

Story originally printed in the La Crosse Tribune or online at [www.lacrossetribune.com](http://www.lacrossetribune.com)

**Published - Monday, August 18, 2008**

## **Doyle favors, proposes more balanced EMS commission**

By SAMANTHA MARCUS | La Crosse Tribune

La Crosse County Board Chairman Steve Doyle will introduce an Emergency Medical Services Commission proposal today that he considers more balanced than a version introduced in the city last week.

Doyle's suggestion alters the make-up of the commission overseeing regional ambulance service by knocking off one city council member.

"I'm trying to pull out the politics," Doyle said. "We really need to get beyond posturing and gameplaying."

In La Crosse Mayor Mark Johnsrud's plan, four of the 11 seats are reserved for city representatives, including the mayor, two common council members and a citizen member.

Doyle said a commission so stacked toward the city "won't fly" in out-county areas.

The joint-commission also includes the Onalaska mayor, county board chairman and vice chairman, a village president, a town board member and representatives from Gunder-sen Lutheran and Franciscan Skemp medical centers.

At the insistence of Tri-State Ambulance officials, two non-voting, ex-officio physicians will be on the panel.

The commission would set and regulate standards, protocol and quality of care, among other things.

Both city and county plans represent a major deviation from a proposal unveiled to the public less than two weeks ago.

The result of months of mediation among the city, county and Tri-State, that draft would have authorized the purchase of two ambulances and allowed 12 firefighters to train as paramedics.

Johnsrud said the public outcry illustrated that any changes should be implemented one step at a time.

Doyle praised Johnsrud for dropping the idea of a city ambulance and working toward a commission "that can take the politics out of this thing."

While the city council could vote on the commission in September, any county board vote is another month out.

"My hope would be that when the city council looks at a lopsided one and then a balanced one,

they would feel that's really the way to go," Doyle said.

*Samantha Marcus can be reached at (608) 791-8220 or [smarcus@lacrossetribune.com](mailto:smarcus@lacrossetribune.com).*

All stories copyright 2000 - 2006 La Crosse Tribune and other attributed sources.