

AGENDA REPORT \*REVISED (1-07-2008)

DATE January 8, 2008

ITEM: Ordinance 2993, Amending OCCGF TITLE 5.3.7.720 & Create OCCGF 8.9

INITIATED BY: RANDY MCCAMLEY, FIRE CHIEF

ACTION REQUESTED: Conduct Public Hearing and adopt Ordinance 2993

PRESENTED BY: RANDY MCCAMLEY, FIRE CHIEF

**RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Commission conduct a public hearing and adopt Ordinance 2993.

**MOTION:**

I move the City Commission adopt Ordinance 2993, and that Great Falls Emergency Services (GFEMS) and Montana Community Ambulance (MCA) are appointed the interim provider of emergency ambulance services during the negotiation of the performance contract with GFEMS.

**SYNOPSIS:**

Ordinance 2993 would revise the current Special Business License Title 5.3.7.720 for ambulance transport companies and create a new article 8.9 entitled Emergency Medical Services. The new code will establish provisions for an ambulance performance contract with a private ambulance provider as well as develop training standards, safety requirements, and an ambulance fee schedule. These changes will results in a more cohesive emergency medical system to serve the public.

\* A small housekeeping revision was added to address language no longer required in Title 5.3.7.760

**BACKGROUND:**

The final version of Ordinance 2993 is a result of numerous revisions over the last few weeks. Staff has worked diligently with our consultant Abaris Group, local ambulance company owners, and their representatives to develop an EMS ordinance that comprehensively improves the EMS system serving the citizens of Great Falls.

The ordinance presented for first reading on December 18, 2007 included the latest recommendations from the incumbent ambulance company. First, they requested a "Conflict Resolution" process be added to the ordinance to help address conflicts or disputes that might arise regarding the interpretation or application of the ordinance. Secondly, they requested greater involvement with the selection of the City's EMS

system medical director. Additional language was included that satisfies both of their concerns.

Adoption of Ordinance 2993 will provide the City of Great Falls with formal authority to properly manage the City's 911 emergency medical service. Once this ordinance is adopted the city can begin drafting a performance contract that shall be negotiated with the incumbent ambulance provider, Great Falls Emergency Services.

Recently there have been some comments from the public about the lack of detail in parts of the ordinance. These comments lack the specificity of what should be added or what may be missing which makes amendments difficult. However, the ordinance was never intended to encompass every detail, role or aspect of how the EMS system will function. The performance contract between the City and the incumbent 911 ambulance provider, joint standard operational guides and EMS system protocols will specify roles, responsibilities and system functional details for the EMS system. These details will be determined in cooperation with the EMS Advisory Committee which is governed by this ordinance.

Additionally, any attempt to add more detail and specific procedure to the ordinance would result in a voluminous document that would be difficult to administer and also subject to frequent City Commission review and revision. This is due to the dynamic and ever changing technology and practice that occurs in emergency medicine.

Also, in order for the 911 EMS system to meet community demand and allow for the flexibility needed to embrace EMS best practices the System Administrator, EMS Advisory Board and Medical Director must have the ability to make needed improvements when necessary.

In closing, while Great Falls may be the first major city in Montana to promulgate an EMS ordinance of this magnitude, most areas outside of Montana have addressed these issues long ago. The City's leadership and vision in this matter will no doubt be followed by other Montana communities in the future.