

VIRGINIA FIRE SERVICES BOARD



A Report of Findings  
and  
Recommendations:

**Town of Farmville  
Fire & EMS Study**



**October 2018**

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The foregoing is a recommendation authorized pursuant to Va. Code 9.1-203.A.4 and is not to be construed as legal advice or as a binding recommendation.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

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### **Fire and EMS Departments**

Farmville Fire Department  
Prince Edward Rescue Squad

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report documents the findings and recommendations for the Town of Farmville Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Study. The information contained is not to be construed as legal advice or as binding recommendations. This report is intended to provide guidance for the Town of Farmville's Council and its fire and rescue stakeholders to build on what is working well, while observing opportunities for improvement. Strategic focus in these areas will enhance the overall quality and coordination of fire-rescue service delivery to residents of the Town of Farmville.

The study was requested by the Town Council in order to analyze several areas of responsibility within the Town's Fire and Rescue Services. The Study Committee was comprised of representatives from the Virginia Fire Services Board, the Virginia Department of Fire Programs, and the Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services.

The findings and recommendations are organized into five working themes to include:

- Organizational Development
- Communication
- Training
- Budget and Administration
- Delivery of Services

These working themes provide a central focus for prioritizing the study's recommendations. They serve as a guide for the Study Committee to identify and evaluate measures that ultimately will improve the quality and coordination of Fire and EMS Services within Town of Farmville.

Below is a high-level summary of the findings and recommendations, which will be discussed further in the report.

### ***Theme 1: Organizational Development (Page 10)***

- ***Strategic Plan & Unified Vision:*** The Town of Farmville should develop a unified strategic plan for Fire and EMS Services to improve performance and service delivery.
  - There should be a long-term plan for the provision of Fire and intent to pursue delivering EMS services. Long term plan should consider emergency communications, emergency management, and the level of system performance.
  - Any future strategic plan should represent the collective efforts of the Town of Farmville's leadership and nearby service providers so it is able to identify the critical challenges it faces with clearly defined performance goals.

- Accountability Practices: The Fire Chief should continue enhancing the Town's Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for the fire department while also establishing one for EMS.

***Theme 2: Communications (Page 14)***

- Fire and Life-Safety Communication: The Town should strengthen its fire and life-safety communication activities with the residents of Town of Farmville.
- Dispatch System: Town of Farmville must pursue efforts to establish second repeated dispatch channel.

***Theme 3: Training (Page 15)***

- Coordinated Training Program: Town of Farmville should continue to improve its comprehensive training program and assess it annually.

***Theme 4: Budget and Administration (Page 16)***

- Capital Improvements: Town of Farmville must pursue efforts to ensure the availability for sleeping quarters, and functioning kitchen.
- Standardization and Central Purchasing: Town of Farmville should continue utilizing centralized purchasing with an emphasis on enhancing the process by creating long-term plan on future purchases.

***Theme 5: Delivery of Services (Page 17)***

- Recruitment and Retention: Town of Farmville should pursue efforts to adopt a recruitment and retention plan.

## **METHODOLOGY**

For each task of the work plan, the Study Committee identified objectives, performed specific activities, and delivered project products. The following is an overview of the study process:

### **PHASE I: INITIATE PROJECT**

#### ***Objectives: Initiation of Study***

To initiate the study, the Study Committee began by gaining a comprehensive understanding of the project's background, goals, and expectations. This was carried out by identifying in detail the specific objectives for the review, and assessing how well the work plan would accomplish the objectives. In addition, the Study Committee set out to establish a mutually agreed project work plan, timeline, deliverables, and monitoring procedures that would support the accomplishment of all project objectives. The final study initiation step consisted of collecting and reviewing existing operational data and information on agreements along with relevant policies and procedures. Many of these review materials are included in the appendix of this study.

As part of Phase I, the Study Committee met with Town of Farmville leadership to establish working relationships, make logistical arrangements, and determine communication lines. During these meetings, the Study Committee discussed the objectives of the project and identified policy issues and concerns central to the study.

The meetings also allowed the Study Committee to obtain pertinent reports and background materials relevant to the review, such as current and historical staffing data, as well as a description of the current service delivery system and organization.

Based on this course of action, the Study Committee concluded this section of the study with a revised project work plan/timeline deliverable.

### **PHASE II: OBTAIN STAKEHOLDER INPUT**

#### ***Objectives: Conduct Leadership Interviews & Capture Input from the Departments***

The second phase of the study consisted of leadership interviews and department evaluations. The expectations were as follows:

- Identify expected service levels;
- Identify opinions of department officials concerning the operations and performance of the department;
- Identify issues and concerns of officials regarding fire and rescue services;
- Identify perceived gaps in existing service levels and new priorities in mission; and,
- Identify strengths and weaknesses as perceived by departmental personnel.

Each goal was realized with the support of Town of Farmville's study project manager and Fire Chief, Dean Farmer. Chief Farmer assisted in finalizing the interview list and

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establishing a schedule that was reasonable, but more importantly convenient for the interviewees. All interviews were conducted during an allotted timeframe and a considerable amount of information was collected. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with majority of Town of Farmville's Fire organizations as well as Town leadership including Town Manager, Gerald J. Spates and Assistant Town Manager, C. Scott David.

The Study Committee received descriptions of staffing and deployment responses in meeting service demands at targeted service levels. The discussions also provided a snapshot of personnel management contentions as well as concerns regarding service delivery. It is also important to note that the Study Committee visited all fire and rescue stations that were staffed throughout Town of Farmville in an effort to support their research of the organizational functioning.

The deliverable for this section of the study work plan consisted of a thorough evaluation of the site visit data and the development of working themes to capture the team's assessment.

### **PHASE III: PREPARE ANALYSES AND DEVELOP CORE STRATEGIES**

#### ***Objectives: Evaluate Current Trends and Prepare a Report***

The third phase of the study work plan involved further investigation and understanding of the organizational structures, operations, limitations, achievements, and opportunities for improvement within the volunteer and career system. The activities that supported this process consisted of additional requests for information not already obtained in Phase I and II of the work plan. Data requests, made in this phase of the study, attempt to address any issues that emerged from the interviews, and further evaluate implications of the operational issues cited. Data obtained during the study process also assists the Study Committee in identifying issues influencing the current levels of service.

After receiving and critically evaluating information from the interviews and all supporting materials, the Study Committee began identifying the necessary critical action steps to achieve exceptional organizational functioning and uniform service levels throughout Town of Farmville.

Each action step was selected to identify the changes in policies, facilities, apparatus, and equipment to ensure that the Town would be capable of providing fire-rescue services at the desired level going forward.

The deliverables achieved in Phase III involved drafting a report that evaluated current trends in the services, recommended action steps for improvement, and the assignment of responsibility.

#### **PHASE IV: PREPARE FINAL REPORT**

##### ***Objectives: Prepare and Present Final Report***

The final phase of the study involved documenting the results of all previous tasks into a written report with critical components, such as an executive summary, methodology, background, and findings and recommendations. Once completed, a draft report was shared with the designated locality project manager, Chief Dean Farmer to ensure the technical content is accurate. Upon receiving corrections, the Study Committee revised the draft report, as needed, to assist in the preparation and issuance of the final report.

The deliverables for the final phase of the work plan consisted of 1) a draft report, and 2) the final report.



## DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The Town of Farmville is located in both Prince Edward and Cumberland Counties and with a total size of 7.4 Square Miles. The 2010 census population was 8,216, with an estimated 2017 of 7,831.<sup>1</sup> Farmville is located between Petersburg and Lynchburg on U.S. Route 460. Petersburg is 67 miles to the east, and Lynchburg is 48 miles to the west.

The 2012-2016 owner-occupied housing units were 41.4% with a median value of owner-occupied of about \$160,300. Moreover, the median household income as of 2016 was \$35,084 with over 40% of civilian labor force.<sup>2</sup> The Town of Farmville is a partner of Enterprise Zone (VEZ)<sup>3</sup> program. Enterprise Zone is a partnership between state and local government that encourages job creation and private investment. The Town supports a thriving downtown and five shopping centers consisting of total retail sales exceeding half billion dollars annually.<sup>4</sup>

The Town's government structure is as follows; the Town Council consists of a Mayor and seven Council members. The Town Manager administers and delegates the daily functions to respective departments with Town Council approval. This community is a regional hub for commerce, industry, and tourism. Farmville is home to Longwood University, Green Front Furniture, Southside Community Hospital and the Farmville Regional Airport.

C01 – Farmville Volunteer Fire Department  
C02 – Hampden-Sydney Volunteer Fire Department  
C03 – Pamplin Volunteer Fire Department & Ems, Inc.  
C04 – Prospect Volunteer Fire Department  
C05 – Meherrin Volunteer Fire Department  
C06 – Darlington Heights Volunteer Fire Department  
C07 – Rice Volunteer Fire Department  
Prince Edward Volunteer Rescue Squad

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> DHCD – Virginia Enterprise Zone - VEZ designs Enterprise Zones throughout the state and providing two grant-based incentives, the Job Creation Grant (JCG) and the Real Property Investment Grant (RPIG), to qualified investors and job creators within those zones, while the locality provides local incentives.

<sup>4</sup> Town of Farmville – Community Profile

## **FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This section provides a summary of the five working themes for this study report. The summary is based on areas of concern that were repeatedly cited in the face-to-face interviews and observed during the site visit. Following this section is an in-depth examination of each theme, to include findings and recommendations.

### **Theme 1: Organizational Development (Page 10)**

- Strategic Plan and Unified Mission
- Accountability Practices

### **Theme 2: Communications (Page 14)**

- Fire and Life-Safety Communication
- Dispatch System

### **Theme 3: Training (Page 15)**

- Coordinated Training Program

### **Theme 4: Budget and Administration (Page 16)**

- Capital Improvements
- Standardization and Central Purchasing

### **Theme 5: Delivery of Services (Page 17)**

- Recruitment and Retention

Town of Farmville's fire and rescue service providers and administration should continue utilizing the national consensus standards. The standards were developed by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) with the input and support of fire and emergency services personnel, businesses, industry and other stakeholders, as guidance documents and resources to address several of the findings identified in this report.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> For a complete listing of the national consensus standards developed by the National Fire Prevention Association, visit: [http://www.nfpa.org/aboutthecodes/list\\_of\\_codes\\_and\\_standards.asp](http://www.nfpa.org/aboutthecodes/list_of_codes_and_standards.asp)

## **THEME 1: ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Town of Farmville Fire Department presently has 45 volunteer members reporting to the Town's Fire Chief. The Department has mutual assistance agreements with the Fire Departments in Hampden-Sydney, Rice, Prospect, and Cumberland County along with other surrounding areas.<sup>6</sup> Specialized equipment at the Farmville Fire Department includes ladder truck, brush truck, pumpers, tankers and engines. According to the interviewees, the Town owns and maintains the fire station, equipment and further provides funding assistance for general expenditure and purchase of new vehicles.

Town of Farmville is commended for their efforts to ensure its locality's code relative to the fire services meets the needs of its constituents. For example, *Section 12-77 & 12-78* of the Town Code - clearly grants the town manager to annually appoint a chief of the fire department and three fire wardens. Moreover, the Town further has high standards of accountability as *section 12-80* explicitly requests all fire departments to annually file a list of volunteer firefighters per department to the Town Manager's office.

**Fire Department:** The Fire Department is an all-volunteer full-service public safety agency providing services to the Town of Farmville, Virginia and to the surrounding areas in portions of Prince Edward, Cumberland, and Buckingham Counties.<sup>7</sup> The Department's 45 volunteer members are responsible for core services such as; Fire Suppression, education, and prevention services in its first due area from the station located in downtown Farmville. Moreover, the locality's Special Operations Unit is the only one within 50 mile radius.<sup>8</sup> The Unit provides response to and mitigation of incidents involving hazardous materials, suspected terrorist or criminal activity, and when specialized services are requested by other agencies. The Farmville Fire Department maintains a Class 6/8B ISO rating.<sup>9</sup>

**Emergency Medical Services:** The Town utilizes Prince Edward County Volunteer Rescue Squad. The squad provides services to the Town of Farmville and surrounding localities. Lastly, the entity provides 24 hours a day services with transport ability. Patients are transported to hospitals within surrounding localities.<sup>10</sup>

**Observation:** Prince Edward County Volunteer Rescue Squad is the sole agency for EMS delivery within the Town of Farmville's first due with mutual aid agreements established with Delta Response Team, Pamplin EMS and Meherrin EMS. There appears to be some obstacles within service delivery between Town of Farmville and Prince Edward County Volunteer Rescue Squad. Solutions to difficulties could be reached through Town of Farmville's effort of pursuing to reach a capacity to provide emergency medical care to its citizens.

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<sup>6</sup> Town of Farmville Comprehensive Plan 2017-2018

<sup>7</sup> Farmville Fire Department

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

<sup>9</sup> Ibid

<sup>10</sup> Prince Edward County Fire and Rescue

The provision of emergency medical services capability has progressed from an amenity to a citizen-required service. More than 90% of career and combination fire departments provide some form of emergency medical care, making fire departments the largest group of prehospital EMS providers in North America.<sup>11</sup> In many fire departments that deliver prehospital care, EMS calls can equate to over 75% of total call volume.

Utilizing fire department personnel to assist in managing medical emergencies is beneficial to patients if ambulance response will be prolonged. When ambulance response is prolonged, a patient will be further delayed in reaching a medical facility to receive definitive care. This is especially dangerous for incidents of chest pain, stroke, and survivable cardiac arrest. Many times, patients experiencing symptoms associated with these events may not recognize the onset indicators and immediately call for assistance.<sup>12</sup>

### **Recommendations:**

1. Pursue efforts to provide emergency medical services to citizens through the development of a first responder capability with Farmville Fire Department.
  - a. EMS offering multiple advantages such as established time/distance efficacy, employee safety and satisfaction, high patient survival rates, and cost effectiveness.
2. Various non-governmental organizations with interests in prehospital EMS have established standards for EMS systems, which include the following:
  - a. NFPA 1710 Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments.
  - b. [Virginia Department of Health's Office of Medical Services](#)<sup>13</sup>
3. Organize and/or join an Association consisting of Town of Farmville, Cumberland County and Prince Edwards County.

### ***Strategic Plan and Unified Vision***

There should be a long-term plan for the provision of Fire and intent to pursue delivering EMS services. Long term plan should consider emergency communications, emergency management, and the level of system performance. The long-term plan must be able to address growth in service demands, and how the system will work to limit service interruptions. The current mission as cited by the Farmville Fire Department *“Through professionalism, dedication, integrity, and training, the Farmville Fire Department will work to safeguard the lives and property and enhance the quality of life of the people in our*

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<sup>11</sup> [International Association of Fire Fighters – Emergency Medical Services – A Guide for Fire-Based Systems](#)

<sup>12</sup> Kales, S. N., & Smith, D. L. (2017). Firefighting and the Heart. Circulation

<sup>13</sup> [Virginia Emergency Medical Services Education](#)

*community. This will be accomplished by providing a vast range of emergency services, strong public relations, and fire safety education” should be used as a guide.*

Presently, the Fire Department has clear mission as cited above. Nevertheless, the statements do not appear to be consistent with the intent of its mutual aid service providers such as Cumberland and Prince Edward County. Thus, any future strategic plan should represent the collective efforts of the Town of Farmville’s leadership and nearby service providers so it is able to identify the critical challenges it faces with clearly defined performance goals. Such evaluation will allow the locality to identify specific initiatives they must undertake so it is capable of delivering quality service to their citizens.

The Plan should build upon the commitments of the Fire Department’s mission. Strategic planning must become institutionalized as an integral part of fire and rescue department and community resource allocations.<sup>14</sup> The Town should explore hiring a professional facilitator with strategic planning experience to guide them through this process.

### **Recommendations:**

1. Town Manager should establish one cohesive and effective Fire and Rescue Committee.
  - a. Membership should seek participation from one member of the Fire Department and, one member from the Rescue Squad Leadership.
2. Town of Farmville government should adopt and implement a strategic plan for its Fire and should pursue EMS Services so it is able to improve performance levels and achieve lower cost of service delivery.
  - a. Stakeholders must each play an integral part in the development of this strategic plan in order to meet expectations and foster commitment.
  - b. Parties involved in the strategic planning process should analyze the gap between where the Town is and where it wants to be in the future and identify strategies to close this gap.
  - c. It is suggested that a neutral party facilitate this process.
3. Collaboratively service providers and Town Government must establish a system of measurable performance goals and objectives. These measures will serve as the basis for the strategic plan.
  - a. Strategic plans should identify immediate, intermediate and long-term goals with reasonable target deadlines.
  - b. The Town Council should routinely review the achievement of these performance measurements and alleviate any barriers to their completion.

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<sup>14</sup> Preserving and Improving the Future of the Volunteer Fire Service, March 2004

4. In developing its strategic plan, the Town of Farmville should continue their commitment to using incident analysis and reporting, to include the Virginia Fire Incident Reporting System (VFIRS).
  - a. The Town of Farmville’s commitment to reporting will ensure that they have reliable data to appropriately assess performance and develop a plan to address operational and capital funding needs, or equipment, apparatus and facility needs.
  - b. By analyzing fire and rescue incident data and potential community hazards, a plan can be developed to improve deployment of resources, placement of sub stations, and the number of personnel needed for response and prevention efforts.
  - c. Access to the data collected should be provided to the rescue squad and fire department so they are able to get a comprehensive understanding of their performance.
  - d. The use of data such as VFIRS can be contributing factors to performance measurement and can further enable stakeholders to assess the effectiveness of the strategic plan.

In Town of Farmville, performance measurements will enable the Town Council to evaluate the performance of its service providers tasked with accomplishing the goals and objectives of the strategic plan. The performance measurement will exhibit clear association between performing, planning, spending and results. The Town of Farmville will have the opportunity to evaluate its mission, vision and performance objectives through three perspectives: financial accountability, constituent priorities and internal processes.

### ***Accountability Practices***

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), a standard operating procedure is “an organizational directive that establishes a standard course of action.”<sup>15</sup> Standard operating procedures (SOPs) are written guidelines that explain what is expected and required of fire service personnel in performing their jobs.<sup>16</sup>

The Town of Farmville Fire Department is applauded for their efforts to create and utilize a set of comprehensive Standard Operating Guidelines. Based on the study team’s observation, the guidelines are consistent with the intent of NFPA 1561: Standard on Fire Department Incident Management Systems. Future efforts to enhance would be beneficial and has the potential further improve service delivery and operational safety. Lastly, the

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<sup>15</sup> Developing Effective Standard Operating Procedures for Fire and EMS Departments, December 1999

<sup>16</sup> Ibid

Town of Farmville has pursued to adopt the Statewide Fire Prevention; the locality is commended for such action, as well.

## **THEME 2: COMMUNICATIONS**

Town of Farmville's Fire Department takes proactive steps to ensure communications to citizens is consistent. The Fire Department's website is continuously updated with all relevant information associated to call volume and mandatory training schedules. The current level of communication has created a very cohesive relationship among the Fire System in Town of Farmville, the Town Council and the Town Manager. The locality must continue its effort so it is able to reach a similar level of external communication among its mutual aid providers along with members of the general public. An effective communications process between all of these entities will improve the strategic plan and clearly define expectations for the community.

### **Recommendations:**

1. The Town should strengthen its fire and life-safety communication activities with the residents of Town of Farmville.
  - a. Increased efforts to promote the positive attributes of the Fire and EMS Services in Town of Farmville can raise morale and attract more volunteers. Some options include producing an annual report, developing a quarterly newsletter and utilizing social networking avenues.
2. The Town should take advantage of pre-existing fire and life-safety information available through state and federal organizations. Public fire and life-safety education resources are available at the following locations:
  - i. Virginia Department of Fire  
Programs: [http://vafire.com/fire\\_safety\\_education](http://vafire.com/fire_safety_education)
  - ii. Virginia Fire and Life Safety Coalition: <http://www.vflsc.org>
  - iii. The Home Safety Council: <http://www.homesafetycouncil.org>
  - iv. National Fire Protection Association: <http://www.nfpa.org>
  - v. Virginia Department of Forestry: <http://www.firePowhatanvirginia.org>
  - vi. Virginia Department of Emergency Management: <http://www.vaemergency.gov/social-media/alert-localities>

### ***Dispatch System***

The Farmville Emergency Communications Center is the sole public safety answering point (PSAP) for the Farmville area. According to interviewees, the center answers 9-1-1 calls for the Town of Farmville, Prince Edward County, and southern Cumberland County. Presently, the Emergency Communications Center serves about 29,000 residents with 15 full-time

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and 4 part-time employees who dispatch two (2) police departments, three (3) rescue squads, and seven (7) fire departments, as well as Farmville Public Works.<sup>17</sup>

According to the Emergency Communications Center, it has “four full-service dispatch consoles, that are equipped with a PlantCML 9-1-1 touch screen telephone, an DaPro computer-assisted call reporting station with mapping monitor, a Motorola 5500 police and fire-rescue radio, and a Sytech radio interoperability system accessible during emergencies to 33 public safety jurisdictions.”<sup>18</sup>

Farmville Emergency Communication Center’s appears to be applying modern communication, such as recording and mapping technologies so it is able to assist its public safety entities. However, during the interviews the study learned that the locality has one dispatch channel, three tactical channels and a short-range non repeated structure. In the future, the locality must pursue efforts to obtain second repeated dispatch channel.

### **Recommendations:**

1. Town of Farmville must pursue efforts to obtain second repeated dispatch channel.

### **THEME 3: TRAINING**

Farmville Regional Fire training Center opened 2017. The facility is used for training exercises and is available as a regional training center.<sup>19</sup> The Department provides safety educational programs for its citizens, and further inspects residences, businesses and industries for fire hazards. Town of Farmville’s website provides stakeholders with a calendar of training and explicitly cites there is a prerequisite to ride apparatus at the Farmville Fire Department. All new members are required to complete three federally mandated online classes from National Incident Management System.<sup>20</sup>

### ***Coordinated Training Program***

Development of important skills is the basis for safety and improving services received by the citizens. The Fire Department in Town of Farmville works hard to ensure the sufficient offerings of mandated and relevant training. The Town should pursue aligning its strategic planning efforts to coordinated training activities with Cumberland County and Prince Edward County.

### **Recommendation:**

1. Town of Farmville should continue to improve its comprehensive training program and assess it annually. Such assessment will enable the adoption of warranted changes.

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<sup>17</sup> Farmville Emergency Communications Center

<sup>18</sup> Ibid

<sup>19</sup> Ibid

<sup>20</sup> Ibid



- a. The Town Council should appropriate all the necessary resources to fulfill the Town's identified training challenges and fully train existing firefighters and rescue personnel.
2. Joint training opportunities must be pursued by Town of Farmville and Prince Edward Volunteer Rescue Squad.

#### **THEME 4: BUDGET AND ADMINISTRATION**

The Farmville Virginia Fire Department's budget is \$244,626 annually. The Town pays for maintenance on building, utilities and presently, owns all apparatus.<sup>21</sup> According to the budget, the aforementioned figures covers salary, line of duty, gas, oil, truck repair etc.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, Town of Farmville absorbs all expenses associated to the Emergency Communication Center – E-911 Department which amounts to \$104, 5277.11. The Center presently provides services to all Prince Edward Fire Department and Prince Edward Volunteer Rescue Squad. In FY2018, Town of Farmville received a total of \$26,662 from the Commonwealth of Virginia's Fire Programs Fund.<sup>23</sup>

#### ***Capital Improvements***

Interviewees advised that the Fire Department has sufficient equipment that is all current. However, there are no sleeping quarters and kitchen to accommodate staff. The number of women joining fire departments continues to increase. According to the International Association of Women in Fire & Emergency Service (iWomen), about 11,000 women work as career firefighters with an additional 35,000 to 40,000 women serving as volunteer firefighters. <sup>24</sup> Consequently, it is important for the Town of Farmville to pursue establishing sleeping quarters that are gender cognizant. Moreover, the locality does not have a long range budget plan to ensure future fleet/apparatus purchases are consistent with Farmville's needs.

#### **Recommendations:**

1. Town of Farmville must pursue efforts to ensure the availability for sleeping quarters, and functioning kitchen.
2. Town of Farmville should complete an annual needs assessment for the delivery of Fire and EMS Services and develop a base funding allocation system based upon the priorities set through the needs assessment and quantitative data.
  - a. Monies should be allocated based on the most critical needs and the highest call volume data.

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<sup>21</sup> Town Budget – Adopted 2018-2019

<sup>22</sup> Ibid

<sup>23</sup> VDFP Aid to Localities FY 2018 Allocation Report

<sup>24</sup> Sleep On It: Incorporating Private Dorm Rooms in Fire Stations, Firehouse 2017

- b. It is recommended that the Town continuously evaluate whether it is getting the appropriate return on its investments.
- 3. With input from the fire and rescue community, the Town Council should pursue efforts to create a capital improvement plan for upgrading its fire and rescue stations and equipment.
  - a. Town of Farmville should share their current capital improvement plan to its service providers.
  - b. Town wide equipment replacement policy should focus on rotational equipment replacement based on prioritized needs.
  - c. Town Councils should also consider leasing of apparatus or big ticket items as an option.
- 4. The Town of Farmville uses a private firm to assist with the acquisition and management of grants. The service is provided without a fee.

***Standardization and Central Purchasing***

The Town does utilize group purchasing method. Presently, the locality does not anticipate any future purchases at least for the next ten years. For example, the oldest equipment is a 1996 tanker and 2005 Pierce Quantum Ladder Truck.

**Recommendation:**

- 1. Town of Farmville should continue its efforts in identifying specifications for future apparatus purchases (considering the cost-effectiveness of regional contracts), refurbishment and replacement using the following national consensus standards:
  - a. NFPA 1901 - Standard for Automotive Fire Apparatus <sup>25</sup>
  - b. NFPA 1911 – Standard for Inspection, Maintenance, Testing and Retirement of In-Service Automotive Fire Apparatus <sup>26</sup>
  - c. NFPA 1912 – Standard for Fire Apparatus Refurbishing <sup>27</sup>

**THEME 5: DELIVERY OF SERVICES**

The Department’s 45 volunteer members appear to provide self-sufficient in their efforts to provide fire suppression, education, and prevention services the 10,000 residents to its first due area. As cited above, Farmville Fire Department is a full-service public safety agency providing services to the Town of Farmville, Virginia and to its neighboring localities such as Prince Edward, Cumberland, and Buckingham Counties. Town of

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<sup>25</sup>NFPA 1901, <http://www.nfpa.org/aboutthecodes/AboutTheCodes.asp?DocNum=1901>

<sup>26</sup> NFPA 1911, <http://www.nfpa.org/aboutthecodes/AboutTheCodes.asp?DocNum=1911>

<sup>27</sup> NFPA 1912, <http://www.nfpa.org/aboutthecodes/AboutTheCodes.asp?DocNum=1912>

Farmville must pursue efforts to collaboratively work with Prince Edward County in an effort to cross-train staff with the use of the Heavy Rescue Vehicle (Crash Truck). Presently the equipment is independently owned by Prince Edward Volunteer Rescue Squad.<sup>28</sup> Situations where there is a need for a call that requires collaboration, there are limited opportunity for responders to use the diverse set of equipment available.

## **Recommendation**

1. Town of Farmville should continue to explore the use of volunteers in support positions.
  - a. Volunteers should be considered as supplemental to the career staff and not replacement for the staff.

### ***Recruitment and Retention***

The Town of Farmville similar to other parts of the Commonwealth requires consistent assistance from local government to help with recruitment. The Town's Government must pursue efforts to actively recruit to ensure a successful successive planning process is present.

## **Recommendations:**

1. The Town Government should identify the needs for additional fire and rescue personnel to meet the service demands and citizen expectations.
  - a. Through improvement of fire and rescue incident data analysis and strategic planning, Town of Farmville should be able to determine fire and rescue personnel needs, equipment needs and deployment.<sup>29</sup>
2. Hire an official Recruitment and Retention Officer. This individual could be assigned additional responsibilities.
3. Adopt an official recruitment and retention program.
  - a. This recruitment and retention program should take into consideration the needs of current volunteers and identify motivational factors to keep this population engaged and committed to the fire and rescue service.
  - b. The Town should set annual recruitment and retention goals and concentrate its efforts and resources to achieving these benchmarks. The plan should be included in the strategic plan.

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<sup>28</sup> Trench Rescue requires the use of crash trucks and effectively collaborative work. It is important for both parties in Farmville and Prince Edward have a positive interdepartmental relationship.

<sup>29</sup> International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) - "Make Better Decisions: Put Your Data to Work," <http://www.iafc.org/MemberCenter/OnSceneArticle.cfm?ItemNumber=5840>. This article provides an example of how multiple sources of data can be incorporated into fire and rescue department planning.

4. Find low-cost methods to enhance public-education efforts such as open houses and creating PSAs.<sup>30</sup>
  - a. Improve the visibility of the Town of Farmville Fire and EMS Services in the community.
  - b. Continued use of word-of-mouth recruiting is effective. Each volunteer should be encouraged to inform their respective community network about Town of Farmville fire and rescue services' training and educational opportunities.
5. In addition, Town of Farmville's fire and rescue organizations should take advantage of pre-existing recruitment and retention information. Resources may be downloaded at the following locations:
  - a. Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
    - i. <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/OEMS/Agency/Recruitment/index.htm>
    - ii. [http://www.vdh.state.va.us/OEMS/Files\\_page/Locality\\_Resources/EMSWorkbook\\_0405.pdf](http://www.vdh.state.va.us/OEMS/Files_page/Locality_Resources/EMSWorkbook_0405.pdf)
    - iii. [http://www.vdh.state.va.us/OEMS/Files\\_page/Locality\\_Resources/EMSWorkbook3.pdf](http://www.vdh.state.va.us/OEMS/Files_page/Locality_Resources/EMSWorkbook3.pdf)
  - b. BecomeEMS.org - <http://www.becomeems.org/>
  - c. Fire/Volunteer (Guide) - <http://www.nvfc.org/resources/rr/retention-recruitment-guide/>
  - d. Fire/Volunteer (Video) - <http://www.nvfc.org/files/documents/Retention-and-Recruitment-Volunteer-Fire-Emergency-Services.wmv>.
  - e. 2004 Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission Report. "Review of EMS in Virginia" Part III of the report; *Recruitment, Retention and Training of EMS Providers* (Page 55) – <http://leg2.state.va.us/dls/h&sdocs.nsf/4d54200d7e28716385256ec1004f3130/87c75ac37063994d85256ec500553c41?OpenDocument>

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<sup>30</sup> Fire Service Image Task Force Report: Taking Responsibility for a Positive Public Perception 15

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## **APPENDIXES**

**Appendix 1:** Town of Farmville Letter of Request – February 2018

**Appendix 2:** Town of Farmville - Virginia Fire Incident Reporting System Report Summary

**Appendix 3:** Town of Farmville FY2018 Aid-to-Localities Allocation Report

## APPENDIX 1: TOWN OF FARMVILLE LETTER OF REQUEST

TOWN OF FARMVILLE  
Post Office Drawer 368  
Farmville, Virginia 23901

Gerald J. Spates, Town Manager  
Carol Anne Seal, Town Treasurer

434.392.5686  
Fax 434.392.3160



COUNCIL  
David E. Whitus, Mayor  
A. D. "Chuckie" Reid  
Sally Thompson  
Tommy Pairet  
Donald L. Hunter  
J.J. "Jamie" Davis  
Greg Cole  
Daniel E. Dwyer  
Lisa Hricko, Clerk of Council

February 15, 2018

Mr. Mohamed G. Abbamin, MPA  
Policy Manager  
Virginia Department of Fire Programs  
1005 Technology Park Drive  
Glen Allen, VA 23059

RE: Comprehensive Analysis Study of Fire System Request – Town of Farmville

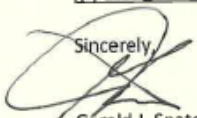
Dear Mr. Abbamin,

This is to request the services of the Virginia Fire Services Board (VFSB) in conducting a complete and thorough review of the fire system in Farmville. The requested areas of concentration of this study include:

- Organization
- Budget and Administration
- Training
- Delivery of Services
- Fleet Design and Management (Equipment/Apparatus)

It is Council's desire to have a complete and thorough review of the above-mentioned areas and a comprehensive list of recommendations to enhance the delivery of services to the citizens of Farmville.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (434)392-5686 or by email at [gspates@farmvilleva.com](mailto:gspates@farmvilleva.com). We greatly appreciate your assistance.

Sincerely,  
  
Gerald J. Spates  
Town Manager

GJS/lmh

**APPENDIX 2 : FARMVILLE – VIRGINIA FIRE INCIDENT REPORTING SYSTEM REPORT**

The Virginia Department of Fire Programs manages the Virginia Fire Incident Reporting System (VFIRS). VFIRS is the statewide system for tracking all emergency responses with fire departments in Virginia. By reporting their incidents to VFIRS, fire departments document the details of their incidents for legal purposes and documenting the overall activities of their fire department.

**Incident Type Summary, Farmville, Virginia 2013-2017\***

| <b>Incident Type</b>   | <b>2013</b> | <b>2014</b> | <b>2015</b> | <b>2016</b> | <b>2017</b> |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Fires                  | 11          | 0           | 11          | NA          | 9           |
| EMS/Rescue             | 7           | 0           | 57          | NA          | 47          |
| Hazardous Condition    | 7           | 0           | 33          | NA          | 6           |
| Service Calls          | 7           | 0           | 13          | NA          | 13          |
| Good Intent            | 16          | 0           | 64          | NA          | 33          |
| False Alarm            | 12          | 0           | 46          | NA          | 24          |
| Other                  | 0           | 0           | 0           | NA          | 0           |
| <b>Total Incidents</b> | <b>61</b>   | <b>0</b>    | <b>258</b>  | <b>NA</b>   | <b>136</b>  |
| Aid Given              | 9           | 0           | 42          | NA          | 34          |
| Exposures              | 0           | 0           | 0           | NA          | 0           |
| <b>Grand Total</b>     | <b>70</b>   | <b>0</b>    | <b>300</b>  | <b>NA</b>   | <b>170</b>  |

**Fire Dollar Loss Summary, Farmville, Virginia 2013-2017\***

| <b>Year</b> | <b>2013</b> | <b>2014</b> | <b>2015</b> | <b>2016</b> | <b>2017</b>  | <b>Total</b> |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| Dollar Loss | \$7,000     | \$0         | \$20,500.00 | NA          | \$153,000.00 | \$180,500    |

**Casualty Loss Summary, Farmville, Virginia 2013-2017\***

| <b>Incident Type</b>  | <b>2013</b> | <b>2014</b> | <b>2015</b> | <b>2016</b> | <b>2017</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Civilian Fire Deaths  | 0           | 0           | 0           | NA          | 0           | 0            |
| Fire Service Injuries | 0           | 0           | 0           | NA          | 0           | 0            |
| Fire Service Deaths   | 0           | 0           | 0           | NA          | 0           | 0            |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>0</b>    | <b>0</b>    | <b>0</b>    | <b>NA</b>   | <b>0</b>    | <b>8</b>     |

\*Taken from VFIRS Incident Summary Report 2013-2017

**APPENDIX 3: TOWN OF FARMVILLE FY2018 AID-TO-LOCALITIES ALLOCATION REPORT**

| <b>Description</b> | <b>Population (2010 Census)</b> | <b>FY2018 Allocation</b> |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Town of Farmville  | 8,216                           | \$ 26,662                |
| <b>Total</b>       | 8,216                           | \$ 26,662                |

*\*\* VDFP ATL Annual Report*