

Fire District Organizational Review & Future Needs Analysis

Prepared for

VILLAGE OF WAUNAKEE & WAUNAKEE AREA FIRE DISTRICT

DANE COUNTY, WISCONSIN



McMAHON
ENGINEERS ARCHITECTS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION 3

II. PROJECT WORK TASKS 3

III. WAUNAKEE AREA FIRE DISTRICT OVERVIEW..... 6

IV. WAUNAKEE AREA FIRE DISTRICT OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS..... 7

V. STAFFING NEEDS OF THE DISTRICT 23

VI. SIMILAR SIZED FIRE DISTRICTS/MUNICIPAL FIRE DEPARTMENTS 25

VII. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS..... 26



I. INTRODUCTION

MCMAHON Associates, Inc. (MCMAHON) was retained by the Village of Waunakee to conduct an organizational review of the Waunakee Area Fire District (District) and to develop a future needs analysis for service by the District. Included in this analysis was a review of current organizational structure, staffing, operational effectiveness, funding methodology and governance structure.

This Study provides a review of the District and an analysis of future needs for fire protection in the service area.

II. PROJECT WORK TASKS

To complete the objectives set forth in the Study RFP, MCMAHON evaluated the operations of the District to provide recommendations to improve its current operations. The MCMAHON Team also studied future growth in the communities to develop a future needs analysis for the District and the communities served by the District.

In conducting this study, MCMAHON consulting staff met with the Fire Chief and members of the Department, members of the District Board, the Waunakee Village Administrator and Village Department Heads, the Waunakee Village President and chiefs of fire and emergency medical service agencies that service the Waunakee Area or provide mutual aid to the Waunakee Area. The Chief was also requested to provide a wide range of documentation to MCMAHON including budgets, call data, policies, procedures, etc.

The following presents an overview of the work tasks completed by MCMAHON during the project.

1. Developed a project team of appropriate users and stakeholders to oversee and participate in the project.
2. Conducted a Project Planning Meeting with the MCMAHON Project Manager, the Project Team and key project personnel. Defined scope and mission, discussed work plans, established liaison responsibilities, coordinated project schedules, and confirmed other general arrangements.
3. Obtained and reviewed documentation provided by the project team pertaining to the project.
4. Conducted interviews and on-site observation to evaluate the current and future needs and standards of performance of the District. In conducting this study, we met or conducted telephone interviews with the following personnel:
 - Waunakee Fire Chief and Chief Officers
 - Waunakee Village Administrator, Village President, and members of the Village Board
 - District Board Members representing other communities served by the District
 - District Officers and groups of fire fighters

Interviews and observations primarily focused on the following:

- Current fire operations, staffing and levels of service
- Fire personnel workload, call volume and activity
- Administrative organizational structure
- Governance structure
- Budget and capital needs
- Department policies and procedures
- Analysis of regulations and rules of the Department
- Facilities and Major Equipment
- Department training

5. Prepared for and facilitated a project status meeting to discuss the results of the interviews and on-site observations with the Project Team.

6. Reviewed the present fire workflows and processes to analyze and develop potential organizational and operational changes to improve efficiencies and effectiveness. This review was based on the Commission of Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) categories and criteria. The performance indicators that were examined include the following:

- Governance and Administration
- Assessment and Planning
- Goals and Objectives
- Financial Resources
- Community Risk Reduction Programs
- Physical Resources
- Human Resources
- Training and Competency
- Essential Resources
- External System Relations
- Health and Safety

7. Determined any public safety industry standards and trends related to the Department's operational requirements. During the development of all recommendations, MCMAHON considered many factors and standards as a basis for recommendations, including:

- National Highway Safety Traffic Administration (NHSTA)
- National Fire Service Accreditation Program (NFSAP)
- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)
- Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA)
- National Fire Administration (NFA)

- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
 - Insurance Services Office (ISO) Rating Schedule
 - Local Fire Protection Ordinances
8. Developed a comprehensive Fire District organizational review and future needs analysis, utilizing the information provided by the documentation received, the interviews, review of national standards, and on-site observations. The projected growth and level of service needs were considered during the development of these recommendations. Recommendations included:
- Effectiveness, efficiency, and performance of current fire operations
 - Efficient utilization of station resources
 - Administrative growth and organizational structure
 - Review and analysis of organizational culture
 - Review of Department policies and procedures
 - Analysis of personnel and staffing needs
 - Analysis of current governance structure
 - Recommended an effective implementation plan
9. Facilitated a recommendation meeting to present preliminary recommendations and obtain feedback from the Project Team.
10. Listed and described the findings and recommendations on the Fire District governance and administration, assessment and planning, goals and objectives, financial resources, programs, physical resources, human resources, essential resources, training, and external system relations, and all other items evaluated and analyzed during the project.
11. Assembled the study report. Performed a detailed quality assurance review of the document to ensure that the document meets the expectations of the Project Team and conforms to MCMAHON's standards.
12. Prepared and delivered the draft report to the Project Team for review.
13. Received feedback from the Project Team regarding the content of the draft report. Changes to the analysis based on the returned comments were made, as were deemed appropriate. Produced and delivered the final document copies to the Project Team.
14. Presented the findings and recommendations of the analysis to the Village Board.

III. WAUNAKEE AREA FIRE DISTRICT OVERVIEW

The District provides fire and emergency services to the Village of Waunakee and the Towns of Westport, Springfield, and Vienna. The Fire District was formed in 1933. Total geographic area of District is approximately 45 square miles.

Population Projection: The District provides fire and emergency services to approximately 21,000 residents. The Village of Waunakee is rapidly growing. The Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) issued a report with population projections in 2013 for municipalities in the State. The report projected the Village of Waunakee would have a population of 13,850 in 2020. The 2020 Census identified the population of the Village to be 14,879. The DOA projects the population of the Village will be 17,530 by 2040. Small increases in population are projected for the three towns served by the District in the next fifteen years.

Waunakee Fire District Service Area				
Population Analysis**				
Municipality	2020 Census	2023 Final Estimate	2030 Estimate	2040 Estimate
Village of Waunakee	14,879	16,165	15,940	17,530
Town of Springfield	2,929	2,919	2,830	2,790
Town of Westport	4,191	4,357	4,555	4,745
Town of Vienna	1,666	1,670	1,670	1,720
Service is provided to portions of the Town of Springfield and Vienna. Population data for entire town.				
Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration				

Equalized Value Comparison: The service area of the District had a value of approximately \$3.7 Billion in 2022. The table below shows the equalized value that the District is tasked to protect.

Waunakee Fire District Service Area				
Equalized Value				
Municipality	2019	2020	2021	2022
Village of Waunakee	\$2,070,712,380	\$2,150,021,500	\$2,306,924,000	\$2,643,080,557
Town of Springfield	\$161,500,753	\$177,597,655	\$187,216,234	\$213,679,256
Town of Westport	\$634,138,530	\$650,853,487	\$699,896,413	\$817,430,561
Town of Vienna	\$28,931,647	\$30,913,933	\$32,318,276	\$36,073,706
Service is provided to portions of the Town of Springfield and Vienna. Value data for areas protected only.				
Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue				

District Organizational Structure: The District currently operates out of one station. The District has one full-time employee: a battalion chief/inspector. Volunteers/paid-per-call personnel are not considered to be employees of the Fire District, but rather members of the Volunteer Fire Department. At the time of the study, the Volunteer Department had 36 members. The organizational structure is shown below.

- 1 Fire Chief
- 1 Deputy Chief
- 1 Battalion Chief (full-time employee of the Waunakee Area Fire District)
- 1 Captain
- 3 Lieutenants
- 29 Firefighters

Call Volume Analysis: The primary purpose of a fire department is to protect persons and property in its service area. The number and type of calls along with other services provided often determines the type of fire department a municipality operates. One measure of this aspect of service is annual call volume. Incident response data was reviewed by the MCMAHON Team for 2021, 2022 and 2023.

Calls for service rose 29% in 2022 compared to 2021. A slight decrease of total calls for service occurred in 2023 in comparison to 2022. Emergency medical services (EMS) calls account for the greatest number of calls when breaking calls for service down by National Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) Categories. In many departments in the United States, EMS accounts for nearly 75% of calls for service.

Incident Type	2021			2022			2023	
	Calls	%		Calls	%		Calls	%
Fire	24	7%		22	5%		42	9%
Rupture/Explosion	0	0%		0	0%		0	0%
Rescue and Emergency Medical Services Incident	139	39%		199	43%		161	36%
Hazardous Condition (No Fire)	30	8%		23	5%		43	9%
Service Call	23	6%		22	5%		26	6%
Good Intent Call	63	18%		84	18%		71	16%
False Alarm & False Call	81	23%		113	24%		109	24%
Severe Weather & Natural Disaster	0	0%		0	0%		0	0%
Special Incident Type	0	0%		0	0%		1	0%
TOTAL	360	100%		463	100%		453	100%

IV. WAUNAKEE AREA FIRE DISTRICT OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS

Department Overview, Demographics and Environment

The District is an organization created through an intergovernmental cooperation agreement under Section 66.30 of the Wisconsin Statutes. The entire geographic area of the Village of Waunakee and portions of the Towns of Vienna, Springfield and Westport are protected by the Fire District. The response area of the Fire District is approximately 45 square miles and has an approximate population of 21,000.

The District was established in 1933 with the same partners that it has today. The intergovernmental agreement that establishes the District was last updated in 2012. Each of the member municipalities establish the services and authority of the District in their respective ordinances/codes.

The District is governed by a five-member Board. All five members must be elected officials in the respective community they represent on the Fire District Board (Village or Town Board). The

Village of Waunakee appoints two members to the Board. Each of the towns that are members of the Fire District appoints one member to the Fire District Board.

A Chairperson and Vice Chair are appointed by the Fire District Board from their five members. A Secretary/Treasurer is also appointed by the Board; however, this position does not necessarily need to be a member of the Fire District Board.

Section 2.02 of the Waunakee Area Fire District Operating Agreement outlines the responsibilities of the Fire District Board.

The District operates from one Fire Station. The station and land parcel are owned by the Village of Waunakee. The District rents the station and land from the Village. The lease is scheduled to end December 31, 2037, unless terminated earlier for other reasons cited in the lease agreement. The station is located at 401 W. Second Street in the Village of Waunakee.

The Department has an Insurance Services Office (ISO Rating) of 03/3Y. ISO published its latest rating report for the District in March 2024.

The ISO rating schedule measures the major elements of the City's fire suppression system. These measurements then are developed into a Public Protection Classification number on a relative scale from 1 to 10, with 10 representing less than the minimum recognized protection. The schedule is a fire insurance rating tool used to determine property insurance premiums that property owners pay to their insurance carrier.

According to ISO, of the 1,208 fire departments rated in Wisconsin, 251 of them are rated as a 3 or better.

Governance and Administration

Governance of the agency is outlined in the Fire District Operating Agreement.

Parties to the Operating Agreement are the Village of Waunakee, the Towns of Vienna, Westport and Springfield and the Waunakee Volunteer Fire Department. The Agreement is drafted pursuant to Wisconsin Statute 66.30 which is titled "Intergovernmental Cooperation."

The current Operating Agreement is not effective in providing sufficient oversight and direction to the provision of fire protection and other emergency services for the Village of Waunakee.

The relationship between the District and the Volunteer Fire Department does not provide effective control of the District. The Volunteer Fire Department elects the Fire Chief and officers of the Department, however the Fire District Board or the communities serviced by the District have no input as to who is elected. **MCMAHON recommends that the Fire District Operating Agreement be updated immediately to include a Fire Commission that appoints the Fire Chief and confirms appointment of officers and subordinates of the Fire Chief to conform with State Statutes. The Department should also transition to a full-time fire chief after the Agreement is updated.**

The Operating Agreement provides authority to the Board to hire personnel and establish qualifications, schedules and regulations for firefighters, however it appears the Board only exercises hiring authority over one full-time employee of the District. The Volunteer Fire Department, which is more like a firefighter’s association, selects people to join the Department. While the Volunteer Fire Department has been effective in recruiting people to join the Department, appointment of members should be confirmed by a governing body such as a Fire Commission.

Oversight of the finances of the District is the responsibility of the Board. As part of this responsibility, the Agreement calls for an annual financial audit of the District by an independent certified public accountant in accordance with the standards that will allow the municipalities the ability to include the information in their respective audited financial statements. It does not appear an audit of the District has occurred in several years. **MCMAHON recommends an annual financial audit of the District by an independent certified public accountant and the audit report be presented for review by the District’s Board.**

Cost share between the municipalities that participate in the District is determined by dividing the equalized valuation of all property within the geographic area of each municipality served by the District by the total equalized value of property in the District. The 2024 municipal contributions to the Department are detailed in the table below:

Equalized Values	2022 (for 2024 Budget)	
Municipality	Equalized Value	% Allocation
Springfield	\$213,679,256	5.76%
Vienna	\$36,073,706	0.97%
Westport	\$817,430,561	22.03%
Waunakee	\$2,643,080,557	71.24%
TOTAL	\$3,710,264,080	100.00%

Equalized value is a common method to share costs under an intergovernmental agreement. School districts that serve multiple municipalities almost exclusively use this method. Other methods to share costs under intergovernmental agreements generally involve a funding formula that takes various factors into account in addition to equalized value such as a population, square miles of area protected and calls for service.

Below is a table demonstrating the equalized value of area protected by the Waunakee Area Fire District for the past four budget years. Readers should be aware that the equalized value data used to calculate a budget is always two years behind the actual budget year the data is used for (example: 2022 data is used for 2024 budget).

Waunakee Area Fire District Service Area				
Equalized Value				
Municipality	2019 (FY2021)		2020 (FY2022)	
	Equalized Value	% of Total	Equalized Value	% of Total
Village of Waunakee	\$2,070,712,380	72%	\$2,150,021,500	71%
Town of Springfield	\$161,500,753	6%	\$177,597,655	6%
Town of Westport	\$634,138,530	22%	\$650,853,487	22%
Town of Vienna	\$28,931,647	1%	\$30,913,933	1%
TOTAL	\$2,895,283,310	100%	\$3,009,386,575	100%
Municipality	2021 (FY2023)		2022 (FY2024)	
	Equalized Value	% of Total	Equalized Value	% of Total
Village of Waunakee	\$2,306,924,000	72%	\$2,643,080,557	71%
Town of Springfield	\$187,216,234	6%	\$213,679,256	6%
Town of Westport	\$699,896,413	22%	\$817,430,561	22%
Town of Vienna	\$32,318,276	1%	\$36,073,706	1%
TOTAL	\$3,226,354,923	100%	\$3,710,264,080	100%

The percentage of the total equalized value, when split by municipality, remained very consistent for the four-year period. Based on the current method to share costs between municipalities, the consistent equalized values mean a generally stable proportionate sharing of the municipal contributions to the District.

Distribution of costs between municipalities is commonly a point of contention in shared service agreements such as fire districts. The Waunakee Fire District utilizes equalized value of the area protected to distribute costs between member municipalities.

MCMAHON evaluated other common factors used in sharing of costs in fire districts/departments that are organized under intergovernmental cooperation agreements in Wisconsin. Some of the most common factors used in cost sharing formulas in addition to equalized value are population, calls for service and square miles protected.

The charts below demonstrate examples of other cost share formulas based on the 2024 Waunakee Area Fire District Budget. The cost sharing utilizing the various formulas demonstrated below remains consistent despite the changing variables in the formula. **MCMAHON recommends maintaining the current equalized value method to share costs for the Waunakee Area Fire District.**

Waunakee Fire District Cost Distribution Percentage Analysis - 2024 Budget				
	Springfield	Vienna	Waunakee	Westport
Current Cost Distribution (Equalized Value)	5.76%	0.97%	71.24%	22.03%
Population, Eq. Value, Calls for Service*	6.15%	1.37%	72.41%	20.08%
Population, Eq. Value, Calls for Service**	6.15%	1.39%	71.80%	20.66%
* Each factor weighted at 33.33%				
** Population and Eq. Value weighted at 30%, Calls for Service weighted at 40%				
Waunakee Fire District Cost Distribution Dollar Analysis - 2024 Budget				
	Springfield	Vienna	Waunakee	Westport
Current Cost Distribution (Equalized Value)	\$59,387	\$10,026	\$734,575	\$227,183
Population, Eq. Value, Calls for Service*	\$63,412	\$14,083	\$746,652	\$207,024
Population, Eq. Value, Calls for Service**	\$63,379	\$14,373	\$740,408	\$213,011
* Each factor weighted at 33.33%				
** Population and Eq. Value weighted at 30%, Calls for Service weighted at 40%				

While the percentage of cost share is important, it is also pertinent to evaluate total dollars contributed. You will note the total municipal charges from the District to the member municipalities varied over the last five years.

Waunakee Area Fire District Municipal Charges				
2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024
\$841,024	\$860,331	\$902,525	\$1,047,183	\$1,031,171
Annual Change	2%	5%	16%	-2%

The largest increase in charges during the period reviewed by MCMAHON occurred in 2023. In that year, the District budgeted for wages and benefits for an additional fire inspector. That position was never filled. It appears most likely that the funds budgeted for the additional fire inspector in 2023 were put towards fund balance after they went unused that year.

In the 2024 Budget, the additional fire inspector position was removed from the budget. Total municipal contributions reduced by only \$10,000 that year even though most of the funds that were designated for the additional fire inspector remained as part of the municipal charges. The funds that remained in the budget were distributed between various accounts, with the most going to an increase in vehicle maintenance.

MCMAHON believes that intergovernmental cooperation agreements are very effective methods to provide services, especially fire protection. However, the current Waunakee Area Fire District Intergovernmental Agreement needs to be updated to address governance, legal and management/oversight concerns.

While the most effective method to address governance, legal and management concerns would be for the Village to propose amendments to the Fire District Operating Agreement, the current Agreement has no provision for amending the Agreement.

Making an initial offering of amendments to the parties would be the most prudent thing for the Village to do. If the other parties to the Agreement aren't open to amendments, the Village is left with one option – to provide the required 18-month notice of withdrawal from the District and start its own fire department or purchase services from another fire department.

If the Village were to withdraw from the District, the Village would receive a distribution of net assets in accordance with Section 6.02 of the District's Operating Agreement.

6.02 Distribution of Assets upon Termination. Upon termination of the District, its net assets, including those acquired by gift or donation, shall be liquidated and the money remaining after payment of all of its obligations shall be distributed to the Municipalities as provided for in Section 4.02.

4.02 Interest of Municipalities. Each Municipality shall have an interest in the net assets of the District in proportion to the total equalized value of the District when compared to the equalized value of such Municipality, determined on the basis of the latest equalized value of such property.

To provide perspective, if equalized value data from 2022 were to be used to determine distribution of net assets, the Village of Waunakee would own 71.24% of the net assets of the Department.

Equalized Values Per FD Documentation	2022 (for 2024 Budget)	
	Equalized Value	% Allocation
Springfield	\$213,679,256	5.76%
Vienna	\$36,073,706	0.97%
Westport	\$817,430,561	22.03%
Waunakee	\$2,643,080,557	71.24%
	\$3,710,264,080	100.00%

With proper notice, the Village would also be able to gain control of the fire station and property it sits on. The lease agreement between the Village and District provides for a twelve (12) month termination notice. The lease agreement specifically states one reason for termination of the lease would be if the Village decides to establish its own fire department.

While an audit was not available for the consulting team to review the specific values of assets to determine what the Village would be awarded upon termination of the District, the consulting team is confident the Village would have sufficient assets to provide fire protection services.

MCMAHON recommends a full review of the District Agreement should be completed by a municipal law attorney and the following issues be considered for change/update in the Waunakee Area Fire District Agreement:

- 1) The Waunakee Volunteer Fire Department should not be a party to an intergovernmental agreement. While the group of volunteer firefighters provide significant service to the communities serviced by the District, the volunteer fire department is an association of firefighters and should not be a party to an intergovernmental agreement since they are not a municipality.
- 2) A Fire Commission must be established in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes Chapter 61. The Commission should have the authority to appoint the chief and confirm promotions and appointments of members of the District. Once created, the Fire Commission and the Chief should create processes to allow input from members of the Department on recommendations for promotion and appointment to the Commission.
- 3) Village of Waunakee should either have a greater proportion of votes on the Fire District Board and Commission or additional language should be added to the Intergovernmental Agreement to require four affirmative votes to pass issues such as the annual budget and major purchases.
- 4) A Finance Sub-Committee of the Fire District Board should be created that includes representatives of Village and Town Administrative Staff and the Town Clerks to assist in providing recommendations to the District Board regarding fiscal issues impacting the District such as the annual budget and major purchases.
- 5) Consideration should be given to add language to allow for the member municipalities to have the ability to exempt charges (annual contributions) from their state required property tax levy cap in accordance with Wisconsin Statute 66.0603(3)(h) if the annual increase does not exceed CPI+2%.
- 6) The Agreement references in Section 7.06 that no employer-employee relationship between the Volunteer Fire Department and the municipalities exists, however, the firefighters received compensation for their work and are covered by the worker's compensation insurance provided by the District. If a Fire Commission is formed as is recommended, this employer-employee relationship and Section 7.06 should be updated so that the District is the employing entity.
- 7) A dispute resolution section should be added to the Agreement that details a process to resolve disputes regarding terms of the District Agreement. The current agreement has no such language. The only current method to deal with a dispute is for a party to withdraw from the Agreement.
- 8) A provision for a process to consider and adopt amendments to the Agreement should be added.

Assessment and Planning

An important component of community fire and emergency service provision is to establish the community's expectation of services in relation to the risks that exist in the community. These expectations allow the District to develop programs to meet community needs, prioritize those

programs based on available financial resources and to utilize data to measure the impacts of the programs.

The first step towards establishing community expectations of service is to complete an all-hazards risk assessment of the response area. **MCMAHON recommends the District complete a community risk assessment once a full-time chief is brought on board.** A risk assessment is a process for identifying potential hazards/risk exposures and their relative probability of occurrence; identifying assets at risk; assessing the vulnerability of the assets exposed; and quantifying the potential impacts of the hazard/risk exposures on the assets. Vision 20/20, a group dedicated to national strategies for fire loss prevention has a resource for how to develop a community risk assessment that is available at www.riskassessment.strategicfire.org.

Developing the community expectation of service and program outcomes is also an important component of assessment and planning for fire and emergency medical services. A document describing those expectations is called a Standard of Cover (SOC) Study. SOC includes response time goals and analysis of capabilities of the District based on critical task analysis and the community risk assessment.

The SOC should go beyond only identifying response time goals for first arriving units. While this is an important component of grading services, it is also important to measure the response times for entire response packages that are needed to mitigate the incident. **MCMAHON recommends the District create a SOC that outlines service expectations once a full-time chief is hired and annual reporting be provided to the District Board detailing current service against those expectations.**

Both the community risk assessment and the SOC can be created by the full-time chief that is hired with assistance from part-time staff. This process will likely take a year to complete.

Goals and Objectives

Establishing a strategic plan for the organization is an important way to not only set goals and objectives for the organization, but to inform stakeholders about the Department and the direction it is moving. **MCMAHON recommends that a strategic plan be developed for the District that is consistent with growth plans for the member communities once a full-time chief is hired.** It is important that Department leadership involve the organization and community in the development of the strategic plan and then report on progress towards achieving goals and objectives cited in the strategic plan to all stakeholders. This is also a project the full-time chief can take on in his/her first year.

Financial Resources

The financial resources of an organization impact every category evaluated as part of this report. Resources must be adequate to maintain the various programs to which the Department commits to provide.

Planning, management and ensuring stability of the financial resources of the District is the responsibility of the Board of Directors according to the Fire District Operating Agreement.

Through interviews with the Chief, it was learned that annually, the Chief proposes a budget to the Board and the Board acts on the proposed budget. **MCMAHON recommends the District adopt a policy on budget adoption and management of the budget to include purchasing and approval authority of the fire chief.** This will provide the Board with additional needed input on programmatic and spending priorities of the District.

Programs

This section of the report covers the delivery of services directly to the community. Communities often grade fire department service delivery based on response times. While response times should not be the sole method to evaluate service delivery, it is an important part.

Response time data is reported in a variety of manners in the fire and emergency service industry. It is best practice to report response time as the elapsed time between the time the call is answered by the 911 Dispatch Center until the arrival of the first fire department unit to the scene. This is the actual time the caller waits for emergency services to arrive.

The Department can gather data points needed to report response time in MCMAHON's recommended fashion. **MCMAHON recommends that reports on the number of responses with response time to calls for service be regularly provided to the Fire District Board as part of the fire chief's report to the Board. Reports should include response time of the first unit on scene and the first staffed fire suppression unit on scene.**

MCMAHON was able to utilize data provided by the Department and the Dane County 911 Public Safety Answering Point to evaluate average response times.

As with many volunteer fire departments, a single responder who may come from home in a personal or district vehicle is often the first arriving responder in an emergency. This provides a rapid response; however, it does not provide for a sufficiently staffed fire engine to initiate suppression of a fire.

In reviewing the Waunakee Area Fire District data, a single responder was most often the first arriving unit on the scene of a call for service, thus stopping the response time clock.

Average Response Time - All Calls - First Arriving Unit			
	2021	2022	2023
Average Response Time	3:40	3:28	3:54

The challenge with recording response times of a single responder, is that a single responder cannot start a life-safety rescue and suppression effort on his/her own. A structure fire is a high acuity call for service that a rapid response by an effectively staffed fire suppression unit is needed. MCMAHON reviewed Waunakee Area Fire District responses to reported structure fires in 2021, 2022 and 2023. As part of that review, MCMAHON not only looked at response times from the time of call, but also evaluated response times from the time the fire department was alerted of the call by the Dane County 911 Dispatch Center and then from the time the first fire suppression unit went enroute to the scene. As you will note, these provide a dramatically different picture of response time than the response time of a first arriving unit with a single responder.

Average Response Time - Structure Fires - 1st Arriving Fire Suppression Unit			
	2021	2022	2023
From Time of Call	11:41	12:16	13:27
From Time Assigned	10:24	9:42	9:30
From Time Enroute	4:20	3:47	4:16

There are no mandated requirements for response times in the State of Wisconsin. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) does, however, publish industry standards that provide recommended response times. Again, these are not laws or mandates, they are recommended standards.

To provide perspective specific to the Waunakee Area Fire District against a national standard, MCMAHON evaluated two structure fires with significant dollar loss that occurred in 2020 and 2023 and compared response times against the NFPA 1720 Standard. NFPA 1720 is a standard for volunteer fire departments. In both instances evaluated by MCMAHON, the fires occurred in a Rural Demand Zone. In both cases, the Waunakee Area Fire District met the response time standard detailed in NFPA 1720.

NFPA 1720 Table 4.3.2 Staffing and Response Time				
Demand Zone	Demographics	Minimum Staff to Respond	Response Time (minutes)	Meets Objective (%)
Urban	>1000 people/sq. mile	15	9	90
Suburban	500-1000 people/sq. mile	10	10	80
Rural	<500 people/sq. mile	6	14	80
Remote	Travel distance > 8 mi	4	Dependent	90

Source: NFPA 1720, Standard for Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments

Waunakee Area Fire District responds to many other types of calls for service other than structure fires. While the District is not the primary provider of emergency medical services for the geographic areas covered by the Fire District, it does provide support to Waunakee Area EMS in the following situations:

- A Waunakee EMS Ambulance is not available and Waunakee Area Fire is dispatched to provide the first response.

- Patient condition reported at time of dispatch indicates EMS will need additional assistance on scene.
- Motor vehicle accident and/or extrication services will be required.
- Waunakee EMS is on scene already and patient condition requires that both Waunakee EMS Paramedics are needed to care for the patient during transport to a hospital, resulting in the need for a person to drive the ambulance to the hospital.

Some fire department members cited internal frustration over the increase in requests from Waunakee Area EMS to drive an ambulance to the hospital during interviews conducted with consultants as part of this study. The consulting team evaluated the number of calls which the fire district was dispatched because of the need for firefighters to drive the ambulance from the scene to a hospital. On average, over the first four months of 2024, fire was called 3.75 times each month. It should be clear that there are other calls in which the fire department is called to assist EMS – 3.75 times per month is the number of times Waunakee Area Fire is called only to provide personnel to drive the ambulance to the hospital. The frequency of these requests appears reasonable.

MCMAHON recommends that in order to reduce burden on the District of providing personnel to drive a Waunakee Area EMS Ambulance, the District implement the following changes:

- Expand the number of members the Fire District allows to drive ambulances for Waunakee Area EMS. Currently only some members of the Fire District are allowed to drive an ambulance.
- Create duty groups to allow for smaller groups within the District to be responsible for these calls and assign each duty group a period of time they are on call for these responsibilities. If members are not on the assigned duty group for that period of time, they do not need to respond to the call. Duty groups may assist the District in other responses also. A duty group plan that was created by the District’s Command Staff in 2023 provides an effective outline for creation of such duty groups. Consideration will need to be given to compensate the members assigned to a duty group when they are “on-call” since they will be required to be available for calls. The plan submitted by the Command Staff in 2023 suggested an on-call hourly compensation rate of approximately \$2.60 per hour. This hourly compensation is provided because the on-call members are required to remain readily available to the Fire District during their on-call hours. If \$2.60 is used as an hourly rate and six members of the Fire District are on call each day, the estimated cost of the duty group program is \$140,000 per year.
- Charge Waunakee Area EMS for each occurrence where Waunakee Area Fire provides a driver to the hospital. In these cases, Waunakee EMS can bill the patient and get reimbursed for these charges.

Prevention & Public Education

The Department has an active prevention and public education program in place.

A major component of risk reduction in the fire service is a public education program. The Waunakee Area Fire District’s public education program includes school programs and community prevention activities.

A second critical component of prevention and public education programs is a fire inspection program. The State of Wisconsin requires fire inspections be completed in commercial and some multi-family residential buildings. The State provides funding assistance for completion of these inspections through the 2% Dues Program. The municipalities that participate in the District receive funding from the State under this program. A condition of receiving funding through the 2% Dues Program is to successfully pass an audit of the fire inspection and public education program conducted by the State. The District passed its most recent audit of the program. The primary job of the District's Battalion Chief/Fire Inspector is to complete these inspections and follow-up on code enforcement issues identified during these inspections.

Fire Cause and Origin Investigations

Investigations of fire cause and origin is the responsibility of the fire department according to State Statute. Commonly, law enforcement will assist in determination of cause and origin of a fire to identify if any criminal action led to the cause of the fire. The Waunakee Area Fire District will engage local law enforcement and utilize the services of the Madison Area Fire Investigation Team, a regional group, as needed.

Domestic Preparedness/Emergency Management

The Waunakee Area EMS Director serves as the emergency manager for the Village and surrounding communities. Evaluation of emergency management services was not within the scope of this engagement.

Fire Suppression

The Department effectively provides fire suppression operations for a volunteer/paid-on-call Department, however improvements to the process of requesting mutual aid to high-risk calls for service can be improved. **MCMAHON recommends the Waunakee Area Fire District implement automatic aid response agreements with neighboring departments to improve mitigation of structure fires and other major emergencies.** Currently, the District generally waits to request mutual aid until after Waunakee Fire is dispatched to a call. Automatic aid would allow for simultaneous dispatch of neighboring departments to assist in providing a rapid response of an effective force of firefighters to rapidly mitigate a fire or other emergency. Several other Departments in Dane County have effective automatic aid dispatch protocols that could be mirrored for Waunakee Area Fire.

Effective standard operating guidelines are in place to provide direction to the department members for fire suppression activities. The District has a fleet of well-maintained apparatus to support personnel in providing effective fire suppression services.

Emergency Medical Services

The District provides services to assist Waunakee Area EMS, but the District is not licensed as a provider of EMS services in Wisconsin.

Technical Rescue

The District responds to technical rescue incidents. All members are trained to perform auto extrications. The Department utilizes the City of Madison Fire Department Lake Rescue Team to assist with water rescue responses. Dane County Sherriff's Office has a dive team for sub-service rescue/recovery. Regional support for hazardous material response is provided by the regional response team, located in the City of Madison.

The resources available for technical rescue incidents are appropriate for the District.

Fire Station

The consulting team did evaluate the need for additional stations within the fire district. Additional stations would reduce response times to some areas of the fire district. The majority of the calls for service are in the Village of Waunakee, where the current fire station is located. The Town of Westport produces just over a quarter of the demand for service, however, there does not appear to be a strong need or desire for a second fire station that would be closer to the Town of Westport.

Waunakee Fire Station 7

Drive Time Analysis

- Waunakee Fire Station
- 3 Minutes or Less
- 3-5 Minutes
- 5-7 Minutes
- 7-9 Minutes
- Over 9 Minutes
- Waunakee Fire District
- Municipalities

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Disclaimer - Drive Time Analysis is created on the basis of following designated speed limits for all made where available.
Data source: Google Earth 2010-2011

County of Dane, Erie, Canada, Exr, HERE, Garmin, © 2010-2011, © 2012, © 2013, © 2014, © 2015, © 2016, © 2017, © 2018, © 2019, © 2020, © 2021, © 2022, © 2023, © 2024, © 2025, © 2026, © 2027, © 2028, © 2029, © 2030, © 2031, © 2032, © 2033, © 2034, © 2035, © 2036, © 2037, © 2038, © 2039, © 2040, © 2041, © 2042, © 2043, © 2044, © 2045, © 2046, © 2047, © 2048, © 2049, © 2050, © 2051, © 2052, © 2053, © 2054, © 2055, © 2056, © 2057, © 2058, © 2059, © 2060, © 2061, © 2062, © 2063, © 2064, © 2065, © 2066, © 2067, © 2068, © 2069, © 2070, © 2071, © 2072, © 2073, © 2074, © 2075, © 2076, © 2077, © 2078, © 2079, © 2080, © 2081, © 2082, © 2083, © 2084, © 2085, © 2086, © 2087, © 2088, © 2089, © 2090, © 2091, © 2092, © 2093, © 2094, © 2095, © 2096, © 2097, © 2098, © 2099, © 2100, © 2101, © 2102, © 2103, © 2104, © 2105, © 2106, © 2107, © 2108, © 2109, © 2110, © 2111, © 2112, © 2113, © 2114, © 2115, © 2116, © 2117, © 2118, © 2119, © 2120, © 2121, © 2122, © 2123, © 2124, © 2125, © 2126, © 2127, © 2128, © 2129, © 2130, © 2131, © 2132, © 2133, © 2134, © 2135, © 2136, © 2137, © 2138, © 2139, © 2140, © 2141, © 2142, © 2143, © 2144, © 2145, © 2146, © 2147, © 2148, © 2149, © 2150, © 2151, © 2152, © 2153, © 2154, © 2155, © 2156, © 2157, © 2158, © 2159, © 2160, © 2161, © 2162, © 2163, © 2164, © 2165, © 2166, © 2167, © 2168, © 2169, © 2170, © 2171, © 2172, © 2173, © 2174, © 2175, © 2176, © 2177, © 2178, © 2179, © 2180, © 2181, © 2182, © 2183, © 2184, © 2185, © 2186, © 2187, © 2188, © 2189, © 2190, © 2191, © 2192, © 2193, © 2194, © 2195, © 2196, © 2197, © 2198, © 2199, © 2200, © 2201, © 2202, © 2203, © 2204, © 2205, © 2206, © 2207, © 2208, © 2209, © 2210, © 2211, © 2212, © 2213, © 2214, © 2215, © 2216, © 2217, © 2218, © 2219, © 2220, © 2221, © 2222, © 2223, © 2224, © 2225, © 2226, © 2227, © 2228, © 2229, © 2230, © 2231, © 2232, © 2233, © 2234, © 2235, © 2236, © 2237, © 2238, © 2239, © 2240, © 2241, © 2242, © 2243, © 2244, © 2245, © 2246, © 2247, © 2248, © 2249, © 2250, © 2251, © 2252, © 2253, © 2254, © 2255, © 2256, © 2257, © 2258, © 2259, © 2260, © 2261, © 2262, © 2263, © 2264, © 2265, © 2266, © 2267, © 2268, © 2269, © 2270, © 2271, © 2272, © 2273, © 2274, © 2275, © 2276, © 2277, © 2278, © 2279, © 2280, © 2281, © 2282, © 2283, © 2284, © 2285, © 2286, © 2287, © 2288, © 2289, © 2290, © 2291, © 2292, © 2293, © 2294, © 2295, © 2296, © 2297, © 2298, © 2299, © 2300, © 2301, © 2302, © 2303, © 2304, © 2305, © 2306, © 2307, © 2308, © 2309, © 2310, © 2311, © 2312, © 2313, © 2314, © 2315, © 2316, © 2317, © 2318, © 2319, © 2320, © 2321, © 2322, © 2323, © 2324, © 2325, © 2326, © 2327, © 2328, © 2329, © 2330, © 2331, © 2332, © 2333, © 2334, © 2335, © 2336, © 2337, © 2338, © 2339, © 2340, © 2341, © 2342, © 2343, © 2344, © 2345, © 2346, © 2347, © 2348, © 2349, © 2350, © 2351, © 2352, © 2353, © 2354, © 2355, © 2356, © 2357, © 2358, © 2359, © 2360, © 2361, © 2362, © 2363, © 2364, © 2365, © 2366, © 2367, © 2368, © 2369, © 2370, © 2371, © 2372, © 2373, © 2374, © 2375, © 2376, © 2377, © 2378, © 2379, © 2380, © 2381, © 2382, © 2383, © 2384, © 2385, © 2386, © 2387, © 2388, © 2389, © 2390, © 2391, © 2392, © 2393, © 2394, © 2395, © 2396, © 2397, © 2398, © 2399, © 2400, © 2401, © 2402, © 2403, © 2404, © 2405, © 2406, © 2407, © 2408, © 2409, © 2410, © 2411, © 2412, © 2413, © 2414, © 2415, © 2416, © 2417, © 2418, © 2419, © 2420, © 2421, © 2422, © 2423, © 2424, © 2425, © 2426, © 2427, © 2428, © 2429, © 2430, © 2431, © 2432, © 2433, © 2434, © 2435, © 2436, © 2437, © 2438, © 2439, © 2440, © 2441, © 2442, © 2443, © 2444, © 2445, © 2446, © 2447, © 2448, © 2449, © 2450, © 2451, © 2452, © 2453, © 2454, © 2455, © 2456, © 2457, © 2458, © 2459, © 2460, © 2461, © 2462, © 2463, © 2464, © 2465, © 2466, © 2467, © 2468, © 2469, © 2470, © 2471, © 2472, © 2473, © 2474, © 2475, © 2476, © 2477, © 2478, © 2479, © 2480, © 2481, © 2482, © 2483, © 2484, © 2485, © 2486, © 2487, © 2488, © 2489, © 2490, © 2491, © 2492, © 2493, © 2494, © 2495, © 2496, © 2497, © 2498, © 2499, © 2500, © 2501, © 2502, © 2503, © 2504, © 2505, © 2506, © 2507, © 2508, © 2509, © 2510, © 2511, © 2512, © 2513, © 2514, © 2515, © 2516, © 2517, © 2518, © 2519, © 2520, © 2521, © 2522, © 2523, © 2524, © 2525, © 2526, © 2527, © 2528, © 2529, © 2530, © 2531, © 2532, © 2533, © 2534, © 2535, © 2536, © 2537, © 2538, © 2539, © 2540, © 2541, © 25

In addition to beginning planning for fire station facilities to provide twenty-four-hour staffing, **MCMAHON recommends the District install an exhaust removal system in the fire station.** The vast majority of the District's fleet of vehicles have diesel engines. Diesel engines produce emissions with particulate and gases that can cause cancer and respiratory illnesses. To counteract the transmission of these hazards, direct capture exhaust extraction systems are regularly installed in fire stations. Direct capture systems utilize hoses that are connected to the exhaust of apparatus. These hoses then vent the exhaust particulate and gases to a fan that pushes the dangerous particulate and gases outside of the building. The Federal Emergency Management Agency's Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program regularly supports installation of these systems in fire stations through the grant program. This grant funds 90% of the cost of purchase and installation of a direct capture exhaust system. Funding for this grant program is authorized by the United States Government. Applications are generally taken yearly. The estimated cost of installation of such a system is \$170,000.

Apparatus and Equipment

Apparatus and other equipment required to provide effective services are in good condition. The District has a strong capital improvement program in place that ensures vehicles and equipment are replaced when needed. There is no apparent need for additional apparatus and equipment. The funding of this capital improvement plan should be maintained.

Records Management

Maintaining reports and records for incident response, personnel matters, training documentation, vehicle and equipment maintenance, and fire inspection functions is an important function of fire department administration. The District is currently in the process of transitioning its records management software from Firehouse Records Management System (RMS) to Imagetrend Records Management System. Firehouse RMS is no longer supported by the vendor. The State of Wisconsin provides a basic version of Imagetrend RMS at no cost. During this transition period, the Department was delayed in entering its records into Imagetrend. The Department is now up to date on entering incident response records into Imagetrend RMS, however there is significant work required to transition fire inspection records. Currently, the full-time Battalion Chief is responsible for entering records into the records management system.

MCMAHON makes the following recommendations regarding the District's records management use:

- The District purchase a full-featured version a records management system. The estimated cost is \$30,000 with additional annual support fees.
- It is recommended the District train additional personnel to enter incident response reports, personnel/training and injury records, maintenance and fire inspection records into the records management system to provide additional depth in performing these tasks.
- Records of training for all personnel should be maintained in the records management system. Currently, documentation of training is maintained on paper records. A record of training should, at minimum, include the following data:
 - Date of the training
 - Training topic
 - Objectives of the training
 - Total length of the training
 - Instructor names(s)
 - Attendee(s)

Human Resources

The District has an Employee Policy and Procedure Manual. The document is dated July 28, 2003. **MCMAHON recommends this Manual be updated to reflect all types of employees (full-time, part-time, paid-on-call and volunteer) and applied to all members of the District.**

Training and Competencies

The State of Wisconsin requires firefighters to have minimum training levels. Members of the Waunakee Area Fire District generally meet the minimum training requirements set by the State.

In 2019, the State amended its training requirements to require that newly promoted/appointed fire officers (Chiefs, Captains, Lieutenants) and apparatus operators receive specific training before they can be assigned duties as fire officers and apparatus operators. Personnel who had already held positions as fire officers and apparatus operators were grandfathered. **MCMAHON recommends the District create job descriptions for all positions within the organization that detail minimum training requirements for individuals to be placed in those specific positions that meet State required minimum training requirements. These requirements should be applied to all personnel applying to fill future vacancies in fire officer and apparatus operator roles.**

Continuing education and training are primarily accomplished on training nights on the first and third Monday evenings. Training of personnel is overseen by several officers of the District. MCMAHON found the department is generally well trained, however, there should be a training plan developed annually to ensure all critical competencies are trained on and reviewed annually. There is also a need to improve documentation of training. **MCMAHON recommends the District develop an annual training plan each year and maintain records of training for all personnel in the records management system.** Currently, documentation of training is maintained on paper records. A record of training should, at minimum, include the following data:

- Date of the training
- Training topic
- Objectives of the training
- Total length of the training
- Instructor names(s)
- Attendee(s)

Essential Resources

The Village of Waunakee maintains a municipal water supply system. The Village's Water Utility maintains the water system and fire hydrants. The areas of the Towns of Springfield, Vienna and Westport protected by the Fire District do not have a municipal water system.

Two-way radio communications occur on a county-wide trunked public safety radio system that allows for interoperability with fire and law enforcement in the County. The County is responsible for system infrastructure.

911 Dispatch services are provided by the Dane County 911 Dispatch Center.

External System Relationships

The Fire District relies on the Village to maintain its apparatus through an established and effective agreement and on neighboring fire departments to provide effective public safety. Maintaining relationships with these various departments is an important component of the District being an effective organization.

The MCMAHON consulting team interviewed neighboring fire chiefs as part of the consulting engagement. Neighboring chiefs were supportive of the Waunakee Area Fire District. Several commented that there is a need to do additional inter-agency training and expressed interest in expanding automatic aid agreements with the Waunakee Area Fire District.

Health and Safety

Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Standards requires the District have an occupational safety and health committee to advise the fire chief on occupational safety and health issues within the organization (SPS330.05). The committee should be composed of representatives of the command staff and firefighters and meet at least biannually. Minutes of meetings should be maintained. **MCMAHON recommends the District establish an Occupational Safety and Health Committee to comply with SPS 330.**

V. STAFFING NEEDS OF THE DISTRICT

The Village of Waunakee and surrounding areas growth will result in an increased demand for service from the District. The Towns of Springfield, Vienna and Westport are growing, but not at the pace of the Village. The increase in service demand includes not only emergency response demand, but demand for fire inspection/prevention services and for related administrative services.

In order to meet these demands, MCMAHON recommends that, after a Fire Commission is established, the Waunakee Area Fire District employ a full-time fire chief to lead the agency. The fire chief should report to the Board and Fire Commission and be responsible for the day-to-day management of the organization, its personnel and provide administrative support for the Fire Board and Fire Commission. The Fire Chief should also be a primary contact for the village administrator, town administrator, and town clerks for day-to-day issues related to the District. The estimated cost of adding a full-time chief is \$150,000 per year (includes wages and benefits).

The current full-time battalion chief should maintain current responsibilities for fire inspections, coordinating apparatus and equipment maintenance and provide support for the Fire Chief.

Currently, staffing for response to emergencies is adequate. The members of the District are dedicated to responding when emergencies occur. Like most paid-on-call/volunteer fire departments across the Country, the District, at times, has challenges in response of members during weekday/day-time hours. The District receives significant support from area employers, including the Village of Waunakee, who allow members of the District to leave their full-time job responsibilities to respond to calls for service. In the case of the Village, seven members of the

Department of Public Works (DPW) are also members of the District and allowed to respond to calls while working for the Village. During these responses, the Village continues to pay the employees. The availability of the Village employees and those members of the District who are allowed to leave their full-time jobs to respond to calls is of significant value to the Village and Towns serviced by the Waunakee Area Fire District.

As the Village expands, the demands and responsibilities placed on the Village's DPW will likely expand as will the frequency in calls for service for the District. At some point, the frequency of fire calls will likely impact the DPW's ability to effectively service the community if the cross-trained DPW employees are leaving their DPW assignment to respond to fire calls. Similar challenges may come to local employers who currently allow their employees who are firefighters for the District in the future also. If the Village or other area employers elect to no longer allow their employees to respond to calls for service, the District will need to initiate a day-time staffing program. This program could initially be supported by a mix of full-time and part-time employees who provide service primarily on weekdays during day-time hours. **Based on current growth in demand for service MCMAHON recommends that the District plan to implement a day-time staffing program by 2029.**

A day-time staffing program should consist of a full-time fire officer and apparatus operator and two part-time firefighters working ten hour shifts during day-time hours. These positions are in addition to the full-time chief and full-time battalion chief/fire inspector. Utilizing current comparable compensation and benefit programs, the total cost of implementing such a program today is approximately \$350,000 a year. This is assuming none of the part-time employees are or become eligible for participation in the Wisconsin Retirement System or for health insurance benefits.

DAY-TIME STAFFING MODEL FOR WAUNAKEE AREA FIRE DISTRICT			
Monday - Friday			
Target Implementation: 2029			
Position	No.	Full-Time/Part-Time	Hours
Fire Chief	1	Full-Time	8A-4P
Battalion Chief/Inspector	1	Full-Time	8A-4P
Fire Officer	1	Full-Time	7A-5P
Equipment Operator/Firefighter	1	Full-Time	7A-5P
Firefighter	2	Part-Time	7A-5P
Paid-On-Call/Volunteers	20-30	Part-Time	On-Call

MCMAHON recommends the District plan for full-time staffing of the fire station by 2039. It is recommended that the Department plan for four firefighters to be on-duty at all times. This will require a total of fifteen full-time employees plus the full-time fire chief and battalion chief. In today's dollars, the total additional personnel costs to the District for these personnel reduced by the day-time staffing cost from the 2029 implementation will be \$1.5 million. Adjustments in the District budget will also need to be made to reflect costs related to ongoing equipment and training needs of these additional personnel.

The District will continue to need to rely on volunteer/paid-per-call members even after full-time staff are hired. It is imperative in the transition from a mostly volunteer/paid-per-call model to a full-time model that the District ensure that the volunteer/paid-per-call model is supported within the organization.

TWENTY-FOUR HOUR STAFFING MODEL FOR WAUNAKEE AREA FIRE DISTRICT		
7 DAYS PER WEEK/24 HOURS PER DAY		
Target Implementation: 2039		
Position	No.	Full-Time/Part-Time
Fire Chief	1	Full-Time
Battalion Chief/Inspector	1	Full-Time
Fire Officer	3	Full-Time
Equipment Operator/Firefighter	3	Full-Time
Firefighter	9	Full-Time
Paid-On Call/Volunteers	20-30	Part-Time

VI. SIMILAR SIZED FIRE DISTRICTS/MUNICIPAL FIRE DEPARTMENTS

As part of the analysis, MCMAHON sought information on similarly sized fire districts and municipal fire departments in Wisconsin. The chart below compares the Waunakee Area Fire District with six fire districts/departments in the State.

Wisconsin Comparable Fire/EMS Agencies						
Agency	Approx. Population	2023 Calls for Service	Fire	EMS Transport	Stations	Current Staffing
Deforest Windsor Fire/EMS	13,000	1,770	Yes	Yes	1	Full Time: Chief, Assistant Chief, 7 Firefighter/Paramedics/EMTs, 3 LTE Paramedics, Fire Inspector and Office Manager. Part-time: paid-on-call.
Fox Crossing Fire Department	19,000	1,407	Yes	No	2	Full Time: Chief, Assistant Chief, Division Chief, Fire Marshal, Fire Prevention Educator. Part-Time: 66 part-time/paid-on-call
Howard Fire Department	20,000	2,132	Yes	Yes	1	Full Time: Chief, Assistant Chief, 4 Battalion Chiefs, 3 Lieutenants, 9 Firefighter/EMTs. Part-Time: 30 paid-on-call
Middleton Fire District	34,000	862	Yes	No	2	Full Time: Chief, Assistant Chief, 2 Battalion Chiefs, Firefighter/Office Manager, Fire Inspector. Volunteer: 100-125 people
Oregon Area Fire District	26,000	485	Yes	Yes	1	Full-Time: Chief, Division Chief, 3 Captains and 3 Firefighter/Paramedics work 24 hour shifts. Part-Time: Staff of paid-on-call and paid-on-premise.
Verona Fire Department	14,000	1,193	Yes	No	1	Full Time: Chief, 2 Deputy Chiefs, 3 Lieutenants, 3 Firefighters work 24 hour shifts. Part-Time: Staff of Assistant Chiefs and Paid-On-Premise, Paid-On-Call and Interns.
Waunakee Area Fire District	21,000	453	Yes	No	1	Full Time: Battalion Chief. Part-Time: Chief, Chief Officers, and Firefighters

VII. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Waunakee Area Fire District has operated with four municipalities and in partnership with the Waunakee Volunteer Fire Department since 1933. The members of the Volunteer Fire Department are undoubtedly committed to serving their community. The members respond to calls for service at all hours of the day.

The District has been successful in providing fire protection services since its inception. Growth in the communities served, a reduction in citizens seeking opportunities to be volunteer firefighters, changes in demands for service and increases in qualifications and standards for members of the organization have previously and continue to impact the District.

The Village of Waunakee proactively retained MCMAHON to conduct an organizational review of the District and to develop a future needs analysis for service by the District. Included in this analysis was a review of current organizational structure, staffing, operational effectiveness, funding methodology and governance structure. The Village clearly wants to be prepared for a time when, most likely, a volunteer fire department will no longer effectively service the Village simply because of increased demand in calls for service and a decrease in the population seeking opportunities to be volunteer firefighters.

Through its analysis, MCMAHON was impressed with the commitment of the current members of the Volunteer Fire Department to serve the community using a volunteer/paid-per-call model. The District will however be challenged to continue utilizing a volunteer/paid-per-call model in the next ten years. A plan to begin slowly transitioning the District to an organization that relies more on career, full-time staffing to be prepared for a decrease in members of the community willing to volunteer as firefighters is included in the report.

Transitioning to a model that relies on more career staff will result in increased costs for the District's member municipalities. This analysis should provide the municipalities with a means to prepare for those upcoming changes in costs to provide fire protection.

MCMAHON'S recommendations also highlight the need to amend the governance structure of the District. Amending the governance is imperative as costs will grow with a transition over the next decade to more full-time employees. Seven recommendations are included in the Analysis specific to governance of the Fire District. Two of the most significant governance recommendations are:

- The member municipalities need to have direct control over who is appointed as the Fire Chief. Currently, the Fire Chief and his/her officers are elected by the Volunteer Fire Department, which functions as an association of firefighters. MCMAHON recommends that a Fire Commission be established in accordance with State Statutes. A Fire Commission has broad authority under the statutes with the most important being the authority to appoint a fire chief and confirm appointments of his/her officers and subordinates. Moving the authority to appoint the chief to a fire commission does not

necessarily mean firefighters cannot have input to the Commission on who is appointed as Fire Chief, but it provides final decision-making authority in the hands of the Fire Commission in accordance with State Statutes.

- The creation of a Fire Commission should not only provide the municipalities governance over appointing the fire chief, but it should also ensure all firefighters are brought under the Fire District as employees.

The Village of Waunakee pays just over 70% of the municipal contributions to the District. The Town of Vienna, the smallest financial contributor, pays less than 1% of the municipal contributions to the District. MCMAHON recommends either additional board member positions be added for the Village on the District Board or specific issues such as the annual budget and major purchases require at least four affirmative votes of the District Board. An alternative, if additional board seats or supermajority voting cannot be achieved in the governance, is for the Village of Waunakee to leave the District and create a municipal fire department with the assets it obtains. The Village's Fire Department could then contract with interested townships for service and ultimately have full control of the financial and operational issues in the fire department.

The Analysis includes an estimated ten-year timeline for the District to prepare to move to a more career-based staffing model as opposed to the current volunteer/paid-per-call model. It is recommended that after the District forms a Fire Commission, a full-time fire chief be hired for the District. The Chief will be responsible for providing administrative and operational oversight for the District, reporting to the Fire District Board and Commission. This should include developing a strategic plan, community risk assessment and standards of cover for the District. It is imperative the new Fire Chief ensure the current model of utilizing volunteer/paid-per-call response remains effective as long as possible and prepares the organization and its infrastructure for what is most-likely a transition to a career based, full-time model over the next ten years.

SUMMARY OF WAUNAKEE AREA FIRE DISTRICT ANALYSIS RECOMMENDATIONS	
Category	Recommendation
Governance and Administration	MCMAHON recommends that the Fire District Operating Agreement be updated immediately to include a Fire Commission that appoints the Fire Chief and confirms appointment of officers and subordinates of the Fire Chief to conform with State Statutes. The Department should transition to a full-time fire chief after the Agreement is updated.
Governance and Administration	MCMAHON recommends an annual financial audit of the District by an independent certified public accountant and the audit report be presented for review by the District's Board.
Governance and Administration	MCMAHON recommends maintaining the current equalized value method to share costs for the Waunakee Area Fire District.
Governance and Administration	MCMAHON recommends a full review of the District Agreement should be completed by a municipal law attorney and the following issues be considered for change/update in the Waunakee Area Fire District Agreement:
	1) The Waunakee Volunteer Fire Department should not be a party to the Agreement. While the group provides significant service to the communities served, the group is more of an association of firefighters and shouldn't be party to an intergovernmental agreement.
	2) A Fire Commission must be established in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes.
	3) The Village of Waunakee should either have a greater proportion of votes on the Fire District Board and Commission or additional language should be added to the Agreement to require four affirmative votes to approve items such as the annual budget and major purchases.
	4) A Finance Sub-Committee of the District Board should be created that includes representatives of Village and Town Administrative Staff and the Town Clerks to assist in providing recommendations to the District Board regarding fiscal issues impacting the District such as the annual budget and major purchases.
	5) Consideration should be given to add a provision to the Agreement to allow the member municipalities to exempt contributions to the District from the state required property tax levy cap if the increase in contributions to the District do not exceed CPI plus 2% annually.

	6) Remove the statement in Section 7.06 that states "no employer-employee relationship between the Volunteer Fire Department and the municipalities exist."
	7) A dispute resolution section should be added to the Agreement that details a process to resolve disputes regarding terms of the District Agreement. The current agreement has no such language. The only current method to deal with a dispute is for a party to withdraw from the Agreement.
	8) A provision for a process to consider and adopt amendments to the Agreement should be added.
Assessment and Planning	MCMAHON recommends the District complete a community risk assessment once a full-time chief is brought on board.
Assessment and Planning	MCMAHON recommends the District create a Standard of Cover that outlines service expectations once a full-time chief is hired and annual reporting be provided to the District Board detailing current service against those expectations.
Goals and Objectives	MCMAHON recommends that a strategic plan be developed for the District that is consistent with growth plans for the member communities once a full-time chief is hired.
Financial Resources	MCMAHON recommends the District adopt a policy on budget adoption and management of the budget to include purchasing and approval authority of the fire chief.
Programs	MCMAHON recommends that reports on the number of responses and response time to calls for service be regularly provided to the Fire District Board as part of the fire chief's report to the Board. Reports should include response time of the first unit on scene and the first staffed fire suppression unit on scene.
Programs	MCMAHON recommends that in order to reduce burden on the District of providing personnel to drive a Waunakee Area EMS Ambulance, the District implement the following changes:
	1) Expand the number of members the Department allows to drive ambulances for Waunakee EMS by updating the minimum requirements to drive ambulances.
	2) Create duty groups for response to calls for service.
	3) Charge Waunakee EMS for providing fire personnel to drive an ambulance to the hospital.

Fire Suppression	MCMAHON recommends the Waunakee Area Fire District implement automatic aid response agreements with neighboring departments to improve mitigation of structure fires and other major emergencies.
Physical Resources	As service demand increases over the next decade, MCMAHON recommends the District begin planning to make improvements to the facility to accommodate staff that would eventually work twenty-four hour shifts at the station. This would most likely involve expansion of the current facility as sufficient space for sleeping rooms and other accommodations required for twenty-four-hour staffing is not available in the current facility.
Physical Resources	MCMAHON recommends the District install an exhaust removal system in the fire station.
Physical Resources	MCMAHON makes the following recommendations regarding the District's records management use:
	1) The District purchase a full-featured version of a records management system.
	2) Train additional personnel to enter incident response reports, personnel/training and injury records, maintenance and fire inspection records.
	3) Ensure training records are maintained and updated in the records management system.
Human Resources	MCMAHON recommends the Personnel Manual be updated to reflect all types of employees (full-time, part-time, paid-on-call and volunteer) and applied to all members of the District.
Training and Competencies	MCMAHON recommends the District create job descriptions for all positions within the organization that detail minimum training requirements for individuals to be placed in those specific positions that meet State required minimum training requirements. These requirements should be applied to all personnel applying to fill future vacancies in fire officer and apparatus operator roles.
Training and Competencies	The District should create an annual training plan that ensures all critical competencies are trained on and reviewed annually.

Health and Safety	MCMAHON recommends the District establish an Occupational Safety and Health Committee to comply with SPS 330.
Staffing Needs	Based on current growth in demand for service MCMAHON recommends that the District plan to implement a day-time staffing program by 2029.