

ROCKVILLE/SPRINGDALE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

P.O. Box 159

Springdale, UT 84767

Wednesday April 27, 2016

Springdale Council Chambers

Regular Meeting and Public Hearing

1. ROLL CALL AND CALL TO ORDER – Chairman Francis called the meeting to order at 6:30PM. The following members of the Rockville/Springdale Fire Protection District Board were present: John Callahan, Adrian Player, Luci Francis, Chuck Passek, and Michael Young. Jennifer Thompson recording.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA –John Callahan moved the agenda be approved. Chuck Passek seconded the motion and a roll call vote indicated all those present voted in favor of the motion.

3. PUBLIC HEARING FOR PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE DISTRICT'S PROPOSAL REGARDING A 3% INCREASE IN THE 2016/2017 ANNUAL STANDBY FEE- Chairman Francis stated that the purpose of this hearing was to collect input from the community regarding this proposal. The Board will not debate, argue or defend any position but will do their best to answer questions that the public may have. The Board will take into consideration all the comments that they receive until the day before the regular meeting (May 24, 2016), when the Board will take action on whether or not to increase the standby fee at the regular meeting on May 25, 2016. The Board has received letters from Mark and Judith Schraut and former RSFPD Board member Michael Plyler prior to this meeting that will be on record and may be read when the minutes for this meeting are published online, along with other comments received. Chairman then turned the time over to Chuck Passek for a brief summary of the questions and answers that were sent out to the public prior to the meeting.

Mr. Passek thanked the public for attending the meeting then said that the Board has tried to promote public awareness for the standby fee increase. It has been on the District's agenda for the past five (5) months. The public hearing notice had been sent out two (2) weeks prior to the meeting, then again the week prior. The Board put together a publication of "frequently asked questions" to inform the public and encourage input prior to the meeting.

Mr. Passek reviewed the document:

1. "How much of an increase is being considered and how many revenue dollars will it generate?" The increase three (3) % the current stand by fees of \$450,000, which would yield approximately \$14,000. The Board has kept the increase to a small percentage in response to public input objecting to radically high increases. The Board felt that more frequent, smaller increases would be better managed.

2. "Why raise the standby fee now?" If we look at the 2016 budget, the District is projected to have roughly \$20,000 in net income or surplus. If we look at where we will be in the future, having old equipment, mainly our fire trucks being 25 & 23 years old, which are the main protection for the Rockville and Springdale area, the District needs substantial capital investments over the next 5-10 years to be able to start saving money for the purchase of the replacement engines. Reserves have been established for about \$100,000 for replacement engines; however in talking with the Chief, the market value would roughly be \$450,000 for a new engine. The three (3) % increase is not directed at the operation of the District but directed to increasing the amount that is put away toward the replacement of those engines. If the District waits to increase the standby fee until a later date, there is a possibility of running into the same issue of a significant one-time increase.

3. "Where does the District get its funding?" Of our approximate \$750,000 in revenues for fiscal year 2016, we get roughly \$450,000 in standby fees annually. Of that \$450,000, 70% comes from commercial related properties, so the majority of the fees are directed to the commercial industry and the remaining 30 % comes from residential properties. We get roughly \$118,000 annually contributed from the Town of Springdale, roughly \$85,000 from the EMS billings from the services of those that utilize the ambulance service and

\$53,000 from property taxes through Washington County where another chunk of the fees are directed to the commercial industry.

4. "Why does the District need to pay firefighters and medical personnel to be available 24 hours a day?" When the last increase happened, it was to cover operations, mainly staffing issues. For the EMS program, to qualify for license in advanced life support, we have to staff at certain levels of qualifications per state requirements. The District has had changing demographics where in the last 10 years there was a decline with community participation with no volunteer base. If the District didn't pay people to be here, we wouldn't have anyone to respond. The District needed to pay medical people and firefighters to be available 24 hours a day. For information purposes, firefighters are paid \$7.50 an hour, EMT/AEMT \$8.50 an hour and paramedics \$ 9.00 an hour, so the wages are very frugal and are not competitive. We put the budget out there to the public, so it is clear and transparent and we want to encourage people to participate.

Chairman Francis added to what Mr. Passek's statement about commercial industries bearing 70% of the standby fees. She said the philosophies behind the fee classifications are to allow businesses catering to visitors to pass that fee on to their customers, the tourists, so that residential property owners carry a lighter burden in total fees.

Motion made by Adrian Player to open the public hearing. John Callahan seconded the motion and a roll call vote indicated all those present voted in favor of the motion.

Public comment:

Michael Behling from Rockville said he was thankful for the services provided from the District. He has used the fire service which kept his home from burning down. He said there are some that think we don't need the District but he is not one of them. He has looked at the District's budget and he does not see it as being an excessive budget. He feels that the problem here is that there are a limited number of residents and businesses, but about 3.5 million tourists going through here that need the services provided by the District. If he calculated his fees over a 10 year period it comes out to roughly \$10,000 which is a sizeable amount. Many people in the canyon are on fixed incomes that may need to decide whether to pay for a fee or to give up paying for a medication, or food or some other need. Mr. Behling said that he could see that the District is not trying to rip people off, but raising the question of how to get the tourists to pay their fair share. He realizes that we cannot just go to the Park and ask them to help us because all the tourists go through the Park. He doesn't believe the federal government would go for that, however, he has some ideas. One idea is to have the District work with the Town of Springdale on a cooperative agreement to install parking meters for revenue. He mentioned that a lot of the tourists that come through Town do not stay at our hotels, or eat at our restaurants, they just drive through and drive out. He is just asking the Board to consider other creative ways to lessen the load for residents and make the tourists pay for their share.

Harriet Callahan first asked the Board about the projected figure for the expected building revenues for the 2017 budget year that comes from new construction. She realizes that we don't know exactly when the revenues come in because it depends on occupancy permits, but from her stand point she can see a tremendous amount of construction revenue. Next, she wanted the Board to know that she has a small family business in Springdale that has been around for 25 years. Her business is a classic small family business with family employed as her part time help. She works a six to seven day work week sometimes to keep afloat. She feels that actions by the Town and the fire board have made our canyon unsuitable for small businesses like hers. Her fees quadrupled about a year and a half ago. She feels that the area is quickly turning into second or third family homes and large franchise businesses who can afford a tax write-off. She feels that not all small businesses can simply pass these rate hikes on to the tourists. Most of her customers aren't the tourists. She said it will be small businesses like hers that will be hurt with yet another increase. She said yes, she could sub-divide her small property and sell frontage to McDonalds to survive but doesn't want to. She said no on raising the standby fees again because she feels that the District would be forcing her to consider how she will survive. As a small business, she has had to budget her needs for twenty years. She feels that the new fire Board is trying to update things all at once on the backs of the businesses. She said that two new fire trucks sound nice but she does not feel that the District has the budget for them now. She believes that there has been one large structure fire in the last little bit and the most frequent fires are vehicles and brush along the roads that need to be taken care of. As a Board, the District has recently deemed a lease purchase vehicle for the fire chief as a greater priority than budgeting those funds toward the purchase of new fire trucks. She feels that good maintenance and upgrading the aging equipment would have been the better use, in her opinion, and she doesn't feel that the life of the fire trucks will expire in the next year or two. She requests that the Board

budget to purchase one fire truck at a time instead of two, use the income of the uncollected fees from the new construction and rely on competent maintenance for the equipment. She gave praise to the fire chief for being one of the best mechanics around. She feels that demanding everything at once and asking customers like her to pay for it is very difficult.

In response to Mrs. Callahan's question, Chairman Francis stated that figure that the Board has estimated for the new construction is approximately \$15-20,000. The District can bill the standby fee once they receive their certificate of occupancy, however, the District expects building to decrease and do not expect to see this kind of a growth surge in the future.

Kristine Evenson, a Rockville resident of 33 years appreciated that all of the information that the Board had put out was posted online for her to look over, along with the overview of the questions and answers. She said in 2013, the standby fee for her was \$168.00, and in 2014 her stand by fee was \$310 which was an increase of 83%. She would like to know if the 3% increase that is being proposed is for the period of July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017, and could we expect the same increase next year as well? Also, she would like more information on whether the Towns of Springdale and Rockville are having to bear the burden of new equipment and is unaware why the District cannot go to the State for grant money. Also, can the Board propose fees for services on visitors or the client when they have an ambulance call, and if so, is there a way that when the fire department goes out on a call, whether a fire or false alarm, those businesses or residences would pay for the call to generate more income. She assumes that the District would respond to a downed aircraft and didn't know if they could charge for over flights going over head. She said that our standby fees and flat rates are our type of insurance to know that the District is there for us. She has used the services and appreciates the fire and ambulance. She has looked at the budget and doesn't feel that it is unreasonable; however she feels that with 3.5 million visitors, the District should get more from the visitors for fire protection when they stay at the hotels or eat at the restaurants. She agrees with Michael Behling about his comment to generate income from people who pass through town, but thinks the only way to do that is with a turn pike or a toll road. Lastly, she would like to know how is the small Towns of Rockville and Springdale are to bear the burden of a million dollars' worth of equipment? She doesn't understand why we cannot get additional funding by the State for Grant money.

Chairman Francis stated in response to Ms. Evenson's comments that the Town of Springdale contributes a substantially larger amount to revenues than the Town of Rockville with the TRT (Transient Room Tax) which consist of the funds listed in the budget in the amount of \$118,000. As far as equipment, the chief's truck that Ms. Callahan referred to was purchased through the State bid process which allowed a purchase at a much lower cost. Chairman asked Chief Ballard to comment on Ms. Evenson's concern for grant money.

Chief Ballard stated that engines are difficult to purchase and usually run the budget into the red. He said that it is easier to get grants for other equipment & training through the State. However, he also said that grants are drying up and were much more prevalent five years back. Chief said that another issue is the increasing costs of things that we have not had to pay for before like communications, which will eat up a budget rapidly. He said grants are out there but we can't budget for any grant money.

Chairman Francis stated that the District is not a part of a larger government entity, but a Special Service District so the funds the District gets are the funds the District must raise on their own with the exception of property taxes and the TRT. Chairman mentioned a lending source called the Community Impact Board (CIB) who will lend funds at a low interest for fire engines and other things. She said the District knows that the engines are aging, and it is not expected that we will purchase two new engines right away but we need to plan ahead and have some funds available in case of a catastrophic failure or have a down payment, or time to apply for a grant.

Mr. Passek wanted to add that when other local fire agencies go to the CIB for funds, they are not getting grants, but getting long term loans at a lower interest rate which will put themselves in debt for a period of time. Chief Ballard added that the CIB is the lending source that was used to acquire the firehouse.

John Callahan also added that if grants are available, they are highly competitive.

In response to Ms. Evenson's last question, will the District ask for a similar increase next year, Mr. Passek said yes, the District sees this as a multi-year thing, but the Board would look at each revenue years independently.

Chairman Francis added that each year the District would go through the process required by statute in regards to raising standby fees.

Kristine Evenson wanted to add that when she used the service she really appreciated it and after, she sent a letter with a donation check expressing her gratitude. She also mentioned that when we pay insurance for a car we pay a flat rate, but when a claim is made, we pay a deductible. With all of the false calls, the District could generate revenue if there was an avenue similar to ambulance as a possibility.

Shelley Cox served on the Fire Board for two years previously. She said that when the District advertised the last increase it was for a 138% increase which made her yearly standby fee of \$709.28 a year jump to \$2100, which was almost a 400% increase. She cannot pass that on to her customers. She said that businesses get revenue, but there has to be a different way for the District to find more revenue as well. She said as far as the new development is concerned, she believes that there will always be the TRT tax and property tax that they will have to pay, which accounts for revenue to the District. She said that everyone loves the fire department and ambulance and appreciates it but the concern is the tax after tax that is really hard on businesses and it is really hard when it has only been a short time since the last increase. She wishes the District would find a different way.

Shirley Ballard stated that she believed that if new development comes online with more rooms, the TRT tax should go up and she is hoping that would be included in the new budget. She also agreed with Michael Behling that only few stop here and only for the Park, then go to St. George to eat or stay, because it is too expensive here. She is asking that the Board take into consideration to find another way. Ms. Ballard said that she is extremely appreciative for what the Board does and to the Fire and EMS who are important to the communities and the people that come here that need the service. She feels that it is already difficult for those that live here on fixed incomes and more people are moving out because they cannot afford it anymore. She pleads with the Board to find another way, go to the Town for a TRT increase. She said that the fire district has a need and so we need to find a way to compromise.

Harriet Callahan wanted it stated on record that she disagreed that the growth will slow down. She sees a continuing of sub-dividing lots and sees the trend of development continue which should bring more income.

Chuck Passek wanted to add that the TRT is a current agreement from the Town of Springdale that lasts ten (10) years and will expire in 2018 and said the contribution is a fixed amount that does not equate to more of a contribution with new development.

Shirley Ballard then asked the Board to go to Town of Springdale and renegotiate the TRT from an entity that has more money.

Jeff Ballard was the fire chief in the District from 1993 to 2003. He mentioned that when he started with the fire department, it was all volunteer based and was housed in a service station and he feels that it has come a long way since then. He felt that the ambulance was dumped on the fire district and since then it has lost money. He has been in the fire service for 25 years total and still sees the same problems with staffing firefighters or personnel. However, he supports the department and ambulance services, and feels that it is a thankless job. He hates to see the increase.

Chairman Francis thanked those who served on the Board and in the fire service in the past and thanked those who made comments tonight. She then asked for a motion to close the public hearing.

4. ADJOURN PUBLIC HEARING.

Motion made by Adrian Player to close the public hearing. John Callahan seconded the motion and a roll call vote indicated all those present voted in favor of the motion.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT AND QUESTIONS- There were no other comments at this time.

6. CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL TO HIRE CANDIDATE RECOMMENDED FOR PART-TIME DISTRICT CLERK POSITION- Chairman Francis stated that the Board had held interviews for the clerk position; had deliberated and would like to recommend that the Board hire Megan Ewell for part time district clerk.

John Callahan moved to approve the hire of Megan Ewell for the part time district clerk position. Adrian Player seconded the motion and a roll call vote indicated all those present voted in favor of the motion.

7. FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT – FIRE SERVICE-

- a) **Report on fire activity since the last Board meeting-** Chief Ballard reported that there were a total of three (3) fire related calls; one at a local motel where a worker was doing work in the building that caused substantial damage. They ended up tearing up some flooring and the fire did not activate the sprinkler system. Chief said that the other fire was located in the Park at the Lodge.

Chief also reported on an update for delivery of the command vehicle which will be the middle to the end of May. He has not purchased equipment yet, but is anticipating doing so upon the delivery of the vehicle.

Chief Ballard informed the Board that traffic is an issue in responding to calls lately. The Department had a call at the Park entrance and emergency vehicles encountered stopped traffic, but they were able to get through eventually with difficulty. Chief Ballard has spoken to Springdale Police Chief Brecke and the Park Service about how to mitigate the issue. He has also spoken with Chief Brecke about the parking issue in Town and will continue to try and work with him to find solutions to this continuing problem.

- b) **Consideration and possible approval of applicants for the Fire service-** There were no new applications presented to the Board at this time.
- c) **Training update-** Chief Ballard reported that the PT (Physical Training) Challenge has begun and is going very well, with enthusiasm. Chief said that there will be more trainings based on the job that personnel are doing, so that it is relevant to EMS and fire. The Department has also had CPR & first aid training which was well attended, with Mr. Passek attending. The Department had a good training with Park Service last month. Captain Alex Barajas is attending a Hazmat Technician Course in Hurricane which will bring some valuable knowledge and abilities into this part of Town.
- a) **New business to include requests for budgeted expenditures-** No new business or requests for budget expenditures; however, Chief Ballard requested to move forward with a public sealed bid auction to get rid of the water tender and old rescue vehicle that are out of commission.

The Board has given their general consensus for Chief Ballard to pursue.

d) 8. FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT – AMBULANCE SERVICE.

- a) **Report on EMS activity since the last Board meeting –** Chief Ballard reported that there were 21 EMS calls with a total of 14 transports.

Mr. Passek asked for a report or stat sheet from the EMS side for a comparison of last year vs this year. Chief Ballard agreed to do this.

- b) **Consideration and possible approval of applicants for the EMS service-** There were no new applications presented to the Board at this time.

c) **Training update-** Chief Ballard reported that training is going well, with good attendance. He wanted the Board to know that both Fire and Ems are attending each other's trainings and they are working well together.

d) New business to include requests for budgeted expenditures- No new business or requests for budget expenditures.

9. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT.

a) Update on transition of accounting procedures to the CPA firm. Chairman Francis stated that the transition is moving quickly. We are still streamlining the procedures, getting bills paid by billpay.com and learning how to use QuickBooks online. Chairman reported that direct deposit for payroll has been established.

Mr. Passek asked when the Board could expect a budget update on a monthly basis in the future from the accountants. Chairman Francis stated that she was working with one of the senior accountants on updating the chart of accounts to sync with the current budget format. Chairman Francis expects to have that by next month. She also said that the accountants are open to meeting with us for training on how to pull reports for ourselves and how to get the data from QuickBooks with respect to payables and receivables.

Chairman Francis is still working with auditor for the audit which should be complete in another month or two when they will submit their final report in June. Stan Seegmiller will be conduct interviews in the next few weeks by telephone.

b) Progress report from Emergency Services Consulting, International- Chairman Francis summarized the progress from ESCI. The work plan is ahead of schedule and the Board can expect a draft at the end of May. Phase one (1) is complete, Phase 2 is complete, Phase 3 is complete, we are in phase 4 now which is the development of response standards and targets, short and long term strategies, then the last phase five (5) is the development review and delivery of the master plan report. The Board can expect to pay the full contract amount. We are on target in every area.

10. STANDBY FEE BILLING REPORT TO INCLUDE UPDATE ON PAST-DUE ACCOUNTS-

Chairman Francis stated that the Board can look at QuickBooks online to see where we are at with this report. There is \$69,000 in unpaid balances of the expected annual standby fee revenue of \$450,000. A good portion of that is made up of the current billing of \$42,000.

11. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

- a) March statements: Profit & Loss, Balance Sheet-The Board has received report there were no comments from the Board.
- b) Approval of expenditures for the month of March 2016.

John Callahan moved to approve the expenditures for March 2016. Adrian Player seconded the motion and a roll call vote indicated all those present voted in favor of the motion.

12. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES.

John Callahan moved to Approve January 26, 2016; January 27, 2016 and March 23, 2016 meeting minutes. Michael Young seconded the motion and a roll call vote indicated all those present voted in favor of the motion.

13. IDENTIFICATION OF ISSUES FOR FUTURE AGENDAS- Mr. Player asked that the ambulance account receivable and collections be put back on the agenda as an action item for the May meeting. He said that he had sent emails to the Board and feels that everyone understands the key issues. He would like to try and get JCI on the telephone to help us with the policy decisions.

Mr. Passek said that the rate increase needs to be on the next agenda.

Mr. Player asked the Board for alternate sources of revenue ideas from the other Board members. He is sympathetic to those who had spoken earlier that were against the rate increase. Mr. Player brought up the suggestion that the Fire Department could enter into an agreement with the Town to inspect the fire hydrants,

in turn the Town would reimburse the workers for the testing and inspection of each fire hydrant. This would be an alternate idea that would possibly generate revenue.

Chief Ballard stated that he would be open to discussing this in the future; however, the Town owns the system and it is the Town's responsibility to maintain it.

Chairman Francis suggested that Mr. Player and Chief Ballard should be able to get together and make sure that the hydrants are serviced properly. Mr. Player and Chief Ballard agreed to do this.

14. ADJOURN.

Adrian Player moved the meeting be adjourned. John Callahan seconded the motion and a roll call vote indicated all those present voted in favor of the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55PM

Minutes typed by:
Jennifer Thompson

APPROVED:

Luci Francis, Chair

April 26, 2016

Dear RSFPD Fire Board,

As a citizen and former sitting board member during the largest single standby fee increase in the history of the District, I would like this letter to be read aloud at the appropriate time in tomorrow night's meeting.

I would like to see a serious discussion occur between the District and the Town of Springdale. I was present at the meetings and public hearings years ago when Springdale implored the District to take over the ambulance service. As part of that negotiation the TRT tax was implemented specifically to fund the ambulance service. At that time as proposed, ALL of the TRT tax was to be utilized in the day to day funding of the ambulance service. In a previous administration of the Town of Springdale it was voted by the town council to drastically reduce the amount of the TRT payments to the District. The justification for this, as explained to me by the current town manager, was that at the time the town needed money to fund an upgrade to the water system. Since the fire department uses water that comes out of fire hydrants, this was just cause for taking money out of the AMBULANCE funds.

This line of reasoning is faulty and disingenuous on several points. First and foremost the TRT tax was created specifically for the ambulance service, not as augmentation of the total fire district budget that could be utilized for ambulance or fire at the district's discretion. The fire district is not responsible for generating their own "fire flow" water supply. The water system in its entirety is the property of Springdale town. The water treatment plant, the pipes the water flows through, and even the fire hydrants themselves are owned by Springdale. The fire department's "jurisdiction" begins when they hook up to the hydrant, not anywhere before that. As proof of this I offer these two points. When I built my house, it was Springdale that mandated I put in a fire hydrant. I had no communication whatsoever with officials from the fire district or fire department. Also, ALL of the maintenance of the fire hydrants is performed by employees of the town of Springdale, not anyone connected to the fire department.

What this has come to mean in practical terms for the citizens is the fire district is forced to pick up more of the financial load for running the ambulance service at the expense of the fire budget. This despite the fact the ambulance service had its own dedicated revenue stream, the TRT tax, at one time.

Springdale has now looted the TRT monies (yes, a previous fire board incredibly signed off on this) and the district is now apparently proposing an annual 3% increase to cover the shortfall. This of course, after the aforementioned single largest increase in the District's history. Ironically, when that large increase was proposed it was the lodging property owners who were most opposed as a unified group. These would be the same property owners who have been generating the TRT tax that should be going to the district. At the time of that increase none of them thought to recommend a different allocation of the funds from the existing TRT tax. In essence, they and all other citizens, are being asked again and again to continue keep funding the shortfall generated by the reduction in the tax that was created to fund a significant portion of the District's operating expenses. I know that the idea of revisiting the distribution of the TRT monies has been informally broached by the Fire District without any receptivity on the part of the Town.

I don't know how others feel, but something just isn't right here.

Respectfully,

Michael Plyler

Subject: Re: RSFPD Public Hearing & Frequently Asked Questions

From: "Judith Martin Schraut" [REDACTED]

Date: 4/25/2016 5:06 PM

To: "District Clerk" <rsfpd@infowest.com>

To RSFPD,

I feel like an increase of three percent for standby fees is unfair to residents of Springdale. I believe that the burden should be on the business owners in Springdale that are making a lot of money from the increased tourism. Residents of Springdale are already having to put up with the increase of traffic and the overcrowding of the town by tourists. We now need to replace our water system, and other utilities that our town is having to take on. We already had a huge increase in standby fees in the last couple of years and it is not fair to people who just live here and don't have business's.

I will not be able to attend the meeting or I would. This is too much to ask residents for, when the services are mostly used by tourists.

Sincerely,

Judith and Mark Schraut

----- Original Message -----

From: District Clerk

To: undisclosed-recipients

Sent: Thursday, April 21, 2016 1:25 AM

Subject: RSFPD Public Hearing & Frequently Asked Questions

Please see the attached Public Notice for RSFPD Public Hearing on April 27 and additional information.

This notice is provided as a courtesy to the community and is not the official notice for this meeting/ hearing/announcement. This notice is not required by District ordinance or policy. Failure of the District to provide this notice or failure of a property owner, resident, or other interested party to receive this notice does not constitute a violation of the District's noticing requirements or policies.

Rockville Springdale Fire Protection District.

April 22, 2016

I am Harriet Callahan with a small family business in Springdale for 25 years. We are the classic small family business.

Actions by the town and Fire Board, new taxes called "Fees" by the state is making our canyon unsuitable for small business. We are very quickly turning into an elitist town of second or third family homes and large franchise businesses that can afford a tax write off on seasonally slow business trends. *NOT All small businesses can simply pass these rate hikes on to the tourists.*

It is the small businesses of this town, like mine, that will be hurt with yet another increase after another. My Standby Fees almost quadrupled a short time ago and still you are proposing to raise the fees again so soon again or annually. Yes, I could sub-divide our small property and sell frontage to MacDonalds to survive. NO. Don't raise the Standby Fees again because that is what you are forcing us to consider.

As a small business I have had to budget for my needs for 20 years. As an all new Fire Board you want to update everything all at once on our backs.

Two new town fire trucks sound nice but you do not have the budget for them now. We've had one structure fire in how long, and a few brush fires. Vehicle fires seem most frequent.

You, as a board deemed a lease purchase of a new vehicle for our new Fire Chief's exclusive use a greater priority than budgeting those funds towards the lease purchase of a new fire truck.

Seems to me that continued good maintenance and upgrading our ageing equipment would have been far better use of funds.

In the budget process start to budget towards the lease purchase of one new fire truck at a time using the income of yet uncollected fees from all the new construction in our 2 towns from the startup money. We have already waited for years and could rely on competent maintenance for a few years more.

Why do you demand to have everything all at once and ask me to pay for it?

Harriet Callahan

Frontier Plunder Antiques, Inc.