

MINUTES
City Council Public Safety Committee

Tuesday, June 16, 2020 – 5:00 PM
Administrative Conference Room at City Hall

Members Present: Gary Daniel, Chair, Council Member
Maurice Jones, Vice-Chair, Council Member
Jim Fatland, City Manager
Phil Harris, Police Chief
Bobby Cooper, Fire Chief

Staff Present: Denise Hodsdon, Executive Assistant

A. Welcome & Call to Order

Committee Chair Gary Daniel called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

B. Certification of Quorum

Executive Assistant Denise Hodsdon certified that a quorum was present.

C. Approval of Minutes from October 16, 2019 Meeting

Motion by Chief Cooper, seconded by Mr. Jones to approve the minutes of the October 16, 2019 meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

D. Fire Department – Replacement of Service Truck

Chief Bobby Cooper noted that replacement of the Service Truck has been requested by the Fire Department every year for the last five years, but it has not been approved by the County. He explained that there has been a lot of discussion, and some confusion about the name of the truck and what is used for. The current truck is a 1996 model and its primary purpose is to meet the ISO standard as a Service Truck. Chief Cooper said if the truck were to go out of service, it would impact the Fire Department's ISO rating. Chief Cooper prepared a letter to Transylvania County Board of Commissioners requesting that they reconsider approving the purchase of the truck. Following discussion and review of the draft letter, Mr. Jones moved, seconded by Mr. Daniel, to sign and send the letter to Transylvania County Commissioners. The motion carried unanimously. A copy of the signed letter is attached as Exhibit A.

E. King Street Traffic Recommendation

Chief Phil Harris reported that he has conducted research in response to a citizen request to City Council to consider making King Street a one-way street. He outlined his research and findings in a memo (copied attached as Exhibit B) and it was his

recommendation that no changes be made to the traffic pattern and parking on King Street.

F. Police Department Update

Mr. Daniel explained that he had asked for this discussion because he is concerned about current events. He said he received two letters today about defunding the Police Department. He noted that we need to be able to respond that we are already doing the things they are asking for and that defunding the Police Department would be bad for the community.

- 1. Department's Use of Force Policy**
- 2. Revisions to Operations Orders**

Chief Harris shared the Department's Operations Manual. He explained that it puts into orders what we train all the time and noted that it gives an understanding of what the Department's policies are based on.

Chief Harris reported that the Use of Force Policy was re-written in 2011 and again in 2017. He has recently drafted revisions to the Department's Use of Force Policy and the Lieutenants are currently reviewing it. He noted that all staff participates in crisis intervention training and that the goal of the use of force is to use the minimum necessary force. He said de-escalation techniques are required in all situations where circumstances allow.

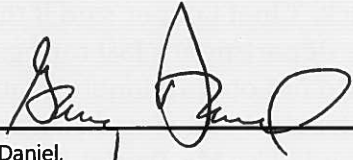
Copies of the Operations Manual and Use of Force Policy are on file with the minutes.

G. Set Date for Next Meeting

It was decided that the Committee would meet again when needed.

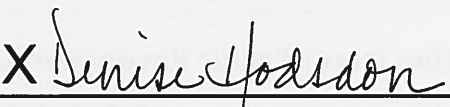
H. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:10 PM.

X 

Gary Daniel,
Chair, Council Member

Minutes Approved: October 8, 2020

X 

Denise Hodsdon,
Executive Assitant



CITY of BREVARD

The mission of the City of Brevard is to promote a high quality of life, support economic prosperity, and cultivate community while honoring its heritage and culture.

June 16, 2020

Transylvania County Board of Commissioners
101 South Broad Street
Brevard, NC 28712

Dear Board of Commissioners,

The City of Brevard Public Safety Committee would like to take this opportunity to address some questions/concerns with the replacement truck that has been requested by Brevard Fire Department (BFD) for the last five years. We respectfully ask that you reconsider approving the purchase of the truck, with the first payment not expected until FY22, due to an approximate 12 month build time.

There has been a lot of discussion, and some confusion, about the name of the truck and what it is used for. The current truck is called Rescue 21 (R21). There has been some discussion that this truck is only used for rescue calls, and that BFD is not contracted to provide rescue services in Sylvan Valley 2 (SV2), except for vehicle extrication. However, the primary purpose of this truck is to meet the ISO standard as a Service Truck, which provides, "...ladders, tools, and equipment normally carried on ladder trucks for ladder operations, as well as for forcible entry, utility shut-off, ventilation, salvage, overhaul, and lighting." If this truck were to go out of service, it would definitely impact BFD's ISO rating, mainly in the SV2 district. The ISO standard includes a long list of equipment, which is currently carried on this truck. In addition, this truck also carries other supplies and equipment used on a variety of calls, such as:

- ✓ Cascade System – This is used to fill SCBA bottles. The current system is designed to fill 2,216 psi bottles, but all of our SCBAs have been updated to 4,500 psi bottles, so we are not currently able to refill bottles at a structure fire.
- ✓ Medical Supplies and Equipment – This includes routine medical calls and Mass Casualty Incidents, with larger quantities of supplies, blankets, backboards, c-collars, stokes baskets, medical gloves, colored tarps for triage, etc.
- ✓ Hand Tools – All of our Engines carry a small assortment of hand tools in bags, but this truck has larger tool boxes with a full complement of wrenches, sockets, screwdrivers, hammers, shovels, brooms, pry bars, power tools, fans, etc., which are used on a wide variety of calls.
- ✓ Overhaul Supplies – This includes hammers, nails, tarps, salvage covers, etc. that are routinely used at structure fires.
- ✓ Hazmat Supplies – This includes extra oil dry, leak containment devices, leak control devices (putty and plugs), sump pumps, buckets, etc.

- ✓ Firefighter Rehab Supplies – This includes bottled water, chairs, and a canopy to provide cover from the elements.
- ✓ Ropes – We do carry a small assortment of ropes, harnesses, PPE, and hardware that can be used on a variety of calls. In addition, we carry an even smaller assortment on each of our Engines that can be used to access wrecked vehicles over a bank.
- ✓ Water Rescue Gear – We carry an assortment of sizes of water rescue gear used for flooding situations, wrecked vehicles in the water, etc.
- ✓ Extrication Tools – Although we do carry an assortment of extrication tools on this truck, our Engines carry our primary tool and equipment.

R21 is not our primary response unit to wrecks. Typically, we have everything we need on our Engines, including extrication tools, air bags, hand tools, chains, struts, cribbing, ropes, PPE, medical equipment and supplies, backboards, brooms, shovels, blowers, chainsaws, cutoff saws, scene lights, oil dry, absorbent pads, and of course water and hoses. Therefore, replacement of R21 does not affect BFD ability to respond and handle wrecks. We can typically handle most wrecks with one Engine, and are very comfortable and capable of doing so.

Based on discussion/concerns/confusion from previous years, we decided to clarify our budget request to reflect that this is primarily a Service Truck, not a Rescue Truck, which is why we changed the name. As you can see by the list of equipment above, we heavily rely on R21 as our ISO Service Truck. Our Ladder Truck can serve as our primary Service Truck in the City, and at commercial structures in SV2, but R21 is the primary residential Service Truck for fire response in SV2. In addition, it should also be noted that BFD is not requesting funding for any additional rescue equipment. Several years ago, there was a discussion about the equipment/supplies that were carried on R21, and a budget request to replace that equipment, but that request has been eliminated.

In FY11, Finance Director Jim Fatland assisted BFD in creating an apparatus replacement schedule. The goal was to replace apparatus according to NFPA guidelines, and maintain a relatively consistent debt service over the years, and maintain an adequate fleet of vehicles to meet the needs of the department for many years into the future. This is the fifth year we have requested to replace the truck, and the constant delay has caused us to completely abandon our previous replacement schedule. We also have an Engine and a Brush Truck that were scheduled for replacement over the last few years that we have had to push back. In addition, delaying again will affect our future replacement schedule.

Our debt service has been reduced from \$236,403 in FY18 to \$56,364 in FY21. We have paid off our Ladder Truck, an Engine, and a Tanker. For FY21, our debt service includes extrication/forcible entry tools (payoff in FY22), and another Tanker (payoff in FY23). Again, our goal was to maintain a fairly consistent debt service, but replacing trucks on schedule. Constantly reducing our long-term debt service will likely require a significant tax increase next time we purchase a truck. The current request to replace R21 would not have a payment due until FY22, due to the build time. Although the expected annual debt service would be approximately \$85K for a ten-year loan, the annual County portion of that, based on the current breakdown, would only be approximately \$39,388.

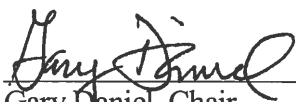
When this truck was first requested five years ago, the estimated cost was \$515,000. Due to the delay and chassis price increases, the current estimated cost is almost \$700,000. There has also been a lot of discussion about the need for a custom chassis vs a commercial chassis truck. There is a huge difference in safety features of custom vs commercial chassis, and we have provided multiple justifications of this in previous years. A custom fire truck is built from the frame up, specifically for our industry, and the rigors that a fire truck endures over its useful life. This includes heavier duty frame rails, axles, engine, brakes, transmission, cooling, wiring, etc. Custom chassis trucks are designed to go from cold to hot, run on high idle for sometimes hours at a time, and handle a significant electrical load that commercial chassis trucks simply can not handle. Custom chassis trucks also include multiple safety factors that commercial chassis do not have, such as lower center of gravity (lower placement of engine between frame rails and strategic compartment placement for heavier items), roll over frame protection, air bags, etc. We have provided multiple examples of how firefighters are able to walk away from a custom chassis roll over wreck, compared to crushed cabs and fatalities typically seen with commercial chassis roll over wrecks.

R21 is a 1996 model truck. In 2003, the truck caught on fire and suffered significant damage. The truck manufacturer, International, recommended replacing the truck. Unfortunately, League of Municipalities Insurance decided to repair the truck, and it has had multiple problems since then. There was significant structural and wiring damage, which has led to multiple problems since the repair. R21 has significant electrical issues, and multiple items that no longer work. For example, the light tower is non-repairable due to wiring issues. Last year, County staff asked for a list of repairs the truck currently needs, and the total estimate was over \$97,000. It simply does not make sense to spend nearly \$100K on a truck that is almost 25 years old.

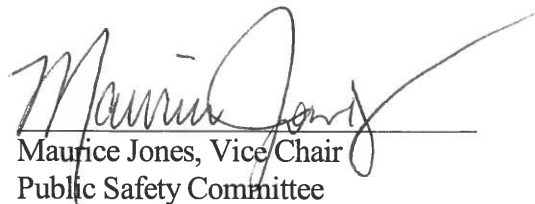
Please let us know if you need any additional information. We will be glad to provide/discuss any previous justification documents as needed. In addition, we invite each of you to visit BFD to see the truck, equipment, needs, and concerns first hand.

In closing, we respectfully ask that you reconsider approving the purchase of the truck, with the first payment being in FY22.

Sincerely,



Gary Daniel, Chair
Public Safety Committee



Maurice Jones, Vice Chair
Public Safety Committee



Jim Fatland, City Manager



Robert A. Cooper, Fire Chief



Brevard Police Department

MEMORANDUM



DATE: April 28, 2020

TO: Jim Fatland- City Manager, David Lutz- Public Works
Director, Bobby Cooper- Fire Chief, Paul Ray- Planning
Director

FROM: Phil Harris, Chief of Police

SUBJ: King Street Traffic Issue

Re: Rejection of One-Way Traffic recommendation for King Street

Mr. Fatland, Mr. Lutz, Chief Cooper and Mr. Ray,

A recommendation came before City Council through a citizen request to consider turning King Street into a one-way street because it is narrow, making vehicles passing each other uncomfortable at times. My research showed the following:

- King Street is two-way traffic with painted parking spaces carefully positioned on each side of the street in order to allow maximum on-street parking without impeding entry or exit from driveways.
- The King Street area is a mixed use area that has limited off-street parking, making the on-street parking critical to the expanding business footprint in that area.
- Growing the business footprint in the "Railroad" district has been a conscious effort by City Council and Planning for at least a decade.
- King Street measures 32-35 feet across with about fourteen feet taken up by marked parking spaces of approximately seven feet wide on each side.
- The speed limit on King Street is 25 mph.
- There have been no noted traffic congestion or accident issues on King Street, with the exception of this and similar requests to consider traffic studies because of perceived speeding and uncomfortable passing issues due to the narrowness of the passing lanes with traffic on both sides of the street.

One-way traffic roadways have been used for 400 years to relieve traffic congestion. Typical characteristics that lead to one-way traffic roadway designations include:

- a desire to relieve traffic congestion/gridlock in dense business districts like downtowns
- a desire to move traffic more quickly through an area with no incentives to stop (such as businesses) to relieve congestion
- a willingness to deal with other traffic issues that one-way streets create such as:
 - congestion at intersections as drivers make additional left turns created by one-way streets
 - added distance to trips because a loop must be navigated rather than the most direct route taken

- a necessity to couple the one-way traffic change in one direction with a one-way change in the opposite direction to manage the extra traffic the opposite way, referred to as a "couplet".

Some of the negatives one-way traffic creates include:

- less convenient access to businesses
- higher speeds because drivers have wider traffic ways and less natural restriction on speeds
- less incentive or ability to see businesses on one side of the street
- increased risk to pedestrians and bicyclists because of the increased speed
- more potential for head-on collisions caused by people driving the wrong way
- drivers familiar with the area intentionally driving the wrong direction because the one-way creates a much longer loop to get to their destination
- increased delivery issues since one stopped truck in the traffic way blocks all traffic, not just a single lane.

There has been a movement away from one-way streets in many downtown areas for the reasons stated. To obtain a true picture of the King Street needs, a traffic engineering study would need to be commissioned. Absent that study, it is my recommendation to respond to the concerned citizen with an explanation that one-way traffic streets often create more issues without completely solving the issue it was intended to correct. In this case, no City departments currently believe there are needs for any changes on King Street. The traffic count and speed information collected by the Brevard Police Department indicates that posted speeds are highly effective and being adhered to by drivers. There are rare times where drivers must exercise caution because of the narrowness of the traffic way caused by parking on both sides of the street, but parking is a valuable commodity that does not have an alternative solution for that area.

In short, the King Street area is best served by the current mix of two-way traffic and parking. If King Street were to be redesigned in the future, considerations could be made to fine-tune traffic flow by some slight changes.

Respectfully,

Phil Harris