Glens Falls ambulance service profitable in first full year; Seeks to buy new vehicle

By MAURY THOMPSON--thompson@poststar.com | Posted: Saturday, March 19, 2011 4:00 pm

GLENS FALLS -- The Glens Falls Fire Department ambulance service took in $438,000 in revenue in its first full year of operation, more than quadruple its expenses of about $100,000, said Fire Chief James Schrammel.

"I think we have provided excellent service in the past year, and I hope that we continue to do it," he said.

To assure it can provide consistent service, the department is seeking to purchase a used ambulance for use as a backup vehicle whenever one of the department's other two ambulances are off the road for maintenance or repairs.

The department has two ambulances dispatched at the same time about 15 to 20 times per month, he said.

Without a second ambulance, the department would have to refer those calls to another ambulance service through the mutual aid system.

The city Common Council is scheduled to vote at its meeting at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday on whether to authorize buying the 1994 ambulance for $8,900 and spending up to $3,000 for repairs.

The city mechanic has checked out the vehicle and deemed it in good condition for its age, Schrammel said.

"The good part is it's only got like 69,000 miles on it," he said.

The departments two main ambulances are 2009 and 2005 vehicles.

The department began operating its full-service ambulance service on Dec. 18, 2009.

Prior to that, the department had a collaborative agreement with Empire Ambulance, a private ambulance service.

Empire Ambulance provided the vehicles and drivers and the Fire Department provided emergency medical technicians.