Town of Ponce Inlet

ESSENTIAL SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD

AGENDA

Thursday
October 3, 2024 - 5:30 PM

Council Chambers
4300 S Atlantic Ave, Ponce Inlet, FL

SUNSHINE LAW NOTICE FOR BOARD MEMBERS – Notice is hereby provided that one or more members of the Town Council or other Town Boards may attend and speak at this meeting.

A complete copy of the materials for this agenda is available for review at the Town Hall.

1. CALL TO ORDER.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

3. ROLL CALL & DETERMINATION OF QUORUM.

4. ADOPTION OF AGENDA.

5. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES.
   A. June 13, 2024

6. OLD BUSINESS: *None.*

7. NEW BUSINESS:
   A. Discussion to retain current fire engine as a reserve apparatus.

8. REPORT OF STAFF.
   A. Fire Department – Chief Scales, Public Safety Director
   B. Police Department – Chief Glazier, Police Chief
   C. Public Works – Mr. Dunlap, Assistant Public Works Manager
   D. Board Liaison – Ms. Cherbano, HR Director/Town Clerk

9. ADJOURNMENT.

Persons who require an accommodation to attend this meeting should contact the Clerk's office at 386-236-2150 **at least 48 hours prior to the meeting date** to request such assistance.

Meeting Date: October 3, 2024

Agenda Item: 5-A

Report to Essential Services Advisory Board

Topic: Approval of Meeting Minutes

Summary:

Staff has provided the attached set of meeting minutes for the Board's review and approval.

Suggested motion:

To approve the June 13, 2024 meeting minutes as presented or as amended.

Requested by:
Ms. Cherbano, Town Clerk
Ms. Gjessing, Assistant Deputy Clerk

Approved by:
Mr. Disher, Town Manager

Town of Ponce Inlet

ESSENTIAL SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

June 13, 2024

1. CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Pursuant to proper notice, the meeting was called to Order at 5:30 PM in the Council Chambers, located at 4300 S. Atlantic Avenue, Ponce Inlet, Florida.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Chairman Cox.

3. ROLL CALL & DETERMINATION OF QUORUM: A quorum was established; the Alternate for Seat #2 was absent.

Board members present:
Mr. Cox, Seat #1; Chair
Mr. McConaughey, Seat #2
Mr. Pulver, Seat #3
Ms. Valerien, Seat #5; Vice-Chair
Ms. Wurst, Seat #4
Mr. Witt, Alternate for Seat #1
Mr. Sustr, Alternate for Seat #2; Absent

Staff members present:
Ms. Cherbano, Town Clerk
Mr. Dunlap, Acting Public Works Director
Ms. Gjessing, Assistant Deputy Clerk
Corey Mead, Lieutenant
Chief Scales, Public Safety Director

4. ADOPTION OF AGENDA: Chairman Cox asked if there were any changes to the agenda; there were none.

Chairman Cox motioned to adopt the agenda as presented; seconded by Vice-Chair Valerien. The motion PASSED 5-0, consensus.

5. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

A. March 7, 2024

Chairman Cox asked if there were any changes to the meeting minutes; there were none.

Chairman Cox moved to adopt the March 7, 2024, meeting minutes as presented; seconded by Mr. McConaughey. The motion PASSED 5-0, consensus.

6. OLD BUSINESS: *None.*

7. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Proposed Replacement of Public Works Building "B".

Chief Scales, Public Safety Director, introduced the proposed replacement of Public Works Building "B". He explained the history of the building and stated it was formerly the pump house, then became the Public Works office, and is now used for storage. When Public Works began preparations to repaint the building, substantial concerns were found. The Chief Building Official assessed the building and concluded it needed to be condemned. Chief Scales presented a PowerPoint showing some of the damage to the building and a site plan indicating the location on the property. He explained the proposed modifications to be made and the estimated timeline. He stated the proposed budgeted amount is for pre-liminary efforts such as design plans and temporary storage. Chief Scales mentioned the professional recommendations received so far indicated that it was too costly to repair the existing building, and that the best solution is to tear it down and build new. Chair Cox asked whether the damage could be from hurricanes and if so, are there grants that could be applied for. Chief Scales stated he is unfamiliar with what grants this would qualify for, but staff continues to look for alternate funding sources. Ms. Wurst questioned how the cost was calculated; Chief Scales explained these were determined by the engineers' estimates. There were a few questions regarding the back-up generator and potential replacement, clarification on which structure is being replaced, and the estimated budget period. Chairman Cox opened public participation – hearing none, he closed public participation.

Chair Cox moved to support the request for the proposed replacement of Public Works Building "B"and forward to the Town Council with a recommendation of approval for the FY 24/25 budget; seconded by Ms. Wurst. The motion PASSED 5-0, consensus.

9. REPORT OF STAFF:

A. *Fire Department:* Chief Scales explained how staffing has changed recently. He stated there may be an opportunity to purchase a new fire apparatus in the near future but the exact financing is to be determined. He also stated the Fire Department building modifications are complete.

B. *Public Works Department*: Chief Scales explained that Fred Griffith has retired, and the Public Works Director opening will be advertised soon. He provided an update on the rest of the public works staffing. The stormwater projects will be put out to bid soon, and the storm pipes have all been cleaned. Mr. McConaughey asked some follow-up questions regarding the fire apparatus.

C. *Police Department*: Lieutenant Mead provided an update on recent classes and events hosted by the police department and an update on staffing, as well as traffic statistics from Memorial Day. Chair Cox asked whether the license plate readers can determine between the same car or if they are counted every time they pass; Lt. Mead explained the reader cannot determine between duplicates. Mr. Pulver asked how one determines where the safe stopping distance is for pedestrian crosswalks. Lt. Mead explained a few ways on how this is determined. Ms. Wurst asked for follow-up on the fraud classes provided by the police department. Mr. McConaughey asked if the Town were able to permanently indicate the right place to stop at pedestrian crosswalks; a discussion ensued regarding different options. Lt. Mead noted South Atlantic Avenue is a county-owned road so the Town would need approval from Volusia County.

D. *Board Liaison*: Ms. Cherbano announced the three Alternate seats for the board are still open and to direct anyone who is interested to the Clerk's department. She then discussed upcoming meeting dates.

10. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Chairman Cox opened public participation – hearing none, he closed public participation.

11. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 6:12 p.m.

Prepared and submitted by:

DRAFT
Stephanie Gjessing
Assistant Deputy Clerk

Attachment(s): Presentation by Chief Scales

Meeting Date: October 3, 2024

Agenda Item: 7-A

Report to Essential Services Advisory Board

Topic: Discussion to retain current fire engine as a reserve apparatus.

Summary: The attached staff report outlines the pros and cons for retaining the Town's current fire engine as a reserve unit following the acquisition of a new Quint and considers the financial implications, including maintenance costs, and the operational impact of the engine's reassignment as a reserve vehicle.

Suggested motion: To support the retention of the existing fire engine as a reserve apparatus and forward to the Town Council with a recommendation of approval.

Requested by: Chief Scales, Public Safety Director

Approved by: Mr. Disher, Town Manager

MEMORANDUM

Public Works Department

The Town of Ponce Inlet staff shall be professional, caring and fair in delivering community excellence while ensuring Ponce Inlet citizens obtain the greatest value for their tax dollar.

To: Essential Services Advisory Board

From: Dan Scales, Public Safety Director

Date: September 26, 2024

Subject: Discussion to Retain Current Fire Engine as a Reserve Apparatus

MEETING DATE: October 3, 2024

PURPOSE

This report outlines the pros and cons for retaining the Town's current fire engine as a reserve unit following the acquisition of a new Quint. With a significant portion of the department's responses being EMS-related, the availability of a backup engine is critical to ensuring continuous fire and EMS service. This report also considers the financial implications, including maintenance costs, and the operational impact of the engine's reassignment as a reserve vehicle.

BACKGROUND

The Town's Fire Department is a full-service operation, handling approximately 750 emergency medical service (EMS) calls per year, with a total call volume of about 1,000 calls annually. As part of the standard response protocol, the fire engine responds to every EMS call in town. The fire engine is equipped with Advanced Life Support (ALS) capabilities and a paramedic, making it the only responding ALS unit when the ambulance is engaged in patient transport.

At the January 11, and March 7, 2024, Essential Services Advisory Board (ESAB) meetings, the justification for replacing the Town's existing 2009 fire engine with a new 75' Quint apparatus was discussed, and the Board included the purchase of a Quint with its budgetary recommendations to the Town Council for FY 2024/2025. On September 19, 2024, the Town Council approved the purchase a 75' Quint, with financing to be determined. That same evening, the Council approved the fiscal year 2024/2025 budget, which included funding for equipment for the new Quint along with a replacement hose for the existing apparatus. Staff has put out an RFP for financing for the new Quint, with options for 7- and 10-year terms, which will be reviewed by the Council at the October 17, 2024, Council meeting. Delivery of the new Quint vehicle is expected within the next few months.

As part of the fleet plan, Staff proposes to surplus the current 2001 mini-pumper and retain the 2009 fire engine as a reserve unit. This approach would allow the Town to maintain reliable fire and EMS response capabilities while managing its fleet efficiently.

At the September 19th Council meeting, the Council discussed but did not decide on whether to retain the current fire engine as a backup or remove it from the fleet. Staff is requesting the Board's review and recommendation on this topic for presentation to the Town Council on October 17th.

DISCUSSION

Operational Impact

The absence of a backup engine during maintenance or mechanical failure could severely disrupt the Town's ability to provide continuous fire and EMS services. While selling the engine could generate short-term revenue, the operational risks posed by not having a reserve engine far outweigh the financial benefits. The potential risks are discussed further below.

Continuous Fire and EMS Coverage

The Fire Department relies on its fire engine not only for fire emergencies but also for medical responses, particularly when the ambulance is occupied with patient transport. The fire engine is the only department vehicle equipped with Advanced Life Support (ALS) capabilities. Without a backup engine, any mechanical failure or required maintenance on the primary engine would cause delays in response times, directly compromising public safety. Maintaining a reserve engine ensures operational readiness at all times. This minimizes service interruptions, reduces dependency on neighboring cities for reserve apparatus, and helps avoid service gaps during critical situations.

Decrease in Available Reserve Trucks from Neighboring Departments

Historically, neighboring fire departments have provided reserve fire engines to the Town when needed. However, the availability of these units has diminished significantly, which means the Town can no longer rely on external cities for backup. This reduction in available support makes it even more crucial for the Town to retain its own reserve engine, ensuring its ability to maintain consistent and effective response capabilities for both fire and EMS calls.

Financial and Maintenance Considerations

Although the current engine remains in good mechanical condition, its age and continuous use as a frontline vehicle have led to significant wear and tear. Transitioning the engine to a reserve unit will greatly reduce its future usage, minimizing the strain that daily operations place on the vehicle. Continued daily use of the engine would likely result in more frequent repairs, which, while manageable, present ongoing concerns regarding operational availability. Each unanticipated repair affects both the engine's usability and the department's ability to respond effectively.

The department currently allocates just over $40,000 annually for maintenance across its entire fleet. By eliminating routine and unscheduled maintenance costs associated with the 2001 mini-pumper and transitioning the current engine to reserve status, we expect the budgeted repair and maintenance costs to remain stable, with the potential for future reductions. The estimated routine maintenance for the reserve engine is approximately $2,000 annually, along with an insurance cost of $1,600. This is a modest expense, especially considering the critical role the engine plays in maintaining uninterrupted fire and EMS services.

NFPA 1901 Recommendations:

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to reducing deaths, injuries, and economic losses caused by fire, electrical, and related hazards. NFPA establishes industry standards for fire services, including recommendations for the lifespan of fire apparatus.

According to NFPA 1900[1], which governs the standards for Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting Vehicles, Automotive Fire Apparatus, Wildland Fire Apparatus, and Automotive Ambulances, the typical service life for a frontline fire engine is 15 years.

NFPA also recommends that frontline engines transitioned to reserve status can remain in service for an additional 10 years, with the potential for further extension if the vehicle is used infrequently and maintained properly. Given the current fire engine's condition and the reduced wear it will experience as a reserve unit, keeping it aligns well with NFPA 1900 standards. This means the engine is expected to provide reliable service for several more years, offering a cost-effective solution for maintaining operational readiness.

Sale/Auction Value

Information from fire engine brokers, apparatus dealers, and neighboring cities indicates that selling or auctioning the current fire engine could yield between $6,000 and $50,000 for the Town. While this could provide a one-time influx of funds, the long-term benefits of retaining the engine far outweigh the short-term financial gain from its sale. Keeping the engine as a reserve unit ensures that the Town can maintain effective response capabilities, particularly in emergencies when operational readiness is critical. The value of uninterrupted fire and EMS service cannot be overstated, making the decision to retain the engine a prudent one for the community's safety and well-being.

Risk of Not Retaining a Reserve Engine

The lack of a reserve engine presents risks to operational response and the community at large, including:

Service Disruptions: Without a backup engine, any failure or downtime of the primary engine could leave the Town without adequate fire and EMS response capabilities, with the closest fire response unit a minimum of 10-13 minutes from town (assuming the apparatus is in the station at the time of call). The closest responding stations are located in Daytona Beach Shores on AIA, and Port Orange on US 1.

Increased Liability: Delayed response times due to a lack of apparatus could expose the Town to liability, particularly in cases where lives or property are lost due to preventable delays.

Increased Property Damage:

- *Fire Spread*: Fires double in size every minute. A delayed response allows the fire to intensify and spread, causing more extensive structural damage over time.
- *Higher Costs*: The longer a fire burns unchecked, the more damage is done, leading to significantly higher repair or rebuilding costs.
- *Loss of Property*: Irreplaceable personal belongings may be completely destroyed. A fire in one of the Town's historical structures could lead to the loss of unique historic artifacts.

Greater Risk to Life and Safety:

- *Casualties*: A delayed response increases the risk of injuries or fatalities to building occupants, as they have less time to evacuate.

[1] https://www.nfpa.org/codes-and-standards/nfpa-1900-standard-development/1900

- *Firefighter Safety*: A more advanced fire can pose greater hazards to responding firefighters, requiring more aggressive firefighting tactics, which come with increased risk.
- *Evacuation Challenges*: As the fire grows, it may block potential exit routes, complicating evacuation efforts for trapped individuals.

Economic Consequences/Loss of Business: If the structure is a commercial property, a slow response can result in more significant downtime, leading to lost income for businesses.

- *Insurance Costs*: Higher property damage often leads to increased insurance claims, which can drive up premiums for the property owner and potentially for the community as a whole.
- *Rebuilding Delays*: Extensive damage may take longer to repair, delaying the recovery of the affected area.

Community Impact: A slow response time for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) calls can have several adverse impacts, many of which can significantly affect patient outcomes and community trust in public safety systems. These impacts include:

- *Public Trust*: Slow response times can erode public confidence in emergency services, particularly if delays are repeated or have serious consequences.
- *Displacement*: Residents may be displaced for extended periods if their homes are rendered uninhabitable, leading to additional social and financial strain on the community.
- *Impact on Infrastructure*: Fires can damage critical infrastructure such as electrical systems, roadways, or water lines, resulting in further disruptions.
- *Increased Mortality and Morbidity*: Delays in EMS response can lead to worse medical outcomes, especially for time-sensitive emergencies like heart attacks, strokes, or traumatic injuries. The "golden hour" is critical for trauma patients, and any delay reduces the chance of survival and successful recovery.
- *Worsening of Medical Conditions*: A slow response may allow a patient's condition to deteriorate further. For example, in cardiac arrest cases, brain damage can occur within minutes if appropriate life-saving interventions, like CPR and defibrillation, are not administered promptly.
- *Legal and Financial Consequences*: In cases where slow response times lead to death or severe injury, municipalities and EMS providers could face legal action, leading to lawsuits, increased insurance premiums, and financial liabilities. This can further strain public resources.

CONCLUSION

Maintaining a reserve fire engine is considered a standard industry practice across fire departments for several important reasons, rooted in operational efficiency, safety, and service reliability. Fire engines are essential tools for providing critical emergency services, and the inherent unpredictability of mechanical failures or maintenance needs makes it crucial for any fire department to have backup apparatus readily available. A reserve engine ensures that when the primary engine is undergoing repairs or routine maintenance, the department can continue to meet the community's emergency needs without disruption.

Mutual aid between fire departments in different jurisdictions is intended to provide temporary assistance during extraordinary circumstances, such as large-scale incidents or when local resources are temporarily overwhelmed. It is not designed to replace a department's own operational readiness for everyday emergency calls. Neighboring cities are not required, nor obligated, to loan their equipment for extended periods or to cover gaps in another department's fleet.

The reserve apparatus of neighboring cities is often limited as well, and a city's priority will always be to ensure that they can maintain adequate coverage for their own communities. Given that fire departments face many of the same challenges, such as aging fleets, budget constraints, and equipment maintenance cycles, it is increasingly difficult to rely on other municipalities to provide continuous support. When multiple departments are under strain, such as during natural disasters or periods of high call volume, the availability of mutual aid becomes even more uncertain.

Borrowing an apparatus from neighboring jurisdictions places an additional burden on those departments, potentially leaving them less prepared for emergencies in their own areas. This reliance could lead to delays in response times for both the borrowing and lending departments, ultimately putting public safety at risk. In situations where an emergency escalates or simultaneous incidents occur, having a reserve engine ensures that a fire department is self-sufficient and ready to respond promptly.

By maintaining a reserve fire engine, the Ponce Inlet Fire Department can uphold its responsibility to provide uninterrupted emergency services to the community. This practice reduces dependence on external resources, mitigates the risk of service gaps, and ensures the department remains prepared for both routine and extraordinary situations. In contrast, relying solely on mutual aid without a reserve engine can expose the department to operational vulnerabilities and may compromise its ability to meet the safety needs of the community effectively.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends retaining the existing fire engine for the reasons outlined above. Staff requests the Board's review and recommendation on this issue for a future decision by the Town Council.

Meeting Date: October 3, 2024

Agenda Item: 8

Report to Essential Services Advisory Board

Topic: Report of Staff

Summary: Department Directors will provide a report and/or update of department projects:

A. Fire Department – Chief Scales

B. Public Works – Mr. Dunlap

C. Police Department – Chief Glazier

D. Board Liaison – Ms. Cherbano

Suggested motion: At the Board's discretion.

Requested by:
Ms. Cherbano, Town Clerk

Approved by:
Mr. Disher, Town Manager