

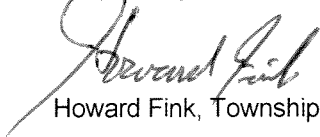
Memo

To: Northfield Township Board
From: Howard Fink
Date: 7/20/2016
Re: Fire Apparatus

Dear Township Board,

Two meetings ago, Chief William Wagner presented his Capital Improvement Plan which consisted of re-organizing the fire department apparatuses. I am recommending that the Board allocate \$250,000 for the purchase of a new ladder / pumper truck. These dollars will be allocated from existing fund balance. Once the allocation is authorized, the board will need to determine what the fund balance percentage will be moving forward. I recommend a 50% fund balance until such a time when we re-pay the general fund for the Van Curler Property.

Respectfully Submitted,



Howard Fink, Township Manager

Northfield Township Fire Department

Apparatus Replacement Plan

The Northfield Township Fire Department recently made its last payment of a loan used to purchase 3 pieces of fire apparatus. While I am opposed to taking out loans for apparatus I am not judging the decisions made by previous Fire Chiefs or Boards.

Because of the state of the budget and economy over the recent years it has been difficult put ourselves in a position to plan for future purchases because the recent goals have been to try to provide the service of fire suppression, medical response and rescue.

The Fire Department is in desperate need of a plan to start replacing is large cost pieces of apparatus. The plan I submit will be a complete change of the current number and type of apparatus and equipment.

Starting with the most expensive apparatus, we currently have 2 tankers and 2 engines. I would propose to replace these 4 pieces of apparatus with 2- Engine/ Tanker combos (1 for each station). Currently our tankers are generally used only for the purpose of carrying water to the fire from the station or a water source. There is minimal equipment on those trucks for the actual fire scene operations such as saws, ladders and scba's. Our current tankers only carry 1800 gallons of water. The minimum generally accepted amount is 2500 gallons. We cannot even participate in a MABAS tanker task force because both tankers don't carry the minimum amount of water and 1 of the tankers only has a pump capacity of 500 gpm. Our current Engines carry 1,000 gallons of water in the water tank and the appropriate equipment to meet NFPA 1901 which sets the standard for fire apparatus. When combining these two types of apparatus like all area fire departments have done the trucks appear much larger. I would propose an Engine/Tanker combo that meets NFPA 1901 and carries 2,500 gallons of water. The spread sheet attached to this document shows the ages of the current apparatus. I would propose for the budget year 2016/2017 the selling of E8-1 and T8-1 and replacing those with the above mentioned Engine/Tanker combo. I will discuss the plan for purchasing this below.

The next most needed replacement will be of the Rescue trucks. We currently have two nearly identical rescue trucks at each station. These were two of the three trucks that have just been paid off. I would propose replacing the R8-2 with a Utility pickup truck that will have brush fire fighting capability in the spring season. We believe we can trade this rescue truck in and purchase a new ¾ ton pick-up and purchase a slid-in water tank and pump for brush fires for a neutral cost. This truck would be stationed at station #2 where we took a brush truck out of service several years ago and never replaced. I would propose trading R8-1 in for a new rescue truck that would be a Suburban type of vehicle that could withstand the high use better than our current rescues. I also believe that we can make this change cost neutral and have newer pieces of apparatus. This will require some operational changes but I believe will save money in maintenance costs. We have put approximately \$15,000 in the last couple years of in engine repairs to these 2 vehicles.

Ladders 8-1 was purchased just prior to my arrival in Northfield Township. The voters approved a millage around 15 years ago for the purchase of a ladder. The ladder purchase was around \$1,000,000. The truck purchased was a 100' Pierce aerial platform truck. The previous Chief and Board at the time of 2006 sold that truck to a City in the Upper Peninsula and purchased the current 75' straight ladder. This current ladder has very minimal hours and miles on it is still in very good shape. I don't anticipate having to replace this for the next 15 years.

We currently have 2 utility vehicles. The 2000 Crown Vic (Utility 8-1) is out of service and in my opinion not worth putting money into repairs. The Crown Vic was basically donated to the fire department by the Police Department for \$1. Utility 8-2 is a 1997 Dodge Ram 2500. This truck was donated to us from the Wastewater treatment plant for \$1. Utility 8-2 is extremely rusty and the transmission was in very poor shape when we acquired it. It is not worth replacing the transmission or putting needed money into the engine. I would propose purchasing a new 4-door utility pick-up truck to replace the current utilities that we have. I would also recommend putting a snow plow on that truck to take care of the plowing of Station #2 and to be used during extreme snow storms to access homes that had not been plowed as was needed several times over the last 2 years.

This plan would take the numbers of vehicles in the fire department fleet 2 years ago that was 12 to a total of 7 vehicles. This will save on fuel, maintenance costs and un-needed miles on the larger pieces of equipment and insurance.

The plan to start to replace some of the equipment is as follows:

R8-2- Sell and replace with new ¾ ton pickup and with available remaining funds purchase a slide in water tank and pump. This truck will then be used for medicals from station #2, brush fires and general use. This can be done at any time as it does not require budgeted money.

R-8-1- Sell the current Rescue truck and replace it with a Suburban style rescue vehicle. This will be able to do nearly all the same things the current rescue only at a savings in fuel and maintenance costs and would be a newer vehicle.

E8-1 and Tanker 8-1- Replace these two vehicles with an Engine/ Tanker combo. The cost of this truck would be between \$450,000- \$500,000. I would propose that this truck be purchased using current Fire Department fund balance with a contribution from the general fund balance and the money received by the sale of E8-1 and T8-1.

U8-1 and U8-2- I would propose replacing these two utilities with 1 utility truck that would be a four door ¾ ton vehicle with a snow plow. This money would come from the fire department fund balance.

I would then move E8-2 and T8-2 out to station #2 until they can be replaced using a newly developed capital improvement fund. I would expect that within 8 years we would have the money built up in that fund to replace the two of these vehicles with a previously mentioned Engine/Tanker combo.

The Ladder would probably need to be addressed in about 15 years.

Establishment of a Fire Department Apparatus Capital Improvement Fund. After several discussions with the Township Manager we have come up with a plan to start replacing much needed fire department apparatus. We discussed always maintaining a 33% fund balance which would leave 4 months of the current budget to run the fire department in case of a millage failure. At the start of the 2015/2016 budget year the fund balance was \$413,000. The appropriations budget for the same period is \$670,000.

Using 33% for a fund balance we would be required to keep \$225,000 in the fund balance. This would allow us to move \$188,000 into a capital improvement fund. With the sale of E8-1 and T8-1 we would receive in the area of \$75,000. This would give us \$263,000 available for use of purchasing apparatus.

My first requests for purchase that would affect the budget would be for the replacement of the utilities. O would request this for the current budget year (15/16). I am estimating that this purchase would be in the neighborhood of \$35,000-\$40,000.

My second request would occur in the budget year (16/17). This would be for the proposed sale of and Engine and Tanker and the purchase of an Engine/ Tanker combo. This purchase would be in the area of \$450,000-\$500,000. This would require a contribution from the general fund of around \$250,000-\$300,000.