



Creating Success Together: Municipal Collaboration, Consolidation, and Innovation

Mark Rohloff
City Manager
City of Oshkosh

2023 Chief Executives Summer Workshop
Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin
August 24, 2023





Factors in Collaboration

- Similar approaches to providing services – both type and scope
- Need to achieve service improvement and/or efficiency
- Timing/Opportunity
- Luck!





Similar Approaches

- Like a marriage – need compatibility
- Service approach needs to be compatible with one another





Service Improvement/Efficiency

- Participants need to have something to gain
- Your gain does not have to be the same as the other's gain
- Seek to understand what your prospective partner needs





Timing/Opportunity

- Often depends on vacancies that occur
- Inside/outside support – staff and community
- Luck is often the secret sauce – where opportunity meets preparation
- Be prepared!
- Political support: make it easy for elected officials to support it





Examples in Oshkosh

- EMS/ambulance with surrounding municipalities
- Joint health clinic for county, school district, and city employees
- Free transit for school district students
- Regional sewer service





Regional EMS/Ambulance

Compatibility

- On-call EMTs not available for towns/small municipalities
- Most remaining town EMTs were either our off-duty folks or our recruits





Regional EMS/Ambulance

Service Improvement/Efficiency

- Towns were seeking more reliable service for growing population
- City was seeking more efficient use of our 24/7 paramedics





Regional EMS/Ambulance

Timing/Opportunity

- Private EMS company proposed drastic fee increase to provide service to towns
- New local hospital was willing to initially subsidize town EMS to develop relationships





Regional EMS/Ambulance

Timing/Opportunity (cont.)

- Layoffs were imminent for City unless we identified additional revenue
- Limited availability of EMTs/first responders for towns
- Local officials knew they had to do something – both needed something





Key Points

- Look for areas of compatibility
- Look for opportunity/timing
 - Innovation Fund is latest opportunity
- Collect data and trends to identify need for consolidation





Key Points (cont.)

- Keep issue on elected officials' radar
 - Focus on problem to be solved
 - Hold off on pushing solution until it's needed
- Success sets table for future collaboration efforts





Questions / Comments

