



October 30, 2024

To the Residents of the West Licking Joint Fire District,

Today's correspondence will look at two areas that we feel need to be a part of these series of letters; yearly fund carry-overs and steps the District has taken to help squeeze the value out of each precious dollar we acquire.

The Fire District's yearly carryovers.

When we use the term carryover, we mean specifically what funds are available for use when the clock strikes the end of the calendar year on December 31st on any given year. We will illustrate below what those figures are, however, they can be slightly misleading. Like any working household we receive our funds at a given preset time. We receive our deposit from the Licking County Auditor sometime in late March, early April. This means that the District must have funds on hand to cover expenses for those three months. The District operates on approximately one and half million dollars a month to accomplish its mission. To be able to cover expenses we have to carry over funds to meet our financial requirements.

GENERAL FUND CARRYOVER

2019	\$4,385,343.15
2020	\$4,263,550.81
2021	\$3,866,470.44
2022	\$4,887,426.31
2023	\$5,476,263.61

Fire District Financial Stewardship.

Inflation has been an issue at the forefront of conversations everywhere over the past few years. As we discussed earlier last week, the District is not immune and the items that we have no choice but to utilize for our services have had an even higher increase than most common household goods and services.

Emergency equipment has never been found at a discounted price and certainly there is never a black Friday shopping event. Since the District's formation in 1982, we have for years looked to deliver top-notch equipment for our citizens at the lowest possible price. We are always looking for new and creative ways to keep our apparatus fleet in top condition and ready for your emergencies.

One of our highest expenses, when it comes to capital item upkeep, is repair and general maintenance on our fleet. We studied our invoices and looked for competitive bids for the work. No matter who the outsource, the rates for mechanics were pushing \$200 an hour and parts still had a 20-30 percent mark-up. It was determined that we needed to investigate having our own mechanic. Knowing that was going to be an expense that we had not had before, we decided to see if there was a department that would consider partnering with us. Truro Township, one of our neighboring departments in Franklin County, decided it would be advantageous to join. Shy of a decade ago we joined together to hire a mechanic. We split the salary and benefit package along with shop supplies. This decision paid dividends.

Additionally, we found out the brightest part of this shared services agreement was the speed at which our fleet returned to service. There are very few companies that service fire trucks and the wait can take months to get our trucks back in service. Our trucks are now back on the street responding to calls within days for major repairs and just hours for minor repairs and preventative maintenance. Our Fleet Services department can do all types of repairs including complete engine rebuilding and body work. In the last decade we have saved well into six digits, not to mention the availability of these firetrucks and EMS transport units.

One of our latest moves was to buy a fire truck that a local department was selling. They were gracious enough to sell it to us for \$25,000. We invested around \$40,000, and to this day, two years later, it is still in service as our back up truck and is in fact sitting in the station located on Taylor Road responding to calls for help. All the upgrades were completed in-house by our fleet services team.

We also 're-chassis' our EMS transport vehicles. Instead of buying completely new paramedic units, we have the patient area (the box on the back of the truck) removed and put on a new chassis (frame, motor, and cab). This saves the District another \$100,000 per unit.

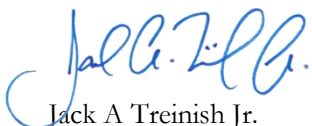
The District's daily response team also utilizes part-time firefighters/EMTs, which in turn helps to keep salaries down. Departments similar to our size and incident volume typically do not have part-time firefighters, but we have kept them as part of our family. These men and women are just as dedicated to your welfare and safety as our full-time staff.

When we talked earlier about the organization of the District, we mentioned Administrative staff. I was hired in November of 1993 as a part time firefighter/paramedic. There was a fire chief and two assistant chiefs. Now, 31 years later, that is the same number of administrative chiefs we have now. I will not lie, we could use a couple more in the administrative side of the District, but we have always chosen to put those dollars into personnel on the street that directly affects you, the consumer.

We also talked about the Federal grants we have been awarded totaling over 3 million dollars to help supplement our budget. Those dollars have allowed us to stay away from asking for more from our citizens. As a reminder, they are grants that we do not have to repay.

Please, rest assured that the District will continue to strive to save money and find ways to make it go further. We take this responsibility very seriously and always will.

Yours in service,



Jack A Treinish Jr.
Fire Chief

Proud Resident for over Twenty Years

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