

**DRAFT PROPOSAL FOR**

**BOW, NH**

**FIRE DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATIONAL AND PLANNING STUDY**

**SCOPE OF SERVICES**

This study will provide a comprehensive review of the manner in which fire and rescue services are provided within the community. Using this review as a basis, MRI will make recommendations for improvements that take into consideration the current and future financial ability of the community, appropriate modifications to the delivery systems to provide optimum service to the entire community, adequacy of physical facilities and equipment, efficient use of resources, and whether the current organizational structure is appropriate or should be modified.

This assignment will require fairly intensive involvement within the community, and may include interviews with elected officials, appointed officials, the fire chief, fire personnel, representatives of various municipal boards and committees, and a number of residents and businesses.

Emphasis will be placed on the following:

1. **Organizational Structure and Governance:** Review organizational structure for appropriateness. Review policy and decision making processes.
2. **Organizational, Managerial, and Operational Practices:** Review existing general orders, standard operating guidelines, policies, rules and regulations in relation to federal and state requirements and guidelines and in relation to contemporary practices and procedures. Review personnel management and grievance response in relation to best practices.
3. **Strategic and Capital Planning, Budgeting:** Review planning processes and the current processes for establishing budgets. This will include reviewing the master plan and any capital plan, including assessment of equipment and a risk management strategy.

4. **Community:** Identify major issues and concerns of the community regarding the operations of the fire department. Achieve an understanding and appreciation of the values and “personality” of the community and the local government. Understand, to the extent possible, the community’s needs, wants, and desires with regard to fire services in the future. Plan for a strong partnership between the community and the fire department into the future.
5. **Risk:** Identify potential areas of risk/liability and make recommendations to reduce those exposures.

The team will spend time with the key personnel in the fire department to gain an understanding of the organizational, operational, and management systems and approaches currently in place, and then compare and contrast the current structures against contemporary practice and convention.

We will engage the elected leaders, the town manager, department heads, municipal employees, and other elected and appointed municipal officials in discussions about the current system and structure to identify any concerns or areas requiring special focus and to gather thoughts and ideas about areas of potential improvement.

Following the interview phase, we will review the fire department’s operating budget and expenditure detail for the last three years to gain a sense of how the community currently commits its financial resources towards provision of fire services, after which we will conduct a detailed review of departmental activities, policies and procedures. We will conduct a physical inspection of the fire facility and associated equipment in order to identify problems or issues and to gain an understanding of current and future demands on available resources.

Recommendations for improvement will be based on the applicable nationally recognized standards, such as ISO (Insurance Services Office), NFPA (National Fire Protection Association), CFAI (Commission on Fire Accreditation International), CAAS (Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services), state laws and administrative regulations.

The results of our assessment will be presented in a draft report and then final report, to be followed by a public presentation. During this presentation, we will explain, interpret, and expand upon the information in the report, as well as answer questions regarding our findings and recommendations.

## PLAN OF SERVICE

In order to gather the information needed to complete this study, the following plan of service will be used:

1. **Interviews:** In order to gain an understanding of the issues facing the Department and the community to better understand the practices and procedures used by the Fire Department to provide services, MRI will solicit input from key individuals.
  
2. **Document/Data review:** MRI will review the following documents and data:
  - Budgets, audits, reports, and documents related to the finances of the department.
  - Relevant municipal ordinances, policies, documents and plans.
  - Fire department policies, plans, response strategies, training programs and requirements, and standard operating procedures and guidelines.
  - Emergency medical policies, plans, response strategies, training programs and requirements, and standard operating guidelines.
  - Fire department documents, incident logs, and reports.
  - Mutual aid/automatic aid agreements
  - Other relevant department documents, statistics, incident logs, and reports.
  
3. **Review of Service Demands:** In order to assess the demands on the service delivery systems of the department, and the effective utilization of departmental resources, MRI will identify the most significant risk exposures faced by the department and assess the potential levels of demand. The MRI study team shall assess departmental response and service requirements in the following areas:
  - Apparatus staffing levels and standard incident response policies and guidelines by type of call.
  - The levels of training to support the effective response to various emergency incidents.

- The extent to which risks are formally addressed through code, regulations, and bylaws.
  - Code compliance, fire investigation, and emergency planning provided by the department.
  - Current mutual aid capabilities and collaborative efforts within the region.
4. **On site Visits:** Much of this plan of service will be done during face-to-face, on-site visits by our project team. The team will spend an extensive amount of time on-site making observations, inspecting facilities/equipment/records and conducting interviews. An anonymous survey tool can also be used to gather information when appropriate.

### **FINAL REPORT**

Upon the completion of all the tasks outlined above, MRI will prepare a draft final report. Copies of this draft report shall be provided to the town manager for review and distribution, as he deems appropriate. The purpose of this draft is to allow key personnel the opportunity to review the document for accuracy, clarity, and facilitate a brief comment period. After receiving the comments and advice of appropriate officials, MRI will prepare and deliver copies of the final report to the town manager and/or other designated officials.

The report is organized in an easy to read format. The report will include, but not be limited to, the following general topics:

- Evaluation of the organizational and command structure of the department.
- MRI will develop a detailed set of recommendations on the management and organizational structure of the fire department, staffing levels, operations and procedures, and alternate service delivery systems and programs to meet the projected needs of the town.
- MRI will develop recommendations for revenue enhancement and cost savings.
- Recommendations on the optimum organizational structure for delivery of fire and rescue services in the community. Our report will include recommendations regarding the potential for cost savings or consolidation of functions.

- An evaluation of systems and procedures for monitoring and controlling personnel expenses.
- An analysis of administration, staff and supervisory structures, and personnel assignments including response methodology.
- A review of current volunteer/on-call firefighter recruitment and retention programs and recommendations for enhancements.
- Analysis of existing equipment, apparatus, serviceability, needs, and excesses. The team will make recommendations related to capital planning.
- Analysis of potential opportunities for the sharing of services and resources with neighboring communities.
- Recommendations for improving training, professional development, and leadership succession planning.
- A review of potential sources of additional state and federal funding.
- Analysis of the utilization of advanced state-of-the-art technology, including automated data processing and procedures, and other technology capable of enhancing efficiency and effectiveness.

#### **Fire and Rescue Services Specifics**

- Vehicle usage analysis, including the type of equipment for fire and rescue service based on nationally accepted practices and its appropriateness for response to the community. This analysis will include a review of the current condition and maintenance of the major apparatus and equipment with a consideration of a future replacement program.
- Review of state mandated training compliance and the department's in-service training program.
- Analysis of hazardous materials response, including the current level of response, associated costs, conformance with appropriate codes, cost recovery, and any alternate considerations.
- Analysis of firefighting and rescue capability response, including a review of the current firefighting response and any alternate considerations. The review will include structural firefighting, wildland firefighting, rescue capabilities, and any

specialized considerations such as technical rescue and hazardous materials response.

- A review of response methodologies and response times and operational procedures.
- Evaluation of risk management and liability issues.

### **QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED**

MRI understands that we are hired to provide answers to public officials. At the onset of this project, we would expect to have a “kick-off” meeting with the hiring authority to determine any special areas of interest for examination. Among the questions that should generally be answered in the final report are the following:

- To what extent would an added emphasis/more focus on different management practices or changed approaches assist the department in more efficiently or effectively delivering services?
- Is the department up to date with mandatory plans, policies, procedures, training, etc.?
- Is the current organizational chart effective and the correct one for the department? If not, how could it be improved?
- Is the department's current staffing model the correct one for the department? If not, what are the options?
- Is the department's call force maintaining an acceptable level of response and service? Does the department have an active recruitment and retention program for call personnel?
- Is the department's apparatus fleet appropriate and adequate for the department's mission(s)? What should the Town be planning for capital expenditures related to the fleet?
- To what extent have current concepts been successfully incorporated in pursuing the department's mission?
- Is proper organizational theory including chain of command, span of control, and unity of command in place within the department, and are these principles working in everyday operations?
- Are the current operating budgets and levels of staffing appropriate?

- Are there adequate financial and management controls in place in such areas as department owned property and equipment, cash receipts, and purchasing?
- Are personnel utilized efficiently and effectively?
- Are the communications and data processing systems adequate, and is management information properly utilized?
- Has the command structure been providing proper leadership?
- Are personnel properly trained for the positions they occupy?
- Is communication within the department clear, consistent, and timely?
- Is the current level of staffing appropriate to conduct current and future department operations?
- Are there service areas that require a more effective response?
- Are the hiring and promotional processes adequate to select the best qualified candidates, screen out undesirables, and achieve an appropriate level of diversity?
- Are the rules, regulations, policies and procedures adequate and up-to-date?
- Are the physical facilities and equipment, including apparatus and radios, up-to-date, capable of meeting the demands on it, and operated and maintained in the most cost-effective manner?

## **PRESENTATION OF A FINAL REPORT AND ACTION PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS**

The final report and associated action plans and recommendations will be presented by the project team at up to two meetings. Attendance at more than two meetings will not be a part of the basic services to be provided under the base fee proposal.

## **TIMELINE**

Municipal Resources, Inc. is prepared to begin work on this project upon award and execution of a contract with the community. A project of this scope can typically be completed within 90 to 120 days.

## **DELIVERABLES**

1. One (1) bound copy of the draft report.
2. One (1) bound copy of the final report.
3. One (1) CD in pdf format containing the final report.
4. One (1) CD in Microsoft PowerPoint format containing an outline of the final report. This outline will be utilized in the final presentation of the report to the Client.

## **ABOUT MRI**

Municipal Resources, Inc. (MRI) provides quality service at an affordable price. We have the technical knowledge and practical experience that others cannot offer because we hire the best in the municipal consulting industry. This is evidenced by a high level of implementation of MRI's recommendations by its clients. Municipal Resources is capable of performing multiple projects at the same time because of the depth that we have acquired through the number of employees and affiliates we maintain. We also have the ability to draw upon a wide array of talent because of our unique business approach. Our clients have come to expect Municipal Resources to provide for whatever they need and we fulfill their expectations. We strive to always meet or exceed our clients' initial expectations for quality of work and reports.

Municipal Resources, Inc. was founded in 1989 by six former municipal and state government managers, with both public and private professional experience. Municipal Resources is dedicated to providing professional, technical, and management support services to municipalities and schools throughout New England. Municipal Resources operates offices in two locations in New Hampshire, one in Maine, one in Massachusetts, and one in Pennsylvania.

Our dynamic management staff can tailor services to specific client needs. Our clients realize that we have been in their shoes; we have the experience, sensitivity, and desire that it takes to develop and deliver services that specifically meet their needs.

Municipal Resources is committed to providing innovative and creative solutions to the problems and issues facing local governments and the agencies that serve them. Combined staff experience in the operations of local government, coupled with the realities of today's economic, regulatory, and political environments gives Municipal Resources a unique capability which can be brought to bear for local government officials, many of whom are volunteers seeking to do what is right for their communities.

The depth of Municipal Resources' experience is reflected not only in the experiences of its associates, but in the scope of services it provides its clients, from professional recruitment to



organizational and operational assessments of individual municipal departments and school districts or ongoing contracted services for various town government and school business support activities.

Municipal Resources Inc. has a particularly strong Public Safety Group and has completed fire safety related projects throughout the Northeast.

### **THE PROJECT TEAM**

Municipal Resources has two (2) principals, a staff of eleven (11) full-time professionals, four (4) administrative support staff, and approximately thirty (30) part-time professionals serving as subject experts. All Principal Consultants affiliated with the firm have substantial experience in government service, a background which proves beneficial to our clients, as we are able to fully understand and address the issues and concerns of the officials and decision makers with whom we do business.

We believe that Municipal Resources has the best collection of talent that any consultant can produce at any price. Generally, our affiliates are current or recently retired practitioners in their field. They have held or hold positions at or near the top in their respective fields. All are previous veterans of consulting assignments. They have Regional, and in some cases, National reputations. We believe this team has the ability to provide your organization with a full range of services necessary to successfully address your current needs. While our technical evaluation is done by in-service experts, all of our recommendations are carefully considered by our own managers before being put forward for your consideration.

### **PRICE**

Our services for this study will be provided on a lump sum fee basis that is intended to cover all professional time and expenses. This study will be completed for a lump sum fee of **\$12,000.00**. This fee can be reduced with a negotiated reduction to the project scope of work.

Respectfully submitted,

MUNICIPAL RESOURCES, INC.

By:

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