



DICK J. BATCHELOR
MICHAEL J. MURPHY
DUSTIN A. WATKINS

Rural/Metro Corporation

Having Dick Batchelor as part of our team, with his knowledge and expertise, has positioned Rural/Metro as the leading private ambulance provider of medical transportation in Central Florida.

- Christopher Blach, Division General Manager, Rural/Metro Corporation

Rural/Metro is an emergency medical transport company that has a longstanding relationship with the City of Orlando. I was brought in to work on extending the contract and the working relationship, helping them to not only extend the 27-year-old contract with the City, but also to extend a contract with one of the local hospitals and secure additional contracts with other local governments such as Sumter County.

This case illustrates the importance of working successfully with the media, in addition to the private parties involved, because the extension of a contract such as this is always controversial. For one, we needed to cultivate a productive working relationship with the fire and rescue unions, as well as with the City itself. Second, there were other large companies that would have liked to have had the contract (and business) that we were pursuing. It's like a chess game, balancing these oftentimes-competing interests.

But that's why understanding and properly harnessing press involvement can be so crucial. Issues of this magnitude draw scrutiny from the media, and rightfully so. Frankly, this kind of openness – forcing the issue into the public domain via the press – is healthy for the process, because it opens it up. More importantly in this case, however, the broadcast media coverage (in addition to the print media) created a sharper focus on the issue, which benefited the client tremendously.

Through our collaboration with the media, under extraordinarily adverse circumstances, Rural/Metro was ultimately awarded the contract extension with the City of Orlando.

Later, a local hospital made the decision to no longer provide emergency medical service transports in response to 911 calls, which meant that the residents of three nearby cities were no longer being served by the hospital. With very little time, it was urgent that those services be replaced by another provider. Because of the prior relationships I had with these cities, I was able to help Rural/Metro win unanimous votes from the city councils in Windermere, Ocoee, and Winter Garden – in only five weeks – to replace the hospital's EMS transports with Rural/Metro's – further expanding the client's service areas and bringing in substantial additional revenues.

Additionally, we implemented a successful strategy to hire the displaced EMS transport employees from the hospital and to acquire the hospital's transport equipment. All in all, this demonstrates not only

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the nature of the work that can be done, but also the expedited time frame in which time-sensitive work can be completed – with the right consultant.

– **Dick Batchelor**

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