

## OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MEDICAL RESCUE TEAM SOUTH AUTHORITY

**JOHN K. TRANT, JR.**  
INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



315 CYPRESS WAY  
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA 15228-2218  
P: (412) 343 – 5111

ON THIS FRIDAY, OCTOBER 22,

### 2022 BUDGET MESSAGE

Board of Directors:

Medical Rescue Team South's reputation for excellence in patient care was at such great heights, the realities of what was "under the hood" of the organization in 2019 were unable to mar that reputation too deeply. Recent progress to address the troubled inner workings and elevate them to match our external reputation serves as the groundwork for a stable future: \$2 million capital investment in station improvements, new ambulances, power stretchers, and other supporting operational infrastructure; establishment of a new organizational structure and installation of a new leadership team; and implementing professional management of financial and HR operations. Fortunately, along with this progress, there is a common desire and commitment to never go back to MRTSA's dark days. We are turning a corner toward a bright future, but some uncertainty still lies ahead.

The future holds immense opportunity to burnish MRTSA's reputation and step out even further as the regional leader in EMS once again. The needed long-term stability may come (and last) by addressing a few remaining challenges: 1) modernizing the shift schedule, 2) broad-based commitment to financial stability, 3) continued aggressive recruitment of field staff, and 4) elimination of the last remnants of an internal "Us versus Them" mentality that grew from the challenging past and replace it with a more productive team approach. When these challenges are addressed, I'm confident the member communities - Baldwin Township, Castle Shannon, Dormont, Green Tree, Mt. Lebanon and Whitehall - can take great pride in their continued investment in MRTSA as the leading EMS provider serving their residents, businesses, and visitors with the expertise and professionalism you've come to expect.

Adopting a deficit budget is not ideal by any standard; but it gets the organization closer to facing yet another tough reality that remained elusive in the past: expenses are outpacing

income at an aggressive rate and have been for some time. I'd much prefer not to present a recommended budget with a large deficit, but addressing these final hurdles, with eyes wide open, is the best way to tackle them head-on. This budget includes zero grant revenue, realistic projections of expenses, and is reflective of a scenario in which the Authority no longer relies on operating debt, which previously accrued to an unsustainable point. Also included is the full staffing of field personnel and the Authority's new management team – Full-time Executive Director, Chief of Operations, and three Lieutenants. The current collective bargaining agreement negotiations are just around the corner and present an opportunity to address management of some of the built-in labor costs, but that remains an open question.

In addition to increases in member communities' financial contributions, possible solutions to the deficit include: 1) an improved shift schedule that is more flexible could reduce costs (overtime and shift overlaps) and at the same time increase service and reduce the calls per shift burden on staff through a return to staffing a fourth ambulance on busy shifts; 2) continued staffing of vacant shifts by the management team, which integrates management with field staff to improve operations and also helps to reduce overtime costs; and 3) attracting new field staff to fill the remaining open positions, which reduces overtime costs and alleviates the burden on current field staff to fill those vacancies. Fortunately, we've made good progress toward filling the open positions with 10 new field staff hires in the last 18 months.

Through the past management challenges and the COVID-19 crisis, our paramedics and EMTs weathered the storm - serving the public with excellent patient care and doing their best to maintain our solid reputation. It's their level of commitment and professionalism, guided by a new leadership team, that give me confidence everyone will work together toward addressing the remaining challenges to complete the rebuilding process. It was my great honor to serve as your Interim Executive Director for just shy of two years. I'm proud of the many accomplishments we've made, of the new leadership team, and of every MRTSA Paramedic and EMT - they start and end every shift as the hardest-working first-responders.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Trant', with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end of the signature.

Interim Executive Director

February, 2020 – October, 2021