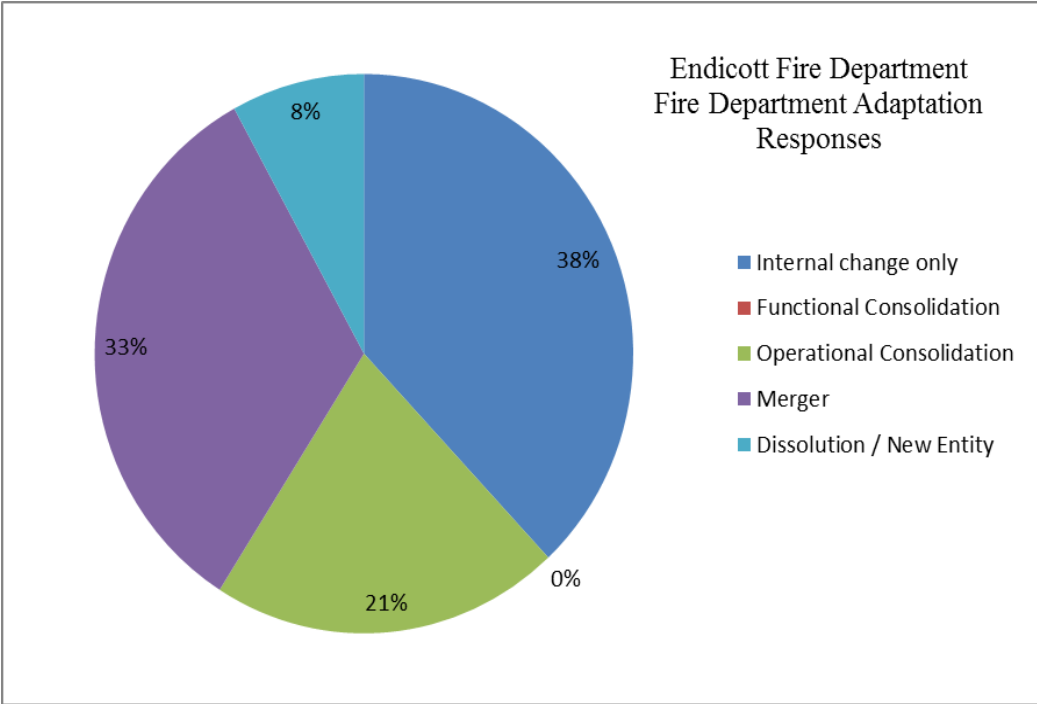


Figure 3

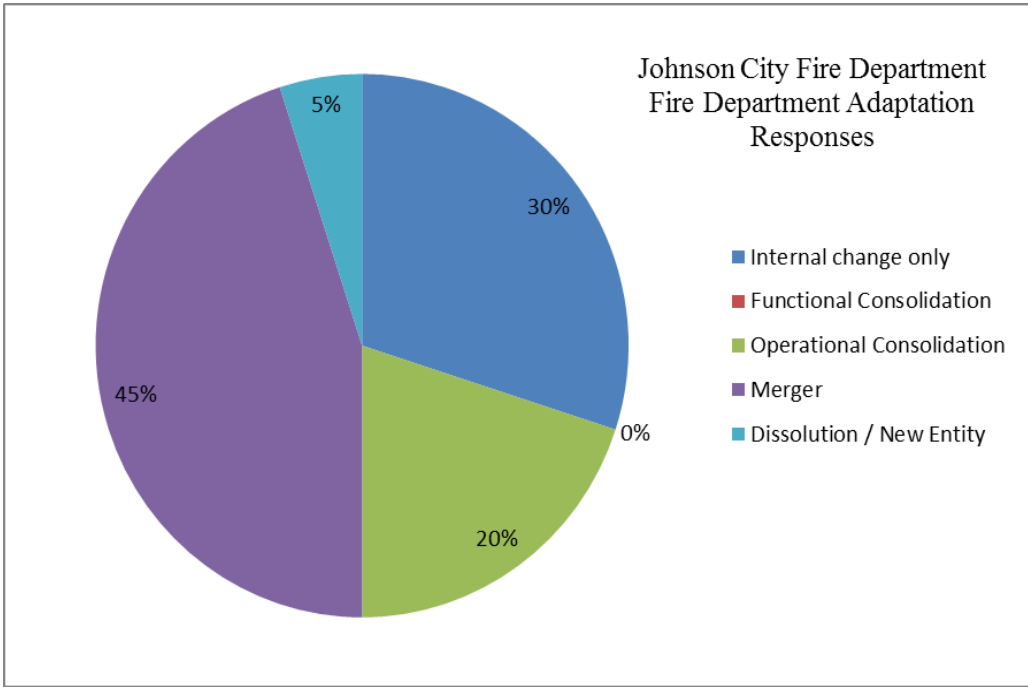


Figure 4

Some distinct similarities are evident when reviewing this data in that mergers were viewed as the single most attractive adaptation to the organization with EFD selecting this option 33% of the time and the JCFD at 45%. Internal change only followed mergers chosen 38% of the time

for the EFD and 30% in the JCFD. It was interesting to note that no respondents in either agency selected functional consolidation as an attractive option to organizational change, while operational consolidation was similar at 21% for the EFD and 20% for the JCFD. Respondents from both agencies were asked what type of staffing they would believe the organization should consist of. The majority of respondents selected career personnel for the staffing model, EFD at 58.3% and JCFD at 70%, however use of career and volunteer personnel in a combination system was acknowledged as a feasible alternative by a fair number of personnel in each agency.

The organizational assessment questionnaire also asked respondents their views on what effects organizational change would have on service levels, staffing levels and organizational culture. Members of both agencies were evenly split in their views regarding whether organizational change would have a positive effect on service levels with 50% of both the EFD and JCFD members in agreement in some form and 50% disagreeing in some form. When reviewing selections for whether organizational change would have a positive effect on staffing levels the JCFD was again split 50/50 while the EFD favored being in disagreement with the statement at a rate of 62.5%. Organizational change having positive effects on organization culture was selected by 58.3% of EFD and 55% of JCFD respondents. Finally, the assessment questionnaire asked members of both agencies to rate their strongest concerns for organizational change within the fire department. Using the mode of answers provided by both departments it is clear that job security is overwhelming the highest of employee concerns with EFD at 91.7% and JCFD at 75%. The rest of the rankings regarding employee concerns follow a pattern depicted in Figure 5 with the exception of the second concern where Endicott personnel selected job satisfaction and Johnson City personnel chose operational change.

Figure 5

Organizational change concerns ranked 1(Highest) through 6 (Lowest) by organization	Endicott Fire	Johnson City Fire
Loss of Identity	Mode 6	Mode 6
Job Security	Mode 1	Mode 1
Job Satisfaction	Mode 2	Mode 4
Professional Development	Mode 3	Mode 3
Cultural Change	Mode 5	Mode 5
Operational Change	Mode 4	Mode 2

Focus groups were utilized to extract additional views regarding trends, similarities and differences between the answers provided in the organizational assessment questionnaire. Looking for additional insight into the organizational culture of both agencies and how it affects group decision making regarding focus groups concentrated on four important talking points extracted from the data obtained in the assessment. These four discussion questions were: What is your greatest concern over collaboration efforts to address operational deficiencies in the fire department? What are your views as to why there is a significant difference in the job satisfaction ratings of firefighters in Endicott and Johnson City? Why do you find a merger as an attractive solution to addressing operational deficiencies in both organizations? Why do you find a joint fire district the least attractive model for addressing operational deficiencies in both organizations?

Summarized responses from these focus groups are provided as follows:

What is your greatest concern over collaboration efforts to address operational deficiencies in the fire department?

Endicott – Being part of the process. Having our voices heard as an organization. Not being in the dark as to what is transpiring.

Johnson City – Being in control of our destiny. Helping to make the choice of what is best for us.

What are your views as to why there is a significant difference in the job satisfaction ratings of firefighters in Endicott and Johnson City?

Endicott – Things need to change, the village and fire department administration will not work with us. They are fighting us every step of the way. We are backed into a corner with nowhere to go. There is no opportunity here, we are stuck.

Johnson City – Getting through the dissolution process was a heavy weight lifted off our backs.

We know the public has issues with us but we just want to be left alone. Things are getting better and we believe that change will benefit us.

Why do you find a merger as an attractive solution to addressing operational deficiencies in both organizations?

Endicott - We want to work outside the Village of Endicott. This village is small and presents little opportunity. I like working with the other department and it would be great to be part of something bigger. Using the same SOP's and training together would provide better safety. We want to be paid the same as Johnson City firefighters.

Johnson City – We realize the need to change. Having common goals, operating procedures and policies makes sense.

Why do you find a joint fire district the least attractive model for addressing operational deficiencies in both organizations?

Endicott – Legally that can't be done because it is union busting. It is not fair. We would not be guaranteed anything.

Johnson City - We don't know enough about it. It is dissolution all over again under a different name. There is no guarantee of job security.

Discussion

The economic conditions in the Villages of Endicott and Johnson City have had a tremendous impact on fire department staffing and operations. Over a period of a quarter century, cuts to personnel in both departments have amounted to losses in staffing of 40% for the EFD and 44% for the JCFD. During this time the agencies have continued to operate under the same antiquated model for staffing their departments while increasing service levels through specialized rescue and EMS (Appendix E). These programs have added to the daily work load and placed additional stress on the system which has produced deficiencies in the delivery of fire suppression, rescue and EMS services. It is for these reasons that the leaders of both municipalities have moved to look at alternatives and options for collaboration and organizational change to meet the strategic operational objectives for fire suppression, rescue and EMS services within Endicott and Johnson City.

A number of agencies are questioning the viability of their operational models many developed decades earlier. Models must be reviewed and changed over time to meet the continued change of the community and address important issues such as firefighter safety, overtime costs and changes to workforce demographics (Rutz, 2010). Rutz finds that a proactive approach to addressing operational change through planning and research and avoiding being reactionary to change is a positive step in providing solid solutions. Continued negative economic change within the municipalities in respect to tax revenue and demographics coupled with future prospects of reassessments and a property tax cap have had profound effects on fire department operations in both the EFD and JCFD. Average daily staffing levels (Appendix G) along with apparatus staffing SOP's (Appendices Q & R) reveal the impact that economic pressure has had on operational readiness of both departments.

The EFD and JCFD have distinct similarities in their operational models and are evident by reviewing organizational structure (Appendices H & I) and program delivery for fire suppression, rescue and EMS BLS first response. Detailed hazard analysis of the response districts for both agencies show that they share common risks for industrial, commercial and residential occupancies (Town of Union Planning Department, 2009). Each department spends approximately 30% of their general fund on the fire department (Appendix E) staffs at levels that average around 5 to 6 firefighters per day (Appendix G) and utilize call backs and mutual aid assignments to provide additional resources at escalating incidents. The departments are extraordinarily similar in their service offerings but struggle to maintain high levels of quality in their program delivery and training. Organizational assessment questionnaires revealed that respondents from both agencies sided with the negative that services are as good as when they first started with the department (Appendices O & P). The agencies continue to move toward common ground as they now share the position of fire chief and standard operating procedures for incident command, fire ground operations, rules of engagement, apparatus staffing and mutual aid policies. Differences are also evident mainly due to infrastructure issues which have the JCFD utilizing two fire stations while the EFD responds from a single fire headquarters and the fact that both departments operate on different radio frequencies.

While the need for organizational change is evident for both the EFD and JCFD to adapt to reductions in staffing and changes in their protection districts, modifications will likely bring challenges and resistance from the two IAFF chapters involved (Appendix E). Eberth (2008) presents the idea that there are many ways to staff fire departments; namely career personnel, volunteers and combination systems that are a hybrid consisting of paid and volunteer forces. Results from organizational assessment questionnaires show that both departments were strongly

in favor of retaining career only staffing in any new entity, EFD at 58.3% and JCFD at 70%.

However use of career and volunteer personnel in a combination system was acknowledged as a feasible alternative by a fair number of personnel in each agency.

Organizational change within fire departments occurs for many reasons including mandates, collective bargaining, arbitration and local practices but resistance to such efforts is to be expected by shareholders in the organization (IAFC & NFPA, 2010). The EFD and JCFD have entered into a written mutual aid plan to provide assistance at second alarm or greater incidents that require additional resources. Developing a solid plan for additional collaborative efforts with detailed cost/benefit analysis pertaining to these changes and their effects on both organizations is paramount. Effective communication between the members of the organization and the parties leading change is necessary to provide details on why change is needed, implementation strategies and benefits to the organization (IAFC & NFPA). Successful change occurs when “preparation meets opportunity” and is brought together using a variety of tools to increase information flow while helping to reduce resistance and its negative effects (IAFC & NFPA, p. 259). Careful consideration towards incorporating shareholder views and ideas from both the EFD and JCFD as well as government leaders is essential when choosing and implementing a plan to address service deficiencies. Focus groups from both agencies pointed to having their voices heard and being a part of any solution that is brought forward.

Snook and Johnson (1997) present a number of cooperative services initiatives that include share services agreements, consolidations, contracting and mergers. The last 40 years have brought a renewed interest in these types of arrangements however the motivation to examine collaborative efforts has largely been due to staffing shortages and fiscal considerations. A number of service agreements are defined in the Continuum of Collaboration developed by the

Michigan Suburb Alliance (2006) and have an extensive range of complexity as you move along the scale. The model starts with less intricate mutual aid plans that can address staffing and operational needs while setting the foundation for larger, more complex projects that require elements of established trust, respect, confidence and keen leadership to succeed. The complexity of full consolidations and mergers “are often precipitated by emergency situations” and bring greater benefits but also incorporate increasingly difficult levels of planning and cooperation (Michigan Suburbs Alliance, 2006, p. 7). The Villages of Endicott and Johnson City are quickly nearing that emergency situation with drastic reductions in staffing over the past quarter century, collective bargaining commitments and the severity of economic conditions affecting the municipalities.

Mutual aid, automatic aid and initial action agreements are common first steps in collaboration between agencies and can provide additional resources in the form of manpower or equipment when incidents start to escalate in complexity (Snook & Johnson, 1997). Endicott and Johnson City entered into a written mutual aid agreement in the fall of 2009 to provide assistance in the event of a second alarm or greater incident where additional resources are required. Distinct benefits to utilizing mutual aid include their common usage within the fire service, normally reciprocal in nature, ease of implementation and that they present little in the way of challenges toward the culture of an organization (Snook & Johnson). Implementation of the Endicott/Johnson City mutual aid agreement has had little in the way of challenges from both organizations and 2010 responses show that aid was given and received five times by each agency.

Snook & Johnson find that collaboration in the form of mutual aid also provides a conduit to the development of strong interagency relationships that can lead to higher levels of

cooperative effort. At this time fire department and government leaders understand that while the current level of cooperation is beneficial to both municipalities the financial cost of operating two independent fire departments staffed with a fully career force is unrealistic given the dire economic condition of the Villages. Reilly (2010) finds that of the twenty five most populous Villages in New York State only Endicott (ranked 22nd) and Johnson City (ranked 19th) have departments that are staffed entirely with career personnel.

While mutual aid between the municipalities has been effective over the 18 months there are detractors that can surface from these types of collaboration. Granito (1997) posits that heavy reliance on mutual aid can lead to ineffective firefighting units and does not relieve an agency of its responsibility to provide adequate protection. Salka (2008) delivers additional points regarding the importance of training and planning to overcome agency differences in tactics, strategies and environmental variables when utilizing mutual aid. Mutual aid assignments between the EFD and JCFD have allowed the agencies to get closer in respect to operational tactics and strategies through common standard operating procedures.

Consolidation is broken down into various forms developed to meet specific purposes. Partial, functional and operational consolidations “allow for better use of scarce resources, the reduction of duplicative effort and greater staff flexibility and capability” (Snook & Johnson, 1997, p. 17). Consolidations allow the parent entities to remain legally separate while using arrangements to address deficiencies. Partial consolidations can address issues such as staffing, while functional consolidation looks to solve problems dealing with common agency functions such as vehicle maintenance, training and dispatch. Operational consolidation allows two or more agencies to operationally function as one which includes movement of assets without concern for formal boundaries. The latter allows for greater flexibility and addresses

“standardization of policies and procedures as well as equipment and operational practices, bringing better efficiency to the fire scene” (Snook & Johnson, p. 17). Rielage (2010) adds that while consolidation can address a number of functional and operational issues, including financial aspects of fire protection, cost alone should not be the driving force behind it. Currently the Villages of Endicott and Johnson City are experiencing significant financial concerns regarding future viability of not only the fire departments but the entire municipal operation, leaders also understand that making organizational change through consolidation or collaboration will provide better services levels for their residents. Support is needed from all levels of the EFD and JCFD as well as the governing boards to incorporate higher levels of collaboration between both agencies.

While partial and function consolidation have promise in what they have to offer both departments it may be too little too late to solve the staffing crisis that developed. Staffing is the common element to many deficiencies that have developed in both organizations in their delivery of fire suppression, rescue and EMS services. Scott et.al (2005) defines key indicators that signify the need for change that include extended response times, reduce staffing, responsibilities that outpace capabilities, internal conflict, mission creep, controversy and lack of budget support. Besides the evident staffing issues, many of these indicators are present in the both the EFD and JCFD including mission creep, internal conflict, controversy and continued cuts to fire department budgets. While an MMA consolidation study (1993) makes comment to an enhanced benefit for residents through development of an EMS first response program, lack of adjustment to the mission has bred confusion in both organizations toward their overall focus. Crosby (2008) purports that mission focus is the key to success and is the essence of driving support for mission centered organizational approaches to management. Lack of long range

strategic planning has left internal conflict and controversy in both organizations as they struggle with their future. Economic pressure from all levels signify trouble for the ailing organizations and funding continues to dry up and program reductions are evident through brownouts (Appendices J, Q & R). Peters (2000) acknowledges that simply waiting out poor economic times can be a fatal trap as businesses retract time, money and sweat equity toward developing opportunities that can have positive effects on their future.

Snook & Johnson (1997) also find that contracting and mergers options available to fire departments in their quest to change service deficiencies. While contracting has advantages that include predefined terms and performance standards its use in this particular situation is limited by contractual obligations with both labor groups. Mergers are considerably more complex than consolidations and are often seen as the final phase of cooperative services when two agencies legally become a new single entity (Snook & Johnson). Mergers can bring great rewards including increased efficiency, better overall service levels and a stronger organization. Foster (2010) identifies the greatest challenge to a successful merger is blending the cultures of two distinctly different entities. While the sheer numbers of mergers has increased dramatically many are fraught with conflict and controversy (Lochard & Olsen, 2006). The EFD and JCFD are similar in size and structure (Appendices H & I) but have distinctly different pasts that have forged the culture in each department. The 2009 dissolution process had considerable impact on the JCFD and the agency is still trying to heal from its sting while trying to repair negative views of the fire department by the community. The EFD struggled through difficult economic times in 2004 but was able to rebound and hold steady for approximately six years before again falling victim to mounting fiscal problems of the Village. The organizational assessment questionnaire sheds light on the views of both organizations regarding culture and the need to adapt or change.

In the EFD a merger was the second choice of respondents for organizational change with 33%. Members of the JCFD actually favored a merger to other organizational change models selecting it 45% of the time. Focus groups from both agencies were asked why mergers were an attractive solution and members of both organizations felt it made sense to operate as a single entity with common rules, regulations and operating procedures. EFD members added that they would like to see their pay scale raised to match that of the JCFD. Here in lies the conundrum of merging the two organizations when review of their pay scales and benefits (Appendix E) show a dramatic difference between both agencies. Given the tensions that exist in both municipalities with respect to both fire departments it would be unlikely that government leaders would move to equalize pay and benefits at JCFD's higher level. Public outcry over the rising costs of fire protection after a 41% increase in the last collective bargaining agreement in Johnson City have left little support for the fire department. Increasing pay scales and benefits in Endicott to match Johnson City would add close to \$465,000 or an 11% increase to the payroll and benefits of their current budget (Appendix E).

The final option for service change lies in the creation of a joint fire district between the Villages of Endicott and Johnson City and the Westover Fire Protection District. In late December of 2010 both Villages passed resolutions by their governing boards to investigate financial and legal implications of creating a joint fire district (Burrell, 2010). A joint fire district can be comprised of multiple protection areas with towns and/or villages and are popular organizational model making up 867 suppression entities in New York State (DiRaddo & Kornfield, 2009). New York State Town and Village law (Appendices C & D) have provisions for the creation of a joint fire district through dissolution of existing agencies and the formation of a new entity which would include a new labor organization. The organizational assessment

questionnaire shows that the creation of joint fire district was one of the least appealing organizational changes for respondents only followed by operational consolidation (Appendices O & P). Focus groups from both organizations stated that a joint fire district left them no guarantee of job security and input because of the dissolution of the existing departments. While a fresh start with a new organizational model has distinct benefits as toward making inroads toward sweeping change it is certain that labor groups would staunchly oppose a joint fire district model and likely bring legal action against both Villages in an attempt to block such action.

Strong organizational culture in both agencies has delivered them to their current position where they are precariously perched to see what the future brings. There is no movement by either labor organization to investigate and pursue different opportunities which can help solidify their posture in this hostile economic environment. Conversely, governing bodies of both municipalities are focused on making organizational change that will provide better service models while keeping escalating costs contained. The organizational assessment questionnaire does indicate that both agencies agree that the fire departments face significant challenges in the future and the departments must adapt to changes in the municipality (Appendices O & P). Respondents in the each agency differ in their view as to whether the fire department will be able to continue current service levels with the EFD strongly favoring agreement while the JCFD views were closely split. Other significant cultural views surfaced through the assessment questionnaire regarding firefighter safety, professional development opportunities and job satisfaction. Respondents from both agencies overwhelmingly agree that firefighter safety is most affected by staffing levels in the department. Personnel from the EFD and JCFD strongly disagreed that professional development opportunities exist in each organization. While job satisfaction for fire officers of both agencies was closely similar a disparity emerged when

comparing job satisfaction between firefighters of both agencies. Focus groups from both agencies were asked to explain in their view why this inconsistency occurred. Members of the JCFD focus group believed that the events of the past dissolution vote had taken them to a low point in their history and even though dissolution was narrowly averted by a 40 vote margin the future seemed brighter to them. The focus group from the EFD pointed to a contentious relationship with the Village and administrators and viewed future prospects in a negative light.

Recommendations

Following a review of all the pertinent literature, instruments, data and discussions with focus groups it is evident that significant organizational change is necessary for both agencies to remain viable. Also apparent is the fact that no magic pill exists to fix deficiencies in the current models to meet the strategic operational objectives for fire suppression, rescue and EMS response in both Endicott and Johnson City. The author is acutely aware of the tension and apprehension that discussions of consolidation, mergers and dissolution bring to both fire departments but fully realizes the consequence of inaction. Following Peter's philosophy, simply sitting on the sidelines during these difficult economic times and not investigating and moving forward with additional collaboration efforts will likely mean continued decline in personnel and services rendering both agencies ineffective. The one caveat that exists is that all solutions with the exception of creating a joint fire district are dependent on the fiscal stability of both Endicott and Johnson City. Fiscal failure of either of the municipal governments will likely bring another dissolution vote which can immediately change all options on the table.

The research results support continued cooperation in the form of mutual aid to provide necessary resources for escalating incidents while focusing on building trust and positive

relationships to achieve higher levels of collaboration. It is for these reasons that a stepped approach should be utilized to move the collaboration process forward looking at smaller pieces of operational and functional areas that will increase reliability of service. Specialized rescue programs such as confined space, low and high angle rope rescue and water rescue would benefit from a collaborative approach that implements common objectives, training and a unified response. Dugan (2008) and Mills (2006) identified training as a vital area that effects operations and the departments would benefit from a functional consolidation to provide greater oversight through a single municipal training officer, increased levels of planning and improved course content and delivery. Operational deficiencies in both agencies evolve from available staffing levels and it is imperative that a long range solution addresses a sustainable staffing model.

Work should begin immediately to engage shareholders in both agencies and labor leaders to determine their willingness to address difficult decisions regarding organizational structure, staffing, wage and benefit compromises. A merger of the EFD and JCFD would require considerable give and take by the respective labor organizations to address the inconsistencies between elements of the collective bargaining agreements of both departments and would likely take years to plan, implement and complete. It is unsure at this time whether one or both of the municipalities can remain viable for that length of time to avoid bankruptcy and/or dissolution. A partial consolidation that addresses staffing by pooling available personnel could be completed in considerably less time and allow for the movement of personnel throughout the districts to be utilized where needed but would be subject to a memorandum of understanding between the collective bargaining units and both municipalities.

While internal change in both the EFD and JCFD were the top choices of personnel in the organizational assessment questionnaire the reality of the costs of the duplication of services, effort, administration and equipment is prohibitive and the overall benefits are questionable. Escalating costs in operations, pensions, health care and loss of tax revenue through reassessment or a state property tax cap will undoubtedly force sweeping change that will negatively affect these smaller organizations. Internal change options for providing additional staffing are limited to becoming a combination career/volunteer system which severely limits the organizational depth for on duty personnel and administrative staff providing logistical support. Rielage (2010) points out the drawbacks of incorporating these and other weaknesses into the new organization to avoid the creation of a weak, ineffective consolidated agency. The benefits of a partial consolidation that addresses staffing or merger will allow for a larger pool of available career personnel that can be deployed throughout the response area where needed.

Hasse (2008) notes that the benefits of a joint fire district model are evident by allowing the restructuring of fire suppression, rescue and EMS services to remove deficiencies and build a workable model that incorporates a combination system. The author is highly sensitive of the draconian concept of dissolving both agencies to create a new entity and the legal battles that would ensue. However given the dire economic conditions at the state, county and municipal level it would be wise for both villages to continue to engage the Town of Union to investigate the benefits, drawbacks and interest in the creation of a joint fire district. Employees and labor organizations should be brought in from the start to assure job security for personnel and outline why a joint fire district would provide agency strength and viability for the long haul by spreading all costs over a larger tax base and applying cost containment and cost avoidance measures.

Crosby (2008) defines the triad of keen awareness, laser like focus and success. For these reasons both agencies should start by developing a new common mission statement that is finely tuned after consulting with government leaders and residents to determine sustainable service levels that meet the needs of the community. By completing a new common organizational mission statement long range strategic planning can be initiated that can provide a roadmap for the future. With this documentation in place it will stand as the guidance document for future organizational growth and direction. As Ling (2001) notes there will undoubtedly be holdouts to changes and collaboration so the villages should examine the feasibility of a retirement incentive that would allow these employees to gracefully leave the organization. The agencies should continue with their efforts toward partial and functional consolidation but will ultimately need to decide whether a merger is in their future or if it is best to move forward with a joint fire district model. Regardless of the final option selected for collaboration between the EFD and JCFD the task will prove to be long and arduous but can offer significant benefits to meeting the strategic operational objectives for fire protection, rescue and EMS services within both villages.

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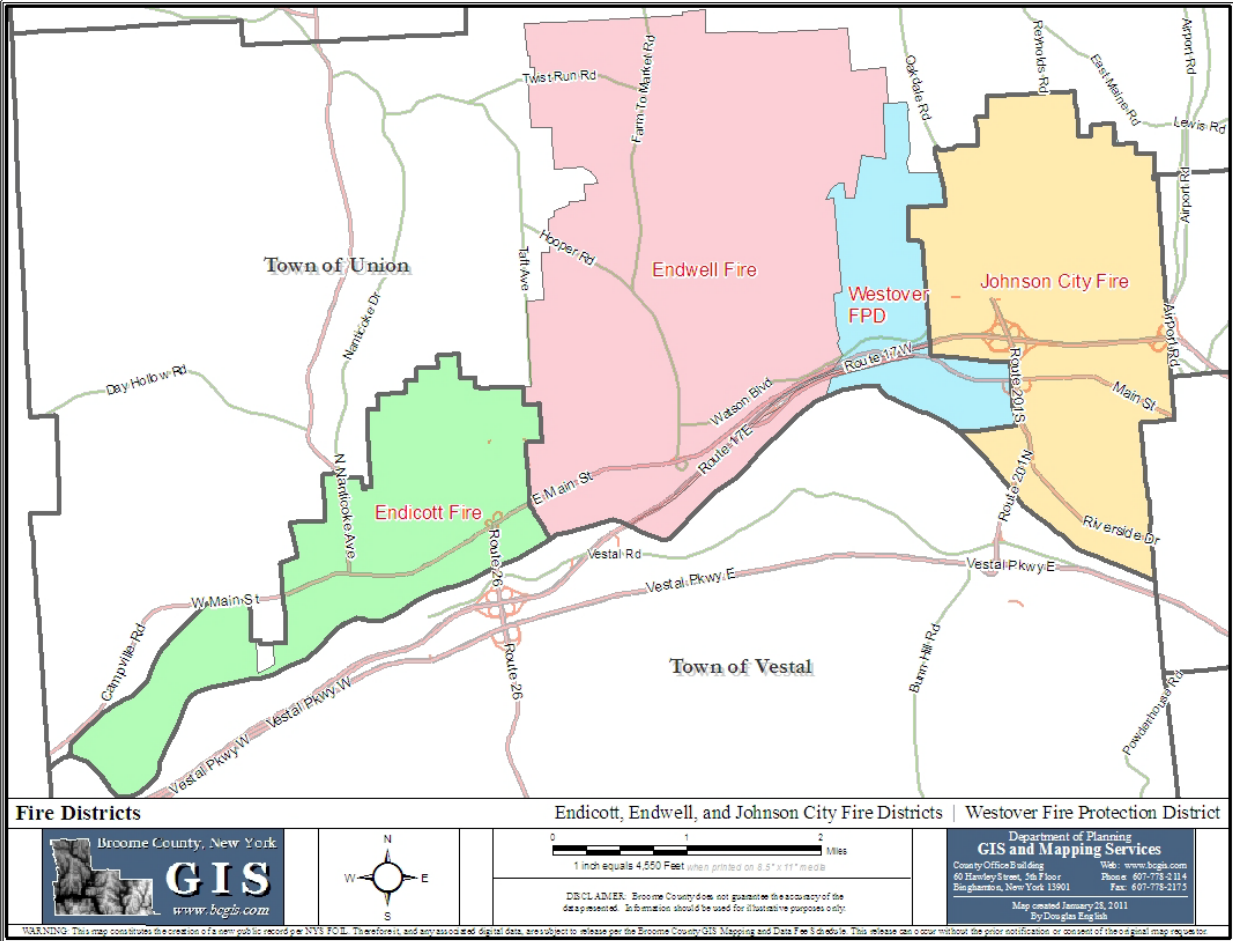
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Appendix A



Appendix B

The Honorable Dennis Hannon

Mayor of the Village of Johnson City

Dear Mayor Hannon:

For the past several months the Fire Study Committee which you appointed last spring has been meeting on a regular basis. We have investigated several different ways in which the village can proceed. Our goal, like yours, has been to come up with ideas that could enhance the effectiveness of fire protection in the village well into the 21st century, provide such coverage at a reasonable rate for the taxpayer, and in the process never jeopardize public safety nor the safety of those whose job it is to protect the public.

We have learned that certain issues must be addressed in a timely manner. Aging infrastructure, particularly our main engine dates back to the 1980s. That vehicle is essential for the protection of United Health Services tower. We have staffing problems on an ongoing basis. We have a deficiency of firefighters with emergency medical training. These are difficult problems and they represent the tip of the iceberg.

We submit to you and the Board of Trustees what we consider to be the three logical choices for the provision of fire protective services.

I. Maintain a single entity professional fire service

The positive aspects of this are evident. It is in place. Procedures are in place as is our specific knowledge. We know response times, we know and have negotiated with the bargaining units, and we know the excellent services provided to our village for a century.

The negatives can be daunting. Property taxes are high and this service is largely paid for through the property tax. Potential property tax caps established in Albany along with local concerns could seriously impact services. In addition, because of staffing problems the department does not have enough people to enable them to send their personnel for live fire training. It is difficult to envision this type of department proceeding into the future without significant change.



II. Creation of a joint fire district among Johnson City, Endicott, and Westover

The positive aspects of the creation of a joint fire district can be summed up in one word; efficiency. This type of district would provide basic items essential to service: the ability to consolidate equipment, the ability to consolidate the workforce, the ability to assign staff where needed over a broader spectrum. A department of this nature would be able to provide more specialties training (i.e. water safety or confined space rescue). A further advantage would be that this department would be funded by a special district legislated by a separately elected board of commissioners. The fire budget would be a stand-alone budget.

The creation of this district would be full of legal hurdles. Every involved municipal entity would have to be involved. Home rule legislation emanating from Albany would likely be required. Once all of that is accomplished, municipal agreements would have to be drawn up and passed by the governing bodies. A new bargaining unit would likely have to be created. This would involve eliminating current bargaining units. There would be startup costs. We would be looking to create a new governmental entity at a time when citizens are looking to dissolve entities.

III. Creation of a hybrid professional/volunteer department

A creation of a hybrid would probably represent the most significant change to the status quo. It would be a department staffed simultaneously with paid firefighters and volunteers. Perhaps the greatest positive associated with this type of department is that around the state and the nation they provide good services to the public. Response time remains good. The simple fact that a core group of professional remains insures stability. There would undoubtedly be a cost savings and that is attractive as well.

The first problem that needs to be addressed is recruitment of volunteers. Are their enough potential volunteer firefighters in Johnson City? Census data shows an aging population which could impede volunteer recruitment. We looked at "bunker" type programs. Again, these could be a tremendous asset. At the same time a down year at Binghamton University or Broome Community College could result in empty bunks. In addition to recruitment, the village would have to provide training and maintain levels of training for volunteers. There is always a question with volunteers' response time. Unlike existing successful volunteer agencies this would be starting from scratch. That could be difficult.

It has been an honor serving on this committee. If you wish us to continue we need to expand what we need to do. Right now we believe that our narrowing of the options has fulfilled the initial authority given to us by the Mayor and the Board of Trustees.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim", written in a cursive style.

James P. Testani

Appendix C

Article 22-A Joint Fire Districts

- § 22-2210. Establishment of joint fire districts
- § 22-2212. Operation of joint fire districts in towns

§ 22-2210. Establishment of joint fire districts

| History | Notes of Decisions |

The town board of a town or the town boards of more than one town, and the board of trustees of an incorporated village or the boards of trustees of more than one incorporated village located in said town or towns are hereby authorized to establish and/or extend in such town or towns and village or villages a joint fire district for the purposes stated and in the manner provided in article eleven-A of the town law, provided all of the territory in such joint fire district shall be contiguous.

HISTORY:

Add, L 1988, ch 241, § 3, eff July 8, 1988

Case Annotations

Positions of village mayor and fire commissioner of joint fire district established by that village are incompatible since statutory scheme governing joint fire districts gives towns and village boards substantial power to affect existence and structure of joint fire district. 2004 Ops Atty Gen I 04-6

The town board of a town and the board of trustees of a village located within the town are authorized to establish a joint fire district by resolution subject to permissive referendum. The members of the board of fire commissioners of a joint fire district may be appointed by the town board and village board of trustees or they may be elected pursuant to the provisions of Article 11 of the Town Law. 1990 Op St Compt 90-27

Where there is proposed formation of joint fire district containing village located within 2 towns, both towns must participate in formation process. 2000 Op St Compt No. 2000-21

Coterminous town/village that operates principally as village may not establish, under CLS Town article 11-A, joint fire district that would encompass only area of coterminous town/village. 2003 Op St Compt No. 03-2

§ 22-2212. Operation of joint fire districts in towns

| History | Notes of Decisions |

In all respects the provisions of article eleven-A of the town law shall apply to the establishment, extension, operation and management of any joint fire district provided for by this article.

HISTORY:

Add, L 1988, ch 241, § 3, eff July 8, 1988

Appendix D

§ 189-a. Procedure

| History | References | Notes of Decisions | Forms |

1. The town board of a town or the town boards of more than one town, and the board of trustees of an incorporated village or the boards of trustees of more than one incorporated village, as defined in the village law, located in said town or towns are hereby authorized to establish in such town or towns and village or villages a joint fire district for the purposes hereinafter stated and in the manner hereinafter provided, provided all of the territory in such joint fire district shall be contiguous.

2. (a) Whenever it shall appear to the participating municipalities to be in the public interest, the town board of such town and the board of trustees of such village shall hold a joint meeting at one location within the proposed joint district for the purpose of jointly proposing the establishment of a joint fire district.

(b) If at such joint meeting it is determined by a majority vote of each board to make such proposal, each such board shall, within thirty days thereafter, hold a joint public hearing at one location within the proposed joint district upon such proposal and shall cause notice of such public hearing to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in such town and village, at least once, and posted in five public conspicuous places in the town outside such village and in five public conspicuous places in the village, not less than ten days before the date of the hearing. In the event that the district maintains a website, one of the posting requirements may be fulfilled by posting such information on the website. Notice of such hearing also shall be served by such clerk upon the members of the town board and the members of the board of trustees of the village, by mail addressed to such members at their last known post office addresses, at least ten days before the date of the hearing. Such notice shall contain a brief description of the boundaries of the proposed joint fire district and of the objects and purposes for which it is proposed that a new district be created, and shall specify the single time when and place where such town and village boards will jointly meet to consider the proposal and to hear all persons interested in the establishment of the district. *If, upon the establishment of a joint fire district, the joint fire district would become the sponsor of a service award program pursuant to section two hundred sixteen-b of the general municipal law, the notice of hearing shall so specify and contain a statement of the estimated annual cost of the service award program to the joint fire district; provided, however, that if, upon the establishment of a joint fire district, the joint fire district would become the sponsor of a service award program pursuant to section two hundred sixteen-b of the general municipal law, the resolutions establishing the district shall be submitted to referendum in each such town and village in the manner provided by article seven of this chapter or article nine of the village law, respectively.*

(c) After such hearing, and upon evidence given thereat, and after considering the objections, if any, the town board of such town and the board of trustees of such village¹ shall determine whether it is *or is not* in the public interest to establish such joint fire district, and, if it is determined to be in the public interest, subject to permissive referendum, such town board and board of trustees shall, by resolution, duly adopted by a majority of each board, establish such joint fire district; *provided, however, that if, upon the establishment of a*

joint fire district, the joint fire district would become the sponsor of a service award program pursuant to section two hundred sixteen-b of the general municipal law, the resolutions establishing the district shall be submitted to referendum in each such town and village in the manner provided by article seven of this chapter or article nine of the village law, respectively .

(d) In all respects the provisions of article eleven of this chapter, not inconsistent herewith, shall apply to the establishment, operation and management of any joint fire district provided for by this section.

(e) In all respects the provisions of this article, not inconsistent herewith, shall apply to the operation and management of any joint fire district heretofore established pursuant to the unconsolidated laws.

3. If, subsequent to the joint meeting for the establishment of a joint fire district as provided in subdivision two of this section and before the establishment of such district, it is desired to include in such proposed district any portion of the territory of an adjoining town, the procedure shall be as follows:

(a) The town board of the town or towns and the board or boards of trustees of the villages which held such joint meeting and the town board of each adjoining town may hold a joint meeting for the purpose of jointly proposing the inclusion of the territory of such adjoining town in the proposed joint fire district.

(b) If at such meeting it is determined by a majority vote of each board to make such proposal, each such board shall, within thirty days thereafter, hold a joint public hearing upon such proposal and shall cause notice of such public hearing to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in each such town and village, at least once, and posted in five public conspicuous places in each such town outside each such village and in five public conspicuous places in each such village, not less than ten days before the date of the hearing. Notice of such hearing also shall be served by such clerk upon the members of the town board or boards and the members of the board of trustees of the village or villages, by mail addressed to such members at their last known post office addresses, at least ten days before the date of the hearing. Such notice shall contain a brief description of the boundaries of the proposed joint fire district and of the objects and purposes for which it is proposed that a new district be created, and shall specify the time when and place where such town and village boards will meet to consider the proposal and to hear all persons interested in the establishment of the district.

(c) After such hearing, and upon evidence given thereat, and after considering the objections, if any, the town boards of such town and the board of trustees of such villages, shall determine whether it is in the public interest to establish such joint fire district and if it is determined to be in the public interest, subject to permissive referendum, such town boards and boards of trustees shall by resolution, duly adopted by a majority of each board, establish such joint fire district.

(d) In all respects the provisions of article eleven of this chapter, not inconsistent herewith, shall apply to the establishment and the operation and management of any joint fire district provided for by this section.

4. Any joint fire district formed pursuant to the provisions of this article may be extended from time to time to include contiguous territory except contiguous territory in a city. The procedure for

extending the district shall be as follows:

(a) The town board of each town and the board of trustees of each village in which any portion of the district as proposed to be extended is located shall hold a joint meeting at one location for the purpose of jointly proposing the extension of the district.

(b) If at such meeting it is determined by a majority vote of each board to make such proposal, each such board shall, within thirty days thereafter, hold a joint public hearing at one location upon such proposal and shall cause notice of such public hearing to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in each affected town and village, at least once, and posted in five public conspicuous places in each affected town outside any affected village and in five public conspicuous places in each affected village, not less than ten days before the date of the hearing. Notice of such hearing also shall be served by such clerk upon the members of each town board and the members of each village board of trustees, by mail addressed to such members at their last known post office addresses, at least ten days before the date of the hearing. Such notice shall contain a brief description of the boundaries of the proposed extension of the joint fire district and of the objects and purposes for which it is proposed that the district be extended¹ and shall specify the single time when and place where such town and village boards will jointly meet to consider the proposal and to hear all persons interested in the extension of the district. *If, upon the extension of a joint fire district, the joint fire district would become the sponsor of a service award program pursuant to section two hundred sixteen-b of the general municipal law, the notice of hearing shall so specify and contain a statement of the estimated annual cost of the service award program to the joint fire district; provided, however, that if, upon the extension of a joint fire district, the joint fire district would become the sponsor of a service award program pursuant to section two hundred sixteen-b of the general municipal law, the resolutions establishing the districts shall be submitted in each such town and village in the manner provided by article seven of this chapter or article nine of the village law, respectively.*

(c) After such hearing, and upon evidence given thereat, and after considering the objections, if any, the town board of each such affected town and the board of trustees of each such affected village¹ shall determine whether it is *or is not* in the public interest to extend such joint fire district, and, if it is determined to be in the public interest, subject to permissive referendum, such town board and board of trustees shall, by resolution, duly adopted by a majority of each board, extend such joint fire district; *provided, however, that if, upon the extension of a joint fire district, the joint fire district would become the sponsor of a service award program pursuant to section two hundred sixteen-b of the general municipal law, the resolutions establishing the districts shall be submitted in each such town and village in the manner provided by article seven of this chapter or article nine of the village law, respectively.*

(d) A signed or certified copy of the determination extending the district shall be recorded in the office of the county clerk and, when so recorded, shall be presumptive evidence of the regularity and validity of the extension of the district and of the acts of the town board or boards and village board or boards of trustees relating thereto. A review of such determination may be had in the manner provided in section one hundred seventy-three of this chapter,

extending the district shall be as follows:

(a) The town board of each town and the board of trustees of each village in which any portion of the district as proposed to be extended is located shall hold a joint meeting at one location for the purpose of jointly proposing the extension of the district.

(b) If at such meeting it is determined by a majority vote of each board to make such proposal, each such board shall, within thirty days thereafter, hold a joint public hearing at one location upon such proposal and shall cause notice of such public hearing to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in each affected town and village, at least once, and posted in five public conspicuous places in each affected town outside any affected village and in five public conspicuous places in each affected village, not less than ten days before the date of the hearing. Notice of such hearing also shall be served by such clerk upon the members of each town board and the members of each village board of trustees, by mail addressed to such members at their last known post office addresses, at least ten days before the date of the hearing. Such notice shall contain a brief description of the boundaries of the proposed extension of the joint fire district and of the objects and purposes for which it is proposed that the district be extended¹ and shall specify the single time when and place where such town and village boards will jointly meet to consider the proposal and to hear all persons interested in the extension of the district. *If, upon the extension of a joint fire district, the joint fire district would become the sponsor of a service award program pursuant to section two hundred sixteen-b of the general municipal law, the notice of hearing shall so specify and contain a statement of the estimated annual cost of the service award program to the joint fire district; provided, however, that if, upon the extension of a joint fire district, the joint fire district would become the sponsor of a service award program pursuant to section two hundred sixteen-b of the general municipal law, the resolutions establishing the districts shall be submitted in each such town and village in the manner provided by article seven of this chapter or article nine of the village law, respectively.*

(c) After such hearing, and upon evidence given thereat, and after considering the objections, if any, the town board of each such affected town and the board of trustees of each such affected village¹ shall determine whether it is *or is not* in the public interest to extend such joint fire district, and, if it is determined to be in the public interest, subject to permissive referendum, such town board and board of trustees shall, by resolution, duly adopted by a majority of each board, extend such joint fire district; *provided, however, that if, upon the extension of a joint fire district, the joint fire district would become the sponsor of a service award program pursuant to section two hundred sixteen-b of the general municipal law, the resolutions establishing the districts shall be submitted in each such town and village in the manner provided by article seven of this chapter or article nine of the village law, respectively.*

(d) A signed or certified copy of the determination extending the district shall be recorded in the office of the county clerk and, when so recorded, shall be presumptive evidence of the regularity and validity of the extension of the district and of the acts of the town board or boards and village board or boards of trustees relating thereto. A review of such determination may be had in the manner provided in section one hundred seventy-three of this chapter,

except that the undertaking for costs and expenses shall run to such town or towns and village or villages and apply to the costs and expenses of each.

(e) In all respects the provisions of article eleven of this chapter, not inconsistent herewith, shall apply to the extension, operation and management of any joint fire district provided for by this section.

HISTORY:

Add, L 1988, ch 241, § 1, eff July 8, 1988

Sub 2, par (b), amd, L 2003, ch 62, § 17 (Part X), eff May 15, 2003

Sub 2, par (b), amd, L 2004, ch 631, § 4, eff April 24, 2005

Sub 2, par (c), amd, L 2004, ch 631, § 5, eff April 24, 2005

Sub 3, par (d), amd, L 1989, ch 121, § 1, eff June 2, 1989

Sub 4, par (b), amd, L 2004, ch 631, § 5, eff April 24, 2005

Sub 4, par (c), amd, L 2004, ch 631, § 5, eff April 24, 2005

Sub 4, par (d), amd, L 1989, ch 121, § 2, eff June 2, 1989

Sub 4, par (e), amd, L 1989, ch 121, § 2, eff June 2, 1989

§ 189-d. Establishment of district

| History | References |

The clerk of such town or village designated by the town and village boards participating in the determination to establish or extend any joint fire district pursuant to this article shall, within ten days, cause a certified copy of the determination establishing or extending the district to be filed in the state department of audit and control at Albany, New York, and shall, within ten days, cause a certified copy of such determination to be recorded in the office of the county clerk, and when so recorded it shall be presumptive evidence of the regularity and validity of the creation of the district and of the acts of such boards relating thereto. A review of such determination may be had in the manner provided in section one hundred seventy-three of this chapter, except that the undertaking for costs and expenses shall run to such town and village and apply to the costs and expenses of each.

HISTORY:

Add, L 1988, ch 241, § 1, eff July 8, 1988

Appendix E

Comparisons between elements of respective collective bargaining agreements, demographics, response profile and staffing between Endicott and Johnson City Fire Departments

Topic	Endicott	Johnson City
Municipality Demographics & Call Volume		
District Composition	Municipality	Municipality & Fire Protection District
Population Served* (2000 Census)	13,038	18,952**
Square Miles of District	3.2	7.2
Number of Fire Stations	1	2
ISO Class Rating	4	4
Protection of Critical Infrastructure	- 150 Acre Industrial Complex -Sewage Treatment Plant -Municipal Electric Power Distribution Center -Railroad	-Regional Trauma Center -Regional Electric Power Distributor -Large Industrial Complex -Interstate Highway -Railroad
2010 Call Volume	2485	2117
Call Type Fire/EMS	686 Fire / 1799 Fire	650 Fire / 1467 EMS
Percentage Fire/EMS	27.6% Fire / 72.4% EMS	30.7% Fire / 69.3% EMS
Agency Demographics		
Represented by	IAFF Local 1280	IAFF Local 921
Contract Expiration	Expired on 5/31/2010	5/31/2011
Size of Organization	30	31
Ranks represented	Firefighter, Fire Inspector, Fire Lieutenant, Fire Captain	Firefighter, Fire Lieutenant, Fire Captain, Fire Marshal
Use of FD facilities for labor meetings	Yes	Yes
Time off for collective bargaining, district meetings	Yes – Maximum 3 personnel at one time	Yes – Maximum 2 members at one time
Grievance Procedure	Dispute presented within 10 calendar days. 5 days to respond. Not settled within 14 days either party may take the dispute to arbitration.	Dispute presented within 10 calendar days. 5 days to respond. Not settled within 17 days either party may take the dispute to arbitration.
Cost for arbitrator	Shared equally between Municipality & Local	Losing party responsible for the entire expense of

		arbitration and legal fees.
Testing and Certification Agency	Broome County Civil Service	Broome County Civil Service
New employee probation	6 months	6 months
Promotional probation	6 months	6 months
Shift Schedule	(4) 10 hour days (4) days off (4) 14 hour nights (4) days off	24 hours on 24 hours off 24 hours on 5 days off
Start/end time	Day shift 0800/1800 Night shift 1800/0800	0800/0800
Wages & Benefits		
Firefighter 3 rd grade	\$32,061	\$34,222
Firefighter 2 nd grade	\$43,844	\$48,729
Firefighter 1 st grade	\$49,022	\$63,236
Fire Inspector	\$51,758	\$67,187 ** No positions in current org chart
Fire Lieutenant	\$54,903	\$68,534
Fire Captain	\$58,256	\$73,640
Fire Marshal	\$77,903 ** Management position, exempt employee, not represented by Local 1280	\$89,869
Longevity	None accrued	5 years - \$250 10 years - \$600 15 years - \$1000 20 years - \$1250
Maintenance of EMS certification incentive	\$1000	None
Overtime pay	1.5 x hourly rate	1.5 x hourly rate
Recall minimum hours	4	2
Allowed accrual of compensation time	Yes – 400 hours	No
Accrual of sick days	Yes – 150 days	Yes – No limit
Accumulated sick day payout at retirement	No	Yes – Max. 150 days
Annual No-Sick Incentive	Yes 0 days - \$800 1 day - \$650 2 days- \$450 3 days- \$250	No
Vacations	After 1 year – 3 tours (12 days or nights) After 5 years – 4 tours (16	1 year -140 hours 5 years -192 hours 10 years – 240 hours

	days or nights) After 10 years – 5 tours (20 days or nights)	Over 15 years – 288 hours
Vacation selection & use	Selected by seniority Taken as full shift only Only 1 person off on vacation per shift	Selected by seniority Taken by hours Max. 2 people off on vacation at any one time
Holidays	11 paid holidays per year Paid 44 hours twice yearly	56 hours per year HIV (Holiday in Vacation) Member on vacation when a holiday occurs is awarded another day off.
Personal leave	48 hours	96 hours
Physical Fitness Pay	None	\$300 per year
Health Insurance	Excellus Blue Cross Blue Shield	Excellus Blue Cross Blue Shield
Health Ins. Cost to Employee	15% of premium	10% of premium
Dental Insurance	Optional – 100% of premium	Optional – 50% of premium
Education Benefits	\$3000 per year for entire department No leave granted	\$1500 per semester per member Members are granted leave with pay for approved courses
Educational Additional	None	Courses in carpentry, plumbing and electrical paid in full by municipality through local BOCES (Broome-Tioga Board of Cooperative Educational Services)
Education Stipend	Associates Degree \$100 Bachelor's Degree \$ 200	Associates Degree \$300 Bachelor's Degree \$400 Master's Degree \$500
Apparatus Profile		
Command Vehicle	0	1
Engines	3	3
Ladder Trucks	1	1
Rescue	0	1
EMS Fly Car (BLS)	1	0
Utility Vehicle	1	1
Support Vehicles	3	2
Special Operations Trailer	1	1
Rescue Boat	1	1

Staffing Profile		
Engine Company	4/3 personnel	2 personnel
Truck Company	2 personnel	2 personnel
Rescue Company	None	2 personnel
EMS Fire Response – BLS	2 personnel	2 personnel
Contractual Staffing Clause	None	None
Minimum Staffing	0	4
Incidents requiring more manpower than is available with on-duty personnel	Second alarm or greater. -Recall of all off duty personnel through radio & text paging system -Predetermined mutual aid assignments	Second alarm or greater. -Recall of all off duty personnel through radio & text paging system -Predetermined mutual aid assignments
Delivery of second alarm assignment on scene	Average 7-30 minutes	Average 5-25 minutes
Brownout Procedure	Staffing profiles are generated at the beginning of each shift and determine which apparatus will be staffed.	Staffing profiles are generated at the beginning of each shift and determine which apparatus will be staffed.
Specialized Rescue Services	Confined Space Rescue High & Low Angle Rescue Swift Water & Boat Rescue	Confined Space Rescue High & Low Angle Rescue Swift Water & Boat Rescue
Uniforms/Gear		
Uniforms/Gear Issued	Full Firefighting Turnout Gear (Helmet, coat, pants, boots, gloves, hood & emergency escape rope system) Complete Station Wear (Pants, shirts (various), boot or shoes, sweatshirts, jackets and hats) Class A uniform	Full Firefighting Turnout Gear (Helmet, coat, pants, boots, gloves, hood & emergency escape rope system)
Replacement of Uniforms/Gear	Quartermaster system New station wear provided every year Turnout gear replaced as needed by municipality	Annual uniform stipend of \$975 Uniform items purchased as needed by individual members Turnout gear replaced as needed by municipality

Budgeted Cost		
2010 Budgeted Cost of Fire Department	\$4,307,638	\$4,221,621***
Percentage of General Fund	30.2%	31.4%

*Population figures are based on 2000 census

**Population of Village of Johnson City and Westover Fire Protection District

*** Does not include cost of Fire Department retiree health benefits

Appendix F

2010 Construction Report Questionnaire

Please enter, for the following categories, the number of permits issued in 2010, the total number of units (if applicable), and the dollar amount of construction that these permits represented.

Town <u>(Village)</u> City of: <u>Endicott</u>			
Type of Permit	Total Number of Permits		Total Construction Value (\$)
	# of permits	# of units*	
RESIDENTIAL			
New Single Family Detached	<u>0</u>		
New Single Family Attached	<u>0</u>		
New Two Family	<u>0</u>		
New Multiple Family	<u>0</u>		
New Mobile Homes	<u>0</u>		
New Mobile Home Parks	<u>0</u>		
Alterations, Additions & Repairs	<u>0</u>		
NON RESIDENTIAL			
New Commercial	<u>0</u>		
New Industrial	<u>0</u>		
New Public/Semi-Public	<u>0</u>		
New Other	<u>0</u>		
Alterations, Additions & Repairs	<u>0</u>		

*Please record both the the number of permits and the number of units for single-family detached, single-family attached, two-family, multiple-family, mobile homes and mobile home parks. The number of permits and the number of units should be the same for the single-family detached structures.

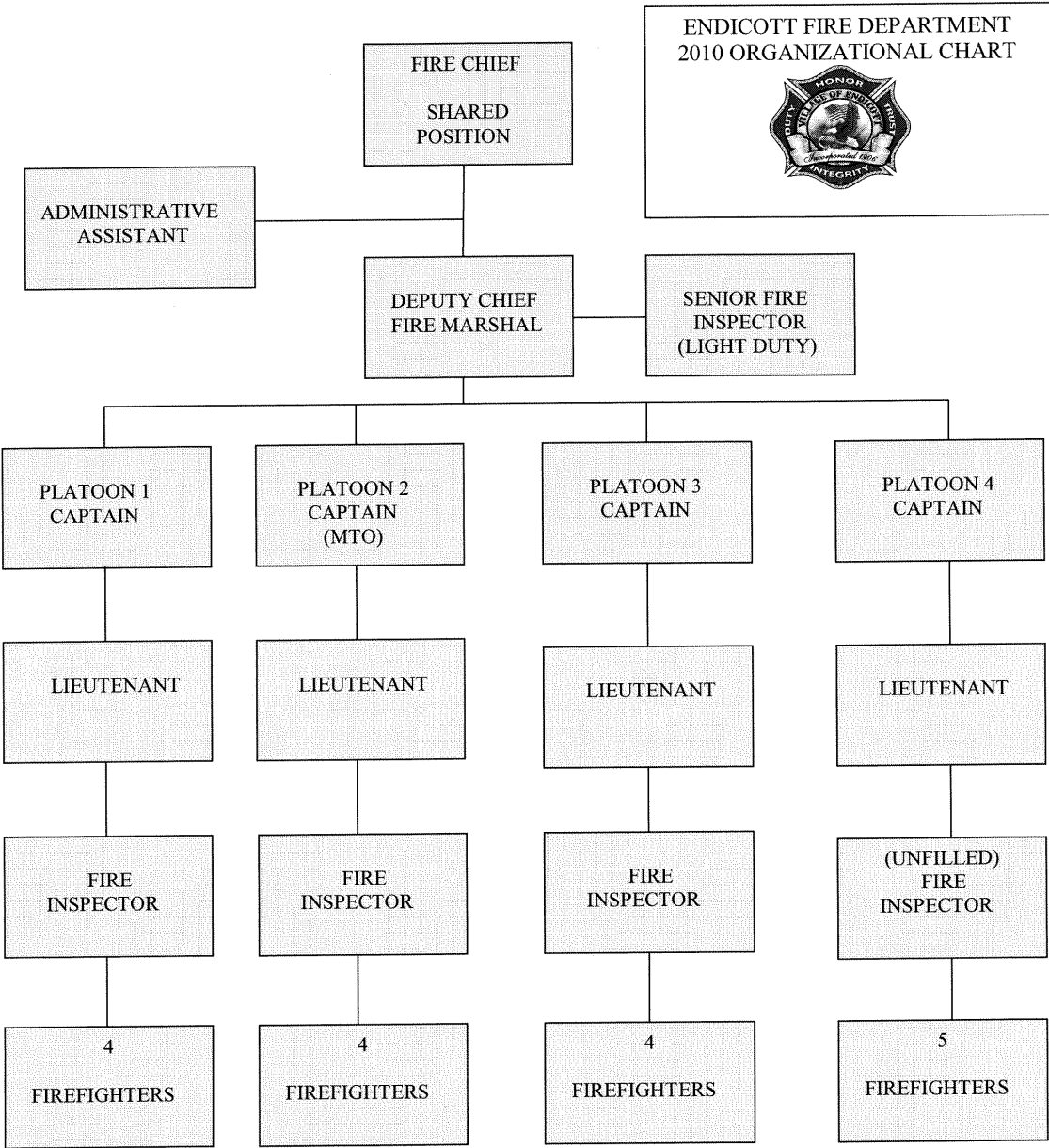
Contact Person: Joseph M. Griswold Fire Marshal
 Phone Number: 757-2460

Please return questionnaire to Lora Zier, Senior Planner.

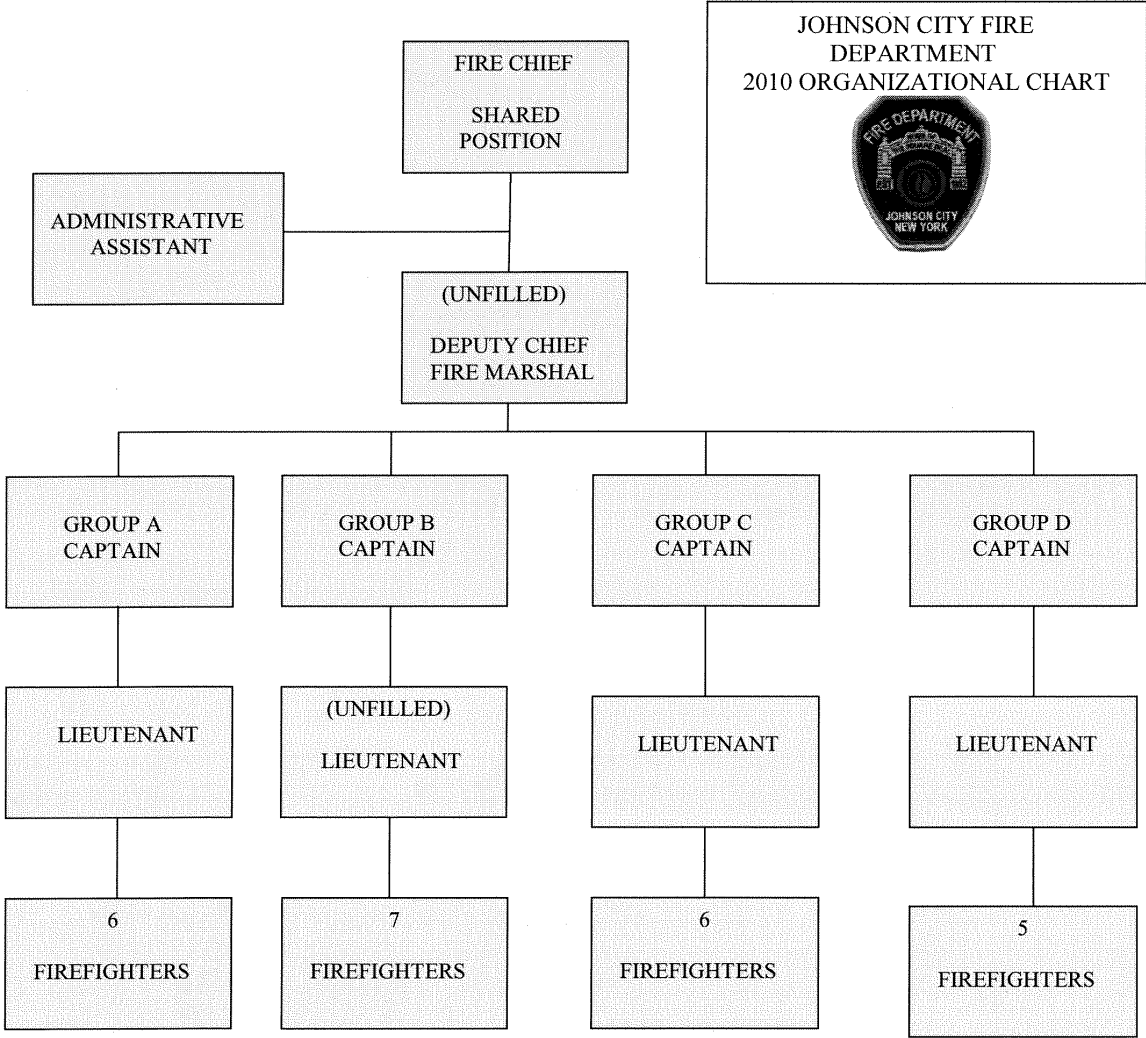
Appendix G
 Endicott / Johnson City Average Daily Staffing By Month
 Calendar Years 2009 / 2010

Endicott Fire	Avg. Daily Staffing	Johnson City	Avg. Daily Staffing
January 2009	7.21	January 2009	8.29
February 2009	6.82	February 2009	8.18
March 2009	6.43	March 2009	7.77
April 2009	6.46	April 2009	7.68
May 2009	6.46	May 2009	7.32
June 2009	6.50	June 2009	7.12
July 2009	6.61	July 2009	6.45
August 2009	5.94	August 2009	6.41
September 2009	6.14	September 2009	6.40
October 2009	5.74	October 2009	6.55
November 2009	6.29	November 2009	6.30
December 2009	5.86	December 2009	6.35
January 2010	6.03	January 2010	6.87
February 2010	6.29	February 2010	6.36
March 2010	5.68	March 2010	6.48
April 2010	5.63	April 2010	5.50
May 2010	5.69	May 2010	6.03
June 2010	5.11	June 2010	5.70
July 2010	5.16	July 2010	5.26
August 2010	5.07	August 2010	5.45
September 2010	5.52	September 2010	5.97
October 2010	5.34	October 2010	6.03
November 2010	5.50	November 2010	5.47
December 2010	5.52	December 2010	5.67
Daily Avg. 2009	6.37	Daily Avg. 2009	7.07
Daily Avg. 2010	5.55	Daily Avg. 2010	5.90

Appendix H



Appendix I



Appendix J

Endicott Fire Run Card
Report of an EMS Incident

Staffing Level	Initial Dispatch Unit	2nd Call in district – Dispatch Unit
8	EMS-25(2)	Squad25(2) B,C,D,Echo priority
7	EMS-25(2)	Squad25(2) B,C,D,Echo priority
6	EMS-25(2)	Squad25(2) Charlie/Delta/Echo priority only
5	EMS-25(2)	E-25-1(4) Charlie/Delta/Echo priority only
4	E-25-1(4) Echo priority only	EMS - out of service
3	E-25-1(3) Echo priority only	EMS - out of service
2	E-25-1(2) Echo priority only	EMS - out of service
1	EMS-25(1) Echo priority only	EMS - out of service

* EMS - out of service if all hands working on a previous fire alarm.

Johnson City Fire Run Card
Report of an EMS Incident

Staffing Level	Initial Dispatch Unit	2nd Call in district – Dispatch Unit
8	Rescue 26(2)	Engine 26-1(2) B,C,D,Echo priority
7	Rescue 26(2)	Engine 26-1(2) B,C,D,Echo priority
6	Rescue 26(2)	Engine 26-1(2) Echo priority only
5	Rescue 26(2) C,D,Echo priority only	Engine 26-1(2) Echo priority only
4	E-26-2(4) Echo priority only	EMS - out of service

* EMS - out of service if all hands working on a previous fire alarm.

Appendix K



Endicott Fire Department
1009 East Main St.
Endicott, NY 13760



Phone (607) 757-2461

Fax (607) 757-5391

ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

As part of an applied research project for the National Fire Academy I respectfully request your participation in this organizational assessment questionnaire. Your responses to these questions will be utilized to generate a profile of the organizational makeup, response services, culture and employee concerns over organizational change. I would like to personally thank you for your participation in gathering this pertinent information regarding this organization.

1) How long have you been employed by the Endicott Fire Department?

- 5 years or less
- 5 to 10 years
- 10 to 15 years
- 15 to 20 years
- 20 to 25 years
- Over 25 years

2) My education level is?

- High School
- Some college
- Associates degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Masters degree

3) My rank within the fire department is?

- Firefighter
- Fire Officer

4) I view my principle duty in the fire department as?

- Fire Suppression
- Fire Prevention
- EMS
- Other

5) My current personal job satisfaction can be rated as? (Low 1...10 High)

My rating would be _____

6) We are paid as well as people with similar jobs in other fire departments within the state?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

7) Our benefits are comparable to other fire departments within the state?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

8) My job within the fire department has changed little since my start date?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

9) The fire department has changed little since my start date?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

10) I feel that professional development opportunities exist within the current organizational model?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

11) The fire department services are as good as when I first started?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

12) The fire department services are better than when I first started?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

13) I believe that firefighter safety within the organization is most affected by?

- Staffing levels
- Training
- Company integrity
- Accountability
- Operations & policies

14) The fire department faces significant challenges in the future?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

15) The fire department has the ability to continue current service levels?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

16) I believe that the fire department must adapt to changes in the municipality?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

17) I believe that the most significant reason for a need for adaptation lies in?

- Economy
- Loss of tax base
- Loss of tax revenue
- Change in population
- Change in demographics

18) If an organizational change were made, I believe that the most attractive adaptation would be?

Please turn to page 5 of this document for detailed descriptions of these organizational models.

- Internal change only
- Partial or Functional consolidation
- Operational consolidation
- Merger
- Dissolution and creation of a new entity

19) If an organizational change were made, I believe that staffing of the entity should consist of?

- Career personnel
- Volunteer personnel
- Combination of career and volunteer personnel

20) I believe that changes to the organization would have a positive effect on service levels?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

21) I believe that changes to the organization would have a positive effect on staffing levels?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

22) I believe that changes to the organization would have a positive effect on organizational culture?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

23) My strongest concerns over organizational change for the fire department are?

Please number 1-6. (1 being my strongest concern, 6 being my lowest concern).

- Loss of identity
- Job security
- Job satisfaction
- Professional development
- Cultural change
- Operational change

ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

The following descriptions pertain to question #18 and reflect different organizational changes or models are common in fire service collaboration and consolidation.

Internal Change Only – Making changes to the parent entity (Endicott Fire Department) such as negotiating to allow for part time, paid on call or moving to a career/volunteer combination department model.

Functional Consolidation – Consolidating with one or more entities to provide personnel and/or resources to meet the needs of a specific function of the fire department. These functions can include but are not limited to training, vehicle maintenance and administrative functions. With functional consolidation all assets and resources remain the property of their respective agencies.

Operational Consolidation – Consolidating with one or more entities to address specific operational goals within the response area of both agencies. Types of operational consolidation can consist of but are not limited to specialized rescue teams such as water and confined space and EMS. With operational consolidation all assets and resources remain property of their respective agencies.

Merger – A merger of two or more organizations results in the creation of a single entity which transcends any existing district boundaries. The equipment and resources become under control of the new entity.

Joint Fire District - A joint fire district would entail legal action between both Village boards and the Town of Union to create a new larger response district that would then be run by board of fire commissioners rather than the existing municipalities. The creation of the joint fire district would cause the existing entities to be dissolved and result in a newly created entity.

Appendix L



Johnson City Fire Department
 320 Harry L Drive
 Johnson City, NY 13790

Phone (607) 729-9512

Fax (607) 729-2187

ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

As part of an applied research project for the National Fire Academy I respectfully request your participation in this organizational assessment questionnaire. Your responses to these questions will be utilized to generate a profile of the organizational makeup, response services, culture and employee concerns over organizational change. I would like to personally thank you for your participation in gathering this pertinent information regarding this organization.

1) How long have you been employed by the Endicott Fire Department?

- 5 years or less
- 5 to 10 years
- 10 to 15 years
- 15 to 20 years
- 20 to 25 years
- Over 25 years

2) My education level is?

- High School
- Some college
- Associates degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Masters degree

3) My rank within the fire department is?

- Firefighter
- Fire Officer

4) I view my principle duty in the fire department as?

- Fire Suppression
- Fire Prevention
- EMS
- Other

5) My current personal job satisfaction can be rated as? (Low 1...10 High)

My rating would be _____

6) We are paid as well as people with similar jobs in other fire departments within the state?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

7) Our benefits are comparable to other fire departments within the state?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

8) My job within the fire department has changed little since my start date?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

9) The fire department has changed little since my start date?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

10) I feel that professional development opportunities exist within the current organizational model?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

11) The fire department services are as good as when I first started?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

12) The fire department services are better than when I first started?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

13) I believe that firefighter safety within the organization is most affected by?

- Staffing levels
- Training
- Company integrity
- Accountability
- Operations & policies

14) The fire department faces significant challenges in the future?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

15) The fire department has the ability to continue current service levels?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

16) I believe that the fire department must adapt to changes in the municipality?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

17) I believe that the most significant reason for a need for adaptation lies in?

- Economy
- Loss of tax base
- Loss of tax revenue
- Change in population
- Change in demographics

18) If an organizational change were made, I believe that the most attractive adaptation would be?

Please turn to page 5 of this document for detailed descriptions of these organizational models.

- Internal change only
- Partial or Functional consolidation
- Operational consolidation
- Merger
- Dissolution and creation of a new entity

19) If an organizational change were made, I believe that staffing of the entity should consist of?

- Career personnel
- Volunteer personnel
- Combination of career and volunteer personnel

20) I believe that changes to the organization would have a positive effect on service levels?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

21) I believe that changes to the organization would have a positive effect on staffing levels?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

22) I believe that changes to the organization would have a positive effect on organizational culture?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

23) My strongest concerns over organizational change for the fire department are?

Please number 1-6. (1 being my strongest concern, 6 being my lowest concern).

- Loss of identity
- Job security
- Job satisfaction
- Professional development
- Cultural change
- Operational change

ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

The following descriptions pertain to question #18 and reflect different organizational changes or models are common in fire service collaboration and consolidation.

Internal Change Only – Making changes to the parent entity (Johnson City Fire Department) such as negotiating to allow for part time, paid on call or moving to a career/volunteer combination department model.

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Operational Consolidation – Consolidating with one or more entities to address specific operational goals within the response area of both agencies. Types of operational consolidation can consist of but are not limited to specialized rescue teams such as water and confined space and EMS. With operational consolidation all assets and resources remain property of their respective agencies.

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Appendix M



Endicott Fire Department
Office of the Fire Chief
1009 East Main St.
Endicott, NY 13760



Phone (607) 757-2461

Fax (607) 757-5391

Date: October 12, 2010

To: All shareholders

Re: Organizational assessment questionnaire

Dear shareholder,

I sincerely appreciate your time and consideration in completing the enclosed organizational assessment questionnaire. The results of this questionnaire will be used for an applied research project for the Executive Fire Officer Program at the National Fire Academy.

The questionnaire will give insight to your views regarding organizational makeup, response services, organizational culture and employee concerns over organizational change. This information will be compiled to generate a profile of the Endicott Fire Department regarding these important aspects of our organization. The basis for this applied research project is to investigate collaboration opportunities with other agencies in our area to maintain high levels of service and reduce or eliminate operational deficiencies.

I would again like to thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Please contact me with any questions that you may have at the number listed at the top of this letter.

Sincerely,

Stephen Hrustich

Stephen Hrustich

Joint Fire Chief

Endicott/Johnson City Fire Departments

Appendix N



Johnson City Fire Department
Office of the Fire Chief
320 Harry L Drive
Johnson City, NY 13790

Phone (607) 729-9512

Fax (607) 729-2187

Date: October 12, 2010

To: All shareholders

Re: Organizational assessment questionnaire

Dear shareholder,

I sincerely appreciate your time and consideration in completing the enclosed organizational assessment questionnaire. The results of this questionnaire will be used for an applied research project for the Executive Fire Officer Program at the National Fire Academy.

The questionnaire will give insight to your views regarding organizational makeup, response services, organizational culture and employee concerns over organizational change. This information will be compiled to generate a profile of the Johnson City Fire Department regarding these important aspects of our organization. The basis for this applied research project is to investigate collaboration opportunities with other agencies in our area to maintain high levels of service and reduce or eliminate operational deficiencies.

I would again like to thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Please contact me with any questions that you may have at the number listed at the top of this letter.

Sincerely,

Stephen Hrustich

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stephen Hrustich".

Joint Fire Chief

Endicott/Johnson City Fire Departments

Appendix O
ENDICOTT FIRE DEPARTMENT

ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

The results are tabulated by the number of responses per answer. Questions #5 & #23 reflect a listing of actual responses.

1) **How long have you been employed by the Endicott Fire Department?**

5 years or less	5
5 to 10 years	5
10 to 15 years	3
15 to 20 years	1
20 to 25 years	6
Over 25 years	4

2) **My education level is?**

High School	2
Some college	9
Associates degree	9
Bachelor's degree	4
Masters degree	0

3) **My rank within the fire department is?**

Firefighter	16
Fire Officer	8

4) **I view my principle duty in the fire department as?**

Fire Suppression	17
Fire Prevention	3
EMS	0
Other	4

5) **My current personal job satisfaction can be rated as? (Low 1...10 High)**

My rating would be **2,4,10,3,3,7,8,5,3,4,3,6,1,4,5,6,7,3,1,8,3,10,4,4**

6) **We are paid as well as people with similar jobs in other fire departments within the state?**

Strongly agree	2
Agree	3
Somewhat agree	4
Somewhat disagree	1
Disagree	12
Strongly disagree	2

7) **Our benefits are comparable to other fire departments within the state?**

Strongly agree	2
Agree	8
Somewhat agree	5
Somewhat disagree	4
Disagree	5

- Strongly disagree 0
- 8) **My job within the fire department has changed little since my start date?**
- Strongly agree 2
- Agree 1
- Somewhat agree 2
- Somewhat disagree 6
- Disagree 8
- Strongly disagree 5
- 9) **The fire department has changed little since my start date?**
- Strongly agree 2
- Agree 0
- Somewhat agree 0
- Somewhat disagree 2
- Disagree 6
- Strongly disagree 14
- 10) **I feel that professional development opportunities exist within the current organizational model?**
- Strongly agree 1
- Agree 1
- Somewhat agree 4
- Somewhat disagree 6
- Disagree 7
- Strongly disagree 5
- 11) **The fire department services are as good as when I first started?**
- Strongly agree 3
- Agree 4
- Somewhat agree 2
- Somewhat disagree 6
- Disagree 5
- Strongly disagree 4
- 12) **The fire department services are better than when I first started?**
- Strongly agree 4
- Agree 5
- Somewhat agree 5
- Somewhat disagree 3
- Disagree 3
- Strongly disagree 4
- 13) **I believe that firefighter safety within the organization is most affected by?**
- Staffing levels 20
- Training 3
- Company integrity 0
- Accountability 0
- Operations & policies 1

14) The fire department faces significant challenges in the future?

Strongly agree	11
Agree	7
Somewhat agree	4
Somewhat disagree	0
Disagree	1
Strongly disagree	1

15) The fire department has the ability to continue current service levels?

Strongly agree	5
Agree	9
Somewhat agree	6
Somewhat disagree	2
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	2

16) I believe that the fire department must adapt to changes in the municipality?

Strongly agree	3
Agree	7
Somewhat agree	10
Somewhat disagree	1
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

17) I believe that the most significant reason for a need for adaptation lies in?

Economy	14
Loss of tax base	1
Loss of tax revenue	3
Change in population	1
Change in demographics	5

18) If an organizational change were made, I believe that the most attractive adaptation would be?

Internal change only	9
Functional consolidation	0
Operational consolidation	5
Merger	8
Dissolution and creation of a new entity	2

19) If an organizational change were made, I believe that staffing of the entity should consist of?

Career personnel	14
Volunteer personnel	0
Combination of career and volunteer personnel	10

20) I believe that changes to the organization would have a positive effect on service levels?

Strongly agree	2
Agree	3
Somewhat agree	7
Somewhat disagree	6
Disagree	3
Strongly disagree	3

21) I believe that changes to the organization would have a positive effect on staffing levels?

Strongly agree	2
Agree	2
Somewhat agree	5
Somewhat disagree	4
Disagree	6
Strongly disagree	5

22) I believe that changes to the organization would have a positive effect on organizational culture?

Strongly agree	2
Agree	3
Somewhat agree	5
Somewhat disagree	6
Disagree	5
Strongly disagree	3

23) My strongest concerns over organizational change for the fire department are?

Please number 1-6

Loss of identity	6,4,2,6,6,6,6,6,6,6,3,6,6,6,5,6,4,6,6,6,1,6,6
Job security	1,1,3,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,6,1,1
Job satisfaction	3,2,5,2,3,2,2,3,2,2,3,4,3,2,5,3,2,2,2,2,5,3,2,2
Professional development	2,3,1,3,4,3,3,2,5,3,2,5,2,5,2,4,5,3,5,3,3,2,3,3
Cultural change	4,5,6,4,5,4,4,5,3,5,5,6,4,3,4,6,4,6,3,5,4,5,5,5
Operational change	5,6,4,5,2,5,5,4,4,4,4,2,5,4,3,2,3,5,4,4,2,4,4,4

Appendix P
JOHNSON CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT
ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

The results are tabulated by the number of responses per answer. Questions #5 & #23 reflect a listing of actual responses.

- 1) **How long have you been employed by the Johnson City Fire Department?**

5 years or less	0
5 to 10 years	1
10 to 15 years	8
15 to 20 years	7
20 to 25 years	3
Over 25 years	1

- 2) **My education level is?**

High School	3
Some college	8
Associates degree	7
Bachelor's degree	2
Masters degree	0

- 3) **My rank within the fire department is?**

Firefighter	16
Fire Officer	4

- 4) **I view my principle duty in the fire department as?**

Fire Suppression	17
Fire Prevention	0
EMS	2
Other	1

- 5) **My current personal job satisfaction can be rated as? (Low 1...10 High)**
My rating would be **8,2,9,2,2,8,6,5,5,10,6,3,5,7,7,7,3,8,4**

- 6) **We are paid as well as people with similar jobs in other fire departments within the state?**

Strongly agree	6
Agree	8
Somewhat agree	6
Somewhat disagree	0
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0

- 7) **Our benefits are comparable to other fire departments within the state?**

Strongly agree	7
Agree	10
Somewhat agree	3
Somewhat disagree	0
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0

8) My job within the fire department has changed little since my start date?

Strongly agree	1
Agree	5
Somewhat agree	1
Somewhat disagree	2
Disagree	5
Strongly disagree	6

9) The fire department has changed little since my start date?

Strongly agree	0
Agree	0
Somewhat agree	0
Somewhat disagree	3
Disagree	8
Strongly disagree	9

10) I feel that professional development opportunities exist within the current organizational model?

Strongly agree	0
Agree	2
Somewhat agree	4
Somewhat disagree	3
Disagree	7
Strongly disagree	4

11) The fire department services are as good as when I first started?

Strongly agree	2
Agree	0
Somewhat agree	4
Somewhat disagree	7
Disagree	1
Strongly disagree	6

12) The fire department services are better than when I first started?

Strongly agree	2
Agree	2
Somewhat agree	3
Somewhat disagree	5
Disagree	5
Strongly disagree	3

13) I believe that firefighter safety within the organization is most affected by?

Staffing levels	13
Training	5
Company integrity	0
Accountability	0
Operations & policies	2

14) The fire department faces significant challenges in the future?

Strongly agree	12
Agree	5
Somewhat agree	3
Somewhat disagree	0
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0

15) The fire department has the ability to continue current service levels?

Strongly agree	1
Agree	5
Somewhat agree	3
Somewhat disagree	6
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	3

16) I believe that the fire department must adapt to changes in the municipality?

Strongly agree	3
Agree	5
Somewhat agree	10
Somewhat disagree	1
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	1

17) I believe that the most significant reason for a need for adaptation lies in?

Economy	8
Loss of tax base	2
Loss of tax revenue	7
Change in population	2
Change in demographics	1

18) If an organizational change were made, I believe that the most attractive adaptation would be?

Internal change only	6
Functional consolidation	0
Operational consolidation	4
Merger	9
Dissolution and creation of a new entity	1

19) If an organizational change were made, I believe that staffing of the entity should consist of?

Career personnel	14
Volunteer personnel	0
Combination of career and volunteer personnel	6

20) I believe that changes to the organization would have a positive effect on service levels?

Strongly agree **2**
 Agree **3**
 Somewhat agree **5**
 Somewhat disagree **5**
 Disagree **4**
 Strongly disagree **1**

21) I believe that changes to the organization would have a positive effect on staffing levels?

Strongly agree **3**
 Agree **2**
 Somewhat agree **5**
 Somewhat disagree **2**
 Disagree **5**
 Strongly disagree **3**

22) I believe that changes to the organization would have a positive effect on organizational culture?

Strongly agree **1**
 Agree **5**
 Somewhat agree **3**
 Somewhat disagree **5**
 Disagree **3**
 Strongly disagree **3**

23) My strongest concerns over organizational change for the fire department are?

Please number 1-6

Loss of identity	4,6,6,2,6,6,6,3,6,6,6,6,5,1,6,6,5,4,6,6
Job security	2,1,1,1,1,2,2,1,1,1,1,1,4,1,1,1,2,1
Job satisfaction	6,4,2,6,4,5,3,2,5,3,4,4,2,2,3,5,4,3,5,4
Professional development	1,3,3,3,3,3,4,5,4,4,3,2,3,3,4,4,2,3,3,3
Cultural change	5,5,5,5,4,5,4,3,5,5,5,6,6,5,3,6,5,4,5
Operational change	3,2,4,4,2,1,1,6,2,2,2,3,4,5,2,2,3,6,1,2

Appendix Q

ENDICOTT FIRE DEPARTMENT
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

TO: ALL PERSONNEL

SUBJECT: APPARATUS STAFFING

BY ORDER OF: CHIEF Stephen Hrustich

DATE: Revised December 18, 2008, Original - October 29, 2007

	Eng 25-1	Squad 25	Tower25-6
8	Officer in Charge Driver Firefighter Inspector	Lieutenant or Senior FF Driver	Driver FF/EMS
7	Officer in Charge Lieutenant FF/Driver Firefighter FF or Inspector	Driver FF/EMS	OOS
7 Optional Response	Officer in Charge Driver Lieutenant, FF or Inspector	Driver FF/EMS	Driver FF/EMS
6	Officer in Charge Driver Lieutenant, FF or Inspector FF	Driver FF/EMS	OOS
5	Officer in Charge Driver Lieutenant, FF or Inspector	Driver FF/EMS	OOS
4	Officer in Charge Driver Lieutenant, FF, Inspector (stay in quarters)	OOS	OOS
3	Chief Officer Driver Officer, FF or Inspector (stay in quarters)	OOS	OOS
2	Chief Officer Driver (Officer, FF or Inspector)	OOS	OOS
1	OOS	OOS	OOS

** Officer in Charge can utilize the optional response for 7 personnel should the dispatch information warrant the need for an immediate response with Tower 25-6. **The optional response should be utilized to any reported fire in the Common Business Districts.**

Appendix R
JOHNSON CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

TO: ALL PERSONNEL

SUBJECT: STATION & APPARATUS STAFFING

BY ORDER OF: CHIEF Stephen Hrustich

DATE: Original: July 13, 2009

Updated: January 8, 2010

# Personnel	NORTHSIDE STATION	SOUTHSIDE STATION
8 On Duty	5	3
7 On Duty	4	3
6 On Duty	4	3
5 On Duty	3	2
4 On Duty	4	Not staffed

Apparatus Staffing

	Car 26	Engine 26 -1	Engine 26-2	Tower 26 or Rescue 26
8 On Duty	Officer in Charge	Firefighter w /EMS Firefighter	Lieutenant or Senior FF Driver	Driver FF/EMS
7 On Duty	Officer in Charge	Firefighter w /EMS Firefighter	Lieutenant or Senior FF Driver	Driver FF/EMS
6 On Duty	Not Staffed, OOS	(2) Firefighter (One EMS trained)	Captain or Lieutenant Firefighter Driver	Driver FF/EMS
5 On Duty	Not Staffed, OOS	(2) Firefighter (One EMS trained)	Captain or Lieutenant Firefighter Driver	OOS
4 On Duty	Not Staffed, OOS	(2) Firefighter (One EMS trained)	Captain or Lieutenant Driver	OOS