

**YORK AREA UNITED FIRE AND RESCUE COMMISSION
SPECIAL BUDGET MEETING**

**SEPTEMBER 21, 2021
APPROVED**

The York Area United Fire and Fire Pension Board meeting on Tuesday, September 21, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. York, PA 17402.

MEMBERS IN

ATTENDANCE: Austin Hunt, Chairman
Dan Rooney, Vice Chairman, Spring Garden Township
John Inch, Manchester Township (via Zoom)
Thomas Gwilt, Spring Garden Township
Lisa Wingert, Manchester Township
George Dvoryak, Springettsbury Township
Charles Wurster, Secretary, Springettsbury Township

ALSO IN

ATTENDANCE: Daniel Hoff, YAUFR Chief
Steve Hovis, Solicitor
Lisa Einsig, YAUFR
Joseph Madzelan, Battalion Chief
Matthew Arnold, Battalion Chief
Matthew Russ, Battalion Chief
Brett Graham, Battalion Chief
Curvin Wolfgang, Battalion Chief
Scott Ryno, Battalion Chief
John Luciani, Spring Garden Twp. Commissioner
Dave Detwiler, Spring Garden Twp. Commissioner
Tim James, Manchester Township Manager
Mark Hodgkinson, Springettsbury Township Manager
Andy Seebold
Dave Raver
19 YAUFR Firefighters
Sue Sipe, Stenographer

1. CALL TO ORDER

HUNT Chairman Hunt called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE BY CHAIRMAN HUNT

HUNT Chairman Hunt indicated by Charter Agreement this is the annual special meeting to present a strategic overview and the budget for the Townships to review and approve.

HOVIS Solicitor Hovis provided an overview, indicating that the Charter Agreement provides that the annual budget will be presented at a joint meeting in September, for the Commission to present to the Charter municipalities the 2022 budget for their consideration. Following this, the municipalities will have the opportunity to consider and pass the budget, with any requested changes. The Charter provides that three-quarters of the municipalities need to approve the budget in

order for it to be effective for the 2022 fiscal year. He indicated with three municipalities, all three will need to approve the budget in order to make it official. If the three municipalities fail to approve the budget by the December 2021 meeting of this Commission, then the 2021 budget will remain the budget for 2022 until all municipalities approve the budget.

3. 2022 BUDGET PRESENTATION

A. Chief Hoff

HOFF Chief Hoff thanked everyone for attending in support of the budget and the department as well.

Chief Hoff provided a report on YAUFR's accomplishments and practices for 2021 continuing into 2022:

- The Mission Statement and Vision Statement came out of the 2014 Strategic Planning process. Each employee is expected to learn and make use of these guiding principles throughout their career. He noted one of the points of feedback from the Strategic Planning Committee was that these statements may be too long and wordy, consequently at the last meeting discussion was held as to how to change words and structure without changing the meaning.
- Chief Hoff stated the Missions and Vision statements guide everyday actions which he noted is evident in the work their administrative and command staff performs. He thanked Lisa Einsig, Laurie Noel and the Battalion Chiefs for the excellent work and support they provide every day.
- Creation of the intergovernmental cooperative is designed to function as an independent body with an independent governing board, similar to their charter townships. By signing the charter agreement, all municipalities participating agree to surrender their individual fire service authority as well as their equipment and apparatus to the regional department. He noted Manchester Township became the third charter township in 2018, although they still remain separate from a collective bargaining standpoint. This has not created much of an issue in the daily operations except for potential savings for overtime and staffing deployment since they are permitted to use employees across all stations of the department.
- 2021 Goals and successes – the priorities for 2021 and the progress made currently was reviewed:
 1. Accreditation and Strategic Planning
 2. Volunteer Recruitment and Retention
 3. Spring Garden Township Station
 4. Inspection Reports On-Line
 5. Refocus Mentoring Program for Officer Development
 6. Establish a New BC Promotional Process
 7. Restructure YAUFR's Command Structure to Include Lieutenants
 8. Develop a Departmental Staffing Plan

- Second annual Youth Safety Camp with a total of 19 children registered. The program was a huge success with the students engaged throughout in fire department operations, vehicle rescue, CPR and also a visit from the Springettsbury Police Department. Chief Hoff congratulated Chief Arnold who led the program.
- Grant Awards
 - The grant application of the State Fire Commissioner has a maximum of \$1500. YAUFR's share of the grant is approximately \$11,500. They also support the volunteer companies by ensuring their submission of applications, i.e., Victory and Springettsbury. Manchester and Victory commit their state grants to supporting YAUFR'S mission. YAUFR benefits in excess of \$34,000 annually from the state grant program.
 - The Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus grant has been completed. We continue to apply for the Recruitment and Retention grant – the SAFER grant through the federal government. The SAFER grant can also be used for career staffing initiatives as well.
 - Chief Hoff indicated he has regular meetings with the Vice President of Operations for Hollywood Casino as a means of potential funding.
- Apparatus Fleet – Units that were purchased in 2018/19 - they replaced aged front-line apparatus. Through the capital apparatus purchase they conducted, it adjusted their previous apparatus replacement practices from 20+ years of rotation down to 12-14. This will permit the sale of apparatus for units that still have a usable life with a higher resale value. 2022 will also mark the six-year target for replacing two command vehicles. The goal for replacement in 2022 would follow the same procurement plans as when those units were originally purchased.
- Station 891 and station 895 are Township owned facilities. Stations 893, 894 and 892 are presently owned by the volunteers which is a financial benefit to this organization and the charter townships. Springettsbury volunteers supported the YAUFR building generously which was a benefit to all the stakeholders within the charter townships and invested over one million dollars.
- Concern was expressed regarding the condition, age and location of Grantley. They continue working with Commissioner Rooney in Spring Garden Township to explore the possibility of land purchase on Indian Rock Dam Road. Commissioner Rooney has had discussions with York College regarding a new west side station.
- Volunteer Support – The volunteers support YAUFR's mission and each relief association in the charter township commit thousands of dollars

each year to purchase portable equipment and new projects that enhance the ability to serve. For 2021 the volunteer associations have already committed close to \$32,425 to either grant funds or direct funding for supplies, equipment and maintenance.

- Chief Hoff noted there has been a volunteer shortage over the past several years. This has greatly affected YAUFR by not having sufficient volunteer support at times both internally or through mutual aid. Because YAUFR is already understaffed, it affects them because the fail rate of the mutual aid volunteer stations averages 46% when called to our first due for assistance. With over 40% of call volume overlapping this increases the possibility of YAUFR units not being available to handle the second and third calls, which means their citizens can experience a delay in response when the call has to be assigned to the next closest company. Chief Hoff stated they have submitted a federal grant application in excess of \$100,000 to assist in the recruitment and retention of volunteers within the department. He noted John Pavoncello is working to develop a recruitment video for the department.
- Strategic Planning – The planning process has provided Staff and Committee members more of an in-depth look at the current operations of the department to provide a better foundation for a discussion and future plan. They have been involved with internal and external stakeholders and discussed strengths and weaknesses for all aspects of operations, as well as the challenges and opportunities to implement change. Committee members were presented a survey on fire department goals and expectations, asking to share with at least three persons outside of the strategic planning committee. There were 51 surveys completed, the results of which were used to develop 8 goals/planning priorities. The committee then discussed each of the priorities to begin to develop objectives and action items. Command staff will be meeting next week to further develop those objectives and work on developing draft strategic plans. The committee will then take time to review the final draft before presenting to the commissioners for comment and adoption.
- Strategic Planning Survey Results:
 - 1 - Adequately staffed and timely response to fire and medical incidents
 - 2 - Training, knowledge, and professionalism of fire department personnel
 - 3 - Properly trained and equipped for response to technical rescue incidents
 - 4 - Properly trained and equipped for response to hazardous materials incidents
 - 5- Pre-fire planning of buildings/situational awareness
 - 6 - Delivery of Public Education and fire prevention programs
 - 7 - Fire/Life Safety code education/enforcement
 - 8 - Recruitment and Retention of quality personnel, succession planning

- 9 - Facilities are up to date and adequate in size and location to serve community/department needs
- 10 - Emergency Management, Disaster Response and Preparedness
- 11 - Plan review of new developments and commercial building construction
- 12 - Fire Cause Investigation
- 13 - Public Relations/Community feedback
- Strategic Planning Survey Results from Open-Ended Questions:
 - 44/51 respondents directly identified staffing as a critical issue
 - 15/51 respondents directly identified fire stations and apparatus locations as critical issues
 - While community outreach was ranked last in the list of goals, it was frequently mentioned in answers to the questions posed
 - Identified the successes and/or failures of surrounding agencies as a threat to our own success
 - Transparency and communication within the organization
 - External relationships
- Goals
 - Ensure the Department is adequately staffed and resources positioned to ensure delivery of a timely and sufficient response to the service demands of the community.
 - Department personnel are properly trained and possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform their jobs safely and efficiently.
 - Ensure the Department is prepared to respond to special incidents, including technical rescues and hazardous materials incidents
 - Increase Community Risk Reduction efforts through pre-fire planning and life safety code compliance
 - Improve and expand upon current public education and outreach efforts
 - Recruitment and Retention of quality personnel, succession planning
 - Emergency Management, Disaster Response and Preparedness
 - Fire Cause Investigation
- 2022 Budget Focus and Goals –
 - Maintain cost consciousness concerning non-personnel related costs.
 - Take care of efficiencies regarding personnel and create a plan for improving a staffing level situation that pre-dates YAUFR.
- Non-Personnel Cost History – While having limited control of some personnel costs, they can control non-personnel costs based on

exercising discretion over projects and needs. For the last 3 years great effort was put into zeroing in on actual costs and asking more from Staff in the way of researching and justifying budgets.

Chief Hoff stated discussion was held at the 2021 budget meetings regarding the battalion chiefs' salaries. He noted there was limited interest in people promoting from captain to battalion chief. This prompted a proposal in the 2021 budget a two-year correction. The first correction of 5% was approved and implemented in 2021. The second correction proposed was an additional 6% in 2022. The 6% correction would place a battalion chief's salary at 4.9% above a 19-year captain in the department.

Chief Hoff indicated additional justification for the increase became evident this year in the promotional process, with only two letters of interest from the departments existing complement of captains. A survey was created for the officers to identify the lack of interest. The results of the survey indicated salary and retirement were the top reasons for not entering the promotional process, as well as expectations of work hours and demands.

Chief Hoff stated in regards to the Administrative Director, presently that salary is approximately \$8,000 under comparable positions with similar or less experience. He cited Administrative Director salaries at neighboring municipalities. He noted Administrative Director, Mrs. Einsig has been with the department for 10 years and has assumed an increasing workload and level of responsibility, including a position change from administrative assistant to administrative director. In 2016 she assumed responsibility for financial services which were divested from Springettsbury Township. The Administrative Director's duties include:

- Office Manager
- Supervisor of Administrative Assistant,
- Manages pay and benefits relative to two collective bargaining agreements with two separate payroll vendors
- First contact with workers compensation and vendors
- Scheduled to complete SHRM Certified Professional credentialing this year.

Chief Hoff stated he is proposing and asking for support of a three- year controlled correction of Mrs. Einsig's salary.

Staffing Plan – Chief Hoff stated no structure fire is considered routine. Consideration must be taken for area, population served, regionally preferred construction and housing types and available resources. The NFPA breaks down necessary staffing for structural fires based on occupancy type with required manpower resources ranging from single-family detached structure which the minimum is 17 firefighters, to a high-rise fire which requires a minimum of 43. He noted the approach they are proposing is three personnel – 1 per shift beginning in 2022 and every other year following. Chief Hoff pointed out this

approach will not achieve minimum standards as recognized by the NFPA, but will allow moving closer than the current situation. The goal is to continue to pursue safe operational standards including staffing for the benefit of the department and for the people they serve.

Chief Hoff reported on community growth noting the most recent census numbers revealed 5% county growth since 2010. However, other census tracks within YAUFR's response area show residential growth as high as 16.2% since 2010. Chief Hoff pointed out when development continues in all townships, increased population results in increased building, development and commerce which are potential increased demand for emergency services. He cited the following development:

Manchester Township

- 8 new or under construction warehouses, 4 in land development stage
- 37 new residential homes
- 10 open permits
- 225 additional lots approved
- 23 new homes in discussion with the possibility of 225+ apartments

Springettsbury Township

- 2 warehouses under construction/completed for a total of approximately half a million square feet
- 37 new residential homes
- 150 apartments
- Unknown open permits
- At least 81 other single-family lots approved
- 16 more apartments approved
- 225 apartments proposed

Spring Garden

- 2 warehouses in the land development phase or not yet under construction for just under one half million square feet - 6 open permits
- 66 new homes/townhomes – 2 open permits

Chief Hoff reported in 2008 YAUFR brought together 15 suppression firefighters from Spring Garden and 17 from Springettsbury. The first two promotions of Battalion Chiefs did not replace those positions. Later, Manchester Township's staffing went from 23 down to the present number of 18.

From a housing standpoint, Chief Hoff stated Springettsbury Township's Comprehensive Plan in 2006 estimated over 40% of existing homes were 45 years or older, which are now 20 years older. He noted Spring Garden Township is comparable with certain areas in the eastern portion being older. Homes in Manchester Township are somewhat newer since they experienced a population growth, therefore new home construction kept pace with population increases.

However, Emigsville contains houses and other structures in excess of 50 years of age.

Chief Hoff stated age of structures is a very important factor for fire professionals. An older building typically has older technology, older components and an increased chance of decay in certain areas. Aged structures have a greater tendency to be renovated by the owner, resulting in a lack of adherence to standards and improperly mixed electrical components. New home construction areas are equally dangerous, being typically lightweight with roof trusses and lightweight flooring systems. These are proven to fail quickly when exposed to fire conditions.

Chief Hoff indicated the increasing age of their population also represents an increased demand for service as medical needs increase and declining health sparks a higher demand for service. An increase in elderly population also equates to homes that are in disrepair, with unsafe measures such as extension cords, space heaters and combustible storage in appliances.

Chief Hoff stated all of these factors contribute to the need for the fire department to address the changing face of the area served.

Chief Hoff presented a map which demonstrated the areas of growth in the community. He stated it is imperative that his staff continues to have an increased presence in the planning, development and permitting activities as well as having first-hand knowledge of current, proposed and theoretical expansion which is critical to their future planning and addressing the needs of the community.

He reviewed the apparatus staffing according to the national standard, noting the National Fire Protection Association standard is four firefighters per apparatus. Of the departments surveyed in 2021 YAUFR ranks first in population served and land mass. However, they fall short in two categories – starting salary and apparatus staffing.

Chief Hoff compared the ratio of firefighters to residential population in the southcentral PA area, noting YAUFR's coverage is spread thinner than any of the municipal counterparts surveyed.

Chief Hoff provided a NFPA Fire Department survey noting the average staffing in the US for a career department is 1.32 FF / 1000. YAUFR's present staffing is .88 FF / 1000.

NFPA Standard 1710 was written in 2001. They do not account for sustained working incidents, they are just for initial operations. The requirements are YAUFR's responsibility to achieve and Chief Hoff stated they are working very hard to meet those benchmarks. Personnel and station locations are the two biggest challenges.

Insurance Services Office – Chief Hoff stated the latest ISO rating was performed in 2017 and the rating came out in 2018. He noted their classification

improved from a 4/9 to a 3/3X. The 9 deals with areas that are underdeveloped which do not have a municipal water system in place. The raw score was 70.82 out of a possible 105.50. ISO identified their biggest areas for improvement:

Deployment (less than half of available credit – 4.81 / 10.00)

- ISO Recommended Standard for Engine Companies - based on % of built upon area within 1.5 miles travel distance
- ISO Recommended Standard for Ladder Companies - based on % of built upon area within 2.5 miles travel distance

Company Personnel (slightly more than a third of available credit – 5.04 / 15.00)

- full credit is only received for people actually arriving on apparatus

Chief Hoff provided a graph which shows the mutual aid departments that surround the YAUFR first due area, listing average turnout times. He referred to the fail rate shown, noting out of the stations listed there are two that are improving their fail rate, Station 9 and Station 23. He noted the graph demonstrates why putting their burden for sufficient fire ground personnel on volunteer companies cannot continue.

A map was shown displaying location of structure fires over the past two years.

Another map addressed the 1.5-mile engine company standard established by ISO.

Chief Hoff reported on a fire which occurred on November 17, 2020 in a single-family residence on Old Orchard Lane in Spring Garden Township. He provided a video of the call, where Firefighter Wirth received injuries. Chief Hoff reviewed the costs associated with this incident. He noted the Safety Committee report determined that consideration should be given to having a dedicated operator stationed at the turntable whenever a firefighter is operating on the aerial. This would have increased communications, accountability and overall situational awareness. Chief Hoff stated that is why their first priority is to staff the special service unit, ladders and rescue more appropriately.

2022 Operational Budget Summary – Chief Hoff stated they are proposing a 3.7% increase in the budget for employee costs. He provided the budgetary breakdown for personnel costs and operational costs. Estimated revenues are down from 2021 and they are more conservative in their estimates for 2022. He noted they are not budgeting for an unfunded liability in the Springettsbury Legacy Pension for 2022.

Capital Plan – they are halfway through their commitment for capital purchase of apparatus. The capital contribution plan is a requirement of the charter agreement and allows each township to have costs that can be forecasted and anticipated.

UFL Pension Costs - For 2022 there is no unfunded liability reported for Springettsbury. Manchester's unfunded liability is at \$59,210.00. Chief Hoff

pointed out that both of the DB plans are closed which will have no additional participants added and with the August 10 arbitration ruling for 2377 all union employees not in the Legacy DB plans will be enrolled in PMRS cash balance plans.

The excess cash balance was previously referred to as the fund balance. This changed in 2018 with Manchester joining. The policy was restated which affects the method of calculating future fund returns. The present policy specifies the excess cash calculation will come at the conclusion of year end audit. It is no longer shown as a return but provides the information to the managers annually at the completion of the audit and credits excess cash back to the townships in the 3rd and 4th installment invoices. The final audit report will be completed within the next several weeks.

Total Requested Contributions for 2022

Springettsbury Township – 4.5% despite the 3.7% for the operational budget, but actually a decrease over the total requested for 2021 due to no UFL

Spring Garden Township – 3.7% increase in the operational budget but because of the decreased revenue it equates to a 4% increase.

Manchester Township – 4% increase although the budget is 3.7% increase

Chief Hoff restated what he indicated he has been saying since July 2003 which is the fire department is understaffed and needs manpower to be successful in their mission. The staffing standards were the same then as they are now because NFPA 1710 was written in 2001. He noted he takes seriously the fact that the department operates with public funds. This department despite all the improvements in equipment and training, cannot be the premiere department ascribed to with community partners without proper resources. The critical component of human resources cannot be the model department YAUFR aspires to be which was the goal when this intergovernmental cooperative was created. Chief Hoff asked for approval of the 2022 budget proposal which is drafted to ensure their personnel and their safety remain a priority. He thanked everyone for their time and attendance and continued commitment to make YAUFR the best organization it can be.

6. ADJOURNMENT

HUNT Chairman Hunt adjourned the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on file at YAUFR Headquarters

Charles Wurster
Secretary

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