

**Town of Somerset & Village of Somerset
with Somerset Fire/Rescue Commission
Joint Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, July 23, 2025**

Town Chair Doug Plourde called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm at the Town Hall. Present: Ryan Sicard, Chris Dubak, Jessica Plourde, Don Kern, Brandon Krohn, Caleb Garn, Chris Moreno from the Village. Doug Plourde, Tim Witzmann, Jason Crotty, and Lenny Germain from the Town. Dave Wolner, Rita Lawson, and Wally Neumann from the Fire/Rescue Commission. Travis Belisle and Sarah Kobs from the Fire Dept. Absent: Shane Demulling and Aaron Morrison. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Agenda: *Motion by Krohn, seconded by Kern to approve the agenda. Motion carried.*

Public Input: Larry Mondor spoke regarding the issues with Pine Vale development and Capstone. Still no resolution with water runoff issues and silt fences on his property. Doug Plourde stated the item is on the agenda tonight.

Minutes from Previous Joint Meeting: *Motion by Kern, second by Garn to approve the April 23, 2025, joint meeting minutes. Motion carried.*

Fire/Rescue 2nd Qtr. 2025 Financial Report: Tracking for 2% dues is being done on a separate spreadsheet. Belisle stated the insurance premium has increased approximately \$4,600. *Motion by Kern, seconded by Garn to approve the 2nd Qtr. 2025 Financial Report. Motion carried.*

Membership Update: Belisle stated membership is good with several new applications on file.

Old Business: **Parnell Prairie Preserve Update-**Witzmann spoke on the playground mulch and putting in drainage tile. Witzmann stated the water will be tested. Doug Plourde announced the blacktop expansion of parking lot is on hold. There is a mowing plan for hiking trails and disc golf with three different types of mowers.

Pine Vale Storm Water/Development Update-Sicard stated he will contact Mondors and have a discussion. Amanda Mondor stated this has been going on since last Fall and there has been no communication or resolution. Mondors request Capstone attend a joint meeting. Sicard stated he has no control of the past but can only move forward. Larry Mondor pressed Sicard that the Village must have some leverage. Garn stated he believes the entire Village Board should attend the meeting with Capstone and Mondors to resolve this issue.

Sports Fields & Parks Committee Update-Demulling was appointed to the Village's Sports Field & Parks Committee. Witzmann volunteered to be on the committee as Sicard suggested two Town Board members. Krohn requested tentative meeting dates. Sicard responded he will email out a calendar to the members for scheduling.

Review of Fire Dept. 5-Year & Long-Range Plans-Belisle stated no new additions to the plans. St. Croix County will be starting the process in 2026 to transition to the new radio system. Belisle stated he wants to continue to keep the equipment updated and work on the Comprehensive Plan and not sacrifice one for the other. Belisle stated there should be grants available for the purchase of the new radios and they will be considering a lot of factors in the radios and when they are purchased. Witzmann asked for discussion on the equipment and a new engine. The equipment is tied to the Comprehensive Plan. Discussion on creating a committee to look at the next equipment purchase with six members (two each from Fire Dept,

Village & Town). Witzmann stated the Comprehensive Plan talks about equipment needs so maybe a separate committee is not necessary.

Discussion on Available Grants-FEMA and DNR have been submitted.

Update/Status of New Concrete Project by Fire Dept. Doors-Doug Plourde announced the concrete project has been put on hold for 2025. Town will revisit the project in 2026 with advertising for sealed bids and scope of work.

Station Bay Flooring-Belisle stated it was quoted at around \$20,000 and that is being put on hold now.

New Village Fire/Rescue Commission Members: Sicard stated Aaron Morrison is the new Village Fire/Rescue Commission member along with Dave Wolner.

Town Fire/Rescue Commission Members: Doug Plourde, Rita Lawson and Wally Neumann are Town representatives to Fire/Rescue Commission.

Update on Department Activities-Fire Hall Kitchen-Belisle stated they want to remove the current kitchen and install a bigger sink. Germain requested kitchen removal be added to August 6th Town Board agenda.

New Business: Update on the Fire Dept. Comprehensive Plan Request for Proposal-Discussion on the proposals and having adequate time to review. The Fire/Rescue Commission is planning on meeting in two weeks to go through the plans. Crotty suggested getting copies of the Comprehensive Plans from other communities to review. Jessica Plourde stated three of the proposals were basically identical, but one proposal is very different. August 13, at 7 pm at Fire Hall was set as tentative date for Fire Rescue Commission meeting to go over the proposals and consider a recommendation.

Committee Formation for Review of Next Equipment Purchase: Crotty suggested adding this discussion to the August 13th Fire/Rescue Commission meeting agenda.

Camera Quote from CWS: Fire Dept. will pay for and install eight new cameras and a network video recorder in the Fire Hall out of their fundraising money.

Set Next Joint Meeting Date: The next regular Fire/Rescue Commission meeting was set for Wednesday, September 10, at 7:00 pm at the Fire Hall.

The next joint meeting date was set for Wednesday, September 24, 2025, at 7 pm at the Village Hall.

Sicard announced St. Croix Economic Development Corporation has completed the County Housing Study and it will have a Somerset profile. Roadshow will be held August 12, 3:30pm-5:30pm at Somerset Library and preregistration is online.

Motion by Krohn, seconded by Jessica Plourde to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Jeri Koester,
Town Clerk

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2	Somerset, Wisconsin												
3													
4	2026 Operations Budget Worksheet												
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2	Somerset, Wisconsin																					
3																						
4	2026 Operations Budget Worksheet																					
5																						
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127																						

Somerset Fire/Rescue - RFP Questionnaire

Section 1 - Expertise and Background

1. What is your experience in working with comprehensive plans for similar size communities like ours?

My work with strategic planning (post-retirement), has been primarily with smaller combination fire departments. Communities such as Hartland, WI, while having a population approximately 3X that of Somerset, operate primarily with volunteers for fire response, utilizing a single station. Pewaukee, WI, had a primarily volunteer fire department that transitioned to a career/POC and then all career department. The demographics and regional response systems are different than Western Wisconsin, but the budget and logistic issues are fundamentally similar. I grew up in my fire service career being surrounded by smaller communities and working with them to ensure quality service and mutual respect.

2. Can you provide references from small Villages or Townships that you have worked with?

The following was sent to Chief Belisle in July:

July 20, 2025

To: Chief Travis Belisle, Somerset Fire/Rescue

From: Bruce Fuerbringer, FBTC

RE: References

References and Description of Experience

The following is a partial list of clients FBTC has served over the past decade with similar projects:

City of Pewaukee, WI Fire Department: Strategic Plan and Updates – 2014, 2019, 2023.

Contacts: Chief Kevin Bierce, Assistant Chief Mark Hoppe. (262) 522-2500

Hutchinson County, TX: THIRA and Hazardous Materials Commodity Flow Study: 2017-2018

Contact: Jason Pender, Fire Marshall (806) 273-0952

State of WI, Department of Military Affairs, WI Emergency Management: WI

Hazardous Materials Risk Assessment and Preparedness Report – 2019.

Contact: Greg Engle, Administrator; (608) 242-3000

Reno County, KS: County Fire District System Evaluation – 2020-2021

Contact: Adam Weishaar, Emergency Management Director (620) 694-2974

Village of Hartland, WI Fire Department: Strategic Plan – 2023 – 2024

Contacts: Chief Dave Jambretz (262) 367-6878; Jeff Pfannerstill, Village Board President (262) 352-2811

3. How do you stay current with National and Wisconsin-specific Fire and EMS standards, regulations, and industry best practices?

I remain a member of the Wisconsin State Fire Chiefs Association (WSFCA), being a Past President. I still attend the annual convention when able and was a guest presenter at the 2023 convention. I am also a member of the National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) and receive updates from them. My master's degree is in Risk Control, which required the study of OSHA standards. I applied those that relate to firefighting to my work, as well as the Wisconsin Safety and Professional Services (SPS) chapters addressing fire department safety and health standards (Chapter 330) and public employee safety and health (Chapter 332).

4. Who on your team will be assigned to our project, and what are their specific qualifications?

As the sole member of 5 Bugle Training and Consulting, I am the principal investigator, researcher and author of the projects I undertake. I do have other experienced fire service professionals who have assisted me in the past when needed. Each professional is well versed in fire service practices and bring their own strengths and specialties to the table. All have been chief fire officers/fire chiefs.

Section 2 - Methodology and Process

1. What is your process for creating a comprehensive plan? What are the key phases and typical timeline?

To obtain a quality and usable strategic plan, the input from many stakeholders is required, both internal and external. The stakeholders are what keep the plan grounded, instead of being a "wish list" of things for the future.

Key phases include the following:

1. Assuring the fire department has a mission and vision that is sustainable.
2. Forming a strategy by defining goals and objectives of the community and how they impact the fire department. Then forming fire department goals and objectives to compliment the communities.
3. Develop an action plan for implementation that includes the allocation of resources (both fiscal and human), identifying key players in the plan, and creating a timeline for implementation, as well as accountability benchmarks.
 - a. Communicate the plan to ensure all stakeholders understand the plan, each stakeholder's role, and the accountability benchmarks (or key performance indicators – KPI).
4. Monitor and evaluate progress against the KPI's for effectiveness.
5. Review and adjust the plan as needed to stay aligned with the community's needs as well as changing internal and external conditions.

The timeline is based on the client's needs and desires and will be established prior to the implementation of the project. Availability of stakeholders, calendar commitments, and unforeseen circumstances may cause the timeline to be adjusted.

2. How do you conduct a community risk assessment? What factors do you analyze for Fire Department needs?

Community Risk Assessment can be addressed by utilizing a "THIRA" or Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment – a FEMA supported process. A THIRA can be a project with its own means and end, but components of it can also be incorporated into the process to meet the needs of the strategic plan. I performed a stand-alone THIRA for Hutchinson County, Texas in 2020-2021 (see references) in conjunction with a hazardous materials commodity flow study.

Many, if not all identified risk factors for the community impact the Fire Department, because the fire department is the primary 1st emergency response to any and all emergencies. Even if the fire department doesn't have the training or resources to mitigate a specific situation, the department

will be responsible for securing the scene and providing for public safety until a specifically trained resource arrives on the scene.

Risk factors can include hazardous materials, transportation routes, vulnerability to weather or natural disasters, and population centers that will be impacted by an incident; levels of firefighter training and equipment availability, mutual or automatic aid (or MABAS) availability, etc.

3. How do you assess current department capabilities, including staffing, equipment, and facilities?

Primarily through a review of the types and frequency of calls and the NFIRS report(s) – or whichever reporting system is utilized – of incidents where mitigation efforts were particularly challenging or difficult. Attempt to determine what would have made the successful conclusion of an incident easier.

Also performing a fleet evaluation to determine if current apparatus and equipment meet NFPA standards.

Staffing is always a difficult task to analyze. No, or very few, fire departments can make NFPA standard recommendations. As such, the bigger picture must be looked at in terms of mutual or automatic aid and MABAS. This is not to say that there isn't a minimum staffing that needs to be striven for, but rather how do we creatively meet that minimum number on scene for firefighter safety and how do we adjust strategies to accommodate staffing levels? Also, determine what outcomes the community desires, how they impact staffing levels, and what the community's ability to fiscally support their desire.

4. What is your approach to projecting future growth (e.g., population, industry, housing developments) and its impact on fire services?

I rely primarily on the municipality's (or county's) Office of Planning and Development to determine trends and potential. What is the community's long-range plan for industry and development? Are there business parks being planned? Senior living communities? Is there a significant business exploring the possibility of locating in the community? What resources will be needed to attract businesses and provide adequate response levels, both fire and EMS or hazmat?

5. How do you involve the local Fire Department and community leaders in your planning process?

Interviews with all stakeholders, internal and external, including neighboring fire departments. Surveys can be utilized if needed, but I prefer the personal interview whenever possible. It lends itself to follow-up questions and the ability to answer questions and explain ideas. It minimizes the potential for assumptions and misunderstandings.

Beyond the interviews, discussions with fire department and community leaders to discuss potential goals and how to ensure their successful implementation. What fiscal resources are available? Are there grants or fundraising opportunities to assist? Might cooperative agreements with other communities help jointly fund a capital investment, which would be utilized by all?

Section 3 - Specific Challenges for Small Communities

1. How would you address the challenges of recruiting and retaining volunteer firefighters, which is an issue in many Wisconsin communities?

There is no magic bullet to address recruiting and retention of volunteer firefighters – I wish there were. Many smaller fire departments are hiring those candidates that the larger fire departments choose not to, which leads to challenges of their own. Many fire departments are lowering their entry level requirements and training recruits on the job to the level they need.

Volunteer fire departments have even more challenges because they do not compensate their firefighters the way career fire departments do. They can, however, have something larger fire departments lack – a greater feeling of family amongst the firefighters. Providing a superior environment and culture of valuing the individual, providing excellent training, personal protective gear and quality equipment goes a long way in the individual feeling valued and respected. Treating firefighters like the professionals they are is critical.

There may be something unique to the Somerset Fire Department that will draw candidates. Its Vision and its determination to get there.

2. What is your experience with balancing the Fire and EMS needs of both a small Village and larger surrounding Township?

Depending on how EMS services are delivered, an EMS service within a fire department generally gets greater attention than the fire side, primarily due to service demand. I don't believe that you can compromise either, as both can involve life safety. A strategy needs to be developed so that the highest quality service possible can be provided to the citizens, in conjunction with mutual aid practices.

3. Given the financial constraints typical of a small Village, how do you make recommendations for equipment and facilities that are both effective and affordable?

Just as there are any number of different vehicle models, so is true with the fire service. The same with equipment vendors. Competition is a wonderful thing. Beyond that, the strategic planning process will help shed light on apparatus and equipment needs. Is a 100' ladder truck really necessary? Will a 75' Quint work? Is a large fire engine needed, or will a mini pumper suffice? All good questions for discussion. Are Department responses primarily urban or rural? Are there any special considerations that need to be considered, such as dirt roads or trails that can be difficult to transit, especially in weather.

There are also Types 1, 2 and 3 of ambulances. A salesman may well try and sell you the Cadillac model, when a lesser type will work just fine for your departments need. Research and planning are the key to fiscal health.

4. How do you factor in the use of Mutual Aid and Automatic Aid agreements with neighboring Fire Departments?

As stated in previous answers, quite heavily – particularly for smaller volunteer departments where resources (both human and equipment) can be difficult to mobilize at any given time. This is also where interviews/discussions with adjacent fire departments become critical to the strategic planning process.

Section 4 - Deliverables and Outcomes

1. What is included in the final comprehensive plan and document? Can you provide a sample of a plan created for another client?

5 Bugle Training & Consulting respects the privacy of each client, and as such, I hesitate to provide a complete copy of the strategic plan without their permission. What I have included at this time is a copy of the Table of Contents of a recently completed strategic plan labeled "Attachment 'A'" for your reference. If you require the complete plan, please advise and I will contact the client for permission.

2. How do you present your findings and recommendations to the Board and the public?

I will provide a final report for the fire department and municipality's review and make myself available to personally report out to the governing body. If there are multiple stakeholder groups that would like to be addressed, a mutual gathering would be preferred versus multiple trips, but it is also understood that unique circumstances arise and can be accommodated.

3. What is your process for helping us develop a clear, actionable implementation plan based on the final document?

The final document will contain a precise implementation plan and timeline. Follow up contacts can be made to monitor progress, identify roadblocks, and brainstorm solutions. Monitoring progress and identifying implementation issues promptly is key to the success of a strategic plan.

4. How can your plan support our Fire Department's long-term budget planning?

The strategic plan will identify factors that may potentially impact fire department fiscal planning, both in the short-term and long-term. Similar to that of an annual budget and a longer-term capital improvement budget. Community and regional factors that may impact long-term budgeting, such as land use, housing, transportation, utilities and economic development are all considerations that will be included in the plan specifically for this purpose.

In Closing, I would like to state that working with local governments and smaller fire departments is my forte. I have worked with 26 of the 72 Wisconsin counties and their emergency Management Directors, including practically all of West Central and South-Central Wisconsin. In addition, I have worked with larger fire departments as well in the southeast part of the State, and with State government in Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM), and maintain a positive relationship with all.

Although I have worked with departments in Texas and Kansas (which was valuable experience), this is my 'home turf' so to speak. Working and cooperating with smaller career fire departments and volunteer departments was part of my everyday routine as a deputy fire chief and as fire chief of Eau Claire. It was a necessity. The geography and demographics of western Wisconsin demand it. We don't have multiple municipalities adjacent to each other and minutes away in response times as they do in the larger urban areas of the State. We learn to lean on each other up here.

In the 15 years I have been consulting, I have always had a project or two on my plate. I strive to take on only what I can handle, so as not to shortchange any client of my time and energy. I don't have to rework someone else's work because it did not stand up to my standards. 90% of my clients have come to me through personal references or are return clients. I am proud of that, and strive to maintain a positive, professional reputation.

Thank you for your consideration of my proposal.

Bruce A. Fuerbringer, M.S., EFO

Fire Chief (ret.)

5 Bugle Training & Consulting, LLC

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Attachment 'A'

Contents

Executive Summary	Error! Bookmark not defined.
PART I: Introduction and Overview	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Acknowledgements	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2024 – 2027 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Part II: Department History, Programs and Services.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Department Mission, Vision, and Guiding Values	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Current Status/Strategic Issues and Challenges.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Strategic Plan Methodologies	Error! Bookmark not defined.
PART III: VILLAGE/DEPARTMENT DEMOGRAPHICS & STASTICS.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
PART IV: WAUKESHA COUNTY FIRE AND EMS STUDY - 2018.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Regionalization, Mergers and Contracting	Error! Bookmark not defined.
PART V: CURRENT SITUATION DRIVING OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Challenge #1 – Staffing	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Challenge #2 – Response Times	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Challenge #3 – Recruitment and Retention	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Challenge #4 – Facilities	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Challenge #5 – Fiscal Resources	Error! Bookmark not defined.
PART VI: FIRE CHIEF POSITION	Error! Bookmark not defined.
PART VII: TIMELINE.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
PART VII: 2024 – 2027 Strategic Goals	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Key Performance Indicators	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Strategic Goal # 1	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Strategic Goal # 2	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Strategic Goal # 3	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Strategic Goal #4	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Strategic Goal #5	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Strategic Goal #6	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Conclusion	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Appendix A: Response Times Example.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Appendix B: Scheduling Example	Error! Bookmark not defined.

Somerset Fire/Rescue - RFP Questionnaire

Section 1 - Expertise and Background

1. What is your experience in working with comprehensive plans for similar size communities like ours?
 - The McMahon Public Safety Team has worked with municipalities across the Midwest on fire and emergency services strategic and comprehensive plans. Clients of similar size to Somerset Fire/Rescue in Wisconsin include the City of Ripon (Fond du Lac County), Village of Holmen, Town of Holland (La Crosse County), City of Seymour (Outagamie County), the Villages and Towns of Fredonia and Belgium (Ozaukee County), Village and Town of Somers (Kenosha County), the Village of Waunakee (Dane County) and a cooperative plan performed for all fire departments in Sheboygan County.
2. Can you provide references from small Villages or Townships that you have worked with?
 - Village of Somers: Fire Chief Ben Anderson – banderson@somers.org
 - Village of Holmen: Village President Patrick Barlow – pbarlow@holmenwi.gov
 - Village of Waunakee: Village Administrator Todd Schmidt – tschmidt@waunakee.com
3. How do you stay current with National and Wisconsin-specific Fire and EMS standards, regulations, and industry best practices?
 - All of our consultants are either current or recently retired fire chiefs and city/village administrators who continue to regularly work on consulting projects for McMahon. Additionally, our team's expertise extends to all levels of the fire service, with members who have served on state, regional, and national associations to resolve key fire and EMS issues. The consulting teams ongoing work in the fire and emergency services field allows them to stay current with standards, regulations and best practices.
4. Who on your team will be assigned to our project, and what are their specific qualifications?
 - See attached Project Team Document

Section 2 - Methodology and Process

1. What is your process for creating a comprehensive plan? What are the key phases and typical timeline?
 - See attached Scope of Work Document. McMahon's process involves a kick-off meeting in which our Project Manager meets with the Department's Project Team. After the meeting, McMahon provides a document request to the Department that allows the McMahon Team to learn more about the Department. Once the document request has been completed, McMahon will perform interviews with Department and municipal leadership. For most projects, McMahon also interviews some or all of the members of the Department (depending on size of the Department). Once interviews and fact finding has been completed, a meeting with the McMahon Project Manager and the Department's Project Team is held to complete a review of facts found in the interview process and through review of documents. From there, the McMahon Team develops a series of

recommendations and documents them in a report/strategic plan document.

Recommendations are presented to the Department's Project Team and other key stakeholders. If all phases of the project are chosen, it is expected the entire project will take four months.

2. How do you conduct a community risk assessment? What factors do you analyze for Fire Department needs?
 - A full community risk assessment was not included in the McMahon Proposal. Generally however, a community risk assessment includes a tour of the community, it's target hazards and key infrastructure as identified by the current fire department and an evaluation of current demand for fire services in the community.
3. How do you assess current department capabilities, including staffing, equipment, and facilities?
 - McMahon's experienced team will provide a detailed review of the organization's capabilities through structured interviews, review of documents including schedules, rosters, training documents, calls response documents, equipment lists, and on-site tour of facilities and review of apparatus.
4. What is your approach to projecting future growth (e.g., population, industry, housing developments) and its impact on fire services?
 - McMahon will evaluate municipal comprehensive plans, population projections and interview planning/zoning/municipal administration regarding housing and commercial developments. Based on information found and identified in this process, the information is evaluated, and comparable communities are identified and evaluated for demand on fire services in those municipalities.
5. How do you involve the local Fire Department and community leaders in your planning process?
 - The local fire department and leadership in the communities served by the Department are interviewed and provide critical information to the McMahon Team.

Section 3 - Specific Challenges for Small Communities

1. How would you address the challenges of recruiting and retaining volunteer firefighters, which is an issue in many Wisconsin communities?
 - Wisconsin is not alone in having challenges in recruiting and retaining volunteer firefighters. While communities across the Country are all facing these challenges, the make-up and dynamics of each community provide unique challenges, but also allow for unique methods to recruit and retain firefighters. Interviews of current department members, and review of community characteristics will provide information to assist in developing methods that Somerset can utilize to recruit and retain volunteer firefighters.
2. What is your experience with balancing the Fire and EMS needs of both a small Village and larger surrounding Township?
 - The McMahon Public Safety Team has worked with municipalities across the Midwest on fire and emergency services strategic and comprehensive plans. Clients of similar size to Somerset Fire/Rescue in Wisconsin include the City of Ripon (Fond du Lac County), Village of Holmen, Town of Holland (La Crosse County), City of Seymour (Outagamie County), the Villages and Towns of Fredonia and Belgium (Ozaukee County), Village and

Town of Somers (Kenosha County), the Village of Waunakee (Dane County) and a cooperative plan performed for all fire departments in Sheboygan County.

3. Given the financial constraints typical of a small Village, how do you make recommendations for equipment and facilities that are both effective and affordable?
 - McMahon's Team has extensive experience working with small municipalities providing them with an excellent understanding of the challenges faced by local government across the State of Wisconsin. As a result, we have a strong track record of helping similar communities meet their infrastructure needs within tight budgets. Our recommendations are grounded in a realistic understanding of local government challenges, ensuring that every solution is both effective and affordable.
4. How do you factor in the use of Mutual Aid and Automatic Aid agreements with neighboring Fire Departments?
 - The fire service cannot be successful in any community without the use of mutual and automatic aid agreements. Recommendations including mutual and automatic aid are included in nearly every fire department strategic and comprehensive plan that McMahon performs.

Section 4 - Deliverables and Outcomes

1. What is included in the final comprehensive plan and document? Can you provide a sample of a plan created for another client?
 - A sample of a strategic plan performed for the Ripon Area Fire District is included for review.
2. How do you present your findings and recommendations to the Board and the public?
 - Findings and recommendations are included in a final written report and are also delivered in presentations to the Board, commonly at a public meeting. Most communities elect to post the written report on their website for public review.
3. What is your process for helping us develop a clear, actionable implementation plan based on the final document?
 - McMahon can identify recommendations as short-term, mid-term and long-term along with high priority, medium priority and low priority to allow department and municipal leadership prioritize and implement recommendations.
4. How can your plan support our fire department's long-term budget planning?
 - When completed, McMahon's plan should provide an actionable plan, with recommended timelines and projected financial impact for each recommendation to allow for the fire department to develop a long-range financial plan.

Somerset Fire/Rescue - RFP Questionnaire

Section 1 - Expertise and Background

1. What is your experience in working with comprehensive plans for similar size communities like ours?

1A McGrath Consulting Group, Inc. has two major divisions, Public Safety and Human divisions. To date we have 650 Clients in 41 states. Approximately ½ (325) have been in the Public Safety division and eliminating police studies a fair estimate would be 300 fire/EMS studies.(reference question two for list of Wisconsin FD clients) With that said the HR division does compensation studies and that usually involves fire departments.

2. Can you provide references from small Villages or Townships that you have worked with?

2A Other clients for reference

City of Live Oak, TX

Project: FD Governance, Leadership & Culture Analysis
Contact: Mr. Anas Garfaoui – City Manager
Phone: 210-653-9140
Email: agarfaoui@liveoaktx.net

Dewitt Charter Township, MI

Project: Staffing Study for both Fire and Police Departments & Efficiency Study
Contact: Adam Cramton – Town Clerk –
Phone: 517-668-0270
Email: acramton@dewittwp.org

Municipality of Skagway Borough, AK

Project: (Multiple). Comprehensive assessment/audit of the Borough of Skagway Fire Department
Contact: Mr. Brad Ryan – Borough Manager
Phone: 907-612-1788
Email: manager@skagway.org

Northfield Township, MI

Project: Assessment of the fire department to audit FD, staffing needs, and options.
Contact: Mark Lloyd, Township Manager
Phone: m734-449-2882 ext. 122
Email: lloyd@m@northfieldmi.gov

List of Wisconsin Fire/EMS Departments – as of August 2025

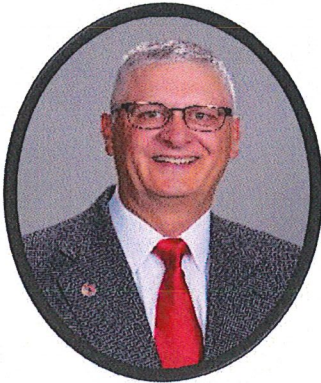
State	Client	Project
WI	Arcadia-Glencoe Fire Board	Fire Department Audit
WI	Richfield Volunteer Fire Company, Inc.	20 Year Master Plan, EE Handbook
WI	Town of Delavan	Apparatus Need Assessment
WI	Burlington Rescue Squad	Assessment of EMS Delivery and Fiscal Analysis
WI	North Shore Fire Department	Assessment of the Consolidation
WI	City of South Milwaukee	Assessment Testing –Police & Fire Chiefs Search
WI	Mazomanie & Black Earth Fire Departments	Consolidation - 2 Departments

State	Client	Project
WI	Village of Marquette	Consolidation 4 - Departments
WI	Town of Vernon	Creation of a Fire Department
WI	Town of Plymouth	Creation of a Public Works Department
WI	City of Burlington	EMS Review/Staffing
WI	Oregon-Area Fire/EMS District	Executive Search - Fire Chief
WI	Stevens Point	Executive Search - Fire Chief
WI	Sun Prairie VFD Company, Inc.	Executive Search - Fire Chief
WI	City of Sun Prairie	Executive Search EMS Director
WI	City of Marshfield	Executive Search Fire Chief
WI	South Shore Fire Department	Executive Search Fire Chief
WI	City of Wisconsin Rapids	Executive Search Fire Chief
WI	City of Ashland	FD Audit, Compensation Study, Handbook, Job Description
WI	Town of Salem	FD Consolidation of 3 FDs, Executive Search: Fire Chief
WI	City of Delavan, Village of Darien, Town of Darien	FD Consolidation
WI	Towns of Linn, Geneva, & Village of Williams Bay	FD Consolidation
WI	Mt. Pleasant & Sturtevant (South Shore)	FD Consolidation
WI	Village of Darien	FD Needs Assessment
WI	City of Oak Creek	FD Station Location & Resource Deployment
WI	Town of Richfield	FD. Railroad Crossing Impact - FD Audit
WI	Town of Fremont	Fire & 1st Responder Assessment
WI	City of Sun Prairie	Fire & EMS Funding Formula
WI	City of Ashland	Fire Chief Assessment Testing
WI	City of Greenfield	Fire Chief Executive Search
WI	City of Wisconsin Rapids	Fire Chief Executive Search, Executive Search Police Chief
WI	City of Eau Claire	Fire Department Assessment Testing
WI	Edgerton Fire Protection District	Fire Department Audit
WI	Town of Maine	Fire Department Audit
WI	City of Rice Lake	Fire Department Audit & Master Plan
WI	City of Sun Prairie	Fire Department Audit and Staffing Study
WI	Village of Grafton	Fire Department Audit, Staffing
WI	City of Lake Mills	Fire Department Staffing Study
WI	Newburg Fire Department Inc.	Fire/EMS Assessment
WI	Lawrence Town of	Fire/EMS Assessment
WI	Town of Ledgeview	Fire/EMS Audit
WI	Village of Pleasant Prairie	Fire/EMS Department Assessment
WI	City of Burlington, Town of Burlington, Burlington Rescue Squad	Greater FD Cooperative Opportunities
WI	Waukesha County Technical College	Hospital Emergency Incident Command System
WI	Village of Winneconne	Station Location

3. How do you stay current with National and Wisconsin-specific Fire and EMS standards, regulations, and industry best practices?
- 3A Our corporation has 30 full-time or part-time consultants. Whenever possible I assign a consultant who is an active Chief in a department similar to Somerset. Next, we assign a consultant who was a Fire Chief in the state of Wisconsin. In your project we have accomplished both. Chief Cleveland

was a full-time Chief in the City of La Crosse Wisconsin.

4. Who on your team will be assigned to our project, and what are their specific qualifications?
4A Consulting team is listed in our proposal. The lead consultant is Chief Cleveland. (profile below)



Chief Cleveland recently retired from the La Crosse Fire Department (LCFD) Wisconsin. He became a career Fire Chief in a combination fire department and retired with nearly 40 years of experience. La Crosse fire is a career fire/EMS department consisting of 4 stations, 110 personnel. While Fire Chief of the LCFD the department received International Accreditation from the Center for Public Safety Excellence – Commission on Fire Accreditation International. Chief Cleveland also merged the City's Building Inspections department into the fire department.

Currently Chief Cleveland is the past Chairman of the Wisconsin Fire Sprinkler Coalition, and member of the Emergency Responder Advisory Committee for the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). He is currently the Chairman for the National Fire Protection Association's Fire and Emergency Services Board and former President of the Wisconsin State Fire Chiefs Association. He has served on the fire service advisory board for Factory Mutual Insurance and as technical panel member for the Fire Protection Research Foundation of NFPA. Chief Cleveland has also served as a peer reviewer for the Assistance to Fire Fighter Grant program. Chief Cleveland worked with numerous state and local legislative councils, boards, and committees on a variety of fire and EMS related issues and worked extensively to adopt Wisconsin's first fire prevention code. Chief Cleveland has a passion for data; using a variety of performance measures to develop, implement, and evaluate public policy for fire and EMS agencies. He has been very instrumental in developing and implementing mutual/automatic aid programs amongst departments.

A strong proponent of cooperation and collaboration allowed him to create Central Wisconsin's 1st municipal paramedic service covering approximately 13 different municipalities encompassing 360 square miles while fire chief in Marshfield, WI. He has utilized this approach in the development and implementation of numerous other programs that include a dive rescue, hazardous materials, and neighborhood services teams, and to address issues such as the opioid crisis, homeless, and maintain safe and affordable housing to communities.

Educational Background:

University of Wisconsin Oshkosh
Masters, Public Administration
Lakeland College
Bachelor of Art, Business Administration
Fox Valley Technical College
Associate Degree in Applied Science – Fire Protection
National Fire Academy
Graduate of Executive Fire Officer program

Section 2 - Methodology and Process

1. What is your process for creating a comprehensive plan? What are the key phases and typical timeline?

1B Approach to the project consists of multiple steps which can be assessed and adjusted as the consultants learn more about the culture of the organization.

- Thoroughly read the Request for Proposal for understanding of client's goal
- Align the consultants expertise with the client's issues and develop consulting team
- Review proposal against RFP goals, generate a written "understanding the project" for review by the client
- Meet in person with key stakeholders to ensure agreement on project approach
- Interview key stakeholders (governance, municipal leadership, fire/EMS department leadership and leadership team, members of fire department, other identified stakeholders. All interviews are confidential and not shared with anyone outside of the consulting team
- Comprehensive assessment of the fire/EMS department covering the objectives as outlined in the proposal (reference McGrath proposal)
- Learn the culture of the department. Organizational culture is the personality of the organization comprised of the assumptions, values, norms, and tangible signs (artifacts) of organization members and their behaviors.
- Collect data, considerable emphasis placed on quantifiable data separating wants from needs.
- Follow-up site visits as needed to clarify issues
- Consulting team develops the draft report components
- Present draft report to the client, and clarify client's questions
- Present final report to the client

Project schedule is listed in the proposal and with each component of the study being fluid the consultants are reluctant to place and timeline on each study objective

2. How do you conduct a community risk assessment? What factors do you analyze for Fire Department needs?

2B A community risk assessment created independently by a consultant is of little value to the municipality/fire department. Rather, in partnership with the fire department leadership, levels of risk are identified. These risks are measured against the departments distribution, concentration, and reliability all components of the department's standard of coverage

3. How do you assess current department capabilities, including staffing, equipment, and facilities?

3B By on site assessment. Staffing for both administrative and operational, equipment by on-site assessment of vehicles and equipment carried, facilities for functionality of the facility and safety assessment

4. What is your approach to projecting future growth (e.g., population, industry, housing developments) and its impact on fire services?

4B Using municipalities documents to assess demographic trends, economic indicators, infrastructure

capacity, environmental constraints, and technological adoption.

- 5. How do you involve the local Fire Department and community leaders in your planning process?
- 5B Essential, through interviews, documentation, site visits, and matching RFP items to issues studied by the consulting team.

Section 3 - Specific Challenges for Small Communities

- 1. How would you address the challenges of recruiting and retaining volunteer firefighters, which is an issue in many Wisconsin communities?
 - 1C Wisconsin is not exempt from the challenges of maintaining a volunteer staffing methodology. Emphasis is placed on retention; it is much easier and less expensive than new employees. Identifying leadership and management philosophy. Fire department members are no different from other employees and the biggest fact, not always stated, is employees leave poor leadership not the department. Recruitment must be aligned with the potential pool and in many cases the consultants have found that recruitment approach is ancient, and today's potential clients wants are in most cases very different
- 2. What is your experience with balancing the Fire and EMS needs of both a small Village and larger surrounding Township?
 - 2C Allowing each municipality leaders to express what is essential in fire and medical services, Identifying commonalities and differences. Examine the fiscal component of the agreement between municipalities and ensure it is based on mutually agreed components. The fire department must view their protection area as the combined area of both municipalities and align resource needs for that area.
- 3. Given the financial constraints typical of a small Village, how do you make recommendations for equipment and facilities that are both effective and affordable?
 - 3C Apparatus/equipment should have a written replacement schedule that aligns with the municipalities; not from a standard that one size community equals all. Apparatus can be modified to meet industry standards, lease purchase agreements, purchase of used apparatus. The facility must be of size and components to ensure safety and environmental issues are addressed. Unfortunately, there are few grants for brick-and-mortar buildings so renovation versus replacement costs must be examined.
- 4. How do you factor in the use of Mutual Aid and Automatic Aid agreements with neighboring Fire Departments?
 - 4C Mutual and Automatic aid is essential but must be based on actual needs. The consultants want

quantifiable data showing what was the cause of the alarm. Remember a Fire Chief is not paid to take risks they are paid to know what risks to take. Reciprocity must be considered if you receive aid, you must be in the position to give aid.

Section 4 - Deliverables and Outcomes

1. What is included in the final comprehensive plan and document? Can you provide a sample of a plan created for another client?
- 1D The final comprehensive plan will meet all of the proposal objectives and give recommendations is the following figure.

Report Priority Hierarchy		
Priority	Definition	Example
1	Urgent /Immediate	Recommendations that require immediate action or inaction by the governing body. Examples include but are not limited to compliance with regulations, laws, life safety, physiological or environmental needs.
2	Pressing	Significant impact on the organization; action needed as soon as possible.
3	Important	The organization will benefit by addressing soon, items that should be accomplished.
4	Future Consideration	Items that need to be addressed: develop future plan of action, low consequences of delay in action.
5	Information Only	The organization should be aware, take it under consideration.

The client will be given all of these recommendations on a flash drive in excel format so they can change the recommendation during their implementation phase of the project. In addition, all the recommendations are listed in priority order on the final project report.

Study Example: Our firm does not share reports due to their potential confidentiality issues

However, some clients list the McGrath Consulting Group, Inc. report on their web page, such as the City of Hasting, MI. Copy and paste the following address into your browser.

<https://www.bing.com/ck/a?!&&p=b72dc8a07a68b03b90625df9c21dbd23a4128431cf8c1a86f0309d6969ac789dJmItldHM9MTc1NzYzNTlwMA&ptn=3&ver=2&hsh=4&fclid=3128d116-3363-6703-1950-c489327466ae&psq=city+of+hasting+fire+department+study&u=a1aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuaGFzdGluZ3NtaS5nb3Yvd3AtY29udGVudC91cGxvYWRzLzA5LTExLTlwMjMtRmlyZS1EZXBhcnRtZW50LUFzc2Vzc21lbnQucGRm>

2. How do you present your findings and recommendations to the Board and the public?
- 2D If the client requests a final presentation of the report a consultant who worked on the report (usually the lead consultant) will attend a meeting and present the report with the help of a PowerPoint presentation. There is no additional charge for this presentation.
3. What is your process for helping us develop a clear, actionable implementation plan based on the final document?
- 3D There will be an implementation section in the report or a prioritized summary of all the consultants

recommendations. Phone calls are always free, and we have clients call us after the presentation to ask for clarification.

4. How can you plan, support our Fire Department's long-term budget planning?

4D I believe the question is how we support long-term budget planning. There will be a section in the report that addresses future operational and capital budget listing what the recommendation will cost the municipality, i.e., add career Fire Chief; we will give a recommended salary range and benefits.