Agenda Item Summary Report

Meeting Date: October 20, 2025 November 10, 2025	Submitted by: Vito Tinelli, Town Treasurer Michelle Bailey Hedgepeth, Town Administrator Chief Sumner, BVFD

Item Title: COUNCIL ACTION | Funding Request for Ambulance Staffing Stipend | Bladensburg Fire Department – FY 2026

COUNCIL ACTION | Funding Request for Ambulance Staffing Stipend | Bladensburg Fire Department – FY 2026

Work Session Item [X] Council Meeting Item [X]	Documentation Attached: Memo from Fire Department

Recommended Action: Staff recommends considering this type of stipend to support emergency response calls for town residents, ensuring adequate coverage and response times. This would be a 9-month Pilot to see the effectiveness, and the Council could review during the FY 2027 Budget Process.

Item Summary: Chief Sumner has requested that the Town of Bladensburg provide financial support to establish an **Ambulance Shift Stipend Program** for the Bladensburg Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad, Inc. The goal of the program is to ensure consistent weekday staffing of one ambulance unit by providing stipends to two volunteers (one aide and one driver) for each daytime shift, Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

The proposal is modeled after successful programs in **Greenbelt** and **Berwyn Heights**, which improved volunteer availability and emergency response capacity.

Estimated Program Costs

Rate	Weekly	Monthly	Annual
$15/hour	$1,200	$4,800	$62,400
$20/hour	$1,600	$6,400	$83,200

Payments would be issued twice monthly via check or Zelle, with **monthly timesheets and reports** submitted to the Town for accountability. Volunteers would receive **1099 forms** at year-end for tax reporting.

Program Benefits
- Provides consistent ambulance coverage during daytime hours.
- Recognizes and supports the commitment of volunteer responders.
- Enhances volunteer retention and engagement.
- Improves emergency response reliability for the community.

Next Steps for Town Council Consideration
1. **Review Funding Options:**
    - Determine whether the FY 2026 budget can accommodate this initiative or if grant/reallocation options should be explored. (Staff is recommending 9-month funding for this year $43,200 paid in 2 payments from Automated traffic Enforcement Proceeds)
    - Identify whether cost-sharing with the County or the Fire Department's nonprofit arm is possible.
2. **Discuss Policy and Oversight:**

- - o   Define how funds will be administered (directly by the Town or reimbursed to the department).
      - o   Establish expectations for monthly reporting and financial reconciliation.
3. **MOU and Discuss for FY 2027**
   - o   Place on the agenda for **Council discussion and direction** at an upcoming work session or regular meeting.
   - o   If supported, direct staff to prepare a **formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** outlining the stipend program terms.

Follow up by Town Administrator:

- The Town Administrator has requested additional information from the Fire Chief and has sought additional information from other agencies, which have been attached to augment this report.

Budgeted Item: Yes [X] No [ ] **Budgeted Amount:** **One-Time Cost: TBD** **Ongoing Cost:**	**Continued Date:**
Council Priority: Yes [ ] No [ ]	**Approved Date:**