

2023 Fire Department Budget - Discussion Document

Introduction

The Alexandria Fire Department (AFD) is a full service department that provides life safety to 21,000+ residents (39,000 Summer) who live, work and play in our city.

Our motto is “Professional...Dedicated...Role Models”. We are driven by life safety, incident response and stabilization, property conservation while maintaining a strong community spirit and service. We collaborate with many partners in the community.

The Big 4 that is the cornerstone to AFD is; Do your job – Treat people right – Give all-out effort - Have an all in attitude...Be FULLY INVOLVED.

The AFD firefighters provide and protect; life safety, fire suppression, fire prevention and education, technical rescue, fire systems inspections, disaster response and mitigation, emergency management plans and procedures.

We deliver this variety of emergency services through our most valuable resource, the firefighters themselves. We continuously put forth a recruiting effort to find volunteer firefighters – this is and will be our on- going challenge in the future.

One of our strong suits is fire prevention and education throughout the community. We are committed to the safety and prevention in the community through various platforms; public speaking and community events, social media, numerous tours, visits, Safety Day Camp, Operation Graduation, Open House, Big Vehicle Day-we dare say that we impact *thousands* of people each year in some fashion.

We excel at emergency management by providing planning, training, table top discussions, exercises and LIVE drills. During the incidents we tend to establish Incident Command and Unified Command. We are strong collaborators with many community partners. The AFD station has become a hub and central training facility for Regional and Sub Regional EM training and endeavors.

PBB Inventory & Costing Estimate

Program	hrs/yr	%
Administrative		35%
Emergency Management		20%
Fire Prevention / Fire Education		20%
Community Awareness, Branding and Support		12%
Fire Incidents / Fire Trainings		7%
Fire Inspections		5%
Fire Investigations		1%
Total		100%

Based on 1.0 FTE



The following includes some of the activities within each program element noted in the PBB estimate table above:

Administration – The Fire Chief is responsible for a significant administrative workload. There are reports that need to be filed for fire calls, township fire levy calculations, and a great deal of human resources work/consultation involved with a large volunteer fire department.

Emergency Management – When disaster strikes, whether manmade or natural, the AFD Firefighters respond. The Fire Chief is the designated Emergency Management Director for the City of Alexandria that works closely with the Douglas County Emergency Management Director and other collaborative partnerships for Planning, Mitigation, Training and Exercises.

Fire Prevention / Fire Education – Fire prevention is the key to saving lives and property, Prevention / Education is the first step in AFD's commitment to saving lives and property. We make an impact by participating and holding numerous Public Education events, especially during the month of October (Fire Prevention Month)-approximately 2000 students come through the station for educational events.

Fire Incidents / Fire Training - Our vision is to be a high performance emergency response and mitigation system that meets the current and future needs of the City of Alexandria and its community members in response to all emergency situations, accidental, natural or manmade. Our mission is to serve the community and protect lives and property through the provision of professional fire and rescue services.

Our strength is in the training and preparedness that the AFD members consistently and proficiently train on.

Community Awareness, Branding and Support - This is our WHY. We choose to serve this community with compassion and genuine concern for the community in all aspects of public safety. We are committed to providing the utmost comprehensive response and customer service that we can. We are at 85+ community events; either providing education, awareness or support.

Discussion for 2023 Changes

- i** 1. The Addition of 1.0 FTE Staff member.

Detailed Breakout Budgets (As Applicable and Beneficial to depth of conversation – New activity/changes/staffing, etc.)

101-42500-50101	Full Time Regular Employee	Amount
Deputy Fire Chief - FD/EM 1.0 FTE	Exempt	\$ 95,000.
TOTAL		\$95,000.

BUDGET DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Additional FTE (Deputy Fire Chief)

Covid – Succession Planning

Duty Crew Update: Eventually, as the volunteer ranks have a hard time in recruiting volunteer firefighters, a modified duty crew will need to be researched. The average response number was 27 firefighters 5 years ago; now 24 is the average. Currently, we are on scene 39% within 320 seconds-89% with 540 seconds. Our response time is taking longer. Average is now 6 minutes 50 seconds-(410 seconds). The average response has slowed down a minute in the last 5 years. The response issue is more acute on weekends when we routinely have 12-15 firefighters that do not respond. The last 4 firefighters sworn in took 2 ½ years to get, 5 able to retire with full benefits in 1 ½ -2 ½ years. There were 227 calls last year, and we are currently 10% ahead of last year in calls.

There is more research that has been conducted on the duty crew concept including cost estimating, discussion outlines, benefits, response models>positive and negative impacts. The average tenure for current generation is 9.76 years of service, that is down from 13 years of service from 20 years ago. Firefighting as a whole is declining nationwide in recruiting volunteers. There is an estimated loss of 5 -8 % of volunteer firefighters yearly nationwide. The current trend is departments exploring and putting on a modified full time crew. This still holds true in 2022 as we have just sworn in two firefighters (April 11, 2022). We also now have two female firefighters on the roster.

Appendix
