



Brattleboro Fire Department

103 Elliot Street * Brattleboro, VT 05301 * 802-254-4831 *

Leonard Howard III
Fire Chief

Charles Keir III
Assistant Chief

To: Green Mountain Cares Board
Atten: Donna Jerry
From: Chief Leonard Howard
Re: Request of Jurisdiction Determination
Date: January 16, 2024

The Town of Brattleboro, on behalf of the Brattleboro Fire Department, is requesting a jurisdiction determination for the fire department to provide Emergency Medical Transport Service for the town of Brattleboro and to towns that request mutual aid.

The Brattleboro Fire Department has been licensed at Advanced Emergency Medical First response service dating back to the early 1980's. In 2000 the fire department began responding as a first response service to emergency medical calls in Brattleboro. Operating as a first response service, the fire department staff are cross-trained as firefighters and emergency medical personnel, therefore regardless of whether they arrive on the scene of a car accident or a house fire, they are certified to provide the service that is required of them. Currently, and as of July 2022, the Brattleboro Fire Department works with Golden Cross Ambulance to provide emergency medical transport services (explained in detail below) to the Town of Brattleboro.

There are two fire stations strategically located for quick response to all areas of town. Central Fire Station at 103 Elliot Street houses two (2) ambulances, three (3) fire engines, two (2) command staff vehicles, and a host of utility vehicles. Station 2 at 16 South Street houses one (1) ambulance, one (1) fire engine, and one (1) ladder truck.

The Brattleboro Fire Department consisted of 3 shifts, with 10 full-time employees (FTE) on each shift, 8 personnel assigned to Central Station and 2 personnel assigned to Station 2. This level of response is provided 24/7, 365 days a year. In total, with command staff and auxiliary staff, the Brattleboro Fire Department has a total of 37 FTEs. Further, the Brattleboro Fire Department contracts for medical oversight from Dartmouth Hitchcock which is performed by Dr. John-David Storn. Except for the fire inspector, all staff are trained as either:

- *Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)* who provides basic life interventions and functions as part of a comprehensive EMS response, under medical oversight or,
- *Advanced Emergency Medical Technicians (A-EMT)* perform interventions with the basic and advanced equipment typically found in an ambulance or,
- *Paramedics* who are allied health professionals with a primary focus on providing advanced emergency medical care for critical and emergent patients who access the emergency medical system. This individual possesses the complex knowledge and skills necessary to provide patient care and transportation. Paramedics function as part of a

comprehensive EMS response, under medical oversight. Paramedics perform interventions with the basic and advanced equipment typically found in an ambulance.

Previously (before July 2022) as a first response service we would respond in a fire truck to a medical emergency. The fire trucks are complimented with medical equipment that includes medical bags and 12-lead electrocardiogram (EKG) to provide medical care to the patient(s). Medical over-sight was performed by Dr. Jim Suozzi from Dartmouth Hitchcock. The town then had a contract with a private ambulance service for medical transport. During this time period, patient care typically began with Brattleboro Fire staff, then patient care was transferred to the ambulance crew.

That private ambulance service notified the town of Brattleboro in April 2022 that when their current contract expired on June 30, 2022, they were no longer going to provide emergency ambulance transport services to the Town of Brattleboro. Following the decision by the private ambulance service, a transport service needed to be arranged.

On July 1, 2022, the fire department partnered with Golden Cross Ambulance Service based out of Claremont, NH. With this partnership, the Brattleboro Fire Department and Golden Cross Ambulance began providing a hybrid ambulance transport service to the Town of Brattleboro. Golden Cross Ambulance obtained an emergency transport license from the Vermont Board of Health, Agency of Human Services. All Brattleboro Fire Department staff then became affiliated with Golden Cross Ambulance as well as remaining a first response service.

During this same time period, as Brattleboro Fire Department staff increased licensure/certification levels, our first response license was upgraded to the Paramedic Level first response by the Vermont Board of Health, Agency of Human Services.

Golden Cross Ambulance provides Brattleboro with 3 ambulances and two staff each day. Each 24-hour period Golden Cross provides one paramedic and one AEMT. One ambulance being a type 1 ambulance (which is a 4x4 pickup truck chassis with a mounted transport box) and the other two ambulances being type 2 ambulances (which is a van-type ambulance).

Two of the ambulances are always staffed with certified EMS staff. Staff matrix of personnel being one Golden Cross provider and one Brattleboro Fire Department provider on two ambulances. Further, two fire engines are also always staffed. The third ambulance at Station 2 is operated by Brattleboro Fire Department staff in the event simultaneously (x3) active emergencies. This response model allows for multiple emergencies to be handled by duty staff. (See table 1).

Table 1. – Staffing Matrix Pre-July 2002

Previous Response Model Assisting Private EMS 2000 -2022		
Central Station		
Utility Vehicle	Brattleboro Fire	Brattleboro Fire
E2	Brattleboro Fire	Brattleboro Fire
Station 2		
E1	Brattleboro Fire	Brattleboro Fire
Current Response Model 2022-2024		
Central Station		

	Staff Member 1	Staff Member 2
A1	Brattleboro Fire	Golden Cross
A2	Brattleboro Fire	Golden Cross
E2	Brattleboro Fire	Brattleboro Fire
Station 2		
E1	Brattleboro Fire	Brattleboro Fire
A3	Cross Staffed with the above two personnel or available administrative EMS providers	

On July 1, 2024, the Brattleboro Fire Department will start providing Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulance transport service to the town of Brattleboro. Golden Cross will no longer be providing staffing or ambulances. Medical oversight will continue to be provided by Dr. JD Storn of Dartmouth Hitchcock in conjunction with the fire department's EMS Superintendent.

Utilizing American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds further outlined below, the Brattleboro Fire Department has purchased three (3) ambulances and associated emergency transport equipment (outlined by Vermont EMS). These ambulances will be 2 - type 1 ambulances (4x4 pickup truck chassis with a mounted transport box) and 1- type 3 ambulance (a van chassis with a mounted transport box). Further, these vehicles and associated equipment have been implemented into the Town of Brattleboro's capital investment plan.

There will be 36 FTE cross-trained (fire/EMS) staff broken down into 3 shifts of 10 working 24/7 365 days. There will always be ALS personnel on duty. Two ambulances at Central Fire Station will be staffed with 2 cross-trained personnel in each and the third ambulance at Station 2 will be cross-trained with the 2 cross-trained members assigned at that station. We also have cross-trained staffed fire engines that can respond as first response units to assist the staff ambulances when required. There are four administrative personnel that are cross-trained at varying levels from EMT to Paramedic certification levels Monday Through Friday 8 am – 4 pm and can respond as needed in department medical equipped vehicles. (See Table 2.)

Table 2. Staffing Matrix July 2024 with EMS certification level.

July 1, 2024, Response Model		
Central Station		
	Staff Member 1	Staff Member 2
A1	Brattleboro Fire (Paramedic)	Brattleboro Fire (EMT)
A2	Brattleboro Fire (A-EMT)	Brattleboro Fire (A-EMT or EMT)
E2	Brattleboro Fire (A-EMT or EMT)	Brattleboro Fire (A-EMT or EMT)
Station 2		
E1	Brattleboro Fire (A-EMT or EMT)	Brattleboro Fire (A-EMT or EMT)

A3	Cross Staffed with the above two personnel or available administrative EMS providers
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The town has budgeted startup costs of 1.37 million of ARPA funds for this transition. This will be used to fund six (6) new shift personnel, the EMS Superintendent, the first three (3) months of new staff salaries, three (3) ambulances, EMS supplies and equipment, an EMS billing agency, 2-way radios, and consultant fees. See Table 3.

Due to the manner of the cross-trained staff, percentage numbers are based on use from 2023 statistics EMS over fire calls. 1573 Fire Emergencies (37.38%) and 2,635 EMS Emergencies (62.62%). This percentage difference can be noted in both Table 3 and Table 4.

Table3. - ARPA Funds EMS Transport Start-Up Costs

ARPA Funds EMS Start-Up Costs		Fire	EMS
		37.38%	62.62%
EMS Supervisor (8 Months)	\$84,702		\$84,702
FF (21 Months)	\$154,713	\$57,831.71	\$96,881.28
Replacement Revenue (3 Months)	\$250,000		\$250,000
Start-Up Consultant	\$20,000		\$20,000
Mobile Radios	\$29,250	\$10,933.65	\$18,316.35
Portable Radios	\$49,000	\$18,316.20	\$30,683.80
Turn Out Gear	\$56,000	\$20,932.80	\$35,067.20
Ambulances (3)	\$666,100		\$666,100
Contingency 5%	\$65,488		\$65,488
Total	\$1,375,253	\$108,014.36	\$1,267,238.63

This transition has an estimated \$1,362,431 to the current annual fire department budget. The largest portion of the budget increase comes from adding the seven new positions. With the fire department already providing EMS first response, the majority of the supplies, equipment, and training were in the budget previously (see Table 4) therefore are noted as an increase or new expense. The overall fire department budget will go from \$2,297,893.00 to \$3,080,221.00 (estimating projected revenue obtained from EMS transport).

Through the budget planning process, the Town of Brattleboro can estimate the cost of associated expenditures for this project. Please see Table 4 for an estimate of those associated costs. You may note the total projected new EMS cost in bold text. The table does not include different projected revenue costs.

Table 4. Projected “New” EMS Operating/Staffing Expenses Increase (or New) Over FY24

	FY 24	FY 25			FY 26			FY 27		
		Fire	EMS		Fire	EMS		Fire	EMS	
		37.38%	62.62%		37.38%	62.62%		37.38%	62.62%	
Staffing	\$1,954,802.00	\$429,185	\$160,429	\$268,756	\$442,060	\$165,242	\$276,818	\$455,322	\$170,199	\$285,123
Overtime	\$1,100.00	\$85,837	\$32,086	\$53,751	\$88,412	\$33,048	\$55,364	\$91,064	\$34,040	\$57,025
Benefits		\$279,842	\$104,605	\$175,237	\$293,741	\$109,800	\$183,941	\$308,426	\$115,290	\$193,136
Fuel	\$29,860.00	\$3,000	\$1,121	\$1,879	\$3,250	\$1,215	\$2,035	\$3,500	\$1,308	\$2,192
Supplies	\$10,000.00	\$15,000	\$5,607	\$9,393	\$15,500	\$5,794	\$9,706	\$16,000	\$5,981	\$10,019
Maintenance	\$50,000.00	\$7,500	\$2,804	\$4,697	\$7,750	\$2,897	\$4,853	\$8,000	\$2,990	\$5,010
Insurance		\$55,877	\$20,887	\$34,990	\$57,500	\$21,493	\$36,006	\$59,171	\$22,118	\$37,053
Bio Waste	\$0.00	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,100	\$1,200	\$0	\$1,200
Assessment	\$0.00	\$27,625	\$0	\$27,625	\$28,454	\$0	\$28,454	\$29,308	\$0	\$29,308
Oxygen	\$0.00	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$1,100	\$0	\$1,100	\$1,200	\$0	\$1,200
Outside										
Billing	\$0.00	\$35,000	\$0	\$35,000	\$36,050	\$0	\$36,050	\$37,132	\$0	\$37,132
Expenses	\$2,045,762.00	\$940,867	\$327,539	\$613,328	\$974,917	\$339,490	\$635,427	\$1,010,322	\$351,926	\$658,396
Capital	\$0.00	\$141,723	\$0	\$141,723	\$141,723	\$0	\$141,723	\$141,723	\$0	\$141,723