



***Racine Fire Department***  
*810 Eighth St, Racine WI 53403*

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October 29, 2018

Honorable Mayor and  
Common Council

Dear Honorable Mayor and Common Council,

I am requesting to waive formal bidding and to direct the purchasing agent to acquire a new Ford/Horton Type III Medical Response Unit from Foster Coach of Sterling, Illinois, when the 2019 CIP program is approved.

For many years the fire department has standardized fire apparatus and our medical response units (rescue squads) on a basic design that is functional, and easily maintained. In addition, we have moved away from extensive customization which is expensive to a more utilitarian design that accomplishes our operational needs. Since becoming Fire Chief in 2006 we have waived formal bidding on several medical response units (rescue squads) with significant success and always under budget.

There are a number of positive attributes to acquiring this medical response unit (rescue squad) from Foster Coach. Those attributes include:

- Knowledgeable Sales and Support Staff. They have always made themselves available on very short notice to answer questions or meet on technical issues that occasionally arise.
- Technical Engineering. Foster Coach working with Ford Motor Company and Horton Ambulance Company has redesigned and improved the construction of this new ambulance which gives the vehicle a life expectancy of 10+ years.
- Standardization of Equipment. This allows us to put the same equipment in the same location on all of the rescue squads which facilitates quicker access by crews on the scene of an emergency. You do not need to hunt down equipment in odd compartments due to different placement of compartments.
- The medical response unit is built for Wisconsin weather. Hot, cold, rain, snow, sleet, ice, and road salt is all part of the Wisconsin experience. Older fire department apparatus built by suppliers well south of Wisconsin have suffered major electrical and corrosion issues due to our environment. A quality control and engineering issue.
- Maintenance. When maintenance issues arise Foster Coach is quickly able to send their representatives or mechanics to us within a few hours of identifying a problem and recommend appropriate repairs. In addition, Foster Coach has been very responsive to issues that have arisen when the vehicles have been outside their normal warranty period.



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- Parts. With Foster Coach located in Sterling, Illinois they have a well-stocked warehouse of spare parts that can be acquired the same day or overnight depending on the severity of the failure.
- Foster Coach has always been willing to provide a loaner medical response unit when one of our primary units is down for repair.

Therefore, it would be our most sincere recommendation that the purchasing agent be directed to waive formal bidding and negotiate with Foster Coach of Sterling, Illinois, for the acquisition of a new medical response unit (rescue squad) once the 2019 CIP program is approved.

**Fiscal Note:** Funding for this purchase is available in the 2019 CIP program.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Hansen, Fire Chief