

COUNCIL TRANSMITTAL

TO: Van Turner, Chair
Salt Lake City Council

DATE: November 16, 2007

FROM: Lyn Creswell, Chief Administrative Officer

SUBJECT: Paramedics Presentation to City Council

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:

The Administration will make a presentation to the City Council regarding the Salt Lake City Fire Department paramedic service. The paramedics will be recognized as a group. Battalion Chief Brian Dale and senior staff members will make a ten minute presentation, followed by a question and answer period.

See attached background information.

City Council Background Information

Paramedicine in SLC

The City Fire Department employs 87 paramedics

A paramedic goes through more than 1200 hours above that of an EMT including:

- Over 400 hours in classroom training (didactic)
- 120 hours laboratory
- Over 300 hours in skills labs
- Over 300 hours in field training

The special equipment paramedics use includes:

- Advanced patient assessment skills
- Advanced cardiac monitors
- 27 different treatment drugs
- Advanced airway adjuncts including surgical airways
- Intravenous catheters
- Pulse Oxymetry
- Chest decompression techniques (collapsed lung procedures)
- Bone Drills

Paramedics are a special breed of firefighters because they are willing to be placed not only in burning buildings, but in the worst medical environments short of a war zone. They treat our citizens when they are having their worst nightmares. Paramedics are an extension of the hospital physician in our community, and they bare the same medical responsibility for assessment and treatment. They they do it for many hours on end, many times without much sleep in 24 hours. Our community expects this level of service, and our paramedics provide excellent patient care and emergency intervention.

The City has many of the best and brightest paramedics as suggested by the number of times our department has received the EMS Incident of the Year as presented by the Utah Bureau of Emergency Medical Services. In the last five years, we have received the award three times. Many of our paramedics also serve the two flight systems in the valley as flight paramedics. This is a highly sought after position, and the numbers of our personnel that have been accepted speaks well of our Department's paramedic corps.

Here are some statistics relating to paramedic service in Salt Lake City:

1. The Fire Department was one of the first two agencies with paramedics in the state of Utah.
2. The Fire Department has more (almost double) the amount of EMS runs as the rest of the county departments combined. This is both a benefit as our personnel get considerable amounts of experience, and a detractor - we are concerned regarding EMS Burnout.
3. Our personnel responded to 29770 emergency runs in 2006. This is approximately a 5% increase from the year before.
4. Our personnel will be one of the first EMS agencies to go paperless with our Patient Care Reports (PCR) in the first quarter of 2008.
5. We will implement our new Zoll Cardiac Monitors and defibrillators with advanced carbon monoxide (CO) detectors this year.