

Town of Rye
Fire Rescue
Memorandum

To: Capital Improvement Committee via Kim Reed
Cc: Matt Scruton, Becky Bergeron
From: Mark Cotreau, Fire Chief
Date: July 19, 2024
RE: Fire Rescue 2025-2030 CIP Narrative

Thank you for the opportunity to submit Rye Fire Rescue's 2025-2030 CIP plan. We would like to thank the CIP Committee, Budget Committee, Select Board, and especially the town residents for their continued understanding and support! We appreciate your trust and are committed to being a good steward of the resources placed in our care.

Terminology:

- Public safety apparatus funding: This is the projected annual funding into our apparatus/major equipment funding plan. It consists of an annual warrant article and a Special Revenue Fund (cell tower) which is allocated for ambulance and fire capital purchases. We included a contractual 3% annual increase in the Special Revenue Fund only.
- Mini-Pumper: This emerging trend in the fire service refers to a much smaller fire engine which carries the minimum equipment to respond to a building fire but certainly not the capability that the full-size trucks have. The idea is to use this truck to respond to service calls, MVA's and other smaller more frequent emergencies thus reducing the time we need to operate the larger trucks. This reduces operating costs, wear and tear on the more expensive apparatus while keeping the needed pumping capability and surge capacity should a large fire call come in while this truck is out about town.

Status on recent projects:

- Mini-Pumper: This project was approved by the voters in 2021. The truck was ordered in December 2021. Due to the ongoing national supply chain issue, we were given a delivery estimate of 510 days. This brought our estimated delivery date to April 2023. In the fall of 2023 we were notified that due to the challenge of getting the Ford Cab for this truck there would be a further delay pushing back the delivery date to September 2023. In June 2023 we were notified the estimated delivery time was June 2024! Earlier this spring we were advised the truck cab and chassis was in and the completion date is September 2024. This is extremely frustrating however this type of extended delivery time is typical of what we are seeing with all manufacturers. It is also representative of what I continue to hear from other chiefs. The silver lining, if there is one, is that the purchase price of \$300,000 is locked in. The manufacturer will likely have no profit on this vehicle as their costs have risen dramatically on this vehicle.

- Ambulance Replacement: This project was approved by the voters in 2023. The truck was ordered in December 2023. The current estimated delivery time for ambulances are trending 24-36 months. Fortunately, we had included this extended delivery time in our capital planning for this vehicle.
- Engine 5 Pump Replacement: Engine 5 is our high-water truck as well as our brush truck. Last year, the pump broke with no parts available to make a repair. We knew this was a possibility when we received the truck but were hoping it would be a little farther down the road. Although a 1990 truck, Engine 5 is in good shape with only 9,000 miles and well suited for the brush fire mission assigned to it. We dealt with several pump repair folks to ascertain repair options and pricing. Ultimately, with selectboard approval, we replaced the pump with a more modern, used pump in good condition. The final repair cost was a relatively modest \$13,291.
- Deputy Fire Chief Vehicle: Last May we received a former police cruiser from the PD. We are in the finishing stages of upfitting this vehicle for use by the fire chief. SB approved up to \$15,000 from CR for this purpose.

Capital Reserve Account Funding:

- The requested warrant article amount this year is \$150,000. We do not do this lightly. While the request has increased, it is important to note:
 - Our funding plan is predicated on the long-standing SB direction that we want to minimize having to bond apparatus and major equipment. The two \$500,000 leases; one executed for the Ladder truck and the one we propose for Engine 3 replacement this year, were planned so that we could make up for the lack of capital funds investment prior to 2016. Assuming our capital plan is funded as requested, there should be no need for future leases or bonding.
 - It is no surprise, given the inflationary period we have been through, that we have had to increase our request.
 - The usual \$100,000 request has not gone up since the town began annually investing in the capital reserve in 2016.
 - You will note we have provided for a modest annual increase in our 6-year plan to account for cost-of-living increases.

Discussion Items:

- 2025 Engine 3 replacement: Engine 3 has served us well since 2004 but needs replacement. The scheduled replacement of Engine 3, in 2025, comes during a time when fire departments across the country are dealing with manufacturers extended lead times, and increased costs. In 2019 the Town of Rye entered into a 5-year lease-purchase agreement for a new ladder truck for the price of \$992,000 with \$492,000 coming from the fire department capital reserve account as a down payment. Today the price of a new custom fire engine is that of the ladder truck in 2019, and manufacturers have more than doubled their lead times from the time a fire truck is ordered to the time that it is anticipated to be delivered. Rye Fire Rescue has a long-standing, and trusted relationship with the local E-One dealer, Greenwood Emergency Vehicles, who has supplied us with the last two fire trucks the town has purchased and who has already ordered several stock fire engines that very closely

mirror our existing Engine 3. They have presented us with a proposal to purchase one of their previously ordered trucks, skipping the extended lead times, and saving nearly \$200,000. Their proposal as presented to the Board of Selectman, includes an escape clause in the event voters should choose not to purchase the vehicle, and was reviewed by the towns legal counsel. The Select Board chose to reserve one of the fire engines for Rye Fire Rescue. The anticipated delivery of the truck is late 2025.

Funding for this project is proposed similarly to that of the new ladder truck. A \$500,000, 5-year lease purchase agreement, with an additional \$289,000 coming from the Fire Department capital reserve account(s). The total purchase price of the vehicle will be \$789,000. The lease purchase agreement on ladder 1 will have come to an end prior to the first lease payment coming due on the new fire engine.

- 2029 Ambulance 2 Remount/Reconditioning: We are considering doing a mid-life refurbishment to extend the life of our ambulances. The reasoning for this is three-fold; (1)Rising EMS response volume, (2)Rising mileage on the ambulances, (3) Rising cost of ambulances.
 - Rising EMS Volume:
 - 2019 Rye Fire Rescue responded to 829 total emergencies including 468 medical emergencies.
 - 2023 (5 years later) Rye Fire Rescue responded to 1049 total emergencies (26% increase over 5 years) including 660 medical emergencies (41% increase over 5 years).
 - 2025January 2024 to this submission date we have responded to 696 total emergencies for a projected 2024 call volume of 1263 emergency responses.
 - January 2024 to this submission date we have responded to 414 medical emergencies for a projected 2024 medical emergency call volume of 751
 - Rising mileage on ambulances:
 - Ambulance 1 (2008 ambulance) current mileage 117,152
 - Ambulance 2 (2016 ambulance received in 2017) current mileage 108,887.
 - Average annual mileage of 15,555/year. Given that ambulance 2 will be in first line service for at least 2 more years, we project mileage of at least 139,997 before it goes into second line duty
 - Rising Ambulance cost: Replacement ambulance costs are already easily in the \$450,000 range. Costs are expected to rise making maximizing the life span of our ambulances essential.

Given the higher run volume and mileage the mid-life refurbishment may be the only way to keep our ambulances reliable for the full 16-year life span (8 front-line and 8 second line). We continue to study this challenge but wanted to keep you updated.

2025-2030 CIP Submission:



Our Capital plan continues to be extended out 20 years with the goal of making the first 6 years as predictable and consistent as possible. The plan is reviewed regularly. The funding for this plan, referred to as Public Safety Apparatus Funding, is predicated on an annual warrant article to the Fire and Ambulance Capital Reserve Account as well as revenue from the Cell Tower Fund (Fund 14). We also build in an adjustment for inflation. We have included fleet changes which will increase efficiencies and extend the life of our more expensive apparatus. Except for the 5-year lease discussed for Engine 3 replacement in 2025, the plan is balanced throughout. I have attached a copy of our 2025-2030 CIP submittals with running balances to this narrative.

This year's submission has the following notable highlights:

- 2025: Engine 3 Replacement (\$789,000)
- 2026: A1 Cardiac Monitor Replacement (\$80,000)
- 2027: Command Vehicle replacement (\$95,000)
- 2028: A1 Lucas CPR Device (\$35,000)
Utility Pickup Truck replacement (\$85,000)
- 2029: Jet Ski/Seadoo Replacement (\$32,000)
Ambulance Remount/Reconditioning (\$400,000)
- 2030: No expenditure.

We have worked hard to ensure this capital plan is focused on our core mission. It is responsible and fiscally balanced given our projected funding. The beginning of January 1, 2024, Public Safety Apparatus fund balance, which consists of Capital Reserve and Cell Tower funding, is approximately \$479,269 and our ending year 6 projected balance is \$881,019. *Note: These numbers are close estimates and our Finance Director, Becky Bergeron, will be providing an exact beginning balance. When we have that, we will issue an updated 6-year plan.*

We are very proud of the product we bring for your consideration! I look forward to discussing this with you in the future.

Be well,

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