

**Whitemarsh Township**  
**Fire and Emergency Services Planning Process**  
**December 2025**

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## **Executive Summary**

Whitemarsh Township's volunteer fire companies and community ambulance service have fatefully served the Township and surrounding communities for decades. Members provide essential fire, rescue, and medical services when citizens are having the worst day of their lives. The emergency services environment in Pennsylvania has dramatically changed over the past twenty years. Changes in volunteer availability, member demographics, community expectations, and operating cost are key issues within Whitemarsh Township. Additionally, there has been a lack of coordination between the independent organizations and no incentive to do just that. Whitemarsh Township has the legal responsibility to ensure fire and emergency medical services and attempts by the Emergency Services Board to ensure collaboration and planning have had little success. To effectively ensure essential fire and emergency medical services are available to community, Whitemarsh Township must take a strategic role in leading, coordinating and managing. To accomplish this vision, a unified organizational structure for Whitemarsh Township should be developed with the following components:

1. Formally establish a Department of Fire & Emergency Services by ordinance.
2. An executive leadership position (Township Chief of Fire and Emergency Services) is recruited and appointed by the Board of Supervisors. This position would have the authority and responsibility to ensure collaboration, a common vision and perform conflict resolution.
3. Develop formal service agreements between the Township and each organization. The agreements would include performance measures and

expectations and should be developed collaboratively with the leadership of each organization.

4. The current Emergency Services Board should be transformed into the Public Safety Coordination Board with responsibility for information sharing, advocacy, and developing overall yearly township goals and objectives.

## **Report Organization**

This report is organized in the following sections:

<b>Section</b>	<b>Page</b>
Consultant Analysis & Recommendations	4
Recommended Implementation Timeline	14
Chief of Fire & EM Example One Year Plan	15
Comparable Municipalities	16
Sustaining Fire Services In Pennsylvania	18
Example Ordinances	23
Example Job Description	36
Example Emergency Services Agreement	45
Example Standard of Cover	48
Unified Organizational Structure	51
Project Data / Survey / Interviews	54

## **Consultant Analysis and Recommendations**

The consultant has been working since May with the key emergency services (fire and ambulance service) stakeholders. Numerous meetings, interviews, surveys, and a basic data review have identified an important theme that needs to be communicated to the Township Supervisors. We have completed one-third of the project with the following information used as the foundation to develop recommendations for improvement.

### Emergency Services Environment in 2025

The local, regional, state, and national fire and emergency medical services environment has dramatically changed over the past 25 years. There are many reasons for the change, however the following are leading factors.

- Demographics Changes in Emergency Services Volunteerism- communities have grown, and populations have become older, families need two plus incomes to live, and other nonhazardous volunteer opportunities exist.
- Reliability of legacy systems – call volume demand, time commitment, and lifestyle changes have contributed to understaffed or failed responses.
- Economics - traditional methods of funding have stagnated or decreased, costs have increased. There is more competition for donations.
- Nonprofit and local government responsibility – as nonprofits have requested additional funding from government, accountability and performance standards have increased.

- Community expectations – the fire service has become an all-hazard agency responding to many calls beyond fire and rescue. EMS has become the default primary healthcare provider for many. Public events have expanded the need for participation.
- Organization design and increasing complexity – membership driven organizations are naturally slow to make decisions and have a certain amount of conflict baked into the culture. That culture can stall organizational progress.
- Technology – building construction, fires in modern buildings, automated vehicles, expanded scopes of practice for EMS leads to the constant need to evolve.

As the environment changed in Pennsylvania, township governing boards, volunteer organizations, and nonprofits have adapted to meet community emergency response needs.

#### Whitemarsh Township Current Status

Whitemarsh Township is relying on volunteer fire companies and a community ambulance service designed in a different time. The organizations (members and employees) are very dedicated and committed to providing excellent service and have modernized operations to a certain point as needed to meet community expectations. That includes using modern volunteer recruitment methods and retention incentive programs and adding paid staff at the volunteer fire companies. The ambulance service

has increased staffing hours, technology, and units. These efforts have improved reliability or the ability to respond to calls. The Township has provided increased funding over the years. All the organizations appear to be good financial stewards of donations, investments, fundraising income, and township provided funds\*.

\*The consultant conducted a very basis analysis of documents provided by the organizations and the township. This is not an endorsement of what the funds were used for only if the documents meet acceptable nonprofit reporting standards.

The organizational leadership of the Spring Mill, Barren Hill FCs, and Whitemarsh Community Ambulance clearly communicated to the consultant current and future concerns that could jeopardize emergency response. Those concerns include a lack of effective communication with the township, little cooperation between the three emergency services organizations, at times inadequate staffing (volunteer & paid) for emergency calls, and the increasing cost of operating.

Many of the issues identified in a 2006 township emergency services study remain today. Although some recommendations have been addressed over the past 19 years, the foundational ones have not. Over the past 19 years there have been:

- Numerous different Township Supervisors
- Four different Township Managers
- Three different Police Chiefs
- Four different Fire Marshals
- Six different Fire Chiefs at Spring Mill
- Two different Fire Chiefs at Barren Hill

- Two different EMS Chiefs at Whitemarsh Ambulance

The organizations continue to operate independently with little or no strategic guidance, direction, and expectations from the Township Supervisors. The Fire Marshal serves in a liaison function with responsibility but no authority beyond designated daily duties.

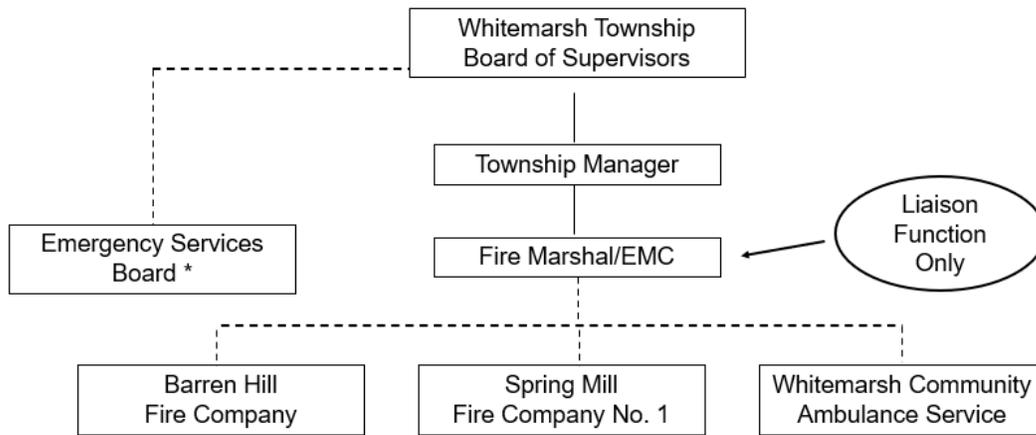
The emergency services board is not utilized to its full potential and has become a meet and discuss body with little outcomes beyond basic operational reporting. Decision making is made independently within each organization with little strategic consideration for the township or the region.

This organizational structure hinders the ability to plan for and implement a modern fire rescue and emergency medical service system that will ensure 24 hours a day, 7 day a week, 365 days per year reliable service to the community collectively and comprehensively.

The consultant has on numerous occasions during this process heard requests from stakeholders that the fire companies, ambulance, and other township departments to work together collaboratively. The current environment and organizational structure work directly against collaborative efforts.

Succeeding in today's complex emergency services environment requires commitment and clear intent from the governing body and staff that can implement and monitor performance and have the authority to lead, manage, and promote collaborative efforts.

## Current Organizational Structure



\*ESB Duties – assist in provision of volunteer emergency services, proposes amendments to fire code, ordinances, and regulations. Advises the BoS from time to time on all matters involving the provision of volunteer emergency services in the Township.

The current organizational structure has limited formal requirements, expectations, or reporting relationships. The Township has the legal responsibility to ensure fire and emergency medical services and provides each organization with significant funding but utilizes the Fire Marshal position in a liaison role. Each organization operates independently.

The fire and emergency medical services in Whitemarsh Township are at an inflection point that will require a change to the organizational structure and incremental modernization to governance. Ensuring the continuity and respecting the dedication of the Barren Hill, Spring Mill VFCs and Whitemarsh Community Ambulance is especially important. The consultant worked directly with the leadership of the fire companies and ambulance service and validated the following weaknesses and threats to their organizations:

- No agreed upon strategic direction on improving beyond doing what we are currently doing.
- Historical (long-term) real or perceived conflict and distrust between each organization and with the township.
- Perceived or real lack of collaboration between organizations
- Ensuring consistent staffing with trained and certified firefighters and fire officers.
- Facilities designed for modern fire and EMS operations.
- Increased cost of operations and capital equipment for fire companies.
- Sustainable and predictable funding for the ambulance service to ensure continued staffing and equipment updates.

### Organizational Culture

It is clear to the consultant that each organization has a different organizational culture. Organizational culture is the shared values, beliefs, behaviors, and assumptions that shape an organization's social and psychological environment, influencing "how things are done around here". There is no shared consensus on a future vision to ensure the effective and efficient provision of modern fire and ambulance services. Because of the culture and current organizational structure, it is exceedingly difficult to integrate and collectively improve emergency services in Whitemarsh Township. No one leader has the responsibility, authority, and credibility to drive organizational change and improvement.

## Recommendations for strategic direction, collaboration, and support

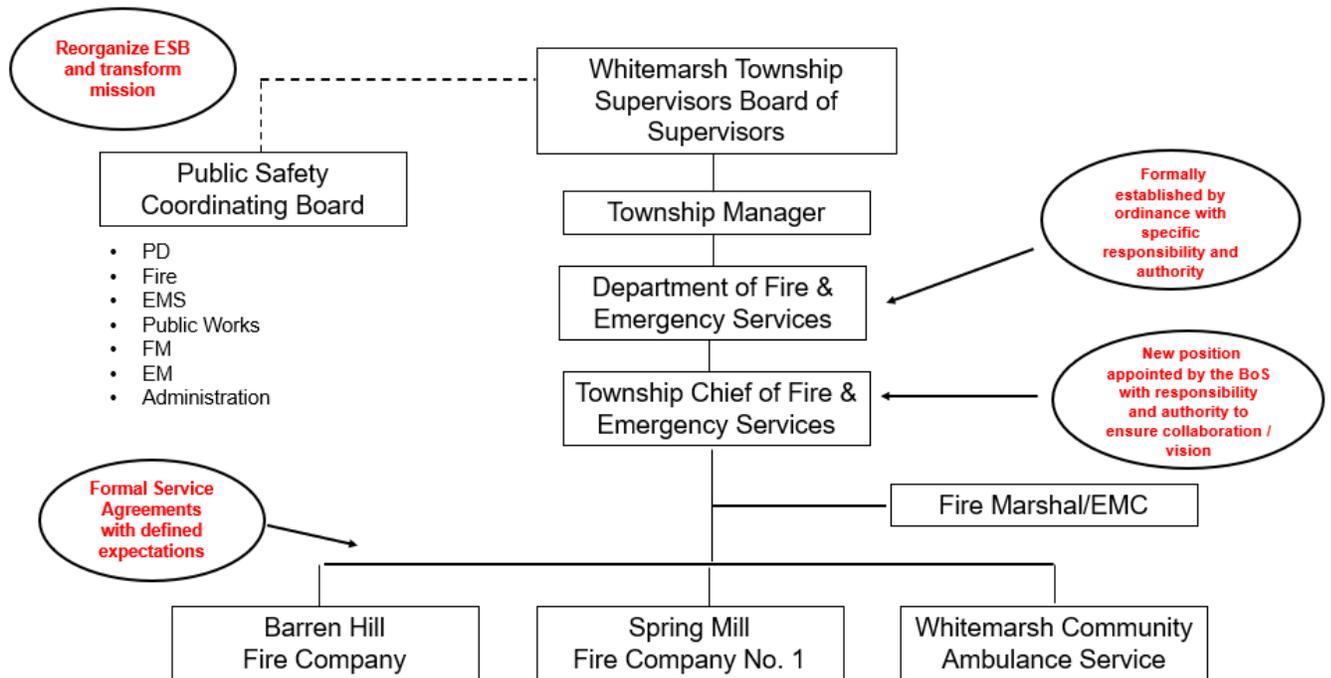
To address the need for collaborative leadership and identified weaknesses and threats in Whitemarsh Township and to move forward with a collective vision the Township Supervisors should commit to:

- Develop a position titled Whitemarsh Township Chief of Fire and Emergency Services, recruit, and appoint an experienced combination emergency services executive leader to provide strategic direction, operational coordination, and administrative support. The Chief of Fire and Emergency Services would lead all Township fire, fire marshal, EMS, emergency management services and should be equal in rank with the police chief. This position would promote collaboration, ensure facilitation between all the organizations, and provide necessary leadership. The Chief would have strong experience in leading volunteer and combination emergency services organizations.
- The Township Chief of Fire and Emergency Services role, responsibility and authority must be authorized in the township code.
- The Township Chief of Fire and Emergency Services would collaborate with all stakeholders to identify and implement a clear vision for the future and intent for the fire companies and emergency medical services within Whitemarsh Township.

- In collaboration with Barren Hill, Spring Mill fire companies, and Whitemarsh Community Ambulance the Township Chief of Fire and Emergency Services would develop and codify a formal agreement for services that clearly outlines expectations, performance measurement, and accountability. This would include response and staffing performance standards.
- The Township Chief of Fire and Emergency Services in collaboration with stakeholders will establish a unified organizational and operational structure that formally connects the independent organizations that will ensure and promote communication and accountability. The unified structure will allow the organizations to remain independent for certain functions and joint for others.
- The current emergency services board should be transformed into a Public Safety Coordinating Board and be empowered to establish and monitor yearly goals and objectives. The board should also be used for information sharing.
- The Township Chief of Fire and Emergency Services would facilitate the development of a community risk assessment and standard of cover for fire, rescue, and emergency medical services. This document will assist in defining performance standards.

The following is a recommended unified organizational structure for Whitemarsh

Township:



The following steps would be used to implement the organizational structure.

1. The Department of Fire & Emergency Services is formally established by ordinance.
2. The executive leadership position (Township Chief of Fire and Emergency Services) is appointed by the Board of Supervisors. This position would have the authority and responsibility to ensure collaboration and a common vision.

3. Formal service agreements would be established between the Township and each organization. The agreements would include performance measures and expectations and should be developed collaboratively with the leadership of each organization.
  
4. The current Emergency Services Board would be transformed into the Public Safety Coordination Board with responsibility for information sharing and advocacy and developing overall yearly township goals and objectives.

## Recommendation Implementation and Timeline

The implementation of the recommendations should take place in 2026 with hiring the executive leader being the priority. It should take five (5) to six (6) months from position approval to the first day of work. Concurrently the Township could work to develop and modify ordinances to establish the authority and responsibilities of the executive leader. Once the position has been filled the executive leader will assess the situation, develop relationships, and then make recommendations for formal agreements with the fire companies and the ambulance service. That should occur in the fall of 2026 prior to the development of the 2027 budget.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
February 2026	Approval of Plan Recommendations	Township Supervisors
February - June 2026	Establish the position, recruit, and hire Chief	Township Manager / Staff
April - July 2026	Develop and authorize ordinance	Township Manager / Staff
July - September 2026	Establish vision for the future	Chief of Fire & Emergency Services
September - November 2026	Establish services agreement for year 1	Chief of Fire & Emergency Services
September - November 2026	Establish unified command structure	Chief of Fire & Emergency Services
January - April 2027	Develop township standard of cover	Chief of Fire & Emergency Services

## Chief of Fire & Emergency Services Example Year One Plan

The following is an example plan that the Township Chief of Fire & Emergency Services can utilize to introduce themselves to the community, identify issues, begin planning, and gain consensus with all stakeholders to move forward.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Attendees / Responsibility</b>
<b>1st Quarter</b>	
Introductory email	All key stakeholders
Meet and Greet social event	Elected officials, Fire company members, twp. staff
Fire Company Board meeting attendance	Fire company leadership
Attend fire company training	Fire company members
Individual interviews	Anyone who would like to provide feedback
Membership survey	Develop/distribute online survey to seek feedback
Mutual aid leadership meeting	Meet with area Chiefs in an informal setting
Run calls	Be available to run calls with the companies
Develop strategic planning committee	Twp. Supervisors, FD leadership, Twp. Manager
<b>2nd Quarter</b>	
Mission & Vision Development Session	Strategic planning committee
Strategic Planning session	
- SWOT	Strategic planning committee
- Develop year-one goals	Strategic planning committee
- Complexity analysis	Strategic planning committee
Gaining consensus activities	Strategic planning committee
Identify administrative / operational challenges	Strategic planning committee
<b>3rd Quarter</b>	
Provide update briefing	Supervisors, Manager, FC members
Strategic plan endorsement / approval	Twp. Supervisors
Fire company board meeting attendance	Fire Chief
Develop implementation timeline for next year	Fire Chief
Next year budget development based on goals	Fire Chief with input from stakeholders
<b>4th Quarter</b>	
Budget Presentation	Fire Chief
Identify possible future regional solutions	Fire Chief
Next year administrative / operational planning	Fire Chief

## Comparable Size Municipalities

There are comparable size municipalities within Pennsylvania with similar demographics of Whitemarsh Township. Although no two municipalities are the same in Pennsylvania, there is an opportunity to design a custom model that can reset the environment and provide a better structure for decision-making that will lead to effective collaboration. The following townships have been identified by the consultant as comparable to Whitemarsh. The comparable data includes the following:

1. Population
2. Number of households
3. Square miles
4. Population density
5. NFPA Demand Zone – risk classification for needed fire staffing.
6. Number of fire companies
7. Type of EMS (Community Nonprofit, Regional Nonprofit, or Municipal)
8. Municipal funding – budget number from each municipality
9. Fire Staffing – current level of staffing.
10. Leadership – Township Level leadership
11. State Relief Funding – funding from the Commonwealth.

County	Montgomery	Montgomery	Cumberland	Mongomery
Municipality (Township)	Whitemarsh	Montgomery	Silver Spring	Limerick
Population	19,707	25,862	19,652	21,536
Households	6744	8811	8118	8153
Square Miles	14.7	10.6	22.8	22.8
Population Density	1341	2440	862	945
NFPA 1720 Demand Zone	Urban	Urban	Suburban	Suburban
Number of Fire Companies	2	1	2	1
EMS	Community	Regional	Community	Regional
Municipal Funding (Fire/EMS/FM)	\$ 1,440,975	\$ 1,668,640	\$ 2,262,684	\$ 2,811,883
Fire Staffing	Daytime Paid	Daytime Paid	24/7 Drivers	Volunteer
Township Chief Fire Officer	FM Liaison	Career Chief	PS Director	FM Liaison
State Fire Relief Funding 2024	\$ 213,262	\$ 220,939	\$ 190,718	\$ 183,340

County	Bucks	Cumberland	Cumberland
Municipality (Township)	Newtown	East Pennsboro	Lower Allen
Population	19,817	21,022	20,099
Households	7675	9035	7853
Square Miles	11.98	10.8	10.3
Population Density	1654	1946	1951
NFPA 1720 Demand Zone	Urban	Urban	Urban
Number of Fire Companies	1	2	2
EMS	Regional	Community	Municipal
Municipal Funding (Fire/EMS/FM)	\$ 2,800,535	\$ 2,134,498	\$ 5,221,795
Fire Staffing	Daytime FFs	Volunteer	PSO/Vol
Township Chief Fire Officer	Career Chief	Career Chief	Career Chiefs
State Fire Relief Funding 2024	\$ 150,813	\$ 136,518	\$ 138,195

\* Does not include funding raised by the individual nonprofit fire companies and EMS

### Executive Leadership

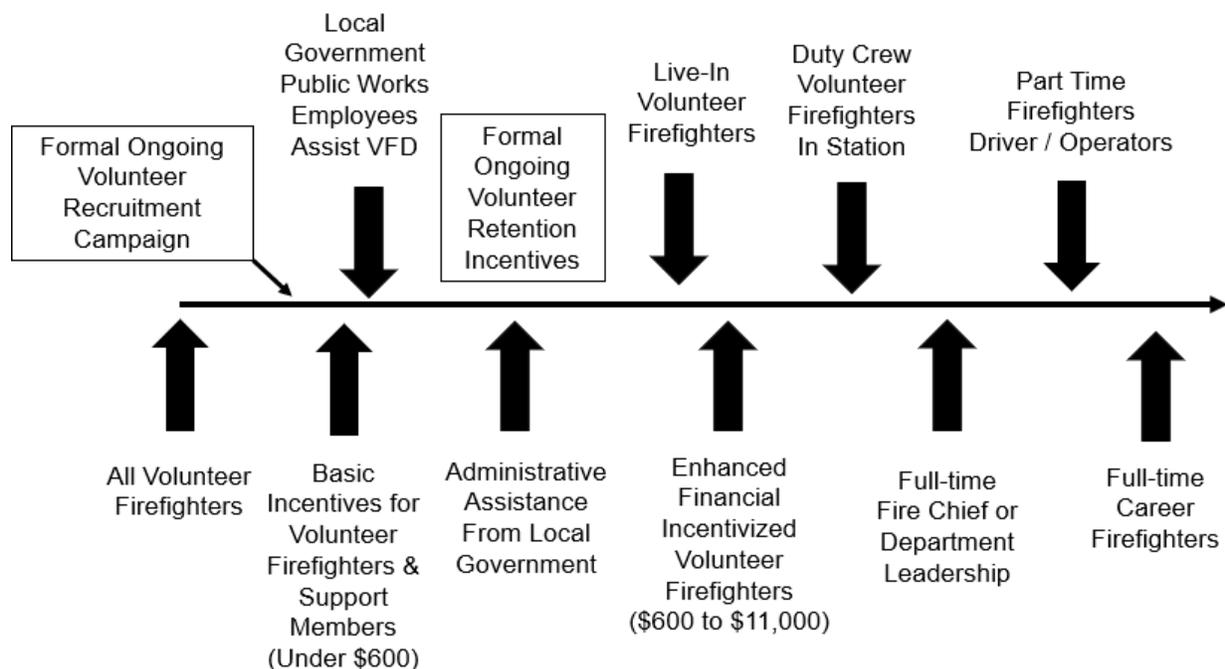
The following is an example of municipalities that have implemented the career executive leadership model to support the current volunteer / combination fire departments:

- Radnor Township – Delaware County
- Middletown Township – Delaware County
- West Manchester Township – York County
- Lower Morland Township / Bryn Athyn Borough – Montgomery County
- Ross Township – Allegheny County
- Cranberry Township – Butler County
- Butler Township – Butler County
- Pine Township - Allegheny County

## Sustaining Fire Service in Pennsylvania

The volunteer fire service, working with their local government has evolved to meet the well-known challenge including the declining number firefighters. All-volunteer fire companies in Pennsylvania have changed and adapted to ensure a consistent response with trained firefighters.

The following diagram shows the programs that departments across Pennsylvania have implemented to ensure the ability to respond to emergency calls with trained firefighters.



An organization can adopt **one or more steps** to ensure an emergency response and continue effective administrative operations. Once the need is addressed it should be assessed over time for continued effectiveness. If the emergency response need is met it is not required to move on to the next step.

All-volunteer fire – volunteers primarily respond from home or work when an emergency call is dispatched. They receive no financial compensation or benefits beyond workers' compensation or basic accident / disability insurance coverage.

Volunteer recruitment campaign – the most successful volunteer fire companies in Pennsylvania have implemented a formal recruitment campaign.

Local government public works employees assist the VFC – In some municipalities, local government employees are permitted to leave normal job duties when an emergency call is dispatched. This concept assists the VFC with drivers or firefighters (if trained & certified to that level) during normal daytime hours.

Incentivized volunteers – Volunteer firefighters are provided financial and nonfinancial incentives for certain levels of participation. A volunteer firefighter can receive up to \$600 in cash without having to report it as income for taxation purposes. Some VFCs provide free t-shirts, dinners, and other service-based awards based on level of activity. Others have implemented significant voluntary financial stipends and or duty crew programs. These programs follow the Department of Labor; Fair Labor Standards Act and do not stipend firefighters greater than 20% of the average career firefighter's salary. Each stipend firefighter receives an IRS 1099 at the end of each year.

Administrative assistance from local government – As the complexity of running the administrative side of the nonprofit corporation increase, the availability of qualified members to hold critical roles may decrease. Local governments have provided certain services to VFCs to reduce the administrative burden. These include accounting, HR, and point of contact services.

Fire Administrative Officer / Administrative Assistant – as administrative tasks and functions continue to increase paid administrative staff is added to support the volunteer fire department. Both local government and nonprofit organizations have hired administrative staff to support.

Work or college live-in program – To relieve community volunteers from increased call volume and to ensure a rapid response, VFCs have developed live-in programs. This model adds a classification of membership to the organizations bylaws and permits qualified volunteers to live rent free at that fire station. It is best practice to have certain rules and regulations for the live-in member to ensure accountability.

Stipend or pay per call duty crew – Volunteer members are paid a cash stipend for call response or for in station staffing. To remain FSLA compliant, a volunteer firefighter cannot receive more than 20% of a career firefighter salary in compensation for staffing. Stipend programs have been successful in ensuring trained firefighters are consistently available for emergency response.

Full-time Fire Chief – As the complexity of volunteer organizations increase, the need for consistent qualified leadership becomes a necessity. That complexity is based upon company call volume, community risk analysis, and numerous administrative tasks necessary to keep the organization running.

Part time firefighters and drivers – If a traditional volunteer come from home model, incentive program, or live-in program does not yield adequate results, part time hourly staff may be necessary. Part-time staffing includes pay per hour to staff the station. This model guarantees a response by having firefighters scheduled to be in station ready for an emergency response.

Full-time career firefighters – This is the final step in the transition from an all-volunteer model. The municipality or VFC hires full-time employees (firefighters) to staff the station 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 52 weeks per year. It is the most expense model and will require a Career Fire Chief to manage the operation.

Spring Mill and Barren Hill fire companies have utilized almost all the sustainability options. With some exceptions. The fire companies do not have live-in firefighters or utilize duty crews. The volunteer fire chiefs continue to lead the companies.

### Pennsylvania Fire Service Organizational Structures

The organization of fire and emergency medical services in Pennsylvania has evolved as complexity has increased and traditional structures struggled to adapt to service delivery demands.

Historically the volunteer fire service provided solid performance with dedicated membership who not only responded to emergency calls but raised funds for operations and capital equipment. The following is a historical outline of the changing environment between local government and the nonprofit community volunteer fire company.

- Volunteer fire companies rapidly expanded in the 1950's as suburban areas grew following WW2 and the Korean War. There was a need for service and community members came together as good citizens and started an organization. Outside of cities and some Boroughs in Pennsylvania, local government had limited involvement in the fire service.
- In the mid to late 1980's administrative complexity began to increase, and many volunteer fire companies formally incorporated into nonprofits (501c3, or 501c4). Community fundraising was the primary source of income.
- Traditionally, most local governments have had a hands-off approach to the separate nonprofit volunteer fire company. This has been changing in some areas.
- As community demographics change and complexity of providing service increase, some local governments have had to assume increased responsibilities for ensuring and funding fire services.

- As the nonprofit volunteer fire company funding streams changed, there was need for increased municipal funding through fire taxes or general funding.
- Some local governments have purchased / built fire stations and have completely funded fire apparatus. Funds are also provided for general operating expenses.
- Some local governments have hired full-time professionals to coordinate and support fire service operations.
- The organizational connection or chain of command between the local government and nonprofit VFC is very important.
  - Some operate (the chain of command) by committee and have limited expectations beyond funding.
  - Some local governments have hired employees (Fire Chief or Director) and are the designated executive leader.
  - Some use the elected volunteer fire chief and the lead fire services official.
- Consistently over the past 10 years, the top three (3) issues facing Pennsylvania's volunteer fire service organizations include:
  - Funding – costs increasing, and traditional funding methods have decreased.
  - Internal struggles – HR related issues, financial related scandals.
  - Inconsistent in adequate staffing and response due to decrease in volunteers.
- Traditional organizational structures (independent nonprofit VFCs) are sometimes challenged to adapt to modern administrative and operational tasks. They are membership driven, with elected leadership that are focused on operational issues and sometimes slow to make decisions due to the complex nature and time constraints.
- It is critical that the volunteer fire service organizations practice solid nonprofit management with the following:
  - Use modern bylaws with diverse and effective governance practices
  - Have administrative policies
  - Have operational guidelines
  - Conduct strategic planning that includes:
    - Ongoing volunteer recruitment campaigns

- Staffing model to ensure a response
- Adopt and use an equipment replacement plan
- Provide retention incentives
- Ensure a method to get the right people in the right leadership positions.

## Sample Ordinance(s) Cranberry and Lower Allen Townships

### Chapter 7 FIRE PROTECTION Cranberry

#### Part 1

#### DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES (DFES)

- § 7-101. Establishment of Department.
- § 7-102. Appointment of Chief of DFES.
- § 7-103. Powers and Duties of Chief of DFES.

#### Part 2

#### VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

- § 7-201. Official Recognition.
- § 7-202. Authorization to Provide Services.
- § 7-203. Authorized Activities.
- § 7-204. Rules and Requirements for CTVFC.
- § 7-205. Facilities.
- § 7-206. Equipment.

#### Part 1

#### DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES (DFES)

- § 7-101. Establishment of Department. [Ord. No. 2020-495, 6/4/20201]

There is hereby created within the Township of Cranberry, Butler County, Pennsylvania, a Department of Fire and Emergency Services which shall be responsible for the coordination of services rendered by the Cranberry Township Volunteer Fire Company, the Emergency Management Agency, Cranberry Township Emergency Medical Services (CTEMS) and any successor agency providing emergency services to Cranberry Township.

- § 7-102. Appointment of Chief of DFES. [Ord. No. 2020-495, 6/4/2020]

The Board of Supervisors may appoint a Chief of DFES who shall be the chief administrative and operations officer of the Department. The Chief of DFES shall report to the Township Manager or their designee.

§ 7-103. Powers and Duties of Chief of DFES. [Ord. No. 2020-495, 6/4/2020]

The Chief of DFES shall have all powers and duties assigned to him/her by the Township Manager and pursuant to Section 1803 of the Second Class Township Code, provided that nothing contained herein shall affect the current corporate status of the Cranberry Township Volunteer Fire Company (CTVFC) and Cranberry Township Emergency Medical Services (CTEMS), as independent, nonprofit corporate entities. The Chief of DFES duties may include:

1. The Chief of DFES shall be in charge of the buildings, fire apparatus, program delivery, conduct, training, and operations including incident command at emergency incidents when determined necessary by the Chief of DFES, of all fire and emergency service operations in the Township.
2. The Chief of DFES shall be responsible for developing and administering the budget for all fire- and emergency-related services and shall maintain financial control of such funds, subject to the financial practices of the Township, including funds budgeted for the operations of CTVFC.
3. The Chief of DFES will develop and track emergency incident response metrics, including the establishment of response metric goals, and report the same to the Township Manager on a quarterly basis.
4. The Chief of DFES may establish such programs or activities deemed necessary to meet emergency response metric goals and/or to improve volunteer response to emergency incidents. The Chief of DFES will work with CTVFC to encourage recruitment and retention of members.
5. The Chief of DFES, in consultation with the CTVFC Board of Directors, is authorized to develop and to enforce Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs), rules, regulations, procedures and practices for fire operations within the Township and which shall be binding on the operational aspects of CTVFC. To the extent other regulations promulgated by CTVFC are inconsistent with the SOGs, rules, regulations, procedures or practices, the Chief of DFES shall engage the CTVFC Board of Directors to resolve the differences, in the event DFES and CTVFC are unable to resolve the differences, the Township Manager, or their designee, shall be engaged to resolve the differences.
6. The Chief of DFES shall work collaboratively with the CTVFC Board of Directors to develop and implement progressive discipline procedures including an appeals process for violations of DFES's SOGs, rules, regulations and/or practices, which shall include the ability of identified personnel to suspend CTVFC members charged with an infraction. Discipline shall include temporary or permanent suspension from use of any Township property, facilities, equipment or any fire-related apparatus.

## Part 2

### VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

#### § 7-201. Official Recognition. [Ord. No. 2020-495, 6/4/2020]

The Cranberry Township Volunteer Fire Company (CTVFC), organized and existing in Cranberry Township, Butler County, Pennsylvania, is hereby designated as the officially recognized volunteer fire company for Cranberry Township.

#### § 7-202. Authorization to Provide Services. [Ord. No. 2020-495, 6/4/2020]

1. CTVFC, its officers, members, and fire police are hereby authorized to provide such services to Cranberry Township as may be necessary for the protection of property and persons situate therein, which include, by way of example and not of limitation, the extinguishment and prevention of loss of life and property from fire, automobile accidents, medical emergencies, hazardous material incidents, and other dangerous or emergency situations. CTVFC, its officers, members, and fire police, may also provide nonemergency and public service functions, such as, again by way of example and not of limitation, removing water from property after storms, and assisting in the removal, abatement and prevention of damage or injury to persons or property, whether through natural causes or man-made situations.

2. CTVFC may conduct and participate in such training activities and drills, either within or outside Cranberry Township as may be deemed necessary by DFES to maintain proficiency in providing services and may also respond to fire and other emergency calls and provide services to municipalities outside the Township, pursuant to DFES direction.

3. The Township shall provide workers' compensation insurance coverage to members of the volunteers of CTVFC, and shall provide general liability coverage to CTVFC and its officers and members who respond to fires, engage in rescue, emergency, and other emergency services, and participate in DFES approved activities and functions.

#### § 7-203. Authorized Activities. [Ord. No. 2020-495, 6/4/2020]

In addition to participating in the activities of the fire company as authorized above, or in going to or returning from any activity, the officers, members, and fire police of CTVFC are also authorized to do the following things:

1. Engage in any type of drill, training, ceremony, practice, test or parade, when duly called for or authorized by the Division Chief pursuant to the SOGs.
2. Participate in parades, ceremonies, conferences, or trade shows within 250 miles of Cranberry Township, provided that the participation in each ancillary event is

approved in advance by the Division Chief pursuant to the SOGs and to engage in the foregoing ancillary activities when the activities are farther than 250 miles if that participation is additionally approved by the Chief of DFES.

§ 7-204. Rules and Requirements for CTVFC. [Ord. No. 2020-495, 6/4/2020]

1. No equipment, fire trucks or property, real or personal, of the CTVFC shall be sold, leased, or transferred without the consent of the Board of Supervisors.
2. As a condition to the Township's recognition of, and grant of authority to, the CTVFC under §§ 7-201 and 7-202, CTVFC shall comply with all SOGs, rules, regulations and procedures established by the Chief of DFES pursuant to Part 1 of this Chapter.
3. Under no circumstances are the volunteers, board of directors, or officers of the CTVFC considered agents or employees of the Township, except as may be defined for the purpose of the Workers' Compensation Law.<sup>3</sup>
4. The CTVFC shall support alternative staffing programs to include associate membership, on-station staffing models, and other staffing initiatives as recommended by the Chief of DFES.
5. The CTVFC shall provide flexible training opportunities and schedules for its members as recommended by the Chief of DFES.
6. CTVFC shall implement competency-based training programs as recommended by the Chief of DFES.
7. CTVFC shall provide other community-based services including fire prevention and educational programs, attendance at community events and other activities that highlight the importance of the volunteer fire service to the community.
8. CTVFC shall comply with approved budget procedures and follow all purchasing procedures.

§ 7-205. Facilities. [Ord. No. 2020-495, 6/4/2020]

The Township shall own and be responsible for real property and grounds, and maintenance of all real property and buildings utilized by CTVFC, including Haine Station, Park Station, and Public Safety Training Complex, and any future facilities that may be constructed by the Township for the nonexclusive use by the CTVFC (the "Facilities"). The Township may, at its sole discretion, locate and maintain within the Facilities, the offices of the DFES Chief and such subordinate DFES positions as the Township shall establish. Further, the Township may, at its sole discretion, locate and maintain within the Facilities such equipment and personnel of other organizations as the Township deems necessary including, but not limited to, Cranberry Township

Emergency Medical Services, Inc. ("CTEMS"). The CTVFC's use of the Facilities shall be for the housing of fire equipment, fire apparatus, conducting CTVFC business and training sessions, and to support the activities of CTVFC and the DFES. The Facilities may be used by members of the CTVFC with the prior approval of the DFES Chief.

§ 7-206. Equipment. [Ord. No. 2020-495, 6/4/2020]

The Township shall own all equipment and apparatus provided to CTVFC, except for the 1928 Pirsch Apparatus, the Fire Safety trailer, items purchased by the Cranberry Township Volunteer Fire Company Relief Association, and items donated directly to CTVFC. All equipment is provided solely for the use of CTVFC business, and shall be insured, maintained, and managed by the Township through the DFES. An inventory of equipment shall be prepared and maintained by CTVFC, on an ongoing and regular basis, open and subject to review by the Township.

## Chapter 21 – Lower Allen Township

### FIRE RESCUE SERVICES

#### ARTICLE I

##### Division of Fire Rescue Services (DFRS)

§ 21-1. Establishment of the Division of Fire Rescue Services (DFRS) under the Department of Public Safety.

§ 21-2. Appointment of the Chief of DFRS.

§ 21-3. Powers and duties of the Chief of DFRS.

#### ARTICLE II

##### Volunteer Fire Companies

§ 21-4. Official recognition.

§ 21-5. Authorization to provide services.

§ 21-6. Authorized activities.

§ 21-7. Rules and requirements for LAFC and LCFC.

§ 21-8. Command structure.

§ 21-9. Facilities.

§ 21-10. Equipment.

§ 21-11. Volunteer entity expenditure funding and audit requirement.

§ 21-12. Prior agreement.

§ 21-13. Severability.

§ 21-14. Repealer.

## ARTICLE I

### Division of Fire Rescue Services (DFRS)

§ 21-1. Establishment of the Division of Fire Rescue Services (DFRS) under the Department of Public Safety.

There is hereby created within Lower Allen Township, Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, a Division of Fire Rescue Services which shall be responsible for the coordination of services rendered by the Lower Allen Fire Company No. 1, the Lisburn Community Fire Company, and any successor agency providing emergency fire rescue services to the Township as designated by resolution of the Lower Allen Township Board of Commissioners.

§ 21-2. Appointment of the Chief of DFRS.

The Board of Commissioners may appoint a Chief of DFRS who is the chief operations officer of the Division. The Chief of DFRS shall report to the Director of Public Safety or his/her designee.

§ 21-3. Powers and duties of the Chief of DFRS.

The Chief of DFRS shall have all powers and duties assigned to him/her by the Director of Public Safety and pursuant to Section 1502.7 of the 2020 First Class Township Code, provided that nothing contained herein shall affect the corporate status of LAFC or LCFC as independent, nonprofit corporate entities as they continue to meet the responsibilities of recruiting, volunteer staffing, retention, and training qualified members to support the mission of the Division of Fire Rescue Services. The Chief of DFRS duties may include:

A. The Chief of DFRS shall be responsible for the fire apparatus, program delivery, conduct, training, and operations, including incident command at fire rescue emergency incidents, when determined necessary by the Chief of DFRS, of all fire rescue service operations in the Township under the direction of the Public Safety Director.

B. The Chief of DFRS shall be responsible for developing and administering the fire operations and capital budgets, under the direction of the Public Safety Director, for all fire rescue related services and shall maintain fiscal management of such budget line items, subject to the financial practices of the Township, including funds budgeted for the fire operations of LAFC and LCFC.

C. The Chief of DFRS will assess community hazards and risks, establish Division performance goals, and recommend response deployment plans that will ensure a safe and effective force for fire suppression, rescue services, and specialty response situations. This will include the recommendation of response plans (box cards) to be

submitted to the Public Safety Director for approval, as needed. Reports on these criteria shall be made as determined by the Public Safety Director.

D. The Chief of DFRS will develop programs to track emergency incident responses to determine response effectiveness of Township fire resources, staffing, and operational response systems; and reported on a regular basis as determined by the Public Safety Director. This will include assessing volunteer resources, Township resources, and automatic/mutual aid resources as deemed necessary by the Public Safety Director.

E. The Chief of DFRS may recommend and establish such programs or activities deemed necessary to meet emergency response metric goals and/or to improve volunteer response to emergency incidents.

F. The Chief of DFRS will work with LAFC and LCFC to encourage and assist in the recruitment and retention of members.

G. The Chief of DFRS will be responsible for developing and administering the selection of all fire rescue officers that respond to fire rescue incidents and perform command and control functions. All DFRS Chief Officers will be appointed by the Board of Commissioners. Company Level Officers, as needed, may be appointed by the Public Safety Director, with the approval of the Township Manager.

H. The Chief of DFRS in consultation with the Public Safety Director will develop and enforce standard operating guidelines (SOGs), standard operating procedures (SOPs), general and special orders, rules, regulations, procedures, and practices for Fire Rescue administration and operations within the Township which shall be binding on operations of LAFC and LCFC. These policy documents shall be issued under the signature and authority of the Lower Allen Township Public Safety Director.

I. To the extent other regulations promulgated by LAFC and LCFC are inconsistent with the SOGs, SOPs, orders, rules, regulations, procedures or practices, the Chief of DFRS shall engage the LAFC Executive Officers and LCFC Executive Board to resolve the differences. In the event DFRS and LAFC, or LCFC, are unable to resolve the differences, the Public Safety Director, or their designee, shall be engaged to resolve the differences.

J. The Chief of DFRS shall work collaboratively with the Public Safety Director to develop and implement progressive discipline procedures, including appeals processes for violations of DFRS's SOGs, SOPs, orders, rules, regulations and/or practices, which shall include the ability of identified personnel to suspend LAFC or LCFC fire members charged with an infraction. Discipline shall be imposed by the Public Safety Director in consultation with the Township Manager and may include temporary or permanent

suspension from use of any Township property, facilities, equipment, or any fire rescue related apparatus.

K. The Chief of DFRS, or appointed representative(s), will be responsible for developing and administering a training program that meets the training needs of all staff and volunteers to ensure qualified fire rescue personnel to perform essential operational skills.

L. The Chief of DFRS will be responsible for determining qualifications and developing an approval process for all fire rescue personnel, under the direction of the Public Safety Director, who respond to fire rescue incidents on Township owned fire apparatus; and perform emergency and nonemergency fire rescue functions.

M. The Chief of DFRS, or appointed representative, will be responsible for developing and administering a fire prevention and inspection program that identifies existing hazards to life and property, providing explanations on how to correct the hazard(s) and maintain compliance with the Fire Code, and providing Fire and Life Safety education to the community at large to reduce the occurrence of fires and life safety hazards in the Township.

## ARTICLE II

### Volunteer Fire Companies

#### § 21-4. Official recognition.

The Lower Allen Fire Company (LAFC) and the Lisburn Community Fire Company (LCFC), organized and existing in Lower Allen Township, Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, are hereby designated as the officially recognized volunteer fire companies for the Township consistent with the roles, responsibilities, parameters, authorities, and limitations of this chapter.

#### § 21-5. Authorization to provide services.

A. LAFC and LCFC members are hereby authorized to provide such volunteer services to the Township as may be necessary for the protection of property and persons situated therein, which include, by way of example and not of limitation, the extinguishment of fire and prevention of loss of life and property from fire, automobile accidents, emergency medical services, fire police services, hazardous material incidents, and other dangerous or emergency, or disaster situations. LAFC and LCFC, its officers, members, and fire police, may also provide nonemergency and public service functions, such as, again by way of example and not of limitation, removing water from property after storms, and assisting in the removal, abatement and prevention of damage or injury to persons or property, whether through natural causes or man-made situations. All services shall be conducted under the authority and

direction of the Chief of DFRS, and policies established by the Department of Public Safety.

B. LAFC and LCFC may conduct and participate in such training activities and drills, either within or outside the Township as may be deemed necessary by DFRS to maintain proficiency in providing services and may also respond to fire and other emergency calls and provide services to municipalities outside the Township, pursuant to DFRS direction.

C. The Township shall provide workers' compensation insurance coverage to volunteer members of LAFC and LCFC and shall provide general liability coverage to LAFC and LCFC and its officers and members who respond to fires, engage in rescue and other emergency services, and participate in DFRS-approved activities and functions.

#### § 21-6. Authorized activities.

In addition to participating in the activities of the fire company as authorized above, or in going to or returning from any activity, the officers, members, and fire police of LAFC and LCFC are also authorized to do the following things:

A. Engage with Township resources in any type of drill, training, ceremony, practice, test, or parade, when duly called for or authorized by the Chief of DFRS pursuant to the SOGs or other orders.

B. Participate with Township resources in parades, ceremonies, conferences, or trade shows, provided that the participation in each ancillary event is approved in advance by the Chief of DFRS pursuant to the SOGs or other orders and to engage in the foregoing ancillary activities when the activities are additionally approved by the Chief of DFRS.

C. The Chief of DFRS is to be notified of any functions or activities that would have an effect on fire protection coverage and the fire company is to ensure the activity does not adversely impact the fire protection coverage in the Township.

#### § 21-7. Rules and requirements for LAFC and LCFC.

A. No equipment, fire apparatus or property, real or personal, of the LAFC or LCFC titled to the Township shall be purchased, sold, leased, or transferred without the consent of the Board of Commissioners.

B. As a condition to the Township's recognition of, and grant of authority to, the LAFC and LCFC under Article II, §§ 21-4 and 21-5, LAFC and LCFC shall comply with all general orders, special orders, SOGs, rules, regulations and procedures established by the Public Safety Director or Chief of DFRS.

C. Under no circumstances are the volunteers, Board of Directors, or officers of the LAFC and LCFC considered agents or employees of the Township, except as may be defined for the purpose of the Workers' Compensation Law and when acting in their official capacity for the Township.

D. LAFC and LCFC shall comply with approved budget procedures and follow all purchasing procedures for expending Township funds.

#### § 21-8. Command structure.

A. The Chief of DFRS shall recommend a command structure to the Public Safety Director for control of fire rescue, emergency scenes, training, and other operational authorities.

B. The command structure may consist of any optional combination of Deputy Fire Chiefs, District Chiefs, Battalion Chiefs, Assistant Chiefs, Captains, and Lieutenants, or any combination thereof, to support DFRS operations.

C. Command staff with employment status shall be appointed by the Board of Commissioners.

D. Noncompensated command staff, including volunteer officers, shall be appointed, following a competitive process, including an evaluation of credentials, by special order of the Department of Public Safety.

E. Appointed command staff shall have command authority at fire or other emergency scenes.

#### § 21-9. Facilities.

The Township shall own and be responsible for real property and grounds, and maintenance of all real property and buildings utilized by LAFC, including Rupp Avenue Station 2 and the Municipal Services Center Station 1, and any future facilities that may be constructed and owned by the Township for the nonexclusive use by LAFC and LCFC (otherwise known as the "facilities"). The Township may, at its sole discretion, locate and maintain within the facilities, the offices of the DFRS Chief, and such subordinate DFRS positions as the Township shall establish. Further, the Township may, at its sole discretion, locate and maintain within the facilities such equipment and personnel of other organizations as the Township deems necessary including, but not limited to, Lower Allen Township Emergency Medical Services, Inc. ("LAEMS"). The LAFC's and LCFC's use of the facilities shall be for the housing of fire equipment, fire apparatus, conducting LAFC and LCFC business and training sessions, and to support the activities of LAFC, LCFC, and the DFRS. The facilities may be used by members of the LAFC and LCFC with the prior approval of the DFRS Chief.

§ 21-10. Equipment.

A. The Township shall own all equipment and apparatus provided for DFRS services, except for the 2009 KME pumper and the 2019 tanker owned by LCFC, the 1955 Ford Darley owned by LAFC, items purchased by the Lower Allen Township Volunteer Fire Company Relief Association or the Lisburn Community Fire Company Relief Association, and items donated directly to LAFC and LCFC.

B. All equipment provided by the Township solely for the use of LAFC and LCFC business and fire operations shall be maintained and managed by the Township through the DFRS. An inventory of equipment shall be prepared and maintained by LAFC and LCFC, on an ongoing and regular basis, open and subject to review by the Township.

C. All Firefighters Relief Association purchases by LAFC or LCFC shall be made, maintained, and liquidated in accordance with the Management Guidelines for Volunteer Relief Associations' latest addition as published by the Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General.

§ 21-11. Volunteer entity expenditure funding and audit requirement.

A. The Township shall require each emergency services organization authorized under this chapter receiving township funds to provide to the Township an annual itemized listing of all expenditures of these funds in a form prescribed by the Township before the Township may consider budgeting additional funding to the organization.

B. Volunteer organizations designated by the Board of Commissioners to provide services to the Township, and receive expenditure compensation, shall biennially schedule, and comply with an audit of their finances by an accounting firm and provide a certified completed audit to the Township Finance Director. The cost of any such audit shall be equally shared by the fire companies and Township.

§ 21-12. Prior agreement.

Any prior agreement for fire and emergency services between LAFC, LCFC, and previously extended by mutual agreement, is hereby terminated. The provisions of this Chapter 21 of the Lower Allen Township Codified Ordinances shall govern the rules, regulations, and relationship of LAFC, LCFC, and the Township.

§ 21-13. Severability.

If any chapter, section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, or phrase of this chapter is for any reason declared invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the chapter as a whole or any section or part thereof other than the section or part thereof so declared to be invalid.

§ 21-14. Repealer.

Any ordinance, chapter, section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, or phrase of any ordinance conflicting with the provisions of this chapter shall and the same is hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

## Example Fire Chief Job Descriptions

### TOWNSHIP JOB DESCRIPTION

<b>POSITION TITLE:</b> Chief of Fire Rescue Services	<b>BAND:</b> Public Safety	<b>BBP CLASS:</b> 1
<b>DEPARTMENT:</b> Public Safety	<b>SUPERVISOR:</b> Public Safety Director	<b>ACCOUNTABILITY:</b> Public Safety Director
<b>NAME:</b> XXXXX	<b>ISSUE DATE:</b> XX/XX/202X	<b>PAGES</b> 6

**POSITION SUMMARY:**

The Chief of Fire Rescue Services serves as a key member of the Lower Allen Township Public Safety Leadership Team and a key member of Lower Allen Township Staff. The Chief of Fire Rescue Services translates strategic direction and plans into action through the development of policies, leadership, supervision, management, allocation of resources, and innovation for the Lower Allen Township Division of Fire Rescue Services. All duties and responsibilities require consistent attention and commitment to this agency's mission, goals, vision, values, and Lower Allen Township's goal of "Community First." The Chief of Fire Rescue Services reports directly to the Public Safety Director.

The Chief of Fire Rescue Services is responsible for recommending departmental policies, planning long-term programs, implementing policy, managing best practices, and making executive-level decisions in alignment with the direction of the organization as defined by the Public Safety Director, Township Manager, and Board of Commissioners. Primary duties involve overseeing all fire prevention, fire code compliance, fire/rescue training, and fire suppression, including developing recommendations and plans for the protection of life and property within the community. Responsibilities include developing, recommending, and implementing approved major departmental policies; planning long-term programs; supporting townshipwide and department sustainability, innovation, and communication efforts; and making difficult technical and administrative decisions. Work involves responsibility for leading, managing, and administering all Fire Rescue operations.

Work includes assuring the accomplishment of the mission, values, and vision statement of the Division of Fire Rescue and Lower Allen Township goals through the direct and indirect supervision of all personnel assigned to the division. Work will require attending and participating in some evening meetings with occasional weekend meetings/events and occasional significant emergency call responses.

Work is performed with wide latitude for independent judgment and action and is reviewed by the Public Safety Director and Township Manager through conferences, reports, and the success of the department's programs and activities.

**ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF THE JOB:**

- Executive Level Management Duties:
  - Partners with other departments and divisions to advocate and promote fulfillment of Township's mission statement, values, and vision.
  - Directs divisional personnel and operations in such a manner as to meet the Township's strategic plan, goals, and objectives established by the Public Safety Director, Township Manager, and Township Board of Commissioners.
  - Embodies Township's "Community First" in all interactions and discussions with citizens, employees, vendors, and intra-departmentally.

- Develops, supports, and champions the combination fire service concept working to maximize the collaboration and partnership between volunteer and career members of the Division of Fire Rescue Services.
- Represents the Township, Department of Public Safety, and Division of Fire Rescue Services in a professional manner and positive light.
- Represents the Township and Division of Fire Rescue Services at any County, Regional, or state-level association organization as assigned by the Public Safety Director.
- Develops policies, procedures, and best practices that demonstrate exceptional customer service, innovation, and prudent stewardship of Township revenue.

**ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF THE JOB (continued):**

- Develops and recommends Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs), Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), General & Special Orders, Personnel Orders, rules, regulations, procedures, and best practices for fire operations within the Township; and enforces when adopted.
  - Deals with contentious issues in a timely manner that reflects and supports Township management philosophy and decisions.
  - Communicates and collaborates with the Township Manager, Director of Public Safety, Executive Leadership Team, and Management Team members to develop innovative solutions that support and promote a high-performance organization.
  - Models and encourages employees and volunteers to demonstrate ownership and support of the Township by fostering a collegial and supportive work environment.
  - Supports and encourages ongoing employee and volunteer professional development through internal and external education and training to improve member performance and service to the community.
  - Develops a division management team of both career and volunteer members that supports the goals and objectives of an all-hazards full-service fire rescue division.
  - Applies the principles and best practices of public administration, financial, and human resource management.
  - Maintains proficient knowledge of and clear interpretations of all applicable laws, ordinances, and codes.
  - Attends Township Board of Commissioner meetings as required and takes necessary action regarding agenda items.
- Staff Management and Development Duties:
    - Demonstrates a long-term perspective through coaching and development of employees and volunteer members to meet succession management goals.
    - Supervises personnel and takes necessary actions to ensure proper personnel administration throughout the division by coaching, mentoring, leading, and counseling to create an environment of minimal interpersonal conflict.
    - Supervises members, which includes, but is not limited to, completing performance evaluations, making disciplinary recommendations, and approving leave and timesheets.
    - Participates in investigating and implementing disciplinary actions approved and as set by policy.

- Provides effective oversight and leadership, to plan, assign, and efficiently direct the work of subordinates, divisions, and programs in a manner conducive to full performance and high morale.
- Coaches and holds employees and volunteers accountable to conduct their work and activities in a manner that embraces the Township's "Community First" values.
- Directs allocation of staff and equipment for maximum effectiveness.
- Provides for and oversees a comprehensive program for division selection, hiring, onboarding, and training of new personnel (Volunteer, Part-time, and Full-time), and the promotion of those personnel.
- Oversees recruitment and retention activities of the volunteer fire companies in the Township.
- Oversees development and administration of a comprehensive training program for volunteer, part-time, and full-time members.
- Determines and ensures personnel (Volunteer, Part-time, and Full-time) are qualified to perform assigned duties and responsibilities.
- Keeps informed as to personnel, property, and operations by observation, reports and management input and acts on such information to improve operations.
- Communicates effectively with divisional staff, other Township employees, other emergency service members, the public, members of civic organizations, or other agencies.

**ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF THE JOB (continued):**

- Operational Management Duties:
  - Provides day-to-day managerial decisions on problems and issues that arise, ensures cost-effective and sustainable operations, and divisional operations with respect to Township-owned facilities, vehicles, equipment, apparatus, and personnel (Volunteer, Part-time, and Full-time).
  - Participates in the preparation of specifications and planning for new equipment, stations, and other facilities, and equipment.
  - Demonstrate extensive knowledge of the principles, practices, and techniques of modern fire suppression, prevention, and emergency medical response, and ability to apply this knowledge to varied fire control, prevention, EMS, and administrative problems.
  - Prepares reports and implements work programs.
  - Supervises both short-range and long-range implementation of plans.
  - Prepares recommendations and studies for administrative consideration.
  - Oversees direction of the comprehensive program of fire prevention including inspection (Fire and Property Maintenance) of various types of structures within the community and conduct of fire and life safety education programs.
  - Responds to and is authorized to take command of emergency incidents and personally directs emergency activities through subordinate officers.
  - Directs related administrative activities including Division and department budget preparation and execution, purchasing, personnel selection, reports, employee training, and correspondence in the administration of projects.
  - Directs all Division planning activities (both short-range and long-range); prepares and implements comprehensive plans and planning policies.

- Reviews plans, technical reports, budget estimates, and proposed ordinances and regulations under the purview of the Division of Fire Rescue Services.
  - Purchases and approves purchase of Division materials, supplies, and equipment.
  - Maintains and improves Fire and EMS incident response to fulfill safe community strategic objectives.
  - Studies the community hazards and risks, develop performance goals, and recommend response deployment plans (Box Cards) to ensure a safe and effective force for fire suppression, rescue services, and specialty response situations.
  - Studies the effectiveness of Township fire resources, staffing (volunteer and career), operational response systems, and automatic/mutual aid resources and provides reports as needed.
  - Develops, recommends, implements, monitors, and evaluates plans for providing consistent, competent, and professional emergency services to the Township.
- Administrative Management Duties:
    - Preparation of the Division budget, the procurement of materials, supplies, and equipment, and the maintenance of the necessary records.
    - Prepares and ensures the communication of special orders, instructions, notices, administrative memoranda, and other forms of communication to the division personnel.
    - Attends meetings/events/training, as needed, to keep abreast of the latest developments in firefighting methods and administration, coordinate mutual aid plans, coordinate and expand training programs, and exchange of ideas.
    - Attends, as needed, the regular evening Township Board meetings and study sessions; may attend evening or weekend community events. Incumbent is accountable for all duties of this job, and other projects and responsibilities may be added at the Township's discretion.
    - Addresses citizen groups and businesses regarding the activities of the division and to explain and promote public understanding of its work.
    - Maintains regular and punctual attendance.
    - Embrace and utilize the principles and practices of community risk reduction.
    - Embrace and utilize of the concepts associated with accreditation as prescribed by the Center for Public Safety Excellence.

**OTHER FUNCTIONS OF THE JOB:**

- Has analytical ability with mental alertness.
- Driving is essential to this position and must operate Township vehicles in a safe manner.
- Has the ability to be a credible witness in Court as part of Chief Officer duties.
- Ability to communicate via radio.
- Work conditions vary by shift or assignment.
- Tasks may be performed outside or indoors.
- Has the ability to move 100 pounds to a height of 4 feet and carry 100 pounds.
- Has the ability to sit or stand for extended periods of time.

- Has the flexibility sufficient to enter and exit vehicles frequently, ambulate for long periods over all types of terrain, climb over and around obstacles, and suddenly move out of the way of dangers.
- Efficiently operates computer equipment and software programs used by the Fire and EMS divisions.
- Strives to obtain competency in accordance with employee evaluation measures.
- May perform fire suppression duties, such as firefighting or fire apparatus driver/operator.
- Performs other related duties as assigned.

**REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Bachelor's Degree from an accredited university or college with major coursework in Public Administration, Fire Administration, Emergency Management, Business Administration, or a related field.
- Supervisory experience at the Battalion/District/Division Chief level or above.
- Ten years of experience in fire rescue training, fire suppression, fire prevention, emergency medical response, and emergency preparedness, in any combination.
- Five years of progressively responsible management and supervisory responsibility in an emergency services department.
- Maintain a valid Pennsylvania driver's license and safe driving record throughout employment.
- The ability to pass a background check, criminal investigation, drug test, and physical exam.
- Current Pennsylvania EMT or National Registry EMT.
- NIMS/ICS 100, 200, 300, 400, 700, and 800.
- The following Certifications (DOD, IFSAC, or Proboard):
  - Firefighter II
  - Fire Officer IV
  - Fire Inspector I
  - Fire Instructor I

**Preferred:**

- Master's Degree from an accredited university or college with major coursework in Public Administration, Fire Administration, Emergency Management, Business Administration, or a related field.
- The following Certifications (DOD, IFSAC, or Proboard):
  - Fire Inspector II

- Fire Instructor II
- Public Fire and Life Safety Educator II
- Incident Safety Officer
- Chief Fire Officer (CFO) designation from CPSE
- Graduate of the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program.
- Minimum five years of executive level experience as a senior manager/leader in an emergency services department, such as an Assistant/Deputy or Fire Chief.

Any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience, which would provide the required knowledge, skills, and abilities may be considered.

**OTHER REQUIREMENTS:**

- Maintains EMT and Firefighter/Fire Officer certifications.
- Ability to communicate effectively and professionally in English both verbally and in writing.
- Citizen or National of the United States, a lawful permanent resident alien, or an alien authorized to work in the United States.

***I have read the foregoing job description and certify that I can perform all aspects of the job and meet qualifications as required by Lower Allen Township.***

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



**TOWNSHIP OF UPPER PROVIDENCE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES**  
1286 BLACK ROCK ROAD  
P.O. BOX 406  
OAKS, PA 19456  
www.uprov-montco.org

PHONE: 610-933-9179

FAX: 484-391-2380

**TITLE:** Chief of Fire & Emergency Services

**CLASSIFICATION:** Full Time – Exempt / Department Head

**DEPARTMENT:** Fire & Emergency Services

**GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

The Township of Upper Providence seeks a highly qualified candidate to serve as Chief of Fire & Emergency Services for the municipality. This position is responsible for overall management and administration of Township Fire & Emergency services including a career fire department, four contract volunteer fire companies, and three contract EMS agencies. The ideal candidate will provide direction in improving overall fire service and EMS delivery to the Township through the development of a strategic plan, policy implementation, and guidance to elected officials and Township Management in addition to leading daily operations.

**SUPERVISION RECEIVED**

Under the immediate supervision of the Township Manager.

**SUPERVISION EXERCISED**

Administrative and operational oversight of career firefighters and fire marshal.

**ESSENTIAL DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

(Does not include all of the duties nor do the listed examples include all of the tasks which may be required of this position.)

- Manages daily operations of career firefighters and other subordinates; assigns duties, assesses performance.
- Coordinates scheduling of firefighters; calculates and approves payroll.
- Responds to and serves as incident commander of firefighting, rescue, hazardous materials, mass casualty, and other emergency operations.
- Manages Quick Response Service (QRS) provided by career firefighters; manages contractual agreements with EMS agencies.
- Assesses fire department and emergency medical services response and operations; implements policies to improve service delivery; recommends policy to Board of Supervisors.
- Administers inspection, testing, and maintenance program for all Township owned fire apparatus and equipment.
- Prepares and maintains reports and records of activities, incidents, inspections and other required information. Utilizes computer software such as Microsoft Office, Emergency Reporting, and Geographic Information System (GIS).

- Attends meetings with Township management, elected officials, peers, professional organizations, municipal representatives, and other parties to further the goals of the department which may occur outside of typical work hours. Sits as a member of, or chairs, task forces or committees.
- Coordinates fire department training programs to enhance skills in firefighting, rescue, and hazard mitigation methods, equipment, or services.
- Oversees fire prevention education programs, life safety education programs, and public relations events.
- Develops operating and capital budgets, forecasts future needs, and explores and pursues alternate funding streams.
- Oversees Fire Marshal's Office and Emergency Management.

## QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor's degree in public administration, business management, fire science, or related field required.
- Master's Degree in public administration, business management, fire science, or related field preferred.
- Ten (10) years of experience in a career or combination fire department including (5) years in a command/supervisory role as Captain or higher.
- Three (3) years of experience as a career officer in managing fire department programs involving both career and volunteer personnel.
- Thorough knowledge of fire suppression and fire prevention theories, principles, techniques, and equipment, including national, state, and local fire codes and standards.
- Thorough knowledge of hazardous materials recognition, identification, mitigation, recordkeeping, and reporting.
- Thorough knowledge of rescue techniques, standards, and best practices.
- Experience in preparing and implementing annual, operating, capital, and long-term budgets for a municipal fire department.
- Considerable knowledge of planning and policy research. Ability to develop a long term strategic plan.
- Considerable ability to make decisions, often under pressure or crisis conditions, that may involve life, property, or the operations of the fire department. Ability to take command of emergency incidents.
- Considerable ability to establish and maintain working relationships with superiors, associates, subordinates, volunteer fire companies, officials of other agencies, and the general public.
- Read, write, and speak the English language in a fluent, comprehensible and concise manner. Communicate clearly and concisely in both written and oral form. Must be able to compose and submit reports in a clear, concise, and complete manner. Reports must be thorough and easily understood by both fire service professionals and the public.

This position must maintain the following at minimum throughout employment as well additional education/training/certification/licensure as required by the Township Manager.

- A) **Certification** through the *PA State Fire Academy-or-IFSAC-or-Pro-board* in all of the following areas:
  - Firefighter II (NFPA 1001)
  - Fire Officer II (NFPA 1021)
  - Hazardous Materials Operations (NFPA 472)
  - NIMS 300, 400
- B) Valid PA State Driver's License

Preferred Qualifications:

- A) Incident Safety Officer
- B) Certification (NFPA or ICC) in fire and building inspection
- C) Emergency Medical Technician
- D) Hazardous Materials Technician

### **WORKING CONDITIONS AND HAZARDS**

Work inside and outside, exposure to all extremes of the environment. Experience frequent transition from hot to cold and from humid to dry atmospheres. Work in wet, icy or muddy areas. Work in or be exposed to areas containing toxic and non-toxic fumes, dusts, and gases. Perform a variety of tasks on slippery and/or hazardous surfaces such as rooftops or from ladders. Work in areas where sustaining traumatic or thermal injuries is possible. Exposed to all hazards of firefighting, hazardous material, and medical responses.

May be required to perform duties while faced with traumatic and gruesome situations in course of duties.

Employee may be required to respond to emergency incidents on a 24 hour basis.

### **SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS**

Must be at least 21 years of age at time of appointment.

Must pass required background checks including but not limited to: PA Department of Human Services Child Abuse Clearance, PA State Police Criminal Background Check, and Federal Criminal History Record Information.

### **PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS**

Position normally requires full use of sight, hearing, speech, arms, hands, legs and feet; lifting objects in excess of 100 pounds with frequent lifting and/or carrying of objects weighing 50 pounds or more. Ability to sit for a minimum of 4 hours, walk for a minimum of 2 hours, stand for a minimum of 1 hour, and drive for a minimum of 1 hour is required.

Must be able to work at heights in excess of twenty (20) feet.

\*This position is subject to the Township of Upper Providence Employee Handbook. Should discrepancies occur, the most stringent shall apply.

*\*This position is subject to random drug testing*

I hereby acknowledge the above requirements as essential to perform my duties.

Print: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: | \_\_\_\_\_

## **Example Fire & Emergency Services Agreement**

Effective this date, \_\_\_\_\_ Whitemarsh Township agrees to a firefighting, rescue, and emergency medical services contract with the Barren Hill Fire Company, Spring Mill Fire Company, and Whitemarsh Community Ambulance under the following conditions:

### **Whitemarsh Township will:**

- A. Officially recognize the Barren Hill Fire Company, Spring Mill Fire Company, and Whitemarsh Community Ambulance Service as providers of emergency services.
  
- B. In coordination with Chief of Fire and Emergency Services and providers of emergency services, approve a standard of cover for response times and staffing. Review the standard annually and take necessary action if there is an inability of the fire companies and ambulance service to meet the standard.
  
- C. Agree to budget money for operational costs and staffing for the fire companies and ambulance service.
  
- D. Agree to budget and deposit money into a capital fund account for the fire companies and ambulance service to fund the cost of major apparatus according to the approved apparatus replacement schedule.
  - i. To purchase the apparatus, the money will be paid by Whitemarsh Township to the fire companies and ambulance service who will be the buyer of the apparatus.
  
  - ii. Whitemarsh Township will permit the apparatus to be owned by the fire companies and ambulance service unless the organizations cease to exist, at which time the Township will become owner of the apparatus.

E. Provide funding for Workers Compensation insurance coverage for the volunteer members of the fire companies.

F. Forward the Pennsylvania State Foreign Fire Tax fund to the Relief Association within the state mandated time period.

**In return the Barren Hill Fire Company, Spring Mill Fire Company, and Whitemarsh Community Ambulance will:**

A. Agree to provide the following level of emergency response capabilities: fire suppression, hazardous materials (operations level), vehicle rescue, basic life support, advanced life support and respond to emergencies as dispatched by Montgomery County.

B. Formally recognize the authority granted to the Township Chief of Fire and Emergency Services.

C. Formally agree to the unified operational organization chart and officer requirements.

D. Adhere to the Standards of Response Coverage as adopted by the Township Supervisors.

E. Provide annual, complete and accurate financial statements to Whitemarsh Township prior to October 1<sup>st</sup> of every year. This will include the formal audit and IRS 990s, plus any requested back up documentation.

F. Adhere to the approved apparatus replacement schedule.

G. Contribute money received from selling township funding apparatus to the apparatus fund.

H. Agree to fund the purchase of other vehicles (command and support vehicles) needed to provide service as per the apparatus replacement plan.

I. Continue to utilize fund drives and fund raisers to supplement annual operating budgets if necessary.

J. As per apparatus agreements, turn over the vehicle and equipment to the township if the fire companies and ambulance service dissolve and / or cease to exist.

- Any changes to the above statements must be approved by the Township Supervisors and leadership of each organization.
- Both sides shall always be open to additional conversations which relate to funding needs and service expectations.
- This contract shall be renewed each year at the annual Whitemarsh Township Board of Supervisors Reorganizational meeting, so long as all stipulations are confirmed.

_____	_____	_____	_____
Whitemarsh Township	Date	Barren Hill Fire Company	Date
_____	_____	_____	_____
Whitemarsh Township	Date	Spring Mill Fire Company	Date
_____	_____	_____	_____
Whitemarsh Township	Date	Whitemarsh Community Amb.	Date

### **EXAMPLE Standard of Cover Example**

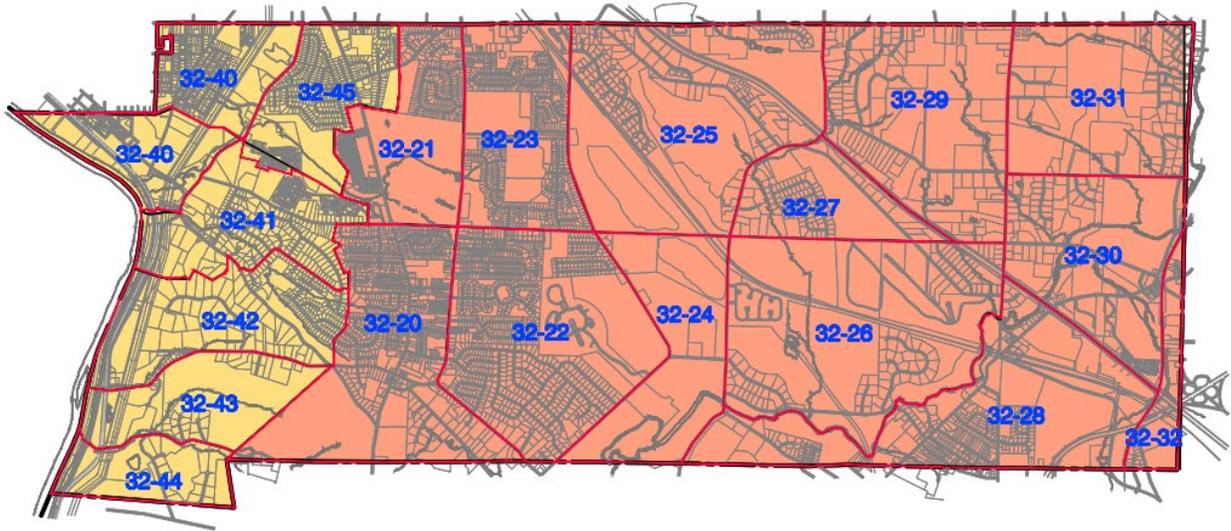
A standard of cover (SOC) is a document that outlines a fire department's plan for providing emergency services to its community by assessing risks, evaluating resources, and setting performance goals. It serves as a guide for resource deployment, staffing, and response times, ensuring services meet community needs and are aligned with local data and international standards like those from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). An SOC is a dynamic tool that is periodically updated to account for community growth and changes in demand.

#### Community Demographics

County	Montgomery
Municipality (Township)	Whitemarsh
Population	19,707
Households	6744
Square Miles	14.7
Population Density	1341
NFPA 1720 Demand Zone	Urban

Age Distribution %	
18 years and younger	23.5
18 years and older	76.5
65 and over	16.1
Income	
Median Household Income	\$ 102,007
Median Family Income	\$ 119,366
Per capita Income	\$50,965
Education	
HS graduate or higher	91.5
Bachelor's degree or higher	51.5
Housing	
Total housing units	7105
Median value of housing	\$ 370,700
Owner occupied housing units	5251
Renter occupied housing units	1493

## Service Area Map



### *FIRE BLOCK MAPS* WHITEMARSH TOWNSHIP, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA



## Whitemarsh Township Fire Services

According to the population density standard for an urban demand zone for 19,707 people in 14.7 square miles is 1,341 people per square mile. Using NFPA 1720 Standard of Volunteer Fire Departments would require a response time of arriving within 9 minutes of dispatch, 90% of the time with a minimum of fifteen firefighters.

### Response Time

The Whitemarsh Township response time goals shall be to have the first-in company and subsequent firefighting units arrive within the following intervals:

**First-In Engine:** On all structure fire incidents inside the first due area of Whitemarsh Township, the first-in Engine is expected to arrive in nine (9) minutes or less 90% of the time.

On all structure fire incidents inside the first due area of Whitemarsh Township, fifteen (15) firefighters and the complement of initial response vehicles are expected to arrive in fifteen (15) minutes or 90% of the time.

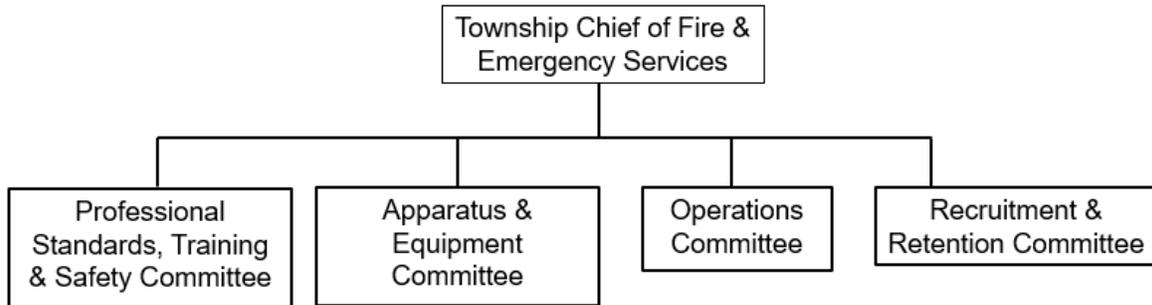
In addition to units from Whitemarsh Township this standard can be met by using automatic aid from adjacent boroughs and townships.

#### Whitemarsh Township Emergency Medical Services

For all emergency medical incidents, EMS shall arrive in a timely manner with sufficient trained and equipped personnel to provide medical services that will stabilize the situation, provide care and support to the victim, and reduce, reverse or eliminate the conditions that have caused the emergency, while providing for the safety of the responders. When warranted, timely transportation of victim(s) to appropriate medical facilities shall be accomplished in an effective and efficient manner.

## Example Unified Organizational and Operational Structure

### Township Organizational Committee Structure



The following standing committees would be established by the Township Chief of Fire & Emergency Services:

#### Professional Standards, Training, and Safety Committee responsibilities:

- Develop and implement Fire Officer & Firefighter Training Standards.
- Develop and implement the in-house basic training / new firefighter orientation program.
- Develop and manage a yearly competency-based training program.
- This program must include an annual SBS, FF Survival, SCBA, VRSQ, and Driver / Operator training.
- Review and update joint operating procedures.
- Provide recommendations for enhanced health and incident safety.

#### Apparatus & Major Equipment Committee responsibilities:

- Evaluate current apparatus and major equipment and make recommendations for improvement.
- Research new apparatus and equipment.
- Ensure readiness of apparatus and equipment.
- Develop and implement joint equipment specifications.

#### Operations Committee responsibilities:

- Develop, implement, and monitor a Standard of Response Cover.
- The standard will include Response Time and Staffing components.

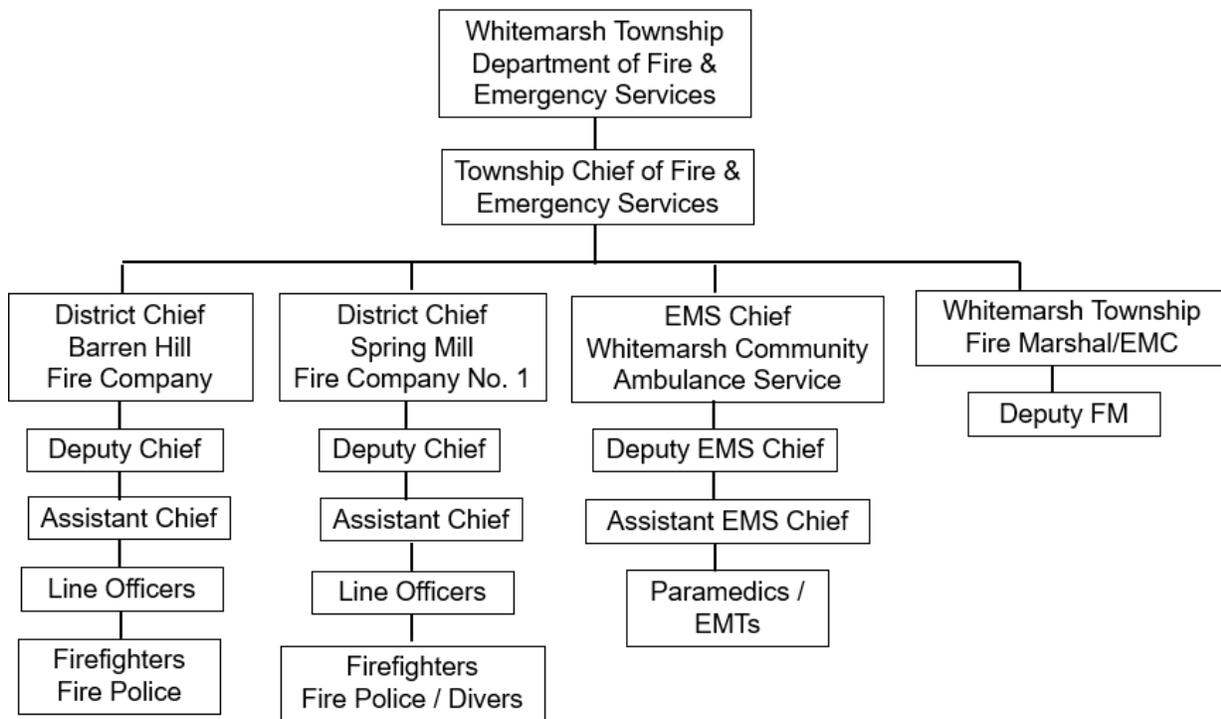
- The standard will be based on risk and to assemble an effective firefighting force.
- Develop, implement, and monitor staffing plans that will meet the Standard of Response Cover.
- Monitor and adjust automatic aid plan.

Recruitment & Retention Committee responsibilities:

- Conduct membership / staff needs assessment for all organizations.
- Develop marketing plan for volunteer recruitment.
- Identify potential retention incentives that would increase staffing.

Membership of the committees will be made up of three (3) appointments each from Barren Hill, Spring Mill, and Whitmarsh Ambulance Service for a total of nine (9). It is recommended that different members from each organization participate in the organizational committee process. The Township Chief of Fire and Emergency Services will staff and facilitate the committee.

Township Unified Operational Structure



The Township Chief of Fire & Emergency Services will be responsible for all operational aspects of emergency response within Whitemarsh Township. The Township Chief will provide vision, leaders intent, and collaborate with the leaders of the Barren Hill, Spring Mill fire companies, Whitemarsh Community Ambulance Service, and the Whitemarsh Township Fire Marshal's Office to ensure overall operational readiness. The Chiefs of the Barren Hill, Spring Mill fire companies, and Whitemarsh Community Ambulance Service will be responsible for all internal nonprofit organizational operations. This includes officer selection, training, and individual readiness. To avoid public and internal confusion about the overall leadership structure it is recommend modifying the title of Fire Chief to District Chief for the individual fire companies.

Whitemarsh Township  
Emergency Services Strategic Planning  
Information and Data as of August 2025  
Working Document - Analysis of Current Status

**Information Sources**

The consultant utilized several sources for developing this document. They included:

1. Stakeholder Interviews and meetings

May 21 – Introductory meeting – Emergency Services Board

June 30 – Meeting with Fire Marshall, Township Manager, Police Chief

June 30 – Meeting with Barren Hill FC leadership

July 11 – Meeting with Whitemarsh Community Ambulance leadership, and meeting with ESB Board Chair and Vice Chair

July 30 – Meeting with Spring Mill FC leadership

August 20 – ESB meeting – provided update.

2. Online Survey of Township Supervisors and Civilian ESB Members

Four (4) responses out of ten (10) possible

3. Data and Documents provided by the fire companies, the township, and ambulance service.

## Emergency Services Board Feedback

Greatest concerns for the future as identified by attendees:

- Funding (Twp)
- Staffing (Twp)
- Communications (Twp)
- Building costs (SMFC)
- Recruitment and Retention (SMFC)
- Volunteers
- Funding, staffing, insurance, maintenance
- Staffing
- Collaboration between agencies
- Funding, equipment, training
- Staffing, volunteerism, recruitment pool
- Buildings, facilities, equipment
- Equal service to community and adequate service
- Funding models for essential services within the community
- We have outgrown the building.
- The building is falling apart.
- Trucks are forced to be outside in the elements.
- A big enough building to house all our apparatus
- Insurance reimbursement
- If we cannot relocate, the condition of our current building and having to leave trucks outside.
- A new/bigger building
- Reimbursement for EMS calls.
- Training / equipment upkeep
- Communications
- Collaboration
- Progression
- Lack of volunteers
- Fire company location.
- Cost of volunteers to keep operations going
- Staffing
- Equipment costs/Building costs
- Funding
- Future staffing needs
- Do we need a full-time Chief?

- How many trucks do we need.

#### Expectations identified by attendees

- Adequate fire and / or EMS staff arriving promptly to provide services.
- Support from the Township (Financial, equipment)
- Open channels of communication between fire, EMS, police, fire marshal, township manager
- A plan for a sustainable means to provide fire and EMS.
- Honesty in the study process
- Unity and collaboration of all services in preparation, training and response
- Give up personal desires and egos.
- Fire / EMS services to look different in the future than they do today (following area trends)

#### **Analysis of current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats from meetings with fire companies and ambulance service leadership**

##### Barren Hill FC

Seven (7) officers/members of the fire company attended the session.

##### Strengths

- Leadership
- Relationships
- Vision
- Members
- Leadership
- Training
- Maturity
- Well cared for apparatus
- Continuity of leadership
- Membership support
- Mission driven for the community.
- Professionalism
- Future focused
- Financial savings / spending
- Committed core members.
  - New committees
  - Length
- Leadership team
  - Longevity
- Social media

- Very involved in the community
- Very thorough in explaining things to residents.
- Dedicated members
- Strong leadership
- Excellent leadership
  - Stable
  - Experienced
  - Respected
- Quality training program
  - Serious
  - Focused
  - Mentorship outstanding
  - High standards
- Good corporate governance
  - Transparent
  - Fiscally responsible
  - Culture of Compliance
- Operations
- Leadership
- Fiscal responsibility
- Doing what is right, always.
- Future vision
- Accountability
- Striving for professional standards
- Training
- Evolving with the times

### Weaknesses

- Building
- Recruitment
- Funding
- Building age
- Bringing in new members
- Facility needs.
- Lack of hours given
- Lack of bottom-up movement
- Losing competition with life
- Membership pool
- Continuity of leadership
- Funding
- Keeping up with changing times
- Station
- Funding streams

- Township
  - Resources
- 5-year membership outlook
- Membership
- Aging building
- Building age
  - Inhibits growth, pride in volunteering.
- Recruitment
  - Challenging demographics (high income, little trades)
  - The new facility would be welcoming.
- Long term staffing concerns
- Funding for changing times and costs.
- Convincing municipal leaders of worth
- Building infrastructure
- Next generation
- Training, operations, other numbers
- Evolving with the times

### Opportunities

- Facility – separate / joint
- Administrator for substance
- Professional standards (maintaining)
- Fire and EMS collaboration.
- Advancement to leadership
  - Open Lieutenant position opening
- Growth
  - Acquiring / merger with other fire company to become better
- Call volume
- We get the most calls in the area.
- Hold more open houses – bring people here.
- Work more closely with high school.
  - First responders club
  - Career opportunities
- New station / remodel
- New volunteers
- Funding
- Using everyone for the good
- Building relationships
- Building worth and value
- Technology
- New firehouse
- Extra staffing
- Combined department to justify firehouse to township.

- Room for improvement

### Threats

- Funding
- Age of members
- Finances
- Prices of trucks going up
- Lack of public interest
- Increasing time consumption
- Phone, technology – no working culture.
- Diminishing life skills
- Competition with others
- Egos
- External resistance to change.
- Lack of involvement
- What is it for me?
- Volunteers
- Training
- Leadership changes
- Current members aging out.
- Township cutting our funding.
- Funding
- Without change, no meaningful voice representation of our interests at the elected leadership level
- Lack of knowledge about the fire service in the community and government
- Lack of oversight
- Lack of buy-in
- Lack of volunteers / new members

### Spring Mill Fire Company

Eleven (11) officers/members of the fire company attended.

### Strengths

- Large expansive property
- SMFC funds 60% of all expenses
- Company leadership
- Strong core leadership group
- Community engagement
- Dive Team
- Room for growth
- Fire Police

- Strong core of members who are dedicated.
- Career staff do a good job keeping the trucks in good condition and upkeep of building.
- Fire/medical/dive/fire police.
- Community service
- Longevity
- Modern fleet / equipment
- Community involvement
- Longevity – mentors
- High percent self-funding
- Collaboration with problem solving.
- Dive team
- Diverse leadership
- Level of community interaction through various programs
- Cost effectiveness, we can self-fund a large amount of operating
- Able to offer financial benefits for the recruitment and retention of members.
- Strong, long-term, core membership group
- High level of community engagement and support, block parties, fire inspections
- Provide emergency shelter when needed.
- Fire police unit provides mutual aid support to surrounding communities.
- Unique capability with Dive Team, only two in Montgomery County
- Internal initiatives to self-fund incentives
- Over 65% of the budget is self-funded.
- Over 7-acre property, opportunity for growth or expansion of property footprint

### Weaknesses

- Shortage of members living in our local district
- Timeframe to certification as Fire 1 for new members due to training requirements
- Cost of equipment and apparatus
- Call volume is low due to uneven geographic coverage areas within the Township.
- Not utilized on all fire responses in Whitmarsh Township
- Low response to fund drive – transient population in our assigned area
- Aging building and maintenance costs
- Recruitment & retention
- Training cost and time
- Younger members limited availability.
- Funding – inconsistent
- Continued maintenance.
- Shortage of volunteers
- Rising cost of equipment and trucks
- Lack of volunteers

- Financial struggles
- Shortage of members in local
- Low call volume
- Aging building
- Volunteers

### Opportunities

- SAFER grant
- Internally funded stipend program
- Dive team – limited resource in Montgomery County
- Newly purchased ATV unit for brush / field fires and off-road rescues
- Expansion – property is 7.3 acres.
- Tax incentive program for recruiting.
- Do more for the township and community.
- Stipend program
- Grants to help with finances.
- Recruit younger members.
- Property
- Public awareness
- Building on strength /history embrace changes and need to adapt.
- Use technology when appropriate.
- Build relationships with officials.
- Model success from other industries.
- Collaboration on training

### Threats

- Competition for members (5 different VFDs in a small area)
- Regulations
- Age/health issues of key people
- Changing attitudes
- Burnout
- Division of township
- Complexity of requirements
- Losing members, not enough call volume, closing
- Location, call volume low.
- Community awareness
- Economy
- Aging infrastructure & equipment
- Membership and the decline in volunteerism nationwide

The Chief, Deputy Chief, and Assistant Chief attended.

### Strengths

- Highly trained and dedicated staff
- Strong community relationships
- Proven track record of reliable 911 response
- Integration with local fire departments
- ALS certified and quality clinical protocols.

### Weaknesses

- Aging facilities and vehicle fleet
- Limited sustainable funding sources
- Staffing shortages and burnout – common nationwide
- Lack of public awareness about EMS funding needs

### Opportunities

- Expansion of community paramedicine and preventative care programs
  - On backburner due to economy/funding
- Partnerships with schools, hospitals, and businesses for education and support
  - Contract with Temple
  - Education agreement with Einstein Jefferson
- Grant funding for infrastructure and innovation
- Increasing visibility and advocacy for EMS as an essential public service

### Threats

- Declining insurance reimbursements and delayed payments
- Increased costs of operations, training, and equipment
- National Shortage of EMTs and Paramedics
- Competition from private transport services is not based on the communities.
  - Specifically with salaries

## **Online Survey of Township Supervisors and Civilian ESB Members**

What is the appropriate time from when a person calls 911 until the arrival of the fire company or ambulance?

- 3 - 5 to 10 minutes
- 1 - Less than 5 minutes

### Top Three Strengths of Barren Hill, Spring Mill, and Whitemarsh Ambulance:

- Strong leadership
- BHFC – usually good response
- Committed team members.
- SMFC – plenty of vehicles
- Active fundraising
- WCAA – Strong leadership
- Community connection
- Services provided to the area
- Location
- Proximity
- Response time
- Skilled staff

### Top Three Weaknesses of Barren Hill, Spring Mill and Whitemarsh Ambulance:

- Declining membership
- The headquarters
- Overlap by fire companies.
- Lack of fiscal clarity and plan for the fire companies
- Fundraising for the fire companies
- Resources

### What are your expectations of the VFCs and ambulance service?

- Prompt response to emergencies.
- Respond is rapid time.
- Community outreach
- Have sufficient personnel.
- Continuing education and training
- Recognize the issue immediately.
- Well trained medical professionals
- Well maintained vehicles
- Deliver quick and efficient services.
- Maintain facilities and equipment in a fiscally responsibility manner.
- Use township funds responsibility.
- Fundraise to help with costs.
- Caring and well-trained staff
- Good response time
- Cooperation between departments

- Sustainable budget/fundraising
- Updated equipment.

With the known challengers facing the volunteer fire service in Pennsylvania do you feel Barren Hill and Spring Mill are up to meeting those challenges?

- Yes, but it concerns that volunteer ranks will continue to decline as veteran volunteers age out of ability to provide services.
- It is becoming more difficult to recruit personnel. We need more buy in from the Township.
- I think it will be a challenge for them to maintain staffing on a volunteer basis.

From your perspective, what are your concerns regarding Barren Hill, Spring Mill, and Whitemarsh Ambulance:

- Funding, lack of volunteers
- Should we explore a merger of equals in the fire service? I would leave the ambulance alone for the time being except for funding a new building.
- I think the fire companies need to work together to meet those challenges.
- I am concerned that we have three separate services that do not work cooperatively, and each have significant financial needs. It is important that we identify a path forward that includes cooperation and management of the cost burden on the township.
- The ability to maintain staffing levels, as well as fundraising. Can they work on this cooperatively?

Do you believe the current funding provided by Whitemarsh Township to Barren Hill, Spring Mill, and Whitemarsh Ambulance is adequate to continue the service level?

- 4 – No
- Not familiar with what an appropriate annual budget might be. I propose an annual flat tax on township residents to fund our EMS, as I don't think enough residents contribute to direct fundraising efforts.
- The township needs to prioritize their funding to emergency services. The amount should exceed the park and recreation budget.

- We need to take up the current funding and use it to support a single fire company combined on a single site with the ambulance service.
- I don't have a number. I believe any increase in Township funding would need a strong commitment to cooperation and fundraising on the part of all our emergency services.

Do you see the Barren Hill and Spring Mill continuing as mostly volunteer fire companies as the primary source of fire service for Whitemarsh Township for the next 5 to 10 years.

- 1 Yes, 3 No
- Residents paying more for salaried firefighters.
- We are fast approaching the need to explore a merger or create a hybrid department.
- We need a single fire company combined on a single site with the ambulance service.
- I don't think it will be sustainable to have all volunteers. It gets more difficult each year. I see a paid fire service.

Do you see the Whitemarsh Ambulance continuing as the primary source of EMS for Whitemarsh Township for the next 5 to 10 years?

- Yes – 1
- No - 1
- Maybe – 2
- Township residents funding
- If we fund them an appropriate amount, there is no reason they would disappear like so many other squads in Montgomery County
- We need a single fire company combined on a single site with the ambulance service.

- I would like to see the results of this survey and understand how our ambulance serves our community and what are the obligations for their services outside of the township/how ambulances answer calls, etc.

What suggestions do you have to improve the mission and purpose of the emergency services board?

- None
- The ESB should be looked at for valuable input to the Board of Supervisors. We shouldn't be able to just rubber stamp any proposals. Any perspective ESB members should understand emergency services.
- I am very interested to see the data from this survey. Especially calls answered, breakdown of location inside of the Township. I am also interested in an equipment survey for each. If there is rubric used for community based on number of residents for how many emergency services and staff are needed or required. I want to see our services be as efficient and effective as they can be. Our Emergency Services already have a lot to offer. Let's build on that.

### **Interview Notes from Consultant**

The following information is notes/statements captured by the consultant during all of the stakeholder meetings.

- Fire Marshal is designated as a liaison role between the township and the VFCs and ambulance service, however the position is task saturated with inspections, emergency management and other assigned duties.
- Communication between all parties is difficult.
- The role of the ESB is gray.
- What is the future of the fire service in Whitemarsh Township, how many firefighters do we need? Should the ambulance service continue to exist in its current form?
- The ESB has become a forum to complain, not solve problems.
- Arriving with only a driver on a fire truck is not adequate for 2025.

- No coordination between the fire stations.
- Do we need more paid firefighters?
- What is the ESB's authority, why was it set up, what is its purpose?
- The discussion regarding a new building has been going on for many years without any decision on a path forward.
- There have been communications problems with the township and unilateral decisions.
- There should be equal collaboration on the ESB.
- What is the vision for the future, without collaboration there is no future.
- There is no formal contract or agreement between the Township and the VFCs and EMS.
- We need a vision for the future. There has never been a plan in place for facilities.
- We need oversight from the municipality; it will help us operationally.
- The Township Supervisors are disconnected from the volunteer and career members of fire companies and ambulance services. They don't understand how we operate.
- We want to be part of the municipality.
- The ESB does not work.
- The volunteers provide great community engagement.
- We are eager to do more to help the township.
- There should be more recognition from the township.
- We need forward thinking and begin thinking outside the box.

- Does the Board of Supervisors know the status of fire and ambulance service in the township?

## **2006 Study**

An objective assessment of fire and emergency services was conducted by Fitch & Associates (consulting firm) at the request of Whitemarsh Township officials. The study's goal was to document the current status and provide an independent perspective that can be used to frame and encourage future discussions.

### Findings and Recommendations Identified 19 Years Ago

#### Findings

- Representatives from the agencies, while committed community volunteers, are concerned about sustainability and organizational dynamics. There is significant discord among individual agencies.
- The Township provides limited support and coordination of emergency services.
- Funding of emergency services is through a variety of mechanisms.
- Stations are not located in a manner that provides optimal coverage and response times.
- Response patterns are excessive, the closest fire company does not always respond to emergencies, lack of response discipline, not compliant with NIMS, lack of township wide policies.

#### Recommendations

1. The Township should provide clear directions and resources to ensure emergency services sustainability.
2. Adopt NIMS (National Incident Management System).
3. Optimize coverage – station locations.
4. Ensure community funded assets remain available to the community.
5. Carefully consider how duplicated services can be consolidated.
6. Create a Township Department of Fire and EMS.
7. Provide Township leadership for Fire and EMS efforts.
8. Reconfigure and reestablish oversight for the system.
9. Change dispatch and response methodology.

- 10. Establish training capabilities.
- 11. Improve effectiveness of Whitemarsh Ambulance.
- 12. Ensure adequate communications infrastructure.
- 13. Prohibit the use of alcohol at emergency services facilities by emergency personnel.

**Basic Data Review**

The following information was provided by each organization and the township.

Fire & EMS Calls

Calls Per Organization

	2021	2022	2023	2024	Average
Barren Hill	547	534	552	593	556.5
Spring Mill	271	236	251	281	259.75
Whitemarsh Amb	4136	4324	4979	5152	4647.8

- In 2024, 78% of Spring Mill’s calls were to emergencies in the township.
- In 2024, 79% of Barren Hill’s calls were to emergencies in the township.
- Whitemarsh Ambulance’s data includes 911 calls and non-emergency transport.
- This data was provided by the organizations in their annual reports.

2024 Calls in Whitemarsh Township

Ambulance	2006
Fire	729

- This data is from Montgomery County DPS

Review of Income and Expenses from required IRS nonprofit 990's

<b>2022 990s</b>	<b>Spring Mill</b>	<b>Barren Hill</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Revenue</b>			
Contributions/Grants	\$ 453,198	\$ 659,527	\$ 1,112,725
Program Services			
Investment Income	\$ 14,938	\$ (128,889)	\$ (113,951)
Other Revenue	\$ 169,685	\$ 124,081	\$ 293,766
Total	\$ 637,821	\$ 654,719	\$ 1,292,540
<b>Expenses</b>			
Salaries, other comp	\$ 216,051	\$ 209,501	\$ 425,552
Other expenses	\$ 564,950	\$ 532,766	\$ 1,097,716
Total	\$ 781,001	\$ 742,267	\$ 1,523,268
Rev less Expenses	\$ (143,180)	\$ (87,548)	\$ (230,728)
Total Assets	\$ 2,600,379	\$ 4,034,224	\$ 6,634,603
Total Liabilities	\$ 697,753	\$ 7,667	\$ 705,420
Net Assets	\$ 1,902,626	\$ 4,026,557	\$ 5,929,183
<b>2023 990s</b>	<b>Spring Mill</b>	<b>Barren Hill</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Revenue</b>			
Contributions/Grants	\$ 420,591	\$ 514,596	\$ 935,187
Program Services		\$ 20,364	\$ 20,364
Investment Income	\$ 39,864	\$ (93,601)	\$ (53,737)
Other Revenue	\$ 225,652	\$ 144,320	\$ 369,972
Total	\$ 686,107	\$ 585,679	\$ 1,271,786
<b>Expenses</b>			
Salaries, other comp	\$ 265,205	\$ 201,949	\$ 467,154
Other expenses	\$ 560,111	\$ 474,817	\$ 1,034,928
Total	\$ 825,316	\$ 676,766	\$ 1,502,082
Rev less Expenses	\$ (139,209)	\$ (91,087)	\$ (230,296)
Total Assets	\$ 2,327,406	\$ 4,460,579	\$ 6,787,985
Total Liabilities	\$ 472,490	\$ 12,552	\$ 485,042
Net Assets	\$ 1,854,916	\$ 4,448,027	\$ 6,302,943

- Revenue sources Spring Mill
  - Government (township contributions, state, federal grants)
  - Fundraising events
  - Rental income
  - Investments
  
- Revenue sources Barren Hill
  - Government (township contributions, state grants)
  - Fire and rescue program services.
  - Rental income
  - Investments

Whitemarsh Community Ambulance

2022 990s	WCAA
<b>Revenue</b>	
Contributions/Grants	\$ 274,385
Program Services	\$ 1,554,451
Investment Income	\$ 1,675
Other Revenue	
Total	\$ 1,830,511
<b>Expenses</b>	
Salaries, other comp	\$ 1,189,915
Other expenses	\$ 734,214
Total	\$ 1,924,129
Rev less Expenses	\$ (93,618)
Total Assets	\$ 1,156,511
Total Liabilities	\$ 497,740
Net Assets	\$ 658,771
2023 990s	WCAA
<b>Revenue</b>	
Contributions/Grants	\$ 443,365
Program Services	\$ 1,478,015
Investment Income	\$ 6,778
Other Revenue	
Total	\$ 1,928,158
<b>Expenses</b>	
Salaries, other comp	\$ 1,464,676
Other expenses	\$ 664,311
Total	\$ 2,128,987
Rev less Expenses	\$ (200,829)
Total Assets	\$ 876,851
Total Liabilities	\$ 417,927
Net Assets	\$ 458,924

- Revenue sources
  - Government (Township and State)
  - Insurance reimbursement (private, government federal & state)

2025 Township Budget for Fire Marshal, Fire Companies, Ambulance

Fire Marshal's Office	
FM	\$ 144,411
FM OT	\$ 500
Uniforms	\$ 4,000
Materials/Supplies	\$ 6,500
Business Exp	\$ 4,000
Radios	\$ 4,280
Gas/Oil	\$ 2,000
VOE General	\$ 8,500
EM costs	\$ 12,000
Total	\$ 186,191

Fire Companies		Each
Twp Contribution to BH/SM	\$ 260,334	\$ 130,167
Audit for FCs	\$ 13,500	\$ 6,750
Fuel	\$ 25,000	
Paid Driver Salary	\$ 400,000	\$ 200,000
Paid Driver Benefits	\$ 121,200	\$ 60,600
FH Software	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 10,000
Study	\$ 35,000.00	
Pay Per Call - Stipend	\$ 63,000	\$ 31,500
Tax Credit	\$ 25,000	\$ 12,500
Total	\$ 963,034	\$ 451,517

Capital Reserve	\$ 106,334
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Ambulance	
Audit	\$ 6,750
Gas/Oil	\$ 30,000
Contribution for Amb	\$ 250,000
Pay per call	\$ 1,500
Tax credit	\$ 3,500
Total	\$ 291,750

Membership / Staffing Reported by each Organization.

<b>Spring Mill</b>	
2025 Life Members	49
2025 Active Members	62
2025 Contributing Members	30
2025 Social Members	75

- In 2024, 4 volunteer firefighters responded to over 100 calls.
- In 2024, 8 volunteer firefighters responded to between 50 and 100 calls.
- In 2024, 32 Vol FFs, divers, and members responded to between 1 and 50 calls.
- 2 Full time firefighters, 7 part time firefighters
  - Full time firefighters responded to 231 and 177 calls.
- 15 rostered fire police
  - 3 fire police members responded to over 100 calls.
  - 1 fire police member responded to between 50 and 100 calls.
  - 9 fire police members responded to between 1 and 50 calls.
- 2 Junior firefighters

<b>Barren Hill</b>	
2025 Fire Brigade - FF1	34
2025 FF Prob & Jr	13
2025 Fire Police	10
2025 Active Adm Support	6
2025 Inactive Life or Dues	67

- In 2024, 16 volunteer firefighters responded to over 100 calls.
- In 2024, 3 volunteer firefighters responded to between 50 and 100 calls.
- In 2024, 23, Vol FFs, juniors and members responded to between 1 and 50 calls.
- 2 Full time firefighters, 4 part time firefighters
  - Full time firefighters responded to 162 and 154 calls.
- 8 rostered fire police
  - 4 fire police members responded to over 100 calls.
  - 1 fire police member responded to between 50 and 100 calls.
  - 2 fire police members responded to between 1 and 50 calls.

<b>WCAA</b>	
Paid Personnel	45
Full time	15
Part time	30
Board Members	15

## Fire and Emergency Services Apparatus in Whitemarsh Township

Unit	No.	Manufacturer	Year	Type	Status	Replacement
<b>Barren Hill</b>						
Engine	29	KME	2014	Engine	Good/Fair	\$ 1,000,000
Rescue	29	Spartan	2020	Rescue Pumper	Excellent	\$ 1,200,000
Tower	29	Sutphen	1997	Aerial Tower	Poor	
Tower - New	29	Sutphen	2025	Aerial Tower	Tower	\$ 3,900,000
Traffic	29	Chevrolet	2025	Fire Police	Excellent	\$ 90,000
Utility	29	Ford	2008	Pickup	Fair	\$ 100,000
Command	29	Ford	2020	Expedition	Good	\$ 85,000
Duty	29	Chevrolet	2016	Tahoe	Good	\$ 85,000
<b>Spring Mill</b>						
Engine	45	Pierce	2022	Engine		\$ 800,000
Squad	45	E-One	2013	Rescue Pumper		\$ 900,000
Ladder	45	E-One	2013	137' Aerial/Quint		\$ 1,800,000
Rescue	45	Freightliner	1995	Air Unit/Rescue		\$ 600,000
Special Servi	45	Ford F550	2005	Support Vehicle		\$ 130,000
Chief	45	Chevy Tahoe	2018	Command Unit		\$ 100,000
Car	451	Chevy Truck	2014	Command Unit		\$ 115,000
Traffic	45	GMC Sierra	2011	Fire Police Unit		\$ 100,000
Support	45	Load Rite	2006	Trailer		\$ 6,000
Support	45	Carmate	2012	Trailer		\$ 6,000
Support	45	AM Journey	2023	Trailer		\$ 15,000
		Load Rite	2014	Trailer		\$ 2,000
ATV	45	Can-AM	2025	UTV		\$ 6,500
Boat	45	Patten	2006	Boat		
Boat	451	Zodiac	2025	Boat		
<b>Whitemarsh Community Ambulance</b>						
Ambulance	318-1	Ford E350 Crestline CCL150	2025	Ambulance	New	\$ 180,000
Ambulance	318-2	Ford E350 Crestline CCL150	2020	Ambulance	Good	\$ 180,000
Ambulance	318-3	Ford E350 AEV DR-92	2019	Ambulance	Fair	\$ 180,000
Ambulance	318-4	Ford E350 Crestline CCL150	2023	Ambulance	Good	\$ 180,000
Ambulance	318-5	Ford E350	2016	Ambulance	Fair	\$ 180,000
Command	318	Chevy Taheo	2019	SUV	Good	\$ 80,000
Explorer		Ford Explorer	2021	SVU	Good	\$ 60,000