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The Advisor

A Newsletter from the Miami Valley Fire/EMS Alliance

Member Departments: Beavercreek Twp., Bellbrook, Brookville, Butler Twp., Dayton, Englewood, Farmersville, Harrison Twp., Huber Heights Jefferson Twp., Kettering, Miami Twp., Miamisburg, Moraine, New Lebanon, Oakwood, Phillipsburg, Riverside, Trotwood, Washington Twp. Associate and Affiliate Members: Madison Twp., Sidney, Violet Twp., Sinclair Community College, Box 21 Rescue Squad, Germantown Rescue

A Public Safety Alliance Proposal

As noted in last month's Advisor, the Alliance is exploring possible expansion to include a law enforcement component, becoming a true public safety alliance in the future. Alliance Executive Committee members Larry Collins and Ken Parks, along with Steve Walker and Sherwood Eldridge from the Montgomery County Police Chiefs Association, made presentations to area mayors and managers in February concerning this proposal. There appears to be significant support for the concept, but it does have financial costs. The region's – and the State's – economic situation makes any requests for additional funding very difficult right now, but the Alliance will work with the police chiefs and the mayors and managers to try to find the funding to make this happen. We will also work with them to try to find other cost saving initiatives for the region.

The information below comes from the executive summary of the current proposal. It outlines the rationale for the expansion and the potential benefits. Financial considerations have been omitted since they are currently under discussion in other forums.

The Miami Valley Fire/EMS Alliance is a council of governments with twenty member communities in Montgomery and Greene Counties in southwest Ohio. It is funded by annual dues of \$0.24 per citizen protected by each member community's fire department. The Alliance provides services ranging from an ongoing regional entry-level firefighter testing program, to incident management response teams, to regional communications coordination and training. It also provides a means for local communities and fire chiefs to address regional fire and emergency medical issues on a real time basis. The Alliance saves its members thousands of dollars each year through these programs, while enhancing regional fire and emergency medical services at the same time. It is important to note that Alliance funding has not increased since it was created in 1995.

There is no corresponding organization for law enforcement in the area. They do not have an organization or structure in place to address regional issues on a timely basis. They have to rely on individual police chiefs and their staffs to coordinate regional law enforcement issues. This has led to many missed opportunities over the years. For example, the Alliance's entry-level testing program was patterned after a law enforcement program that could reasonably be reinstated in the area if a public safety organization were to be established.

In addition, the Alliance and the Montgomery County Police Chiefs' Association have identified a range of issues of immediate concern that would benefit from a cooperative fire and law enforcement approach. These include many critical homeland security issues, information sharing, communications interoperability, incident management and unified command. In fact, the current Alliance Communications Committee, with fire and law enforcement representation and working in concert with the Montgomery County Office of Emergency Management, developed the regional communications recommendations that were recently approved by the Montgomery County Commission for \$3,200,000 in federal grant funds. This would not have been possible without multidisciplinary and multijurisdictional participation on the committee. This committee is making more progress towards regional communications interoperability than would have been thought possible just a few years ago.

Therefore, the Miami Valley Fire/EMS Alliance and the Montgomery County Police Chiefs' Association are proposing that the Alliance be expanded to include a law enforcement component, i.e., that it transition into a "public safety alliance" for the region. The first step in this process is to add a part-time law enforcement coordinator, with the hope that this position could be expanded into a full-time position in the future.

The end product – a true *Miami Valley Public Safety Alliance* – will make the region safer for everyone, public safety workers as well as the region's citizens, and it will lead to significant cost savings for all participating communities. At a time when all local communities need to work together to save money and reduce unnecessary redundancy, the region can't afford to miss this opportunity. The new *Alliance* will also serve as a model for the state and the nation to enhance public safety cooperation.

Regional Entry-Level Testing Program

We have ninety-six applicants for the 2005-A entry-level test. Orientation sessions will be held Saturday, March 5 at Miamisburg Fire Headquarters, Station #54, at 2135 East Central Avenue. The written examination will be held on April 2 at Sinclair C.C. Building #20.

The CPAT portion of the test will be held on May 7 at 243 South Alex Road in West Carrollton. CPAT practice sessions have been scheduled for Tuesday, March 22, 6:00-9:00 p.m.; Sunday, April 10, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.; and Tuesday, April 26, 6:00-9:00 p.m. at the CPAT facility on South Alex Road.

Alliance Executive Director Position Opening

On a personal note, I have accepted an offer to return to the Dayton Fire Department as an assistant chief. If at all possible, I will stay on at the Alliance until we can hire a new Executive Director. I will continue to work with him or her to make sure there is a smooth transition and to maintain continuity of operations. I'm very proud of what we've been able to accomplish here over the past three years, and I think the Alliance is in a very strong position for the future.

Resumes for the position will be accepted until March 4, 2004. We will do a resume review the next Monday, March 7, and we hope to do interviews on March 11. We would like to fill the position by March 31 if we can.

When Glenn Alexander left the Alliance, he quoted Yogi Berra, "When you come to the fork in the road, take it." I'll have to modify that just a little bit. "When you come to the fork in the road, turn around and go back where you came from." With apologies to Thomas Wolfe, I'm going home again.

Upcoming Events

- 2/28-3/4/05 – US&R Task Force Leader meeting in Washington D.C.
- 3/2/05 – ~~Ohio Response System/Incident Management Teams meeting, Ohio Division of Homeland Security in Columbus, OH.~~ Rescheduled for 3/9/05.
- 3/4/05 – Resumes due for Alliance Executive Director position
- 3/4/05, 9:00 a.m. – EMS Workgroup, Sinclair C.C. Bldg. #20.
- 3/5/05, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. – Entry-level test orientation sessions, Miamisburg Fire Headquarters.
- 3/7/05 – Alliance Executive Director Resume review.
- 3/7/05 – Alliance ladder testing bids due.
- 3/9/05, 1:00-5:00 p.m. – Ohio Response System IMT presentation, Ohio Department of Public Safety, Columbus, OH. Call the Alliance Executive Director for more information.
- 3/11/05 – Alliance Executive Director candidate interviews
- 3/15/05, 9:00 a.m. – Alliance and Corporation Executive Committee meeting
- 3/16/05, 1:30 p.m. – Alliance Training/H.R. Committee meeting, Sinclair C.C. Bldg. #20.
- 3/17/05, 9:30 a.m. – Alliance Health and Wellness Workgroup meeting, Sinclair C.C. Bldg. #20.
- 3/17/05, 9:30 a.m. – Alliance IMT/ICS Workgroup meeting, Farmersville Fire Headquarters.
- 3/22/05, 6:00-9:00 p.m. – CPAT practice session, 243 S. Alex Road, West Carrollton.
- 3/28/05, 2:00 p.m. – Dayton Regional Hazmat Board quarterly meeting, Sinclair C.C. Room 20-121.
- 4/2/05, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. – Entry-level testing program written examination, location to be announced.
- 4/10/05, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. – CPAT practice session, 243 S. Alex Road, West Carrollton.
- 4/26/05, 6:00-9:00 p.m. – CPAT practice session, 243 S. Alex Road, West Carrollton.
- 5/7/05, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. – Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT),

Executive Committee

- **Chief Ken Parks**, Chairperson, Washington Twp. Fire Department, 433-3083
- **Chief Mark Thomas**, Vice-Chairperson, Beavercreek Fire Department, 426-1213
- **Chief Larry Collins**, Dayton Fire Department, 333-4501
- **Chief Jim Nickel**, Brookville Fire Department, 833-2345
- **Chief Robert Bobbitt**, Miamisburg Fire Department, 847-8750

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