

**PINELLAS COUNTY EMS WATER RESCUE GRANT PROGRAM**

**RESOLUTION 26—**

**A RESOLUTION TO MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE THE EMS WATER RESCUE GRANT PROGRAM; PROVIDING FOR ITS PURPOSE; PROVIDING FOR THE PROVISION OF FUNDING TO SUPPORT OPERATIONS, MAINTENANCE, EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING FOR WATER RESCUE PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE ON A COUNTYWIDE BASIS; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

**WHEREAS**, in order to provide Water Rescue services to the citizens and visitors of Pinellas County, it is essential to continue to improve and expand the capability, expertise and resources to handle situations where such emergency services are needed; and

**WHEREAS**, the fire rescue agencies respond to various waterborne emergency incidents; and

**WHEREAS**, the fire rescue agencies are all signatories to the automatic aid agreement among all of the fire rescue agencies within Pinellas County and respond without regard to jurisdictional boundaries when emergency calls are received; and

**WHEREAS**, the County, acting as the Emergency Medical Services Authority, wishes to continue the collaborative efforts with such agencies to sustain a countywide Water Rescue Grant Program that will support enhanced operations, maintenance, equipment and training; and

**WHEREAS**, the EMS Water Rescue Grant has supported the original goals to establish and maintain a countywide approach to radio communications; equipment to improve search capability such as sonar and thermal imaging; rapid rescue diver equipment and training; search pattern training; rescue boat operator training; medical and safety equipment. All of these programs and efforts have increased the efficiency and safety of water rescue operations through a shared operational approach; and

**WHEREAS**, the EMS Water Rescue Grant has always been intended to supplement and not replace local funding by Cities and Fire Districts, utilizing many different funding sources, to support their ability to respond to waterborne emergencies and have preparedness for evacuations due to hurricanes or flooding; and

**WHEREAS**, the EMS Water Rescue Grant amount has not been increased since Fiscal Year 2016-2017, the recommendation is to adjust the funding amount for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 and for future fiscal years; and

**WHEREAS**, this resolution repeals and supersedes Resolution 17-47.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF PINELLAS COUNTY, ACTING AS THE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AUTHORITY (“AUTHORITY”), THAT:**

## **SECTION 1. EMS WATER RESCUE PROGRAM.**

- (a) Role. There hereby exists an EMS Water Rescue Grant Program to provide for the enhanced preparedness and response to waterborne medical emergencies and rescue situations through the support of a countywide program that provides funding support for operations, maintenance, equipment and training necessary to improve and expand the capacity and capability of the various fire rescue water rescue resources.
- (b) Purpose of Funding. In exchange for funding, equipment and training from Authority as outlined herein, the fire rescue agencies will make available water rescue resources and personnel, who are trained and equipped to respond to any Water Rescue incident to rescue patients and provide medical treatment throughout Pinellas County.

Water Rescue incidents include, but are not limited to, providing emergency response, medical aid, and search and rescue services operating in water, in all weather and all hazard environments in Pinellas County and its surrounding waters, including environments of extreme weather, flooding, debris, fire, entrapment, ejections from vessel and distressed swimmers.

The EMS Water Rescue Grant has always been intended to supplement and not replace local funding by Cities and Fire Districts, utilizing many different funding sources, to support their ability to respond to waterborne emergencies and have preparedness for evacuations due to hurricanes or flooding.

- (c) Definitions. Unless the context otherwise requires, capitalized terms used herein shall have the following meanings ascribed to them:

“Dive Team” or “DV” means personnel that provide dive, rescue, recovery and black water rescue services.

“Fire Rescue Boat” or “(FB)” means a specialized vessel that is designed for firefighting, emergency response, medical aid and search and rescue.

“Light Marine” or “(LM)” means a small, powerful and agile vessel such as a personal watercraft with a rescue sled that is used for rescues in many different environments.

“Marine Unit” or “(M)” means a specialized vessel such as a boat or inflatable that is designed to meet individual mission requirements such as emergency response, medical aid, and search and rescue.

“Rapid Diver System” means a fast donning, lightweight, all-inclusive scuba system to be used in place of traditional bulky scuba equipment.

- (d) Water Rescue Coordinators. Participating fire rescue agencies shall designate a named person to serve as a Water Rescue Coordinator to actively participate in the Water Rescue committee, assist with equipment and training needs assessment; assist in the coordination and participation of their individual agency.

## **SECTION 2. WATER RESCUE FUNDING AND SUPPORT.**

- a) Supplemental Operating and Maintenance Funding. The Authority will provide supplemental operating and maintenance funding each fiscal year as indicated in Appendix "A". Up to fifty percent (50%) of the program expenditures may be expended on operating and maintenance. In any Fiscal Year, if the reimbursement for operating and maintenance will exceed fifty percent (50%), the standardized reimbursement amounts will be adjusted proportionally. Each apparatus in the same category will receive the same standardized reimbursement amount.
- b) Equipment and Training. The Authority will provide equipment and training, which may include instructors and training materials, as described in Appendix "B", but shall not include funding for salaries for students to attend training. Other identified training or equipment needs will be met at the discretion of the Authority's executive director to the extent of budgeted available funds for such purposes. Equipment will be provided to individual fire rescue agencies as determined by the Authority's executive director within the budgetary constraints of this Resolution.
- c) Term & Payment. This program will remain in place until vacated by the Authority. Payments will be made in lump sum each fiscal year for the duration of this program.
- d) Fiscal Non-Funding. In the event sufficient budgeted funds are not available in any fiscal period, the Authority shall notify the fire rescue agencies in writing within five (5) days of the determination of such occurrence.
- e) Not to Exceed Cap. Expenditures for this program shall not exceed \$400,000.00 in any fiscal year.
- f) Authority Assets. All assets purchased by the Authority shall remain the property of the Authority. Assets may be provided to fire rescue agencies for use through a "hand receipt" process. The Authority will maintain such equipment during the equipment's safe useful life.

## **SECTION 3. EFFECTIVE DATE**

This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption and repeals and supersedes Resolution 17-47.

Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_ offered the foregoing Resolution and moved its adoption, which was seconded by Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_, and upon role call the vote was:

Ayes:

Nays:

Absent and not voting:

**APPENDIX A**  
**OPERATING AND MAINTENANCE FUNDING**

Apparatus Type	Standardized Reimbursement
Dive Team	\$7,500
Multi-Engine Fire Boat or Marine Unit	\$10,000
Single Engine Fire Boat or Marine Unit	\$5,000
Light Marine Unit	\$1,000

**APPARATUS**

Contractor	Dive Unit	Single Engine	Multi Engine	Light Marine
Clearwater	DV51	M49	FB44	LM44 LM46 LM49 LGML
Dunedin			FB60	
Gulfport		M17		
Madeira Beach		M25		LM25
Palm Harbor		FB66 M66		LM66
Pinellas Suncoast		FB26 M27		LM26
Safety Harbor			FB52	
Seminole		M31		
St. Pete Beach			M23	LM22
St. Petersburg	DV11	M11 M12	FB11	LM11 LM12
South Pasadena				LM20
Tarpon Springs	DV69	M70	FB71	
Tierra Verde		M21		LM21
Treasure Island			M24	LM24

Note: The Authority's Executive Director may add, change or delete as apparatus is updated by the Water Rescue Coordinators.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING**

Examples of Authority funded equipment and training include, but are not limited to, the following:

#### **Equipment**

Communications equipment including mobile radios and tablet computers

Rapid Diver System Equipment

Medical equipment and supplies including Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs)

Personal floatation devices and other personal protective equipment (PPE)

Rescue Boards and other equipment

#### **Technology**

Automatic Identification System (AIS) Equipment

Fixed and Handheld Thermal Imaging Cameras and Sonar Equipment

Drone First Responder

Thermal Imaging Night Vision Systems

#### **Training**

Search and Rescue Planner's Course

Rapid Diver and Marine Rescue Training

Rescue Boat Operations Course

Search and Rescue Operations Course

Surface Water Rescue (SWR) Course