
2020 BUDGET HEARING – WRITTEN RESPONSES TO COUNCIL QUESTIONS

Budget Hearing #4: August 21, 2019 Fire Department & EMS

Unanswered Council Questions

1. Council Member Broden asked for a copy of the Fire Department's Fleet Replacement Schedule:

Answer: The Fleet Replacement Schedule calls for two pumper trucks every 3 years, which ensures an apparatus will spend approximately 18 years in a front line capacity, and could be eligible for reserve status for several more years after that. The city maintains a fleet of 11 front line and 3 reserve pumper trucks as recommended per ISO standards. The decision as to which specific pumpers are replaced is made in conjunction with Equipment Services after reviewing service records and cost of ownership for the fleet. The build time for our pumper trucks is usually close to one year, so the replacement decisions can change based on factors that occur while the apparatus is still under construction. Our specified pumpers approach \$500,000 and we presume a 4% industry increase year over year.

We order an aerial ladder truck on a five year rotation which places our apparatus at 20 years old upon replacement. The aerials make fewer calls, but are much more complex and expensive to purchase and operate. Our aerials approach \$1,000,000. We run 4 front line and 2 reserve aerials to meet recommended ISO response time parameters.

Coverage of Notre Dame events, and other community events, necessitates a large fleet of reserve ambulances. The front line ambulances run the largest number of calls and require more frequent replacement and refurbishment. We purchase commercial chassis and ambulance bodies which allow us to refurbish our trucks and achieve a significant savings over continuously buying new rigs. We expect to save 1/3 the cost when refurbishing an ambulance rather than purchasing new. We refurbish an ambulance nearly every year, and or purchase a new one. An ambulance will serve in the front lines for 5 to 7 years before refurbishment or replacement. The city currently fields 5 ambulances that serve the city, and two ambulances that serve contracted unincorporated areas of the county through an interlocal agreement.

We purchase a fleet car annually (such as a Ford Fusion), as well as support SUVs (such as a Chevy Suburban) as needed. These serve in roles such as Fire Inspectors, Battalion Chiefs and Safety Officers. Our Paramedic Chase cars are similar vehicles. These are typically 10 or more years old before replacement.