**MEDIA OPPORTUNITY**

 **from**

**BONITA SPRINGS**

**FIRE-RESCUE**

**June 6, 2013 Contact: Nicole Hornberger**

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**Public Meeting on Bonita Springs’ Transport Certificate**

**Who:** The Bonita Springs Fire Control and Rescue District and the Lee County Commission

**What:** Negations regarding the approval of the Bonita Springs Fire District’s transport certificate.

**Where:** Bonita Springs Fire Station Four at 27701 Bonita Grande Drive, Bonita Springs.

**When:** Thursday, June 6 at 1:30PM.

The Bonita Springs Fire Control and Rescue District (BSFCRD) submitted an application to Lee County Public Safety with the intent to expand our current level of paramedic Advanced Life Support (ALS) non-transport service to a fire-based ambulance transport service in May 2010.

Fire-based ambulance transport has been identified as a service expansion that will substantially benefit the citizens of our community. This addition of service would facilitate a transition from the current two-tiered medical response service, provided by BSFCRD and Lee County EMS (LCEMS), to a single medical response and transport service provided by BSFCRD.

In 1997, BSFCRD was licensed by the Lee County Board of County Commissioners as a paramedic EMS non-transport service provider; to date, we are still dependent upon other agencies for ambulance service. With this improved level of service, Bonita’s cross-trained Firefighter/EMTs and Firefighter/Paramedics, who already respond first and provide ALS treatment, will provide patient transport if the certificate is approved.

The initial capital outlay to start the ambulance service would be supported by financing or leasing the vehicles. The proposed revenue generated from patient transport would cover the operational costs of providing the ambulance system. The billing fees charged for transport would be equal to the current rates charged by LCEMS.

Currently, Fort Myers Beach and Lehigh Acres Fire District’s provide the same type of ambulance service we are seeking to initiate in our community. In general, Bonita Springs units arrive on an emergency scene 2.5 minutes prior to LCEMS units. Those 2.5 minutes can mean the difference between life and death in a critical patient. Quicker ambulance response equates to quicker transport to definitive medical care.

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