

Fire Rescue Task Force

April 1, 2014

6:30 p.m.

City Manager Conference Room
City of Whitewater Municipal Building
312 W Whitewater Street, Whitewater, Wisconsin

AGENDA

Members of the Task Force are: Don Gregoire (Fire Chief), Todd Lindert (Rescue), Jan Bilgen (Police Commission), Ken Kidd (Council), Phil Frawley (Council), Cameron Clapper (City Manager)

1. Call to order and roll call
2. Approve minutes for the February 13 and February 27, 2014 meetings
3. Follow-up on any changes to previously discussed items
4. Discussion of details pertaining to the organizational structure of the Whitewater Fire Department including composition of the governing body/board, duties and responsibilities of the governing body/board, duties and responsibilities of the fire chief, duties and responsibilities of Fire Department officers (including EMS) and duties and responsibilities of the city toward the proposed newly organized department
5. Propose future meeting dates
6. Adjourn

*There may be a quorum of Whitewater Common Council members present at this meeting.
No Council business will be conducted.*

*Anyone requiring special arrangements is asked to call the office of the
City Manager/ City Clerk at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.*

Fire Rescue Task Force

February 13, 2014

6:00 p.m.

City Manager Conference Room

City of Whitewater Municipal Building

312 W Whitewater Street, Whitewater, Wisconsin

MINUTES

1. Call to order and roll call.

Meeting was called to order by Ken Kidd at 6:02 p.m. Present: Don Gregoire (Fire Chief), Todd Lindert (Rescue), Jan Bilgen (Police Commission), Ken Kidd (Council), Cameron Clapper (City Manager). Absent: Phil Frawley (Council). Also present: Mark Taylor, Wally McDonell (City Attorney), Mike Higgins (2nd Asst. Chief), Steve Chene, John Peache, Chris Christon.

2. Approve minutes from the January 28, 2014 meeting.

It was moved by Lindert, seconded by Bilgen to approve the minutes for the January 16, 2014 meeting of the Fire Rescue Task Force. Ayes: Gregoire, Lindert, Bilgen, Kidd, Clapper. Noes: None. Absent: Frawley.

3. Follow-up on changes to previously discussed items.

Gregoire stated that a temporary contract, 501(c)3 application, and by-laws are being worked on with the help of the city attorney and an attorney the Fire Department has retained.

Cameron Clapper, City Manager, stated that he would be providing the Common Council with an update of the progress of the Task Force at their next meeting on February 20.

4. Discussion of potential organizational models.

Kidd summarized that the main issue of the committee is to decide how the Fire Department and EMS will relate to the City and how the Fire Department and EMS will relate to each other, reorganizing as needed to ensure long term viability. Lindert presented a variety of options for organization included in a power point to the committee, assuming 501(c)3 status. Organizational models proposed in the PowerPoint are listed below:

- A. Similar to the current organization, with fire and EMS members voting for their officers, all with one vote within the organization.
- B. A corporation with a Board of Directors made up of members outside the fire department with fire and rescue chiefs answering to the board and fire and EMS members equal
- C. A Board of Directors made up of fire department members with fire and rescue chiefs answering to the board and fire and EMS members equal
- D. A Board of Directors with the fire chief answering directly to the board and the EMS chief answering to the fire chief with fire and EMS members equal

- E. The fire department as a separate organization with EMS answering to the City Council or the Police and Fire Commission as a city department
- F. The current situation with the Fire Chief overseeing fire department and EMS operations with unequal representation for fire and EMS members with EMS members not having voting rights

Lindert's power point is attached to these minutes as Exhibit A. The Task Force discussed at length the options discussed at the previous meeting as well as the organization models provided in Captain Lindert's power point. This discussion included the possibility of the Fire Department as a non-stock corporation with a governing board and as a municipal department.

Clapper pointed out that in other parts of the city organization, organizations similar to the non-stock corporation model were being, or had been, discussed and developed. These examples included the current work by the CDA to possibly develop a separate entity to administer their seed capital loan and grant programs and the Whitewater University Technology Park Board which was established as a separate organization to oversee the Innovation Center and the Technology Park. In each of these examples, rules had been established as to how advisory board members were selected and any associated term limits either through articles of incorporation or bylaws. The group agreed that accountability would be very important and the selection of members for a board of directors would be critical whatever the final form of the entity.

The possibility of a stipend program for fire department officers was suggested.

The group further discussed the organization options presented in the power point provided by Captain Lindert and the concept of an advisory board or board of directors. A board would be responsible for organizational governance and not be involved with operational chain of command or related procedures. The board would be responsible for approving, and possibly negotiating, new agreements for fire and EMS services with the city as well as the surrounding towns. The board would also be responsible for supporting and promoting the establishment/maintenance of standards and best practices within the department as well as financial policies and disciplinary issues. The leadership of the fire department would be accountable to the board. It was agreed that the composition of the board would greatly determine how the fire department would be perceived by those inside and outside the organization.

There was concern expressed as to whether or not the fire department would be able to make it as a separate entity. Kidd pointed out that one of the important goals for the Task Force is to see where the city can help ease the burden on fire department officers and others. The City could provide help with financial and administrative services by agreement with the fire department.

It was generally agreed that all members should have equal voting rights but that a single person should oversee the department. It was further agreed that the selection and appointment of the chief and any assistant chiefs would be an important issue to address and

that, while the advisory board might have authority to select a chief or to select officers, it would be important for the membership of the department to be involved in selecting/nominating finalists for those positions and that each division (fire and/or EMS) should have a say in selecting their respective officers as well as the chief. It was also suggested that the duration of the appointment for the officers (1 year? 2 years? 3 years?), especially for the office of chief, be considered. It was also suggested that the current bylaws, with different rules for fire vs. EMS, be consolidated into one set that would be the same for all the membership.

Regarding the position of fire chief, all agreed that, under a new organizational structure following a model like those suggested in the power point (primarily Option D), the fire chief would not have the same duties and responsibilities held by the chief currently. All agreed that, whatever the responsibilities, the chief officer for the organization should still be identified as the fire chief.

The goal for the next meeting will be to discuss:

- 1) The duties and responsibilities of the fire chief
- 2) The duties and responsibilities of the city toward the fire department
- 3) The composition of the board.

It was also suggested that compensation for all volunteers and officers, as well as the role of the Communications Center in any new organizational structure, be discussed in March. Clapper indicated there were questions regarding the future of the Communications Center at the council level and that there would be a meeting between UW-Whitewater, Walworth County, and the City (including fire/EMS leadership) to discuss the issue on March 10. Council members would also be invited to attend the meeting.

5. Confirmation of next meeting dates:

February 27, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.
March 13, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.
March 20, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.

6. Adjourn.

A motion by Clapper, seconded by Bilgen to adjourn. Ayes: Gregoire, Lindert, Bilgen, Kidd, Frawley, Clapper. Noes: None. Absent: None. The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cameron Clapper
City Manager

Exhibit A

**WHITEWATER
FIRE & RESCUE
TASK FORCE STUDY**

February 13, 2014

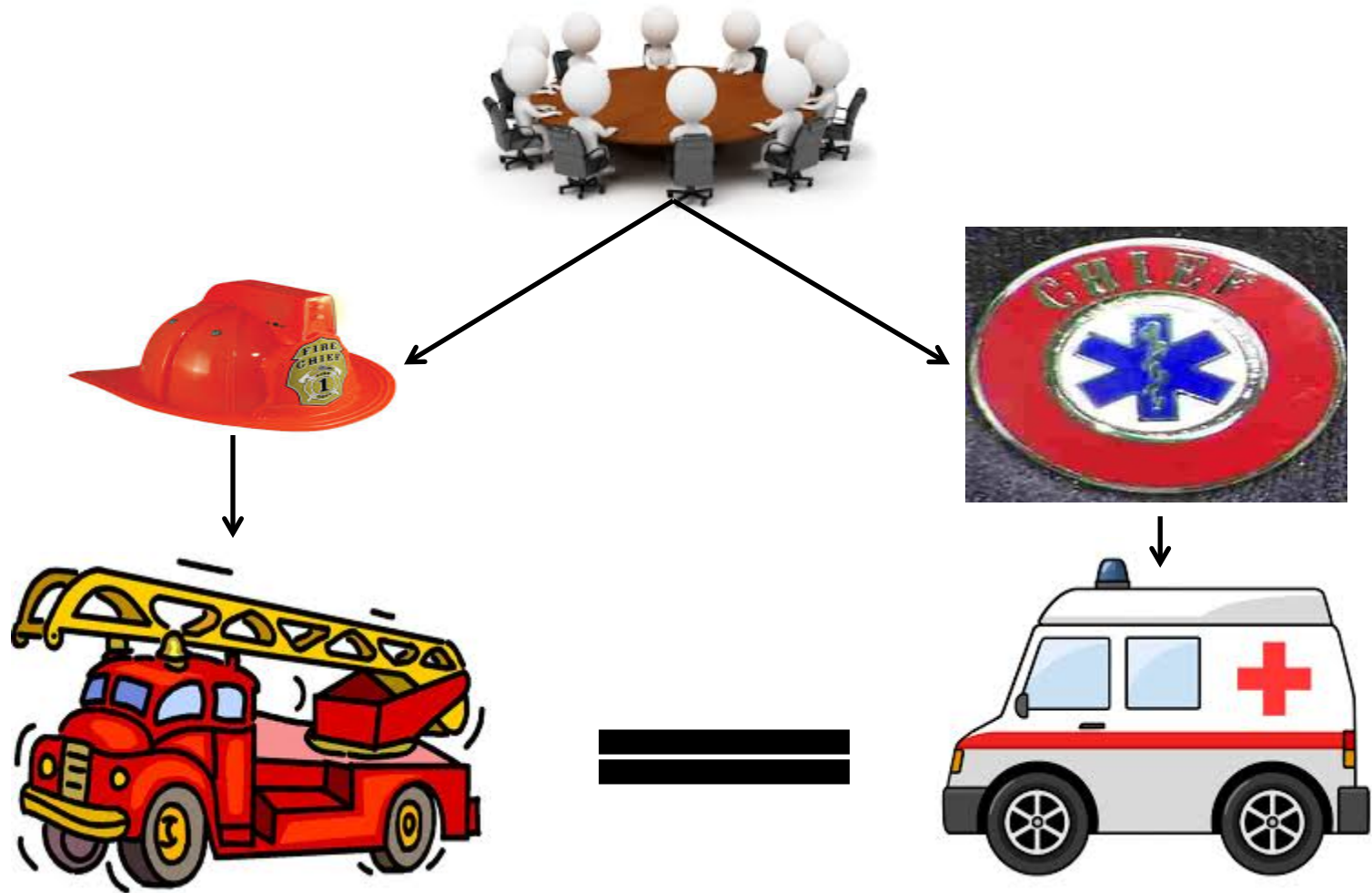
Whitewater **Fire** & **Rescue** Organizational/Oversight Options

(with pictures)



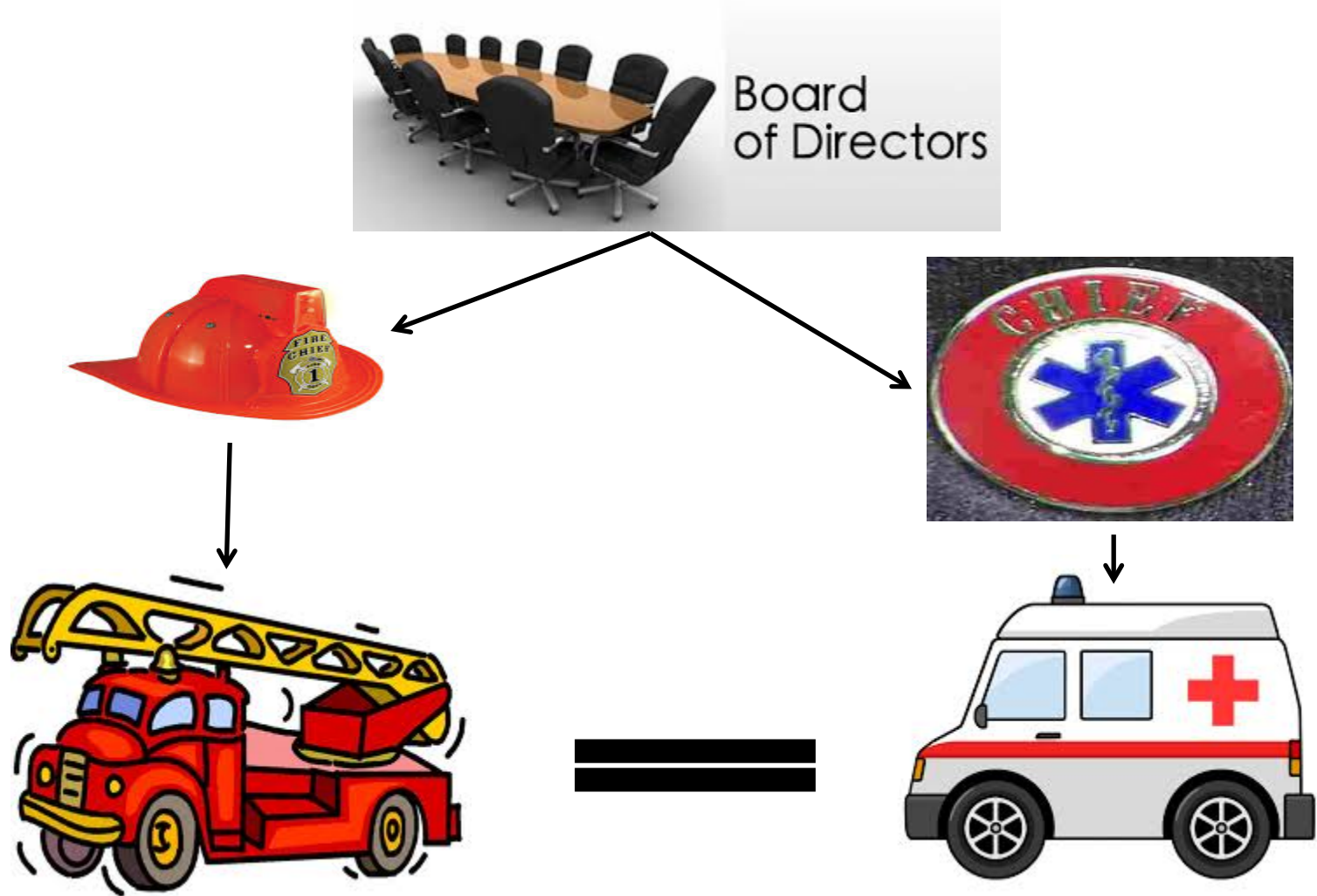
OPTION A

(Police/Fire Commission)



OPTION B

(combination board oversees FD Corp.)



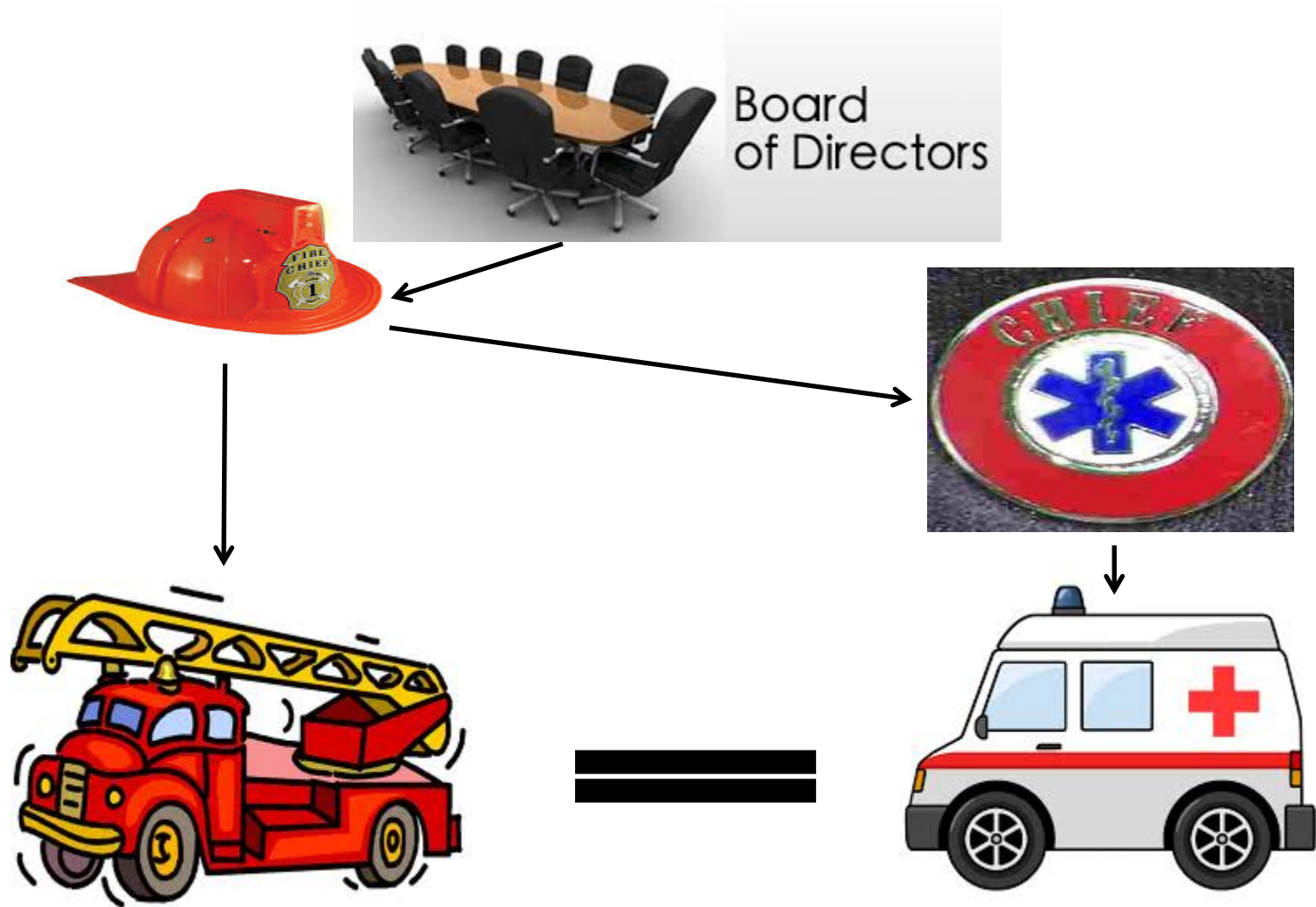
OPTION C

(all firemen board oversees FD Corp.)



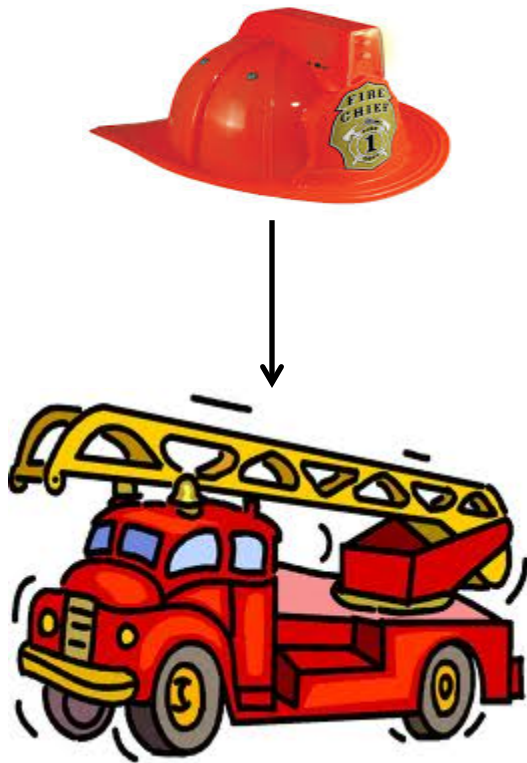
OPTION D

(all firemen board oversees FD Corp.)



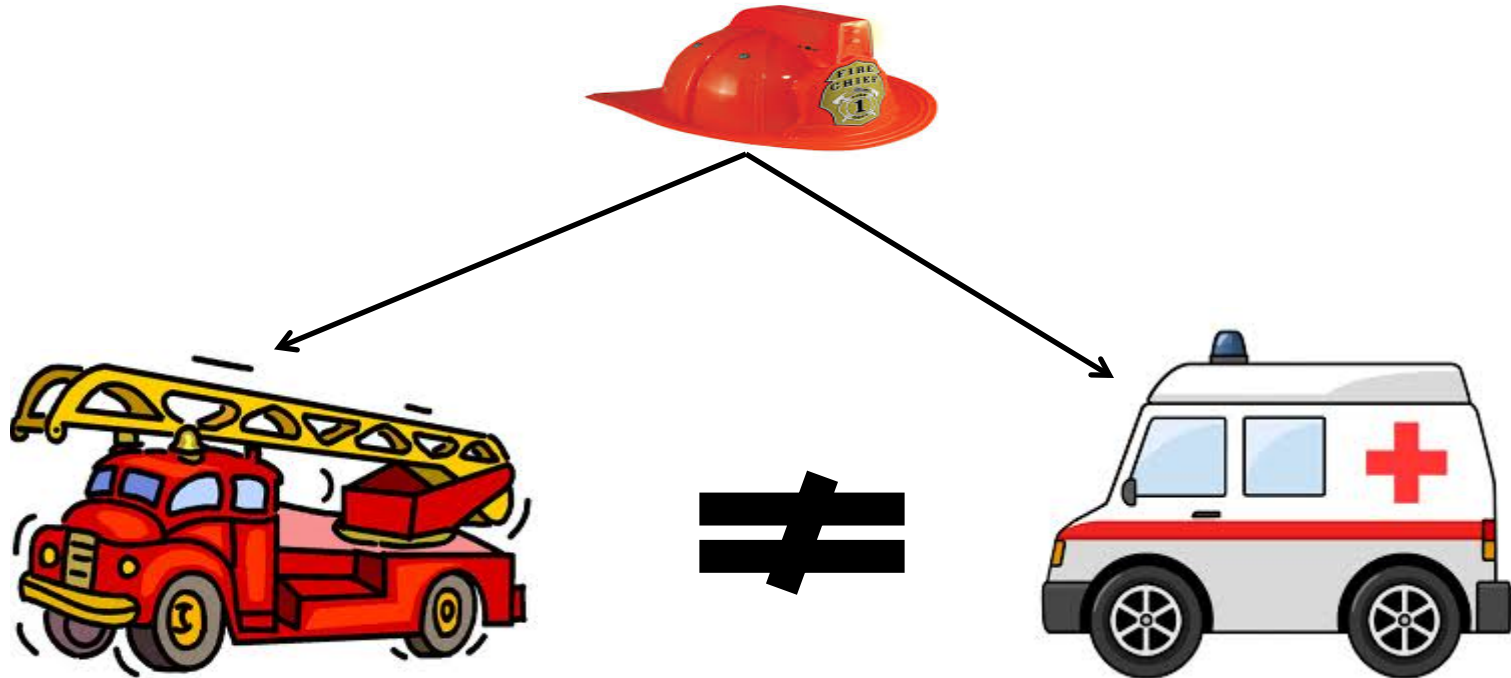
OPTION E

(FD separates from Rescue; Rescue = city dept)



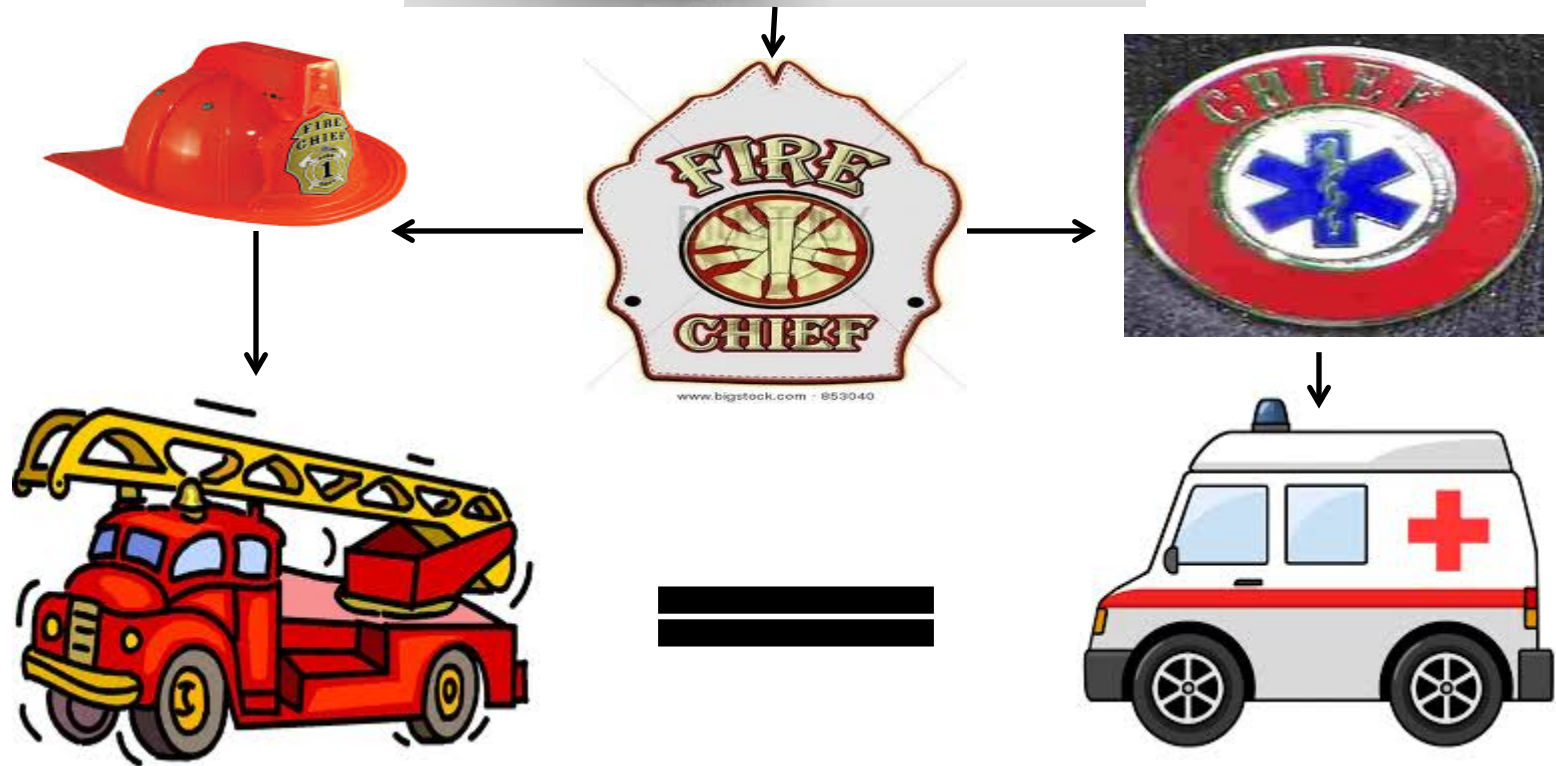
OPTION F

(current structure)



NEW STRUCTURE

(combination board oversees FD Corp.)



OPTIONS

- A) Police/Fire Commission Oversight**
- B) Combination Board made up of various representatives (FD, Rescue, City Hall); all FD/Rescue members equal**
- C) Board elected by FD, oversees Fire Chief & EMS Chief; all FD/Rescue members equal**
- D) Board elected by FD, oversees Fire Chief; all FD/Rescue members equal**
- E) Separate FD & Rescue; Rescue now City Dept**
- F) Fire Chief elected by FD only, oversees Rescue Operations; all FD/Rescue members NOT equal**

**"That's
all
folks!"**



Fire Rescue Task Force

February 27, 2014

6:00 p.m.

City Manager Conference Room
City of Whitewater Municipal Building
312 W Whitewater Street, Whitewater, Wisconsin

MINUTES

1. **Call to order and roll call.** Meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Ken Kidd. The meeting start was delayed to await the arrival of Chief Gregoire who was out on a fire call at 6 p.m. Present: Don Gregoire (Fire Chief), Todd Lindert (Rescue), Ken Kidd (Council), Phil Frawley (Council), Cameron Clapper (City Manager). Absent: Jan Bilgen (Police Commission).
2. **Discussion of details pertaining to the organizational structure including composition of the governing body/board, duties and responsibilities of the fire chief, and duties and responsibilities of the city toward the proposed newly organized department.**

The Task Force addressed the organizational structure as it had been discussed at the previous meeting. The group spent some time reviewing the organizational model as had been discussed previously and clarified the following assumptions.

1. Fire and EMS would be one united department under the new model, not separate organizations or entities.
2. Under the new model (to be proposed), the organization would be a separate incorporated entity such as a non-stock corporation.
3. In order to obtain support from the common council for any changes to the existing organization, a recommendation would need to come from the task force and not just from the membership of the fire department. The recommendation would include a proposed organizational structure for the fire department.
4. The process for selecting/nominating a chief would include/involve all the membership of the department with the advisory board having involvement at the end of the process with the final selection.
5. The process for selecting/nominating fire and EMS officers would involve/include their respective membership with the advisory board having involvement at the end of the process with the final selection.

After reviewing and clarifying the above assumptions, the task force discussed the role of the advisory board. The group identified the following as potential duties/responsibilities for the board.

1. Provide budgetary oversight including the approval of the annual budget that would then be presented to towns and the city.

2. Provide assistance with conflict resolution and/or labor relations including the review and hearing of disciplinary actions (appeals).
3. Establish/Approve benchmarks for the organization based on best practices. Monitor adherence to standards for training and performance.
4. Approve (and assist in negotiating) service contracts for fire department services with towns and the city.
5. Serve as a liaison between the fire department and outside organizations such as the city and/or towns.
6. Succession planning.

Items to discuss at the next, or future, meeting(s) include further discussion of the role of the board, the duties and responsibilities of the fire chief and other officers, and potential services to be provided by the city. It was also suggested that there be discussion of the LOSA insurance program at a future meeting.

3. **Confirmation of next meeting dates:**

March 13, 6:00 p.m.

March 20, 6:00 p.m.

4. **Adjourn.** A motion was made by Don Gregoire, seconded by Phil Frawley to adjourn the meeting. Ayes: Gregoire, Lindert, Kidd, Frawley, Clapper. Noes: None. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.