



EMERGENCY MEDICAL  
SERVICES

**KURT ZELLMANN**  
ASSISTANT CHIEF

CITY of WEST ALLIS  
FIRE DEPARTMENT

Date: November 10, 2016

To: Honorable Board of West Allis Police & Fire Commissioners

From: Assistant Chief Kurt W. Zellmann

Re: Request for expenditure of budgeted funds to purchase three ambulances.

Honorable Commissioners,

I respectfully request your authorization to expend budgeted funding in the estimated amount of \$736,000.<sup>00</sup> to complete the purchase of three identical ALS Ambulances and miscellaneous lose equipment to outfit the units.

This request is the result of a six month process that began with the evaluation of the WAFD EMS apparatus and evolved into collaborative effort with the City of Milwaukee Fire Department to design a common EMS unit that meets the needs of both the WAFD and MFD.

As a result of this shared services collaboration, we have been able to design a unit that meets the needs of both agencies. This is the first time our two agencies, the biggest and busiest fire departments in the County have ever sat down to work collaboratively on apparatus design. Together, both agencies evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of our current designs and took the best features from both layouts and combined them into one design that both agencies are pleased with. Once the design was completed, we jointly engaged and evaluated vendors to find the builder that could economically produce the units. We have unanimously chosen Braun Industries of Van Wert Ohio to build the units. Braun Industries has a strong presence in the region with multiple departments in the area currently utilizing Braun Ambulances. Support is also well established and readily available from a local facility in Waukesha, the sales company in Minneapolis MN and factory direct from Braun in Van Wert Ohio.

<http://www.braunambulances.com/>

The advantages of this collaboration are numerous from both financial and operational perspectives. By agreeing on the design of the unit we have been able to leverage the manufacturer to provide aggressive pricing for the units. The initial purchase will be for a total of six units, with WAFD buying three and MFD buying three. MFD being the much larger agency, they will likely purchase a total of eight to ten units in the next three years. The blueprint is to offer this design to other shared services agencies in the County and to work towards a standardized EMS unit for all agencies in the county. Both the Wauwatosa and North Shore Fire Departments have initially expressed interest in the concept of purchasing this unit since it would cut down on their time investment in the specification and evaluation processes. The other agencies would also benefit from the volume pricing by tagging onto orders with MFD.

This venture is designed to be a long term proposition between both the fire agencies and Braun Industries. One of the key factors in the decision to utilize Braun Industries was their long term value plan and the all metal construction of their patient modules. Braun's heavy duty construction methods and lifetime module structural integrity guarantee is designed to encourage the process of Re-Mounting the module onto a new chassis once the original chassis has served its operational life. The re-mount process saves significant production time over a completely new chassis and module and in the area of a thirty percent savings verses buying a completely new vehicle. Both WAFD & MFD have long term plans to migrate to the re-mounting process instead of buying completely new vehicles with each purchase cycle. Our current vehicles are not good candidates for re-mounting for two major reasons. The first reason is, because the cabinetry within the vehicles is all wood construction and the removal of them from the rig generally causes damage and they are cost prohibitive to re-surface and re-install. The second major reason is the original module manufacturer is no longer in business and proprietary electrical and body parts are becoming harder and more expensive to obtain.

From an operational standpoint the beginning of standardization of fleets has many advantages going forward especially with our biggest mutual aid partner(s). One factor that spurred this process in the first place was the current hurdle that our apparatus are different enough that swapping/sharing personnel on calls is not efficient because we don't know where equipment is on the other departments rigs and our different chassis and manufactures have made just in time training on scenes impractical. Previously we have not been able to shuffle personnel and operate each other's vehicles in times of need and there are cases where this delayed patient care and transport. This first cooperative design and purchase will not immediately remedy that problem but it is a very significant step in that direction.

To purchase the apparatus jointly and ensure both the best possible pricing and strict adherence to WAFD and MFD design requirements, we have decided to again utilize the largest municipal equipment purchasing cooperatives in the United States. The Houston Galveston Area Council (HGAC) provided pre-bid open book pricing on Ambulances and has eliminated the need for an individual municipality to dedicate the time and staffing to writing a proprietary yet open bid specification for purchasing of the apparatus. Use of HGAC also prevents a municipality from having to defend its pre determined requirements from manufactures who wish to provide what they deem as substantively "comparable" options to specification requirements. This can lead to long drawn out bidding process where municipalities are essentially forced to accept brands or models of equipment or systems that they did not intend to purchase. The utilization of HGAC in this instance also allows for both agencies to run a concurrent procurement process efficiently as possible since our standard bidding processes differ significantly.

In conclusion, I respectfully request this honorable board's permission to allow the City's Purchasing Division to utilize the HGAC purchasing cooperative to complete the purchase of three (3) Braun Super Chief Ambulances and related equipment for the estimated price of \$736,000.00

Sincerely,



Kurt W. Zellmann  
Assistant Fire Chief  
City of West Allis Fire Department

Signature Page

The West Allis Police and Fire Commission hereby provides approval for the West Allis Fire Department to proceed with the budgeted purchase of three Braun Super Chief Ambulances from North Central Emergency Vehicles via the HGAC purchasing consortium in cooperation with the City of Milwaukee Fire Department. For the estimated amount of \$736,000.00

APPROVED BY:

  
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Board of Police and Fire Commissioners

DATE: November 17<sup>th</sup> 2016