

## Ambulance Dispute

La Crosse Mayor Mark Johnsrud has proposed creating a city ambulance service that would be staffed by city firefighters.

It's a potential source of income for the city, as much as 300 thousand dollars a year.

That income would come at the expense of Tri-State Ambulance, which currently provides service to the city and outlying areas.

Tri-State direct Matt Zavadsky says, "The message that we want to give folks today is the system we have today our high performance system operation."

It's a message that Tri-State wants to get out, if it isn't broke don't fix it.

Zavadsky says, "If you change components of that to any of those three things, clinically, operationally, or financially, we need to know what those changes are going to be so we can evaluate the impact they may have on the rest of the community."

Under the proposed change, the La Crosse City Fire Department would provide ambulance service in the city.

But Tri-State says that could hurt its bottom line.

Zavadsky says, "if certain percentage of the calls handled by tri-state are no longer handled by us that would have a clinically, operationally, and financially impact on the community of the entire 22 hundred square miles that we cover."

Yet La Crosse City Fire Chief Gregg Cleveland says they should be given a chance to show the city what they can provide.

"Our own objective is to participate and make an impact to the system and make it better."

Both the La Crosse City Fire Department and Tri-State hope they can find common ground and reach an agreement.

Matt says, "What we would hope is that we can come to an agreement, that we can enhance the program without changing the balance."

Chief Cleveland says, "The fire department and Tri-State have the best interest in the community and I would hope we would be able to look at the system and see what strengths the fire department has and what strengths tri-state has."

Tri-State and the La Crosse Fire Department will have the chance to do just that.

They have scheduled a meeting for July tenth.

Fire Chief Cleveland says after that July tenth meeting, they will have a better idea of what the fire department's role will be in providing emergency service to La Crosse.

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