Fire Station Committe Update

Mission: it is the mission of the Strafford Fire Station Committee to assess, explore options, and design a fire station that is fiscally responsible while considering the short- and long-term needs of the community and the department. The committee will explore and report upon options for location, and will provide an analysis for the land purchase, preparation, and costs associated with constructing and furnishing the building.

Committee Members:

Chair: Chief Steve Johnson

Deputy Chief Erik Aucella

Captain Paul Stover

Captain Peter Frasca

Selectmen Chris Garcia

Resident Charlie Burnham

Resident Don Clifford

Chief George Joy

Meetings to Date:

8/7/2024 First meeting set ground rules, expectations, and goals for the committee. Additional Meeting date set. Identified largest obstacle being land availability.

8/21/2024 Field Trip to Milton Fire Department to evaluate their station and our needs. Chief Marique explained to us their process and what they liked or would do different.

9/25/2024 Architect Michael Petrovick attended to give overview of overall process and committee expectations. Committee agreed that a fire station architect is necessary as opposed to a general contractor.

10/16/2024 Meeting was a brief overview the progress and establishing if any added info was available on land. Land continues to be the biggest hurdle.

11/6/2024 Meeting with Chief Johnson and Michael Petrovivk and his Senior Designer Hunter Davis to sign the contract for their services. A Check for \$25,000.00 was given to cover their serviced with funding coming from the current Fire Department Operational budget.

11/13/2024 Next scheduled meeting. This will be a work session with the architect developing our process and initiating the needs assessment pathway.

Summary

The committee is a well-rounded committee offering a variety of backgrounds deeply rooted in the Strafford Community. The committee has already recognized many of the needs of the community and of the department. Elements such as response times, population density, financial constraints, and the codes and standards impacting the build. The department has absorbed increases in responses over the past 5 years increasing approximately 35%. The communities' needs have evolved and changed with an influx of resident's post covid along with increasing new construction. Staffing has increased from 1 full time Chief to 4 full time members and 24/7 coverage. Per Diem and part time staffing includes 30 additional members bringing the department total to 34 members. The committee is planning to build with the future in mind. The goal is to consolidate two stations into one station centrally located. This will allow housing the majority of the equipment in one location improving response times of additional apparatus and specialty equipment as needed. This will improve maintenance of the vehicles and equipment while improving departmental training and ability to respond to the ever-changing needs of the community. Additionally, the committee has established the importance of the station also being designed to accommodate an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for times of natural disasters or prolonged outages impacting the town. Emphasis on grant acquisition is another path the committee is exploring to help offset the costs and reduce financial burden to the tax base.

The next step of the process will begin 11/13/2024 with a hands-on workshop with the committee and the architect beginning the needs assessment and planning phase of the project. Further updates to follow as the process continues. Included with this summary is also an overview of the Architectural Firm, their staff, and some of the many station projects they've built. They are highly respected and recommended with many projects completed throughout New Hampshire.