

Brookville City Council
Special Meeting
September 14, 2021

The Special Meeting of the Brookville City Council was called to order by Mayor Letner at 6:30 p.m. on September 14, 2021. The meeting was held in the City Council Chambers and virtually using the Cisco WebEx application. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Members Fowler, Wilder and Zimmerlin; Law Director Stephan, Acting Clerk Brandt and Fire Chief Fletcher were present. Members Crane, Schreier and Requarth were absent; Manager Keaton attended virtually, and Police Chief Jerome was absent.

Roll Call by Acting Clerk Brandt.

Motion by Fowler, second by Zimmerlin to adopt the Agenda as presented. All yeas, motion carried.

Mayor Letner reported the reason Council is meeting this evening is Fire Chief Fletcher would like to purchase the 2005 Pierce 1500 Pumper Tanker that he discussed previously with Council.

Fire Chief Fletcher stated we certainly appreciate Council's willingness to come together for a Special Meeting and giving us the opportunity to hopefully address a rather unique opportunity that we have here, and that is the addition of an engine to our fleet. We have identified it as 2021 Used Fire Engine Project. Chief Fletcher stated as he discussed with Council last Tuesday evening, he put together a little bit of information and background for Council. As we all know, we have a lack of necessary revenue to replace fire engines based upon the schedule laid out in the capital improvement plan, the Vehicle Replacement Schedule. It would basically require us to have enough revenue set aside in capital improvements to purchase a fire engine approximately every eight years to rotate through our fleet and we just do not have the ability to save enough money to do that. We have enough funds to replace ambulances on a regular basis, which the rotation on ambulances is about every four years. For fire apparatus, the revenue just isn't there. It forces us to look at another plan, regardless of what the schedule is. Our fleet has become somewhat aged. Our frontline goal, if you recall, is breaking down the information I shared with you last week. Chief Fletcher commented we look for a frontline goal of a fire engine to serve us for 10-15 years as a frontline piece of equipment. We look for it to give us at least another ten years as some sort of a reserve role backing up that frontline equipment. Our average apparatus age is 20.3 years when you average our three pumping pieces out across our fleet. As you can see, he is sorry that was miss identified there. The one that says Vehicle 302=14 years is supposed to read Vehicle 305. Vehicle 302 is the 26-year-old piece and 305 is 14 years old. By our replacement schedule, we are already needing to move Vehicle 305 to reserve status. It is typically an engine that runs frontline status for us all the time. Vehicle 311 is also a frontline vehicle and that is a pumper tanker. Vehicle 302 is the oldest and that's the one we are holding in reserve. Our needed number of pumping apparatus is also a reason that we are addressing adding a vehicle to the fleet. Currently we have three pumping pieces in the fleet and based upon the properties that we protect; ISO ideally looks at us to have four pieces of pumping apparatus. This is an opportunity for us to address two issues simultaneously. One, it puts a fourth pumping piece into the system, and secondly it gives us another piece to fit in the equation of a frontline and reserve pumping piece fleet. When it comes to how we operate, we have two management strategies that we could explore here. We can either stay on schedule and replace the fire engine approximately every eight years or look at acquiring a used vehicle that extends that vehicle replacement schedule. We would take and move the call load across four pieces instead of three and as he's said before, that helps our ISO rating. If the question is which is the better management strategy, honestly, we implore both. We're able to do that new vehicle strategy with our ambulances and because we spread two frontline ambulances out over three vehicles, we have success with spreading that out. Whenever the time comes, if we must get a little more than four years out of a frontline service because of that strategy, we're able to extend that and get that life. When it comes time to buy an ambulance, even though we may have the money, if it makes sense that the fleet was maybe not as impacted as hard as we thought it would be over the last four years, we can stretch it out for another year. It gives us options if we just run the tires off them and say, well, you know, it's time to replace one. What do we do if moneys not there or what do we do if there's another priority? These strategies do help us have some flexibility. Both are proven ways to manage the fleet. With the fire engines would it be excellent to incorporate some new blood into our fleet? Again, that revenue is just not here for us right now. Down the road a capital improvement levy, something of that nature, we

may obviously see the money be there one day, but it is just not for the foreseeable future. We have a history of success going this route. Back in 2014, there was a fire engine that was a 1986 Pierce Pumper and this Pierce Pumper served Brookville very well. In fact, for its life, it was probably on every major fire in this area. It was a workhorse for this town. As we got into 2013, we had a year where it just ate us up to keep it on the road and part of the problem was an error when all the piping in the fire engine was mainly steel. We couldn't keep the piping in these things. Our water is very hard on infrastructure in this region and our fire engine suffered that. Newer fire engines have stainless steel piping, and we get a much longer life out of them. The valves, everything again is newer technology, and you don't think a stainless-steel piping being newer technology, but by the time we get past 2010, it's pretty common that most fire engines will have stainless steel piping. So, we had an opportunity we looked for and we identified a fire engine in a place called Cyprus Creek, Texas. Cyprus Creek is a suburb of Houston. This was one of three identical pumpers Cyprus Creek had, and we had the opportunity to acquire one of those to come and be a pumper tanker in Brookville. We acquired that engine in 2014 and that's what it looked like when we marked it up for Brookville, and it fit into our fleet. Now that we are down an engine this is the frontline engine that is responding to every fire we've got right now in Brookville. This fire engine is coming up on 21 years itself, but we have had good success with used fire apparatus. We start off by not buying junk and then we take real good care of it for a lifetime that it's with us. This is not a step in a direction that we have not been down this path before. This is a vehicle that reached its decommissioning date back last year during 2020. Again, this vehicle is 26 years old and although we're not experiencing near the mechanical issues that we had with the 1986 pumper that put us in the position to replace it. This pumper is still showing its life. The other problem that we run into with this pumper is it does not have a generator. It's one that does not have lighting. This was built in an era where it was one of three, or four of five fire engine pieces of equipment that would respond from Brookville to an emergency. The evolution of fire services since the time this was built is fire engines must be a lot more self-sufficient, because there's not other vehicles coming to do what one vehicle can do. It needs its own generator, lights, etc. can we plug this thing in to our fleet when necessary and pump water, yes, but it can't do a lot of other things that other fire engines can do and it would be cost prohibitive to retrofit a lot of those functions into this vehicle here. That's one of the reasons this is not prime for pushing right up front and being the first one that goes to fires. It lacks a lot of equipment, space, etc. The primary plan right now is to add a 2005 Pierce Enforcer 1500. The first 1500 indicates its gallons per minute that its pumps, the other 1500 is the gallons of water that it carries. This is one and half times the amount of water that our frontline engine now carries. That's a good thing, it buys us time, especially in those instances where we're understaffed. Instead of running with a full crew of four firefighters on a fire engine, maybe it's kind of at a time where there were only two firefighters available, because the ambulance was busy. Its time, the more water we have in the tank, the more time we must get connected to a water supply, or tankers to arrive to give us more water. Carrying more water is a very good thing for our department that covers the area that we do. The vehicle we're looking at here is very well maintained, low engine mileage and low engine hours and for us, it basically checks all the boxes. It's a rural capable pumper, it has a front inlet and that's a real big deal for us. This one has a generator; it already has the same line configuration our other engines have. It's very consistent with our compartmentation. That's a big deal when we must let vehicles move into different positions. Right now, I have heavy rescue tools that do not have a proper place to ride on the fire engine they are currently on. The place where we have the most room is in the cab where humans drive, that's very dangerous to let loose equipment ride in the cab. If that vehicle was involved in a collision, you've got heavy equipment that's flying around inside the cab and that injures the people riding in the cab. To us it is very important that all the heavy equipment is in the place that's it supposed to be in and secure so it's not a safety hazard to people. That's something we run into with that oldest engine is we must put things where things certainly get more wear and tear and could be a hazard. Chief Fletcher displayed a picture of the used Pierce Pumper. It is like what we run now. It is currently located in Landisville, Pennsylvania. There is a video tour of this but unfortunately the video may be a little bit choppy due to our wireless platform here. He can send this link to Council because it's not going to play for us. Chief Fletcher goes on to say that we are one of thirty plus departments expressing an interest in purchasing this fire engine. Today, another fire department was already to the vehicle. They spent about four hours going through that vehicle and they have expressed their desire to buy it. They are not able to purchase the vehicle for at least another thirty to sixty days. We have an opportunity to claim it and purchase it if we so choose. Chief Fletcher stated he came into this expecting that before I could get to Pennsylvania, this vehicle may very well be gone. The need doesn't go away if this vehicle is not available. We have a contingency plan as well. I won't spend a whole lot of time dwelling on the contingency plan, other than the fact this is just a perfect example. There is

another vehicle that is less than \$200,000. Right now, that vehicle is priced at \$185,000. Other than the low mileage and low hours, it is significantly less than the Pierce Pumper that we're looking at in Pennsylvania. It lacks a generator; it lacks a debt gun, and it lacks ladders. Those are things we would have to transfer from another vehicle over to this vehicle, but it could be a sister engine to our frontline 2007 Rosenbauer Pumper. That's what makes this one an attractive piece to us, the price, and the fact that this engine is almost identical to our Rosenbauer Pumper. We have a lot of capabilities here but we're still not getting the amount of engine, and this only carries 1,000 gallons of water. The compartmentalization is almost identical to ours but it's a side pump versus a top. There are again some differences here, but is this a heck of a fire truck for \$185,000.00? It is, but it's absolutely second place to the other one I mentioned in Pennsylvania. The other thing I will share with you and in discussion with the City Manager, we were not even considering any apparatus that took us out of the less than \$200,000 range. We don't want to deplete our entire amount of funds that we have in capital improvements. Chief Fletcher stated most comparable engines price tag starts at \$300,000 and go up from there. The engine in Pennsylvania that we would prefer to acquire is absolutely an outstanding opportunity for us. Chief Fletcher reiterated this is one that he doesn't want to miss the opportunity to go after. The contingency fire engine that he mentioned is eight hours the other way in the country. It's over on the other side of St. Louis in Mountain View, Missouri. Our action steps for this plan are, we've located a primary, we've located a contingency and we're here now discussing this with your approval. We will go evaluate the Pierce Pumper tomorrow. Chief Fletcher stated that he, Blair, our Fleet Mechanic, and one or more of his officer staff will make the trip over. We'll make sure that its worth our investment. If the Pierce Pumper is in great condition, then we will make every effort to secure it for the community. If all goes well, it could arrive here next week and since he's a pumper short for the next four to five weeks at a minimum, he's liable to equip it and put it into service next week. We will have it up and running and be back up to three pumpers that quick. Chief Fletcher stated he believes Finance Director Brandt shared with you the lack of desire for anybody to finance this project. With us having almost twice the amount readily available in capital improvements, that would be his recommendation to request Council authorization to purchase the 2005 Pierce Pumper.

Member Fowler inquired if they will be driving the pumper back, or will it be transported.

Fire Chief Fletcher replied, the purchase price includes them delivering the pumper to us after they completely service it. It just arrived to them two days ago. The main reason we would not bring it back with us tomorrow is because they are going to warranty the engine for us. They are going to service it first. They want the opportunity to process it and make sure that it has no issues, then they will deliver it to us. That's all included in our purchase price. The other item they include in the purchase price is marking the apparatus. Fire Chief Fletcher stated we have a local company that does all our marking and he talked with them about that, and they have no problem with that. All we need to do is have our company mark it and send them the invoice. We're getting this for less than the \$165,000 asking price, as he would have to spend funds to mark the vehicle once it gets to Brookville.

Member Zimmerlin asked Chief Fletcher, out of curiosity, how confident are you if we approve getting the vehicle that you are getting that engine?

Fire Chief Fletcher replied, definitely so. The gentleman that owns the fire apparatus dealership in Pennsylvania indicated that they have the most volunteer fire department companies in the National Fire Service. This gentleman is a volunteer Fire Chief himself, and we had a very frank conversation. Chief Fletcher explained Council's willingness to have a meeting and we were going to talk. After this meeting, I have a Fire Chiefs' word to Fire Chief's word. If I tell him that we are on our way with plans to leave in the morning, that fire engine will not be sold out from under us before we get there. If he knows we are coming to look at it with the intention of buying it unless we see a problem, they will hold it for us.

Member Zimmerlin respond that vehicle in Pennsylvania compared to the contingency plan is like night and day; it is also less expensive. It would be beneficial to go slightly above the amount they are asking to get that particular fire truck versus going with the contingency. His other question is, if we can't get this one and it has the functionality we really need for a variety of reasons that you outlined, how quickly do we need to go with the contingency, or do you think there will be other engines that would come up even if we approve the Pumper that you are going after, or over the threshold, say hey we'd much rather see you get one that has similar functionality.

Fire Chief Fletcher replied, he would tell you if he was seeing a lot of vehicles that were a deal where we could stay under \$200,000. If Council is willing to go up to \$225,000, that opens us up to a market of a handful of others. Chief Fletcher stated if that is the case there's a big gap between where we see a lot of these things and they're more often \$300,000. To tell you, how rare of a find this is, this is almost a unicorn. Fire engines that have 750-gallon water tanks, we call those city pumpers, very common and we could go pick out 25 of those that would fit our needs if all we wanted to carry was 750 gallons of water. On 1,000-gallon tanks, he can still find a dozen of those but with all the rest of the equipment, we start to get into that \$300,000 range. He went on to say that the two common ten configurations for bigger pumpers, 1,500 gallons or 1,800 gallons, he will see five of these a year at the most come up for sale. Most of those vehicles are sold faster than we even have the reactionary ability. We could wait for another one of these, statistically it is not coming along any time soon. He's been looking for more than a year at fire engines because we knew we needed to replace a vehicle soon per the replacement schedule. We knew we must do something with this pumper and have been watching them closely. Chief Fletcher commented that he tends to look at Texas because it gets us out of the salt belt. We will look at the bottom side of this vehicle, we don't want to miss any issues with the frame. A rust attacked frame for us would be a deal breaker. We're going to look ourselves and he doesn't expect there to be anything wrong with it.

Mayor Letner says, this suits our needs for the rural area we serve with the townships.

Chief Fletcher goes on to say that this benefits us in the city as well as it holds twice the amount of our other pumper. If it takes us a little bit of time to connect to a hydrant, we are ok. The other thing is, from time to time we have experienced water system issues. This is a good frontline pumper for Brookville for the next several years.

Mayor Letner asked Manager Keaton if she had anything she wanted to add.

Manager Keaton responded that she is in favor of Fire Chief making his way to Pennsylvania and try to obtain this vehicle as it seems to fit our needs.

Mayor Letner thanked Manager Keaton for joining tonight as she is on vacation.

Manager Keaton commented that she spoke with Chief Fletcher at great length yesterday, so she is in favor of this vehicle.

Motion by Fowler, second by Zimmerlin to allow Fire Chief Fletcher to purchase a 2005 Pierce 1500 Pumper for an amount not exceed \$187,000. All yeas, motion carried.

Motion by Fowler, second by Zimmerlin to adjourn. All yeas, motion carried.


Michelle Brandt, Acting Clerk


Charles Letner, Mayor