

Board of County Commissioners

Agenda Request

Date of Meeting: June 16, 2009

Date Submitted: May 29, 2009

To: Honorable Chairman and Members of the Board

From: Benjamin H. Pingree, County Administrator
Lindsay Stevens, Assistant County Administrator
Scott McDermid, Director, Department of Public Safety
Fran Councill, Director, Division of Emergency Medical Services

Subject: Request Board Approval to Purchase a 2009 Excellance Type 3 Advanced Life Support Ambulance

Statement of Issues

This agenda item requests Board approval to purchase a 2009 Excellance Type 3 Advanced Life Support Ambulance.

Background

The Board of County Commissioners approved the funding of a new ambulance within the 2008/09 EMS Budget. The purchase of a new ambulance is designated to replace a 1991 Ford Excellance Ambulance that was recently traded to the Sheriff's Office for a 2004 Chevrolet Tahoe.

Pursuant to Chapter 401.26, Florida Statutes, ambulances in the State of Florida are required to be compliant with the Federal General Services Administration Chapter KKK-1822 specifications. Ambulance manufacturers that participate in the contract negotiations and selection provided by the Florida Fire Chiefs' Association, the Florida Association of Sheriff's, the Florida Association of Counties, and the Florida Association of Cities were analyzed by staff. There were two ambulance manufacturing facilities visited by EMS staff. Additionally, the County's local apparatus mechanics from Calloway Truck, who are certified Emergency Vehicle Technicians, were consulted. As a result of a three month evaluation process, the manufacturer Excellance was chosen to build a type three ambulance on a Chevrolet C-4500 Chassis.

Analysis:

Wakulla County has repeatedly purchased ambulances designated within the EMS community as "Type 1" Ambulances. A Type 1 Ambulance has a modular patient compartment (box) mounted on a heavy duty commercially available pick-up truck style chassis. As a result of the challenging budget, there was a reduction in the amount budgeted for an ambulance as compared to in years past. In order to purchase an ambulance that is consistent with the fleet, a budget of greater than \$150,000.00 would be required. This year's budget of \$120,000.00 required staff to undertake a comprehensive review of all ambulance types, options, and equipment. It was the consensus of EMS administration that staff move to a "Type 3" ambulance design to reduce the

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amount of overall cost without significantly reducing the capabilities offered within the patient compartment.

A “Type 3” Ambulance is a modular patient compartment mounted on a van “cut away” style commercially available chassis. With a van-type chassis, maintenance costs increase due to the restrictive access to the engine compartment, when access is compared to the current engine compartment access offered by a pickup truck style chassis. In the GSA’s KKK specifications, there are specific requirements for acceleration, torque, and horsepower that eliminate the option for using the alternative fuel engines currently available. The large majority of challenges that face our current fleet are associated with the durability of the diesel engine. The County currently has one of the newest ambulances in our fleet at the Ford dealership receiving a new engine block; it is expected to be out of service for at least a month of repairs. The work is being done under the manufacturer’s warranty.

This year Wakulla EMS crews provided a specialty transfer of a critical cardiac patient needing to be transported to a cardiac surgeon in Miami for a heart transplant. This type of transfer is not a usual duty of Wakulla EMS crews; however, it was accepted as a challenge when requested of us by Tallahassee Memorial Hospital and Leon County EMS. The crew agreed to an especially efficient transfer in order to create the largest net return. It was the intention of doing this special transfer to add dollars to the ambulance purchase budget. The revenue generated from this transfer, after the accepted loss from Medicare, was \$2,960.23. Staff is also able to save an additional \$2,000 dollars by purchasing the chassis before the completion of the modification, saving the interest typically charged for the chassis during construction. Taking the revenue found from the Miami transfer and purchasing the chassis early, we are able to keep the purchase of Wakulla’s new ambulance within the budgeted amount. County EMS has similarly purchased the chassis prior to modification in the past, the proposed savings have consistently been found worthwhile.

Options:

1. Approve to purchase a 2009 Type 3 Excellence Ambulance.
2. Do not approve to purchase a 2009 Type 3 Excellence Ambulance.
3. Board direction.

Recommendation:

Option #1

Attachments:

1. Summary highlights from the GSA KKK 1822