



**From:**  
**Brian Zwiebel, EMS Chief**  
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**City of Burlington**  
**Mayor Jeannie Hefty**  
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Date: April 3, 2019 Contact: Brian Zwiebel,  
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**-- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE --**

### **EMERGENCY SERVICES TO STREAMLINE SERVICES**

The Burlington Rescue Squad (BRS) has provided emergency medical services to the greater Burlington community continuously since 1946. In the more recent years the demand for emergency medical services has continued to increase at an exponential rate in our community. This is due in part to the demographics of an older population, who by nature need more medical services taking up residence in Burlington. Covering both the Township of Burlington and the City of Burlington, Burlington Rescue has come close to 1600 calls for service per year. This is remarkable for a number of reasons. The first reason is that this has been done with volunteer personnel doing the responding 24 hours a day. The second is that most municipalities, when they top 750 calls per year, go to a full-time, paid service.

Our community is fortunate that we have been able to maintain the superior quality of service to our community due to the dedication of a shrinking sample of Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT). Due to the call volume, number of EMTs and concern for duplication of services, the City of Burlington officials, Town of Burlington board members and officers of Burlington Rescue have begun negotiations of how the City of Burlington and Burlington Rescue can efficiently combine while still maintaining the quality of service that they perform for both City and Town residents. The negotiations involve conversations about continuing to use as many volunteer hours and personnel as necessary while being diligent about the use of taxpayer dollars. The first step

includes the City Fire Department upgrading its service provider level from First Responder to the Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (A-EMT) to match the current license level of BRS.

Chief Brian Zwiebel said, "We, as members of Burlington Rescue, have prided ourselves on the quality of service we have been able to provide with our brothers and sisters in the Fire/EMS community. We will continue to do that on a consistent basis. These talks are a preliminary step to ensuring the safety and viable future of EMS and Fire services in our community."

Burlington Mayor Jeannie Hefty, herself a Gold Badge Member of the rescue squad has noted the positive relationship that has developed between the fire and rescue services, which has made these negotiations as easy as possible. Mayor Hefty further noted, that that men and women of both our fire and EMS services should be very proud of the dedication that they have given to our area's citizens and visitors up to this point and into the future. Mayor Hefty has spoken with Town Chairman Ralph Rice and has assured him the Town will continue to be serviced in the same manor through any combination of A-EMT service.

While there is no definite timeline on the combination of services, negotiations are ongoing as Chief Zwiebel noted, "The summer season is rapidly approaching and with all of the lakes and recreation activities our area offers, our calls are not going to decrease, that's for sure."

EMS Chief Zwiebel, Mayor Hefty and Fire Chief Alan Babe said that this is positive step in moving forward for our community. Collaboratively we will continue to provide EMS to the people of our service area.

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