

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Willich and City Council Members
From: Jerry Osterman
RE: Consolidation of Fire/EMS Services Report
Date: April 17, 2008

The Cities of Ketchum and Sun Valley have a history of excellent co-operation in providing Fire/EMS services to residents and visitors to our communities. With an interest in developing comprehensive statistics/data and evaluating whether consolidation might be considered, the McGrath Consulting Group, Inc. was hired to prepare a study which was issued in August of 2007. Multiple copies were distributed to each agency for review.

After reviewing the 324 page document and maps, I find it to be very comprehensive with a good collection of statistics and data. The recommendations, however, should be evaluated for applicability by each agency and not just "rubber stamped" as the study tends to "push for consolidation". The suggested "Common Funding Formula" on page 278 proposes that the City of Sun Valley "be required" to pay 30.2% of a consolidated Fire Department Budget. According to table 52 on page 277, the 2006 budget for Sun Valley is 18.2% of the combined Ketchum and Sun Valley departments. If we use the report total combined budget of \$2,031,684 the result would be an increase of \$244,784 per year to the City of Sun Valley. With that much projected additional costs, our elected officials may wish to evaluate what additional benefits would be achieved through consolidation versus adding additional funding to our existing program. It is my belief that the City of Sun Valley Fire Department with full-time positions of Chief and Assistant Chief, EMT's and First-responders is the most financially effective operation available. Largely through the lifetime commitment of Fire Chief Carnes and all department members, the esprit-de-corps and recruitment of volunteers remains strong. If a time arrives in the future where Sun Valley is not able to attract and maintain a strong volunteer membership, then perhaps a revisit to this issue would be appropriate. However, for now, the department is a huge asset to the citizens of Sun Valley.

Our Department continues to improve with four members currently enrolled in EMT(Emergency Medical Technician) training to bring our total certified personnel to 13 members. City Council recently approved the purchase of a new 2008 Fire Engine at a cost just under \$450,000 and has budgeted \$50,000 to commence design for four workforce housing units at the Elkhorn Fire Station. Our department also has a "Paid on Premise" Program whereby responders are paid to man the station on weekends. With respect to Ambulance services, page 274 of the report states that Ketchum receives 36.6% of its budget from the Ambulance District. Through the current Ambulance Property Tax Levy of .0000912, City of Sun Valley contributes approximately \$233,928 per year into that program.

It is my observation that the mutual fire/EMS participation between Ketchum and Sun Valley is an excellent relationship that should be appreciated and preserved. All of the Fire Department personnel of both departments should be complimented for their dedication and professionalism to the citizens and visitors of our communities.
Respectfully submitted,

Jerald L. (Jerry) Osterman