

Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District, Aug. 16

Apparatus replacement plan revealed; chassis purchase approved

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Aug. 16 meeting of the Black Forest Fire Rescue Protection District (BFFRPD), the board approved the purchase of Ford F550 chassis for two brush trucks, and approved seeking a proposal from Pierce Manufacturing for the potential purchase of a Type 1 engine.

At the end of the meeting, resident Linda Smith announced that former volunteer Public Information Officer Gary Watson had recently passed.

Vice Chair Kiersten Tarvainen attended via Zoom. Note: This reporter attended via Zoom, but it was not possible to hear everything Hinton said throughout the meeting. Information was received via the board secretary and the administrative staff to make this article possible.

Apparatus replacement plan

Fire Chief PJ Langmaid said the department had a chance to purchase two Type 6 (brush trucks) F550 white truck chassis for \$66,647 each. There is no delivery date, but the district did "miss the boat" on purchasing chassis for the past two months, he said.

Chairman Nate Dowden said the district needed to send a commitment letter by Aug. 18 to avoid losing its place in line.

Langmaid said there is a slim chance the district could get a black or red chassis, but failing that, the plastic stripping would need to be removed from the interior of the white chassis before the department colors black over red could be applied. It will be more labor intensive, but better than nothing, he said.

Dowden said originally the Ford salespeople indicated good availability for red chassis and suggested the district reserve red, and when they were gone, the district was told it should have requested black, and now they are unavailable. The salespeople were not helpful, he said.

Treasurer Jack Hinton said he would need to look at the numbers before an informed decision could be made.

Langmaid said the 2023 budget approved \$65,000 for concrete, a capital improvement not acted upon, with no commitment to a contractor. The decision does not have to be based on where the money is coming from right now, he said.

Dowden requested the board approve the purchase of two chassis for a total of \$133,294.

Tarvainen said she liked the idea of the "F550 Crew Cab" model after picking and choosing what gear to take to calls in the past, she was all for it, she said.

The board unanimously approved the purchase.

Pierce Type 1 Engine proposal

Langmaid also requested the board review and consider a planning proposal to purchase a Pierce Type 1 Engine for about \$882,000. He said the purchase required no money down, with payments beginning in about two years, and if the economy does not allow the district to complete the purchase, it could be sold. Production time is typically two years or longer and costs continue to rise. The supply for this type of engine is dwindling and the configuration is never coming back, as the new EPA standards take effect. It will be a valuable commodity that other departments will want, he said.

Dowden said the board needs more data from Pierce Manufacturing and it could then consider approving a proposal in September.

Director James Abendschan recommended the department get on the list given the production timeline of two to three years.

Dowden requested the board approve that the fire chief proceed with a request for proposal to Pierce Manufacturing for a negotiation to purchase a Type 1 Engine for no more than \$882,000, for further consideration by the board.

Getting on the list is a good idea, said Tarvainen.

The board approved the decision to request a

proposal, 4-1, with Hinton dissenting.

Hinton expressed his disappointment with the method utilized to approve high-value purchases, stating that the board should be given more time beforehand to study information on the proposals and desired purchases. The board needs a clear definitive picture of what the financial status of the district will be before appropriating large sums of money, he said. More time was needed to study the proposals and take a more measured look at the financial situation and the future property tax assessments. It is disrespectful for the board to be bombarded with high-dollar requests for apparatus, he said.

Langmaid said he believed he was following the board directive to present information for consideration, and the board directed the staff to return with a proposal and pricing, he said.

Resident Smith asked if the district could conduct a search for a used engine. The district was successful last year and saved money by purchasing a used ladder truck in 2022, said Smith.

Langmaid said district mechanic Gavin Smith had looked for a Type 1 engine similar to the Pierce Type 1 Enforcer engine received last year, with just the following criteria: a 750-gallon water capacity, a 1,500-gallon-per-minute pump, and a low hose bed for firefighter safety, but nothing was available, he said.

Note: The board held a workshop at 5 p.m. before the meeting to discuss the apparatus replacement plan. The district purchased a Pierce Type 1 Enforcer engine in August 2022 via a 10-year lease-purchase agreement; and a tender truck that will cost \$346,910 is expected to arrive in fall. See www.ocn.me/v22n9.htm#bffrpd. The district also purchased a used 2005 mid-mount aerial ladder truck in late 2022 that once equipped will require additional staffing. See www.ocn.me/v23n7.htm#bffrpd.

Financial report

Hinton said the district had about \$4.1 million in total assets as of July 31.

The financial report provided to this reporter noted that as of July 31, the district had about \$2.4 million for General Operations. Deployment operations revenue received year to date was \$255,884, and 47.85% of the budgeted \$534,729 year to date. The income received year to date was about \$4 million, and 93.60% of the estimated \$4.2 million. Expenses year to date were about \$2.1 million, and 53.53% of the estimated \$4 million budgeted for 2023. The financial reports can be found at www.bffire.org.

The board unanimously accepted the financial report as presented.

Chief's report

Administrative Officer Rachel Dunn said the department received about \$5,047 in ambulance revenue, and the total tax revenue was about \$79,108. A payment of \$43,879 was made toward the lease-purchase of the Type 1 engine purchase in 2022. The department also received uniform items and forcible entry props for the training center, she said.

Langmaid said the following:

- The training hours for June were off due to data entry issues, but July training racked up about 1,885 hours.
- The department training trailer is complete and in service.
- The department is advertising to hire a lateral entry level firefighter to ensure the board-approved minimum eight-a-day staffing model continues without forcing staff back on shift.
- Two firefighters completed Driver Operator Pumper certification in Alabama.
- The wildfire technicians assess the district fire danger and change the signs installed around the district. Signs may not need to change daily, but fuel moisture and weather are monitored for changes daily.

- No significant calls of unusual nature in July.

Training Complex upgraded

Langmaid said the Training Complex was undergoing an upgrade with the removal of the dead trees surrounding the facility, but to hide the junk cars and Conex containers from neighbors, dirt berms were being formed. He thanked La Foret Conference and Retreat Center for providing the excess dirt, and although it was a lot of work for firefighters, they moved the dirt and the complex should be more appealing to neighbors. The project was a "win-win" for everyone, said Langmaid.

The meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Meetings are usually held on the third Wednesday of the month at Station 1, 11445 Teachout Road, Colorado Springs. Meetings are open to the public in person or via Zoom. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 20 at 7 p.m., and will begin with a Pension Board of Trustees meeting. For joining instructions, updates, agendas, minutes, and reports, visit www.bffire.org or contact Director of Public Relations Brooke Reid at admin@bffire.org or call 719-495-4300.

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Monument Fire District, Aug. 23

Station 3 rebuild plans revealed; Station 5 remodel approved

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Monument Fire District (MFD) meeting on Sept. 23, the board received a presentation for the rebuild of Station 3, approved a contractor and funding for the Station 5 (Highway 83/Stagecoach Road) remodel, approved securing the production of two engines with a proposal for purchase, and held an executive session to discuss a land purchase agreement.

Secretary Jason Buckingham and Director Tom Tharnish attended via Zoom. Directors Randall Estes and Roger Lance were excused.

Station 3 future rebuild plans revealed

Fire Chief Andy Kovacs introduced Principal Lead Architect Kevin Schaffer and Associate Principal Architect Eric Becker of OZ Architects, and John Sattler, vice president of NV5 Program Management, representing the district during the Station 3 rebuild and the remodel projects for Stations 2, 4, and 5.

Becker and Schaffer gave a presentation on a preliminary design for Station 3, and said the following:

- The team conducted a feasibility study in 2022 and realized the existing site on Woodmoor Drive did not meet the district's needs. See <https://www.ocn.me/v22n9.htm#mfd>.
- Three sites were selected within the district and the best location for the Station 3 rebuild was determined to be a site north and adjacent to the YMCA on Jackson Creek Parkway.

- The site is far enough away from Station 1 on Highway 105 and will include the district administration offices, and meet the needs of the growing community.
- The plan includes four apparatus bays, administration and living areas, bunk rooms, kitchen, a gym, combined workstation areas, apparatus support area, decontamination area, bathrooms, and a workshop.
- A training and community room function will be included, community accessible, but will remain separate from the fire crew.
- The site leaves some room for growth and expansion of the station and area, with the possibility of adding an additional bay.

Division Chief of Administrative/Fire Marshal Jamey Bumgarner said the original Station 3 on Woodmoor Drive was built in 1973.

Vice President John Hildebrandt asked if any lessons were learned from the remodel of Station 1 that was completed in fall 2021.

Kovacs said the Station 1 design lacks office space and wished that it had been included earlier in the project, but that has been addressed in the design for the Station 3 rebuild. Quiet space to allow study time for promotional or degree exams will be incorporated into the dorm areas, he said.

Note: The Station 1 remodel added 1,800 square feet




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