

LRB – RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS SECTION ANALYSIS

SEPTEMBER 14, 2006 AGENDA
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

ITEM 11, FILE 060490
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File No. 060490 is a resolution authorizing the Milwaukee Fire Department to participate in the Wisconsin Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS).

Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) Background

MABAS is a mutual aid organization that has been in existence since the late 1960s. The organization includes over 550 member fire departments organized within 46 divisions. Information below is provided on the official website (<http://www.mabas.org>) The MABAS Executive Board meets quarterly and functions as a coordinating agency.

MABAS Structure

Representatives consist of over 25,000+ firefighters and daily staffed emergency response units including more than 750 fire stations, 900+ engine companies, 275+ ladder trucks, 600+ ambulances (mostly paramedic capable), 150+ heavy rescue squads, 125+ light rescue squads, and 225+ water tankers, Fire/EMS reserve (back-up) units, specialized operations teams for hazardous materials (HAZMAT), underwater rescue/recovery (DIVE) and above grade/below grade, trench and building collapse rescues (HURT) and certified fire investigators which can be "packaged" as teams for larger incidents requiring complicated and time-consuming efforts for any single agency.

Background

1. Section 66.0301 Wis. Stats., authorizes the City of Milwaukee to contract with other municipalities for the delivery or provision of services including fire protection and emergency medical services such as the service agreement with West Allis.

Discussion

2. The expansion of mutual aid to a statewide system doesn't require all municipalities and fire districts to join MABAS as a member agency. In the absence of preexisting contracts and agreements, mutual aid assistance become a voluntary act (similar to Hurricane Katrina deployment which reimbursed costs to the City of Milwaukee).
3. The Fire Department mentions a few members such as the counties of Kenosha, Walworth, Rock and parts of Green, Dane, Waukesha, Milwaukee and Jefferson counties in Wisconsin and Lake, McHenry, Boone, Winnebago and Cook counties in Illinois as MABAS agencies (<http://www.mabas.org/forms/pdf/ByDesignation.pdf>).
4. File 060490 authorizes the Milwaukee Fire Department to become a MABAS participant by entering into agreement with MABAS (Mutual Aid Box Alarm System) to formalize aid agreements and adopt a standard of operation, incident command, minimum equipment staffing and safety on-scene terminology.

Fiscal Impact

No fiscal impact is anticipated. There is no cost to join MABAS and dues are self-imposed by and at the control of each individual MABAS division.

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