

THE BULLETIN

SEPTEMBER 26TH, 2026

The Voice of CAFDA since 2004
Editor, Tom Rinaldi – tom@rinaldi1.com since 2014
When you see **, highly recommended article

CAPITAL SHORT TAKES

- **BUDGET SCHEDULE** PAGE 4 also on CAFDA.net
- **ELECTION SCHEDULE** PAGE 9 also on CAFDA.net
- The Nominal Compensation discussion continues with the latest from State Districts.
- FASNY has introduced a new Firefighters Home website. Firefightershome.org Whether you're interested in admissions, learning more about the Home, the information is just a click away. We hope you take a moment to check it out!
- Congratulations to all departments who qualified for a portion of the State V Grant funding.

TRAINING OPPORTUNTIES:

From CAFDA

1. ***Join us at the NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING on Thursday October 1st at 7pm, Clifton Park Fire Station and Zoom Link: CAFDA General Membership Meeting Time: Oct 8, 2026 07:00 PM Eastern Time https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82935704354?pwd=mjRF7a9DOKCSkpnHqxkCstMMzrkduQ.1***
2. ***Mark your calendars now, CAFDA Fall Seminar, Saturday November 7th, at Guilderland Fire Department, 2303 Western Ave. (US Route 20), Guilderland, NY. The Education Committee has identified the subjects including the ever popular "Experts Panel". SEE PAGE 40 FOR FLYER AND REGISTRATION FORM, REGISTER ON-LINE NOW AVAILABLE AT CAFDA.NET***
3. ***Mark your calendar for the CAFDA Conference '27, Lake George NY, April 9-10-11, dinner/vendor show Friday April 10th Fort William Henry Carriage House. Sponsored Mixer the evening of Thursday April 9th at the Holiday Inn Resort, food, games, beverages. The response has grown each year and we are in the process of identifying the subjects for 2027.***
4. ***CAFDA Commissioner Training Dates for 2027 will be held in Averill Park on February 6th, Thomas Corners on February 20th, Clifton Park on March 6th, Schoharie on March 20th, Berkshire on March 27th and Warrensburg on April 3rd.***

CAFDA TRAINING AND EVENT DATES				
Day/Date	**Time**	**Type**	**Location**	**Notes**
FY 2026				
Thursday, October 1, 2026	7:00 PM	**General Membership Mtg.**	Clifton Park	Officers/Director Nominations

Saturday, November 7, 2026	8:00 AM	**Annual Fall Workshop**	**Guilderland FD**	**2303 Western Ave.**
Thursday, November 12, 2026	7:00 PM	**General Membership Mtg**.	Clifton Park	Officer/Director Elections
DECEMBER 2026	**NO MEETING**			
FY 2027				
Saturday, January 2, 2027	9:00 AM	**General Membership Mtg.**	Clifton Park	Organizational/Morning Meeting/Breakfast Buffet
Saturday, January 6	8:00 AM	**Commissioner Training**	Averill Park Rensselaer County	Snow Date 2/7
Thursday February 11	7:00 PM	**General Membership Mtg.**	Clifton Park	
Saturday February 20	8:00 AM	**Commissioner Training**	Thomas Corners Glenville Fire Dist #7 Schenectady County	Snow Date 2/21
Thursday March 4	7:00 PM	**General Membership Mtg**	Clifton Park	
Saturday March 6	8:00 AM	**Commissioner Training**	Clifton Park FD Saratoga County	Snow Date 3/6
Saturday March 20	8:00 AM	**Commissioner Training**	Niagara Engine Co #1, Schoharie Schoharie County	Snow Date 3/22
Saturday March 27	8:00 AM	**Commissioner Training**	Berkshire Fire District Fulton County	Snow Date 3/28
Thursday April 1	7:00 PM	**Board of Directors Mtg**	Clifton Park	
Saturday April 3	8:00 AM	**Commissioner Training**	Warrensburg FD Warren County	Snow Date 4/4
Wednesday April 7	8:00 AM	**Financial & Fiduciary Responsibilities**	Fort William Henry Conference Center	Instructors from OSC
Thursday, April 8 - Saturday April 10, 2027	To Be Announced	**CAFDA Conference '27**	Fort William Henry Conference Center	Lake George
Thursday, April 6 - Saturday April 8, 2028		**CAFDA Conference 2028**	Fort William Henry Conference Center Lake George, NY	

From Other Organizations

NYSAFC is Bringing Hands-On Training to Your Area!

Open enrollment is available for NYSAFC Regional Hands-On Training this fall. The eight-hour **Fire Behavior On the Inside** course is scheduled for **Albany** (November 14-15), Ontario County (November 7-8), and **Schenectady** (October 17-18) Counties.

THE THREE-HOUR **FLASHOVER** program is coming to **Albany** (September 26-27) Guilderland Fire Chief's Association, Ontario (October 10-11), **Schenectady** (October 17-18) East Glenville Fire District and Orange (November 21-22) Counties.

View the Calendar and Register...

2026 Seminar Series with Chief Mike Lombardo Resumes in September

https://www.nysfirechiefs.com/2026seminarseries

Chief Mike Lombardo (Buffalo Fire Department) will present "**Dangerous Spaces: Challenges and Tactics When Dealing with Garage and Basement Fires**" at 16 sites through November. Registration is $35 (NYSAFC members) and $50 (non-members) per person. Registration will be available at the door, but pre-registration is encouraged. Join NYSAFC in Chautauqua, Chemung, Cortland, Dutchess, Erie, **Fulton**, **Greene**, Monroe, Nassau, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego, Otsego, **Rensselaer**, Rockland, and **Saratoga** Counties.

FREE FIREFIGHTER WELLNESS SEMINAR SERIES FROM NYSAFC AND PERMA

"In the Mouth of the Dragon: Fire Dynamics and the Cancer Risk on Today's Fireground"

With Director/Chief Frank Leeb
(First Responder Center for Excellence/FDNY)
This two-hour program will help participants develop a clearer understanding of the relationship between modern fire behavior, toxic smoke, and occupational illness – and how informed tactics, disciplined decision-making, and fireground awareness can reduce risk.
2026 Locations and Dates:
On-site and pre-registration available.
Seminar begins at 7:00 p.m.
Registration area opens at 6:30 p.m.
Clinton County – September 23
Fulton County – December 14
Oneida County – December 9
Suffolk County – October 7
LEARN MORE AND REGISTER AT THIS LINK:
https://ygc8ha5ab.cc.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001o9hCtluVAB0476vX-cZjVvqHRmCxsoU9KP1ysekKcaUKmTrLIyUm9MYE27KlZGa8SfVj6i_vyF1LCA5NEtJOVP4CsAq1mRK_CqqD37uVsJpqRM7iioF6rda1M28AQPaz3gl9mHrjqcHFSk235YEe1tRRN65ua9bEg9e-SasQTT4HaYcImbZWgOpUBf_YOalJ&c=ts5YTR8fTiZUrzXYf0woGb7NfLL_J2QllZMAXQm8kEvKQgY4u4qZHA==&ch=tChtpqKC9nh6nvNTFs3T9qQIyI_yslbkvSVrvr4mUPXbgl62_Z1NNg==

LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

From Albany

$25 MILLION IN CAPITAL FUNDING FOR 65 VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS

- ***Ten Volunteer Fire Departments Receive Maximum Award of $1 Million***
- ***V-FIRE Grant Program Helps Improve Facilities, Response Capabilities and Responder Safety***
- ***Builds on Governor's Efforts To Strengthen and Stabilize New York's Volunteer Fire Service***

Governor Kathy Hochul today announced $25 million in capital funding for 65 volunteer fire departments and districts across New York State to improve facilities, response capabilities and emergency preparedness. Ten departments received the maximum award of $1 million. These investments build on the $25 million previously awarded to 88 volunteer fire departments in October 2024. With nearly half of New Yorkers relying on volunteer firefighters for fire protection and emergency response, this grant program helps offset the financial pressures of rising equipment and construction costs, ensuring local taxpayers do not bear the full cost of these essential safety upgrades.
Recognizing the important role of volunteer firefighters in communities across the state, Governor Hochul has prioritized strengthening and stabilizing New York's volunteer fire services through record investments in training, equipment and facility upgrades.
Administered by the State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services, the Volunteer Fire Infrastructure & Response Equipment (V-FIRE) Grant Program supports volunteer fire departments by upgrading and improving facilities and response capabilities through the following objectives:

- **Facility Improvements:** Funding the construction of new, or renovation of existing, fire stations, classrooms, meeting spaces, or training centers to ensure they are safe, structurally sound, meet current building codes, and promote safe firefighting practices.
- **Equipment Purchases:** Supporting firefighter health, safety, and wellness by providing up-to-date personal protective equipment (PPE), PPE washers and dryers, decontamination equipment and supplies, and effective exhaust removal systems.

Additionally, the V-FIRE grants support the consolidation of fire service resources through regionalization efforts, allowing departments to expand their capabilities beyond traditional jurisdictional boundaries to enhance local, county, and statewide mutual aid response.

Ten volunteer fire departments received the maximum award of $1,000,000 for major capital overhauls through this round of grant funding:

- Sennett Fire District, Cayuga County
- Volney Volunteer Fire Corporation, Oswego County
- Farmington Volunteer Fire Association, Inc., Ontario County
- Village of Tivoli, Dutchess County
- Village of Richfield Springs Fire Department, Otsego County
- West Edmeston Fire District, Otsego County
- Adams Center Fire District, Jefferson County
- Port Henry Fire District #3, Essex County
- Coventry Volunteer Fire Company, Inc., Chenango County
- Village of Angola Fire Department, Erie County

Capital Region (8 awards totaling $2,295,926)

- Beukendaal No 5 Fire District, Schenectady County, $934,698
- East Schodack Fire District #1, Rensselaer County, $383,000
- Lebanon Valley Protective Association, Inc., Columbia County, $96,554
- Speigletown Fire District, Rensselaer County, $318,957
- Stuyvesant Falls Fire District, Columbia County, $58,000
- Village of Cambridge Fire Department, Washington County, $314,848
- Village of Catskill Fire Department, Greene County, $90,669
- Village of Menands Fire Department, Albany County, $99,200
- Village of Lynbrook Fire Department, Nassau County, $189,500

Mid-Hudson (7 awards totaling $2,357,959)

- Buchanan Engine Company No 1 Inc., Westchester County, $425,000
- Kauneonga Lake Fire District, Sullivan County, $82,215
- Kerhonkson Fire District, Ulster County, $388,050
- Pearl River Fire District, Rockland County, $107,015
- Village of Suffern Fire Department, Rockland County, $256,679
- Village of Tivoli, Dutchess County, $1,000,000
- West Nyack Fire District, Rockland County, $99,000

Mohawk Valley (8 awards totaling $3,857,616)

- Caroga Lake Volunteer Fire Company Inc, Fulton County, $56,900
- Columbia Litchfield Fire District, Herkimer County, $126,730
- Middleburgh Fire Department, Schoharie County, $58,775
- Village of Cooperstown Fire Department, Otsego County, $488,211
- Village of Milford Fire Department, Otsego County, $377,000
- Village of Oriskany Fire Department, Oneida County, $750,000
- Village of Richfield Springs Fire Department, Otsego County, $1,000,000
- West Edmeston Fire District, Otsego County, $1,000,000

North Country (4 awards totaling $2,488,223)

- Adams Center Fire District, Jefferson County, $1,000,000
- Parishville Fire District, St. Lawrence County, $157,499
- Port Henry Fire District #3, Essex County, $1,000,000

- Town of Gouverneur/Gouverneur Fire Company Inc., St. Lawrence County, $330,724

Southern Tier (8 awards totaling $3,031,569)

- Andes Joint Fire District, Delaware County, $40,200
- Coventry Volunteer Fire Company, Inc., Chenango County, $1,000,000
- Delhi Joint Fire District, Delaware County, $298,800
- Erin Fire District #1, Chemung County, $390,205
- Painted Post Fire Department, Steuben County, $261,578
- Town of Colesville Fire District #1, Broome County, $593,000
- Vestal Fire District, Broome County, $418,895
- Village of Odessa Fire Department, Schuyler County, $28,891

Waiting for the governor to call for the bills that were passed by both Chambers so that she can sign them into law. Technically she has until December 31st.

- Law passed and signed to require mandatory recycling program for e-scooters/e-bikes.
- The use of "Piggyback Purchasing" extended one more year until June 30, 2027.

S8832 KAVANAGH (D)	**A9504 GLICK (D)**	**1/2/126 PASSED SENATE 2/10/26 PASSED ASSEMBLY**	**THE PURPOSE OF THIS CHAPTER AMENDMENT IS TO FACILITATE THE INCLUSION OF E-BIKE AND E-SCOOTER BATTERIES IN THE RECHARGEABLE BATTERY RECYCLING PROGRAM AND TO PROMOTE CONSUMER SAFETY, CONVENIENCE, AND AWARENESS**	**2/13/26 SIGNED CHAPTER 87**
S10075 SOLAGES (D)	**A11162 ZELLLNER**	**6/2/26 PASSED SENATE 5/29/26 PASSED ASSEMBLY**	**EXTEND THE PROVISION OF THE COMPETITIVE BIDDING STATUTE [GENERAL MUNICIPAL LAW §103] WHICH PERMITS PIGGYBACK PURCHASING. THE STATUTE HAD A SUNSET PROVISION MEANING THAT IT WOULD EXPIRE ON JUNE 30, 2026. THE BILLS PROPOSE TO AMEND THE STATUTE TO EXTEND THE SUNSET PROVISION UNTIL JUNE 30, 2027**	**6/26/26 SIGNED CHAPTER 147**
S6368B SKOUFIS (D)	**A3126B LUNSFORD (D)**	**4/22/26 PASSED SENATE 3/30326 PASSED ASSEMBLY**	**AN ACT TO AMEND THE EXECUTIVE LAW, IN RELATION TO REQUIRING THAT WHEN A COMPLAINT IS MADE TO LOCAL CODE ENFORCEMENT OF A VIOLATION OF THE UNIFORM FIRE PREVENTION AND BUILDING CODE OR LOCAL BUILDING CODES WHICH RESULTS IN THE ISSUANCE OF A COMPLIANCE ORDER, THE COMPLAINANT SHALL ALSO BE PROVIDED A COPY OF SUCH ORDER**	**PENDING SIGNATURE**
S9502A MARTINEZ (D)	**A10885B STERN (D)**	**6/2/26 PASSED SENATE 6/1/26 PASSES ASSEMBLY**	***TO AUTHORIZE* LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO ADOPT A PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION FOR SURVIVING SPOUSES OF PAID FIREFIGHTERS WHO ARE KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY.**	**PENDING SIGNATURE** PENDING PASSAGE BY EACH LOCAL GOVERNMENT BY RESOLUTION
S7316 HINCHEY (D)	**A8008 LUNSFORD (D)**	**5/18/26 PASSED SENATE 6/1/26 PASSED ASSEMBLY**	**REQUIRES THE FORFEITURE OF BENEFITS TO BE PAID PURSUANT TO A SERVICE AWARDS PROGRAM TO VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS WHO HAVE BEEN CONVICTED OF FELONIES COMMITTED AGAINST A VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT, VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY, FIRE DISTRICT, OR FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT.**	**PENDING SIGNATURE**
S5614 ADDABBO (D)	**A3681A WOERNER (D)**	**6/2/26 PASSED SENATE 1/28/26 PASSED ASSEMBLY**	**AN ACT TO AMEND THE GENERAL MUNICIPAL LAW, IN RELATION TO REMOVING RESTRICTIONS ON THE FREQUENCY CERTAIN AUTHORIZED ORGANIZATIONS MAY CONDUCT BINGO GAMES**	**PENDING SIGNATURE**
S4675 JACKSON (D)	**A688 BUTTENSCHON (D)**	**5/6/26 PASSED SENATE 4/29/26 PASSED ASSEMBLY**	**AN ACT TO AMEND THE EXECUTIVE LAW, IN RELATION TO PROVIDING MINIMUM BASIC TRAINING RELATED TO HANDLING EMERGENCY SITUATIONS INVOLVING INDIVIDUALS WITH ANY PHYSICAL AND/OR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY TO ALL FIRE-FIGHTERS**	**PENDING SIGNATURE** REQUIRES ADDITIONAL TRAINING
S6233A MARTINEZ (D)	**A6790A MCMAHON**	**6/1/26 PASSED SENATE 5/14/26 PASSED ASSEMBLY**	**THIS BILL INCREASES THE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' AND AMBULANCE WORKERS' PERSONAL INCOME TAX CREDIT FROM $200 TO $800 FOR ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS AND FROM $400 TO $1600 FOR ELIGIBLE MARRIED JOINT FILERS. ALSO ALLOWS FIRST RESPONDERS TO TAKE THE PROPERTY TAX CREDIT ALSO.**	**PENDING SIGNATURE**

From Washington

NIOSH Releases Safety and Health Advisory on Fires and Explosions in Oxygen-Limiting Silos

The National Institute for Occupational Health and Safety Fire Fighter Fatality Investigation and Prevention Program has released a safety and health advisory to prevent fatalities and serious injuries from fires and explosions in oxygen-limiting silos. The advisory outlines the hazards as well as firefighting tactics and considerations to prevent explosions. **View the advisory** HERE.

NFPA 455 – What You Need to Know

NFPA 455, Standard for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) consolidates NFPA 450 and 451 into a single, all-purpose document. The 2026 edition of **NFPA 455** is now available, providing EMS leaders with a more consistent framework for planning, implementing, and evaluating the full range of services their agencies provide. Wondering why this consolidation occurred and what has changed? Check out **this one-pager** from the NVFC EMS/Rescue Section to learn more.

From Federal DOL/OSHA

- **If something happens it will be announced here.**

FIRE DISTRICT FINANCIAL NEWS

***FIRE DISTRICT BUDGET PROCESS SCHEDULE 2026 available on the CAFDA.NET website. CAFDA.net*

Local Government and School Accountability Contact Information:

Phone: (518) 474-4037; Email: localgov@osc.ny.gov
Address: Office of the State Comptroller, Division of Local Government and School Accountability
110 State Street, 12th Floor; Albany, NY 12236

NYS-OSC Fire Service Audits

BIG INDIAN-OLIVEREA FIRE DISTRICT, ULSTER CO. – BOARD OVERSIGHT

Audit Objective

Did the Big Indian-Oliverea Fire District (District) Board of Fire Commissioners (Board) provide adequate oversight of the District's financial operations?

Audit Period

January 1, 2024 – April 3, 2025.

We extended the audit period back to January 1, 2020, to analyze various financial trends and the timeliness of Annual Financial Report (AFR) submissions.

Understanding the Audit Area

A board of fire commissioners, responsible for managing and controlling a fire district's financial operations, must provide adequate oversight of financial operations to ensure public funds are managed with accountability, transparency and integrity. This critical function can help maintain public trust, ensure legal compliance, and protect public resources from mismanagement, waste and fraud.

The District's budgeted appropriations for fiscal year 2024 totaled approximately $123,000, and the general and capital reserve fund balances totaled approximately $780,000 as of December 31, 2024. The District Treasurer (Treasurer) paid 60 claims totaling $96,742 during the audit period. The District had 16 LOSAP participants in 2024.

Audit Summary

The Board did not provide adequate oversight of the District's financial operations. As a result, the Board hindered its ability to make informed financial decisions and cannot ensure taxpayers and other interested parties that the District's financial activities are adequately reported and accounted for and that funds are used in the most fiscally responsible manner.

We identified deficiencies in the Board's policies, budgeting practices, claims auditing, Length of Service Award Program (LOSAP) administration, AFR filings and compliance with training requirements. For example, **the Board did not:**

- *Ensure all Commissioners completed training within 270 days* of their first day in office as required by New York State Town Law (Town Law) Section 176-e. This training is intended to help ensure fire district commissioners have the knowledge needed to fulfill their statutory, fiscal, procurement and ethical responsibilities and help provide effective oversight of district operations and public resources.
- *Adopt adequate policies for:*
    - *Capital Plans*
    - *Claims auditing*
    - *Fund balance*
    - *LOSAP, and*
    - ***Multiyear Financial Plans***
- The report includes 11 recommendations to *Prepare annual budgets that conform with statutory requirements.*
- *Ensure adequate accounting records were maintained or file the District's AFR according to statutory requirements.*
- *Properly audit 100 percent of the claims we reviewed totaling $54,022 prior to payment.*
- *Properly administer LOSAP.*

strengthen the Board's oversight, improve accountability and the District's financial management practices.
READ THE FULL REPORT HERE: https://www.osc.ny.gov/files/local-government/audits/2026/pdf/big-indian-oliverea-fire-district-2026-28.pdf

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WOODHULL FIRE DISTRICT, STEUBEN Co. – FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT

Audit Objective

Did the Woodhull Fire District (District) Board of Fire Commissioners (Board) provide adequate oversight of financial operations?

Audit Period

January 1, 2024 – June 23, 2026

Understanding the Audit Area

A board of fire commissioners (board) is responsible for managing and controlling a fire district's financial operations and must provide adequate oversight of the fire district's financial activities to ensure that public funds are managed with accountability, transparency and integrity. This critical function helps maintain the public's trust, comply with legal requirements and prevent waste, fraud and mismanagement of fire district resources.

From January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2025,[1] the District's revenues totaled $654,579 and disbursements totaled $655,496.

Audit Summary

The Board did not provide adequate oversight of the District's financial operations. As a result, the Board could not ensure that the records and reports that it used to make financial decisions were complete and accurate, which made it difficult for the Board to make informed decisions and adequately plan for future expenses.

The deficiencies that we identified included the following:

- T*he Board did not conduct an annual audit of the Secretary-Treasurer's records as required by New York State Town Law (Town Law) Section 177.*
- *The Chairman of the Board (Chairman) and four other Commissioners had a limited understanding of their financial responsibilities. They also did not complete the mandatory fiscal oversight training as required by Town Law Section 176-e.*
- *The Board did not conduct a thorough and deliberate review and approval of claims before payment. We reviewed 55 payments made to vendors and determined that the Board did not adequately review 14 payments (25 percent) totaling $19,737.*

- *The Board did not develop and adopt written, multiyear financial and capital plans or a fund balance policy to assist them in planning for future costs, despite having significant future operating and capital needs.*

Without proper guidance and management of operations, the Board and Secretary-Treasurer cannot assure taxpayers, District residents and other interested parties that the District's financial activities are accurately accounted for and reported. Inadequate oversight of financial operations diminishes transparency and accountability and increases the risk that financial errors, loss, waste and fraud could occur and remain undetected.

The report includes nine recommendations that, if implemented, will improve the Board's understanding of its fiscal oversight responsibilities, strengthen fiscal oversight of the District's financial operations, improve financial planning and help safeguard District resources

READ THE FULL REPORT HERE: https://www.osc.ny.gov/files/local-government/audits/2026/pdf/woodhull-fire-district-2026-79.pdf

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TWIN DISTRICT VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY, ERIE Co. – CREDIT CARDS

Audit Objective

Did Twin District Fire Company (Company) officials ensure credit card purchases were properly supported and for appropriate Company purposes?

Audit Period

January 1, 2024 – July 31, 2025.

We extended our scope period to September 2025 to review a relevant policy.

Understanding the Audit Area

Credit cards can be a useful purchasing tool because they allow cardholders to acquire goods and services efficiently. However, the convenience of credit cards also increase the risk that purchases may be improper, not properly supported or not in a company's best interest. As a result, effective internal controls and oversight are essential to ensure that expenditures are properly supported and for appropriate purposes. This oversight should include clear policies, independent review of purchase and supported documentation and periodic monitoring of credit card activity. To ensure that credit cards are used only for approved and necessary expenses, a fire company must have both a credit card policy and a system of internal controls in place.

From January 1, 2024, through July 31, 2025, the Company made credit purchases totaling $255,200, including $54,763 related to travel expenses and training.

Audit Summary

Company officials did not always ensure that credit card purchases were properly supported and made for appropriate Company purposes. Although the Company's credit card policy assigned responsibility for monitoring credit card activity to the Board of Directors (Board), *the Board did not review credit card purchases, statements or supporting documentation before approving payment. Instead, the Board relied on card holders to monitor usage and review and approve their own purchases.* Without independent Board oversight, the risks of misuse, excessive spending and improper purchases remains high. Allowing credit card users to review and approve their own purchases also weakens internal controls and increases the risk that questionable or potentially fraudulent expenditures will occur and not be detected.

We reviewed 932 credit card purchases totaling $255,200 and identified 140 credit card purchases totaling $25,950 that lacked sufficient supporting documentation. Of them, we physically located 15 purchases totaling $3,977. We selected 28 of the remaining 125 unsupported purchases totaling $15,740 to further review and determined that officials did not have adequate support for three of the purchases totaling $1,161 made at a warehouse club, a local restaurant and online retailer. As a result, we could not determine whether these purchases were for appropriate Company purposes.

In addition, of the 932 credit card purchases, 100 credit card purchases totaling $29,929 were related to meals and lodging for conferences and training. *Because the Company did not adopt a travel policy establishing allowable travel expenses and spending limits, officials incurred unnecessary costs. Had officials followed rates established by the United States General Services Administration (GSA),[1] the Company could have saved approximately $12,000, or 40 percent of these travel-related costs.*

This report includes five recommendations that, if implemented, will improve Board oversight and accountability for credit card and travel expenditures, and reduce the risk of inappropriate or unsupported spending and help safeguard Company resources
READ THE FULL REPORT HERE: https://www.osc.ny.gov/files/local-government/audits/2026/pdf/twin-district-volunteer-fire-company-2026-35.pdf

THE FIRE CHIEF'S OFFICE

The Importance of Flexibility in Fire Department Leadership

John J. Salka Jr.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Fire department officers can't expect that the ways that they approach their everyday crewmembers will work when they are put in charge of a firefighter who fills in for the day or of personnel that they supervise when they are assigned to another firehouse for an overtime shift or the like.
- Flexibility to officers' approach to supervising members permits officers to deal with the possibility of the mood "regular" firefighters being upset when a new, unknown member joins the crew for a single 24-hour shift.
- Company officers who nurture and develop the skill to apply whatever leadership actions are necessary in any and every situation command the most disciplined and effective crews.

Leadership is a tremendous topic that has been written about and taught in schools, academies and universities. There probably are hundreds of texts on leadership and certainly hundreds of instructors, professors and training officers who teach the topic to current and future leaders.
How do you know what elements work best for you? How do you know what book or text provides you with the information that you need to be a successful leader? The answer: You don't, because there are innumerable elements that are associated with leadership. That said, how can there be so many different ways of dealing with the group, team or company that you lead? The answer is simple but complex.

CURVEBALLS

There are so many different people. Whatever group that you lead is made up of a unique collection of individuals. If you are the officer of a fire company in an urban department where the staffing for your unit is four firefighters plus yourself, you have four people who have different needs, problems, strengths, weaknesses and attitudes. If you work with that same group every shift for months or even years, you'll have a good handle on how to deal with and treat those folks to get the most out of them.
What happens when on any particular day one of the regular people is off and another firefighter fills in for that person. You have a new and possible unknown firefighter who you're responsible for, maybe just for the 24-hour shift, but still, that person is under your wing for the day and you must "deal" with that individual, too. Doesn't this change the attitude or mood of the shift? Could this single firefighter say or do something that could upset or blow up the mood of the other "regular" firefighters? Now you have a leadership challenge to handle.

AN OUTSIDE ASSIGNMENT

What about when you as the officer are assigned an overtime shift in another firehouse where you rarely work. You might find yourself in an unfamiliar firehouse or location working with an entire crew of firefighters who you don't know. Will your leadership skills fit into this situation, or will you be disarmed and find it difficult to lead this group? Must your leadership skills and abilities be adjusted to fit this new situation, or must the firefighters who work for you that day adjust their behavior to your requirements?
There are no specific answers to these questions, because the variables are too numerous and the list of options that you have is quite long. What piece of advice might be helpful in all of these situations and many more?

SKILLS ADJUSTMENT

One of the best pieces of advice that can be offered to any leader, but particularly to a fire service officer, is that you must be prepared to adjust. A leader of any rank—lieutenant, captain, battalion chief—will be thrust

into numerous leadership situations over the course of one's career. As noted above, you might be with a different group of people, one of your crew might be replaced or you might supervise at a different firehouse. You must develop a robust set of leadership skills that you can adjust and apply in the numerous leadership environments that you find yourself. You must be "one of one" in your leadership role and strive to apply the most appropriate and effective leadership actions in any and every situation that arises.
Company officers who nurture and develop this skill are the ones who command the most disciplined and effective crews.

THE ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

Interesting Tactic: Fire Departments Allege Racketeering in PFAS Turnout Gear Lawsuit

Curt Varone

A group of 28 municipalities, fire districts and volunteer fire departments have filed suit against 3M, DuPont-related companies, turnout gear manufacturers, and textile and component manufacturers, accusing them of concealing the presence and dangers of PFAS in firefighter turnout gear.
While dozens of lawsuits have been filed over PFAS in turnout gear, this suit adds an new claim: the plaintiffs accuse the defendants of violating the federal Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act, commonly known as RICO.
The suit was filed September 12, 2026, in U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota as part of the multidistrict litigation, In re: Non-AFFF Firefighter Turnout Gear Marketing, Sales Practices, and Products Liability Litigation, MDL No. 3191. The plaintiffs include fire departments and municipalities from across the country, ranging from the City of Albuquerque, New Mexico, and Gary, Indiana, to several small volunteer fire companies in Texas and West Virginia.
Named as defendants are chemical manufacturers including 3M and several DuPont-related entities; turnout gear manufacturers including Globe, Lion, Fire-Dex, Morning Pride/Honeywell and Innotex; and manufacturers and suppliers of fabrics, moisture barriers and other components used in turnout gear.
The complaint alleges that PFAS — commonly referred to as "forever chemicals" because of their persistence in the body and environment — were incorporated throughout structural firefighting gear.

Fire District Election Schedule for 2026 available on the CAFDA.net website.

CAFDA.net

Click on this PDF to see notes from DOL related to Prevailing Wage Rates for Construction, Article 8

POSITIVE OUTCOMES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE FIRE SERVICE

POSITIVE OUTCOMES

How one New York fire district went from 17 to 44 interior firefighters in 3 years

Declan Stablow, News 10NBC

Fire departments across the country are dealing with lower volunteer numbers, but the Brockport Volunteer Fire District says it's seeing the exact opposite. The Brockport Fire District was dealing with staffing issues up until about three years ago. Then it began turning things around, going from 17 interior firefighters in 2023 to 44 now.
One of the reasons for the gain is a state-funded bunkhouse. College students interested in a career in firefighting can apply to live in the bunkhouse in exchange for 20 hours of duty time each week.
The bunk-in program began during the 2025-26 school year. There's one student living in the bunkhouse right now, and the district received another two applicants in the last month.
The district also began a social media campaign to recruit younger members back in 2024. Brockport Fire Chief Adam Leggett says the average age of firefighters in New York is 50, but at Brockport it's 36.

News10NBC's Declan Stablow spoke with Tyler Lamendola, who is getting his master's degree at SUNY Brockport while living at the bunkhouse.

"I want to eventually go career in. This really helps with that because I'm seeing so many different places and how other departments run so this really helps me and even with like college and stuff like that that helps me get through college with not having to pay rent or something like that. It's just a great program all around," Lamendola said.

BFD also has a restricted access member program, which allows kids ages 16-17 to get experience with the department. Back in 2023, Brockport Fire District had four firefighters responding per call, but this month it's more than nine.

BFD has also been advising other districts about how they can boost their numbers. Next Saturday, the Brockport Fire District is hosting its first annual Fire Fest as part of its community outreach. It'll highlight the work it does and give people of all ages a chance to learn about becoming a firefighter.

Danville, Pennsylvania High School Fire Club ignites interest in firefighting careers among students

Outside of William Cameron Fire Company in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, members of the Danville Area High School Fire Club are taking turns dragging hoses, something that firefighters do when they are at an active fire scene.

The students were visiting to see how a paid career fire department operates while also allowing them to experience some training and the physical fitness test that is required to get hired.

"Coming out to a fire station like this through the club, it helps us explore the career of firefighting and EMS. It's just exposing us to what we want to do in our future," said Mikayla Arner, Danville Area High School Fire Club Junior.

The Danville Area High School Fire Club focuses on youth interested in the firefighting profession. The club holds monthly meetings and trainings that put students into real-world scenarios. Many of the fire club members go into fire service when they graduate.

FIRE SERVICE CHALLENGES.

Update on the rebuilding of the Menands Firehouse

Amber Fisher, News 10

Back in May, a fire tore through the Menands Firehouse, damaging the building that also houses the Police Station and Town Hall, and leaving their fire and police departments to operate out of temporary locations. At a village board meeting on Monday night, the village outlined the steps that they're taking toward rebuilding.

Menands Mayor Brian Marsh said crews have been running environmental testing on the building, one of several steps before any rebuilding can begin. He continued, "Our engineers have been there today, and will be there tomorrow doing some environmental testing, checking for types of contamination from anything that was stirred up during the fire– be it lead, asbestos and then many other contaminants,"

The fire broke out in one of the firehouse bays, destroying Squad 6 and damaging two other trucks. The cause of the fire is still under investigation.

Since then, crews have been using a truck they borrowed from Shaker Road Fire as the village sorts out a temporary firehouse location. The mayor explained, "We're close to having at least a solution where we can, as we evaluate the needs of this building, whether it's repaired or replaced or whatever, we feel that we can operate all season, all year for a good period of time."

Marsh said the village just received a what's called a "Proof of Loss" for some of the damage for around a million dollars. Those funds could arrive as soon as the next day to put towards rebuilding. "The community has really rallied around us. *The insurance process is just a slow one.* We want to make sure that everything is investigated, and that we have a great plan going forward." said the mayor.

He also said that with the intensity of the damage, the firehouse side of the building will take more than a year to reconstruct.

The police side of the building was built in 1927 and will have to be gutted. The mayor explained, “From what I understand, it’s somewhere in the area between $750,000 and $1 million just to replace and reconstruct that section of the building.”
As the village works through plans for temporary firehouse sites, they hope to have the police side of the building reconstructed and operational within the next six months.

SATISTICS FOR THE FIRE SER1VICE

FIREFIGHTER HEALTH AND SAFETY – PROTECTING OUR OWN

FIREFIGHTER FATALITIES IN THE UNITED STATES

63

In 2025 we experienced 78 LODDs reported nationally.!

- **Data from US Fire Administration on LODD:** https://apps.usfa.fema.gov/firefighter-fatalities/
- **Information on FF injuries and deaths from the Secret List:** https://www.firefighterclosecalls.com/
- **Information of Fire Apparatus MVCs:** https://www.emergencyvehicleresponse.com/

Apparatus Accidents in the News:

- A fire truck overturned on a Clayton, North Carolina Road Thursday morning. The 7:45 a.m. crash occurred on Covered Bridge Road. Information about the firefighters aboard as well as details of the crash is not known at this time. Last week, the Clayton fire department announced that two 2026 Pierce Enforcers were placed in service.
- Two Louisa County firefighters were injured Saturday afternoon on the way to a crash when their firetruck flipped over. The preliminary investigation indicates the fire engine was traveling south on Oakland Road with its emergency equipment activated when it ran off the right side of the road,” the state police said in a statement. The driver overcorrected, causing the fire engine to cross the roadway, enter a residential yard, overturn and come to rest upright. The truck’s driver, a 24-year-old man, and the passenger, a 26-year-old man were treated at the University of Virginia Medical Center in Charlottesville and released. There was significant damage to Squad 6 and engine company.
- A firefighter was taken to the hospital following a fire truck overturning Monday night in Smithfield, Virginia. According to the Smithfield Volunteer Fire Department, the single-vehicle crash happened around 11 p.m. while crews were responding to a reported structure fire. The engine came to rest on it’s roof.
- A Wright County, Missouri firefighter has been accused of a motor vehicle crash involving a fire engine on Saturday, Sept. 19. According to online court dockets, Joseph Garrison, born in 1979, of Mountain Grove, has been charged with leaving the scene of an accident with property damage exceeding $1,000 and intoxication with a BAC of .174. In the statement, Fire Chief Bill Dodds reported that Garrison was his firefighter and that he did not have a driver’s license and should not have been driving the fire engine.
- An Ashburn, Virginia Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department TD ladder truck slid off Belmont Ridge Road in rainy conditions Tuesday morning. Truck 606 went off the road at Belmont Ridge Road at Portsmouth Boulevard around 10:30 a.m., Loudoun County Fire Rescue spokesperson Annemarie Antignano said. No one was injured, but the truck was damaged. The truck was responding to a fire alarm call when it happened, due to possibly a blown front tire.
- A Greenbrier, Arkansas Fire Department engine returning from a fire response on September 19 was involved in a single-vehicle rollover, the second such incident on the same day. Greenbrier’s Engine 1, a 1995 Pierce rig, was *returning* from a fire response when it left the roadway and rolled over. No injuries were reported, but the apparatus “sustained extensive damage and is expected to be considered a total loss,” according to the town. The fire department has moved a reserve engine into service, and the city is now evaluating options to replace the damaged truck.

Firefighter Deaths, Injuries, in the News

- The chief for Toledo Fire and Rescue is recovering after she was seriously injured in a hit-and-run crash in Colorado. Allison Armstrong was in the state for a firefighter conference in Colorado Springs when the crash occurred Friday night on Interstate 225. In a post on social media, Armstrong said Sunday she was still in pain from the crash. She said her injuries include a fractured sternum, fractured back, whiplash, "many" contusions, and swelling and pain. "Thank god for air bags. Thank god for seatbelts," Armstrong said. "Thank god my vehicle didn't flip. Thank god everyone behind me was able to stop or move into another lane without also striking me. "I have a lot of injuries from this accident but am truly grateful it wasn't worse and no one else was hurt." Armstrong said she was driving at 65 mph with her vehicle on cruise control when her SUV was struck from behind. She estimated the vehicle that hit her was going at least 80 mph. Christopher Archuleta-Martinez, 21, of Centennial, Colo., has been arrested on suspicion of driving under the influence.
- Two crew members from aerospace company Precision were killed Sunday when their firefighting helicopter crashed while working the Dome Fire in Yosemite National Park.
- A volunteer firefighter is recovering from injuries Sunday evening after they were struck by a vehicle speeding through an accident scene. According to the East Hampton, Connecticut Volunteer Fire Department, while first responders were at a two-car crash, East Hampton police tried to stop a fast-moving vehicle that was trying to pass the scene, but were unsuccessful. About five minutes later, the vehicle returned from the opposite direction, driving around a fire truck and striking traffic cones before hitting a firefighter who was working at the scene. Fire department officials say the firefighter had minor injuries and was evaluated at a local hospital. The driver has not been apprehended.
- Four first responders were injured Monday night after they were reportedly struck by a vehicle while responding to crashes on Interstate 26 in Kingsport, Tennessee. While emergency personnel were loading a patient into an ambulance, a vehicle traveling westbound struck three Kingsport firefighters and one Sullivan County EMS EMT, injuring all four emergency responders.
- Two drivers disobeyed fire police directing traffic on Monday around a serious Route 322 crash in Swatara Township, Pennsylvania with one of them hitting an officer with their car, police said. Neither officer was injured during the exchange. The known offending driver is at large as of Tuesday on a felony charge of aggravated assault, misdemeanor reckless endangerment and three summary offenses. The fire police took a picture of the offending driver's license plate.
- A.F. Dobler Hose and Ladder Company, Girard Pennsylvania, Junior Firefighter Bryce Kaufmann is being remembered for his enthusiasm, dedication and humor. He was riding an e-bike to a fire call Sunday when he was involved in a collision with a vehicle. Kaufmann was transported to a hospital where he died Monday of his injuries.

Driving: Don't Let Your Guard Down

Daniel Marinier

Since I lived close to the fire station, my odds of getting there first were in my favor. When the pager went off, my heart started pounding and I raced to the station. As the first arriving volunteer firefighter, it was my duty to get the truck to the scene. My officer was second to arrive at the station, and off we went. We got to the scene safely, but I recall pressing down on the brake pedal as hard as I could to get the vehicle to stop and the distinct smell of burnt brake pads. The call went well, but the truck desperately needed the brakes to be serviced ASAP.

Today's modern apparatus look monstrous compared with this antique. New pumpers on average weigh 40,000 pounds, while aerials average 55,000 pounds. Many fire department drivers do not consistently operate vehicles of this size daily, and these vehicles don't operate like a daily commuter. The driver/operator must adjust his driving skills to the size, abilities, and constraints of these vehicles. Having permanent drivers assigned helps the organization have experienced drivers at the wheel, but volunteer and many career fire departments do not have this option, so different firefighters hop in and out of the driver's seat. Accidents are called such because they're not voluntary actions, but we can divide these into two categories: avoidable and unavoidable.

Even though modern apparatus offer numerous safety features such as electronic stability control (ESC), which enhances safety by preventing rollovers and loss of steering control through automated intervention; traction control; backup cameras; etc., accidents and minor collisions will always come down to the driver. The following will focus on driving for operators on avoidable accidents and ways we can minimize these events.

NEW DRIVERS

The main cause I've noticed in my career for apparatus mishaps involving new drivers is unfamiliarity with the vehicles' size and weight and the drivers' inability to adapt their driving style to these types of vehicles. Beyond acquiring the mandatory level of driver's licence (a DZ driver's license for my department), many departments have a series of training requirements, a minimum number of nonemergency driving hours, standard operating guidelines (SOGs), and a minimum number of supervised emergency runs to follow before a driver is certified to operate the vehicle for an emergency call.

The "fire truck-rodeo," a crowd favorite, is a great way for a new driver to get familiar with operating large apparatus. The design of a "truck rodeo" will vary slightly with every fire department, but the main components seem to reoccur for most North American departments and can be divided into seven parts.

1. **Forward serpentine**: Cones are placed 30 to 38 feet apart, depending on apparatus wheelbase, and the driver must weave an S pattern between the cones.
2. **Reverse serpentine**: Cones are placed 30 to 38 feet apart, depending on apparatus wheelbase, and the driver must reverse weave an S pattern between the cones.
3. **Diminishing clearance exercise**: Cones are placed 9 feet 2 inches apart and gradually reduce width clearance to 8 feet 2 inches.
4. **Confined space turnaround or the three-point turn**: In a space of 50 feet wide by 100 feet long, the driver must enter the location's center (from side to side), turn around, and exit the location.
5. **90° reversing into a parking bay**: The driver must reverse from a perpendicular location into an area 12 feet wide by the length of the apparatus plus 10 feet.
6. **Parallel parking.**
7. **Accelerating/stopping closest to the cone**: In an area 150 feet square, the driver must stop closest to the cone without striking it while moving forward and in reverse.

Firefighters enjoy friendly competition, so adding time limits to the course, adding penalty seconds for striking a cone, or having that person buy ice cream for the crew because he ran over a cone can make a training session that much better. Don't be shy about the weather; this isn't a dry-weather-only scenario. Doing this on a rainy or even snowy day (depending on where you live) adds realism, as we drive under all weather conditions.

Over my career, I've found drivers with five to 10 years' experience know their rigs' capabilities and limitations. They are comfortable operating the apparatus at emergency scenes. Some drivers become overly confident with years of experience under their belts without any incidents and start to take unnecessary risks. These drivers like to please their officer and crew, and when out on non-emergency calls, the driver, to make his life as easy as possible, might steer them into making decisions that may compromise safety. For instance, while the crew is making their run to the grocery store for the day at the station, pulling up as closely as possible to the entrance of the store so the crew doesn't need to walk across the parking lot may seem helpful, but it may also be taking an unnecessary risk in having the large vehicle weave through tight spaces, parked cars, light poles, and pedestrians. Don't risk it. Keeping the crew together in the apparatus offers more eyes to scan the area and park the rig at the back of the lot where there's plenty of space. Even the driver can help the crew get their 10,000 steps a day.

Another scenario I've seen is when a crew needed to fill up on diesel fuel. When the crew pulled into the gas station it was very busy, and most fuel pumps were being used. The diesel pump was easily accessible but occupied. Instead of waiting for the pump to be free, the decision was made to relocate the apparatus to another pump. In doing so, the apparatus ended up rubbing up against a parked car. There was no rush for fueling at the time, and if the crew practiced a little more patience, the incident would have been avoided. Trying to please everyone doesn't always pan out. Once an incident occurs, the paperwork, accident investigation, and driver's possible suspension time isn't worth the few minutes more it takes to avoid unnecessary risks.

DRIVERS WITH 10+ YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

Seasoned drivers with experience have encountered a lot on the roadway by the time they reach 10+ years behind the wheel. They've traveled thousands of miles in a variety of weather and road conditions or dealt with congested traffic conditions and even other distracted drivers. Their experience behind the wheel makes them better at their jobs. Seasoned drivers are respected and valued parts of the team, and one may think that they don't require any assistance/ feedback regarding their driving duties. Supervisors do play a part here and may feel uncomfortable telling senior drivers how to do their job.

For instance, the driver may have made the same move hundreds of times, always moving or backing the apparatus in the same location repeatedly without incident. Using the crew as spotters when backing an apparatus is a standard through-out the fire service. The driver telling the crew to remain in the vehicle because he doesn't think spotters are necessary does not follow the department's SOGs. The driver should have a very good reason to make this choice, and inconvenience is not one. Being a professional driver means you need to follow a standard, and that implies following all rules and regulations set out by your fire department. Regardless of the overall senior level, a captain/acting captain or lieutenant still needs to make sure all members on the crew adhere to SOGs. Directing and enforcing a seasoned driver to follow guidelines may be uncomfortable, but it's still better and less embarrassing than calling your senior officer and explaining damage on the apparatus.

Driving the fire truck was one of my favorite duties when I held the halligan bar more than a pen. It is an exhilarating feeling to be at the wheel of an apparatus worth more that $1million, especially going lights and sirens to a job. We are proud professionals 100% of the time while at work, and we're always trying to avoid the pitfalls of complacency. The key to a successful career as a driver/operator may rely on this attention. While some accidents are unavoidable, let's do our best to minimize the avoidable ones by remaining vigilant.

THE BUILDING AND FIRE CODE ISSUES – WEEKLY REPORT ON FIRE FATALITIES

- **Home Fire Fatalities in the News**: https://apps.usfa.fema.gov/civilian-fatalities/

Fire Deaths in 1&2 Family Dwellings in NYS	57
9/9/26 Yonkers, Westchester Co. Male 28	
Fire Deaths in any type of Dwelling in NYS	110
Fire Deaths in 1&2 Family Dwellings Nationally	871
Top 3 States with the greatest 1&2 Family Deaths	#1 PA 64
	#2 NY 57
	#3 OH 48
Civilian home fire fatalities in 2026: 1339 = 34.3 weekly	
Both the states of Maryland and California as well as Wash. DC require sprinklers in 1&2 family dwellings. According to realtors and builders only old homes burn, so sprinklers are not needed in new homes: so my question to you is; when does a new home become an old home?	

RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT

*****As volunteer firefighters become harder to find, Pennsylvania departments turn to paid crews***

Katie Know, WIFT

If Lower Paxton Township's Bureau of Fire didn't have paid firefighter positions supplementing its volunteer staff, its three fire companies would have been adequately staffed just 17% of the time in the first half of 2026. The department's three stations also would have been out of service simultaneously for a total of 92 hours, according to Brett Graham, Lower Paxton Township Bureau of Fire Chief.

"I think that as a whole, we, as in the state of Pennsylvania and the country as a whole, have waited too long to start this transition, so we're now in kind of crisis mode," Graham said.

Fire departments across the country **are struggling** with fewer volunteers. Since 2008, the U.S. has lost about a quarter of its volunteers as call volume rose by about 70%.

Pennsylvania's volunteer firefighter ranks have stabilized in recent years at roughly 32,000 to 35,000, according to the Office of the State Fire Commissioner.

But departments across the state are increasingly turning to a combination of paid and volunteer firefighters to keep their stations staffed.

For Lower Paxton Township's Colonial Park, Paxtonia and Linglestown fire companies, they first hired paid firefighters in September 2025. The force has grown to 20 career staff working alongside volunteers.

Graham said a higher cost of living has driven people away from volunteer roles.

"Most people nowadays are struggling to make ends meet, so anything they are doing, they're going to want to be compensated for," he said.

Support for WITF is provided by:

Lower Paxton Township relies on its 1.24-mill fire tax to fund the department, including salaries and equipment. *It costs $124 per year for the median homeowner.*

A combination model

Pennsylvania State Fire Commissioner Tom Cook said rural departments are especially struggling. They don't have a strong taxpayer base for funding, and the people who would be interested in volunteering are often already involved, so there are limited recruitment opportunities.

It's becoming more common, he said, for fire companies to have a combination of paid staff and volunteers.

Career firefighters can provide staffing during weekday daylight hours, when many volunteers are at their regular jobs. Volunteers can then provide additional personnel when departments face larger incidents.

"The combination model is the future of the Pennsylvania fire service, where you have a small cadre of paid firefighters that handle the routine incidents, and then you have a roster of volunteer firefighters that you can rely on when you have the bigger incidents," Cook said.

The Office of the State Fire Commissioner is pushing $30 million in grants for municipalities to help with regionalization or staffing, he said, but it's not a long-term funding solution. Fire departments will ultimately need to find ways to fund staffing through their local communities.

Citizen's Fire Company #1, serving Palmyra Borough and North Londonderry Township in Lebanon County, still runs fully on volunteers.

But department leaders say they aren't sure how long they can maintain that model.

President Andrew Braden said they supplement the force with six live-in volunteer firefighters, who have dorm-like rooms in the fire hall and can quickly respond to calls. If just two of them decided to leave the force, the department would struggle, Braden said.

He said there is currently no long-term plan for the department's staffing, but leadership will bring up hiring supplemental paid positions again at the scheduled October fire commission meeting. These people could handle the administrative work, freeing up volunteers to focus on their vital work in the community.

"Being able to guarantee that a fire truck's on the street every single day, every moment, is something that always floats in the back of my head, and we can't make that 100% guarantee to our communities," Braden said. "But that's how you would solve it, would be hiring career staffing."

One full-time firefighter would likely cost about $100,000, and Braden estimated the department would need about 12 to guarantee 24/7/365 service.

The cost would ultimately fall to local municipalities, he said. ***Regionalizing or merging nearby fire departments could help spread the expense across communities.***

CHANGING ORGANIZATIONS

- In Pennsylvania, the Portage Volunteer Fire Company No. 1 and Summerhill Township Fire Department are merging to form a regional department. The two departments are combining as Mainline Fire and Rescue Service – a move that will ensure their local communities will continue to be well-served in the years ahead, fire officials said.

- Finalized in January 2023, the agreement brought together the Charleston Fire Department, North Charleston Fire Department, Mount Pleasant Fire Department, Isle of Palms Fire Department, St. Andrews Public Service District Fire Department, James Island Public Service District Fire Department and St. John's Fire District. Together, *these seven agencies protect roughly 530 square miles* across the core Charleston metropolitan area. They operate with comparable staffing models, training standards and compatible procedures, allowing their firefighters to work together effectively on emergency scenes. Under the agreement, the closest appropriate apparatus responds regardless of jurisdictional boundaries. In a state where tension has historically existed between municipalities and public service districts, these agencies chose cooperation and service over jurisdictional politics.

- In January 2026, the Deerfield Beach, Florida City Commission voted 4 to 1 to end its long standing agreement with the Broward Sheriff's Office and rebuild an independent municipal fire rescue department. BSO has provided the city's fire and EMS services since 2011 and will continue coverage during the transition, with the new department expected to begin operations in fall 2027. The city's proposed model maintains six stations with 145 personnel and four platoons working a 24/72 schedule. Deerfield Beach has already begun hiring command and administrative personnel to build the department. The department will utilize a four shift, 42-hour workweek on the 24/72 shift schedule.

FIRE STATION DESIGN

*****Fire Station Planning: Getting It Right From the Start to Avoid Costly Mistakes***

Dennis Ross

Key Takeaways

- Early planning and professional guidance are essential to avoid costly redesigns and operational issues in fire station projects.
- Balancing cost and long-term value—considering quality, sustainability, and longevity—is key to successful facility investments.
- *Too many opinions and unclear roles can hinder project progress; a focused, well-structured team improves outcomes.*

Fire and police departments, plus municipalities across the country are making critical decisions about facility design and construction, often with the best intentions, but without the full picture. The result can be costly: lost time, budget overruns, and unnecessary frustration for the people working to move these projects forward.

In today's complex design and construction environment, what owners think they know can be just as risky as what they don't know. Seemingly practical choices made early in the process can lead to unintended consequences later, affecting everything from daily operations and long-term maintenance to challenging public perceptions and project success.

Some of the more difficult decisions require an understanding of the difference between cost and value. The lowest upfront price is not always the best investment, and a qualified design partner can help owners make informed decisions that support their mission, protect taxpayer dollars, and deliver facilities that serve first responders and their communities for decades to come.

EARLY MISSTEPS CAN CREATE LARGER PROBLEMS

Sometimes, even the best intentions can create larger, unexpected issues down the line. *Knowing when a feasibility study is needed can help guide the project to proper site selection, operations-based programming, accurate budgeting, and other necessary professional reports (geotechnical, drainage, hazardous materials, etc.), are all essential to the development of a new, renovated, or repurposed station, and each is connected to a larger strategy*. Early decisions made without the right information or guidance can create significant challenges later in the process. *If key decisions are made too quickly, rely on incomplete information, or lack input from a qualified design team, they can lead to inefficiencies, costly changes, operational limitations, and long-term maintenance concerns.*

That's why making the right choices for your facility is key from the start. A successful public safety facility begins with a solid planning framework that reflects how a department operates today and how it plans to

evolve in the future. When the foundation of the design plan is thoughtful and well-informed, the project is better positioned to stay on budget, avoid unnecessary redesigns, and support its responders and the communities they serve.

Early planning missteps can include starting with floor plans before setting goals, underestimating site constraints, ignoring zoning and building codes, and commonly, sharing the belief that a larger building committee will automatically lead to better results. In practice, this "the more, the merrier" philosophy does not always translate into better outcomes. *Too many opinions, unclear roles, and a list of competing priorities can slow the design process, create confusion and frustration, and ultimately pull the project away from its core goals.*

VALUE OR COST?

Let's face the facts: in 2026, the cost of building a new public safety facility will likely be higher than anyone would like. But that reality makes it even more important for owners to look beyond the lowest upfront costs. *While the least expensive option may appear attractive at first, it rarely delivers the best long-term value.*

While cost importantly focuses on making reasonable decisions in the short term based on hard numbers, value is determined by a series of long-term considerations, including quality, longevity, sustainability, and efficiency. Your qualified professional can assist in educating and presenting your project to the public. They understand the public forum and how to present in concise, easy to understand terms and can help eliminate confusion and tamp down on misinformation.

To ensure a successful project that aligns with your goals, it is crucial to strike the right balance between cost and value. Just as it would not make sense to plan for a facility that is far outside your budget, it is equally important not to sacrifice the key elements that will strengthen the facility's capabilities and support its long-term success.

Your goal should not be to spend less. It should be to strategically invest in a resource that will remain functional and support your community for decades to come.

HOW AN EXPERIENCED DESIGN TEAM CAN SUPPORT

If you're planning to develop a new, renovated, or repurposed station, it is never too early to include a qualified design team in the conversation. *Even if your exact goals for the building are not finalized, experienced designers can help facilitate early discussions, clarify key points, and ultimately turn those initial ideas into a practical plan.*

A qualified design team does more than present architectural options. They help owners balance cost, operational needs, long-term value, and project goals while providing informed, professional recommendations that support the best possible outcome for the facility.

In one real-world example, a fire department received a generous donation of seven acres of land and initially believed it had secured the ideal location to bring a new station to life. However, a closer evaluation revealed significant site constraints, including narrow access from a side road, wetlands, a limited buildable area, and the site's location in a floodplain. Without qualified guidance early in the process, the department could have invested in a site location that increased costs, limited functionality, led to the development of a white elephant, and ultimately, may not have been a viable site for the facility.

Land is arguably one of the most important investments a fire department will make. Beyond the purchase itself, site-related considerations may need to include surveys, geotechnical reports, drainage studies, environmental reviews, hazardous materials assessments, and more.

Overlooking due diligence on a site because of ignorance is not an acceptable defense and hoping nobody will notice is even more dangerous. For that reason, the first step a department should take is to engage architects and engineers who possess a key understanding of fire station building projects. If other key consultants are required for your situation, these professionals can also help you find and contract the right team.

FIRE APPARATUS

Fire Department Apparatus Purchasing Options to Minimize Delivery Time

Tom Shand & Mike Wilbur

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Stock model rigs and program apparatus that are in the process of being constructed can serve to shorten the delivery time when a department must replace a damaged fire vehicle or must add to its fleet to better protect the community.
- Stock model apparatus afford some cost savings, because the vehicles were engineered previously with major components that were ordered with known costs.
- Contributing to program apparatus' generally more-rapid delivery than other vehicles is the fact that there isn't a preconstruction conference.

As the fire apparatus industry continues to work through the backlog of orders for new units, departments face extended production lead times and, thus, must adjust their life cycle expectations. Stock model rigs and program apparatus that are in the process of being constructed can serve to shorten the delivery time when a department must replace a damaged fire vehicle or must add to its fleet to better protect the community.

PREP FOR GOING THE NONCUSTOM ROUTE

Consider this scenario: Your apparatus committee is charged with conducting a needs assessment and developing specification requirements to replace the oldest of four pumpers that are in your department's fleet. Engine 41 is a 2005 custom chassis, 1,500-gpm pumper that runs approximately 500 calls per year and should have been replaced during the previous year. Because of budget constraints, the purchase was delayed. After consultation with several manufacturers, the committee finds that the build time for a fully custom apparatus will range between 34–36 months.

After an analysis on the condition of Engine 41, it's determined that the fire pump wouldn't pass a service test and must be rebuilt. There's extensive corrosion on the chassis frame rails and components. The tires have aged out and require replacement. The cost of all of these repairs might exceed the residual value of the apparatus for resale.

During the next apparatus committee meeting, the group, including the company captain, the company engineer, the department mechanic and the chief officer who oversees the fleet, determines that other alternatives should be pursued in place of developing specifications and going to bid for a replacement apparatus, which, because of local purchasing guidelines, would take 4–6 months before a contract could be authorized.

The committee seeks information from several manufacturers and is pleased to learn that numerous options could be exercised that would result in a shorter delivery time with a guaranteed, fixed price. With this knowledge in hand, the committee develops a concise list that outlines the minimum requirements for the new pumper. These include dimensions, engine and drivetrain components, cab seating, fire pump and water tank capacities, and the preferred body and hosebed configuration. With this outline as well as the requirements for vehicle inspection and testing, acceptance, payment and desired warranty terms, the committee will reach out to vendors to determine what pumpers are available to meet the department's needs.

SOME STOCK OPTIONS

Over the years, it has been common for larger apparatus dealerships as well as manufacturers to have stock model apparatus on order that provide quicker deliveries to replace damaged units or for when department operations require additional apparatus to serve the community. Generally, these rigs were designed and ordered based on the more-popular vehicle configurations that were delivered previously and on what would fit local demographic requirements. Today, a common arrangement might be a cab that has seating for six personnel, a 1,500-gpm pump, a 1,000-gallon water tank, and an aluminum body that has roll-up shutter doors and enclosed ground ladders. In urban areas, a design might provide for a low hosebed, multiple rear-body discharges, front intake and an option for hinged body doors. (It's interesting to note that in some areas that are served with predominately hydrants and strong fire flows, there's a movement toward larger water tanks when compared with units that are slated for replacement.)

Because of the extended build times for full custom apparatus, the dealership-ordered stock or ready-for-delivery pumper often can meet the needs of the department. Furthermore, depending on when the contract between the department and dealership is signed, there might be an opportunity to add some options that were engineered and approved previously for the chassis model that's being produced without additional production time extensions.

This stock model apparatus affords some cost savings, because the vehicles were engineered previously with major components that were ordered with known costs, when compared with extended production time vehicles for which material costs are uncertain.

NO PRECONSTRUCTION CONFERENCE

Several apparatus builders of all sizes offer program apparatus that are designed and engineered at the factory level for sale through their dealerships. These units are designed based on the most frequent configurations that are built to meet a price point as well as to minimize production time. These vehicles are developed as a base model and with limited options that were preengineered. This allows a department to choose the configuration that most closely meets its needs while determining the final cost for the unit.

Contributing to program apparatus' generally more-rapid delivery than other vehicles is the fact that there isn't a pre-construction conference. The initial contract configuration is exactly what's built, with no change orders.

The availability of these program units depends on market conditions and time of year. If a department is interested in such a rig, it must have its team and financial personnel in position to react promptly to secure a particular apparatus.

Another procurement option is to appraise available manufacturer offerings where different models of pumpers are available with an array of options. This permits a committee to design a unit to meet its needs while staying most closely within the limitations of the design-your-own unit. The options might include different body lengths, lowered crosslays and rear hosebed, enhanced intake and discharge arrangements, and various mountings for ground ladders, including hydraulic ladder racks.

Departments that consider built-to-order or limited-option-content vehicles should develop a detailed listing of the most important design features and components that must be incorporated into the new vehicle to match the department's needs and vehicle mission, most critically the cab, body, fire pump and piping arrangements. Warning light configuration, paint color and vehicle trim, among other factors, should be considered but shouldn't be a determining factor when making a purchasing decision.

GOING FORWARD

Long lead times and increasing costs beyond budgeted financial resources have caused some departments to reexamine their procurement practices. The long-term effect of acquiring stock model and program apparatus must be evaluated as these rigs enter service to monitor their effect on maintenance intervals, in-service time and warranty-related issues.

GREEN ENERGY AND THE IMPACT ON THE FIRE SERVICE

- This morning at 06:55, Wilton, Saratoga Co. NY, fire along with automatic daytime mutual aid(Maple Avenue and Gansevoort) were alerted to a working residential structure fire. Car 72-0 quickly called in route and requested Saratoga Springs Fire for a FAST, Saratoga County Cause and Origin and National Grid to the scene. Shortly after Car 72-0 also requested tankers from Corinth and South Glens Falls. Car 71-0 arrived, established command and confirmed a working fire. Car 710 then requested a second alarm and requested a tanker from Schuylerville to the scene. Deputy Fire Coordinator Fire Car 6 assisted with coordinating scene response and cover assignments which included Malta Ridge to relocate a tanker to Wilton Station 1 and Ballston Spa was moved to Maple Avenue for cover assignments. Everyone's quick response made for a tremendous save with very limited damage to the home itself. Crews were also able to safely remove 3 cats from the home. Also thanks to Wilton EMS, NYSP and Wilton Highway Department for their assistance during the incident. The cause of the fire was determined to be lithium batteries in a cabinet.

- The Monterey County, California Sheriff's Office has issued a shelter-in-place order in the area of the Moss Landing Power Plant due to a fire at the battery energy storage facility. According to a release from the County of Monterey, *the fire is within a structure that was damaged during the January 2025 Vistra battery fire* and involves batteries that were also damaged during that incident. "The current incident is not comparable to the January 2025 fire in terms of its scale or complexity," according to a statement from the

county in conjunction with the North County Fire Protection District. *The shelter-in-place order covers an area within 1/3 of a mile from the plant* at 7301 Highway 1. The order is a precaution due to smoke and potential hazardous materials associated with the fire according to the press release. The North Monterey County School District has also issued a shelter-in-place order.

- Five people were injured early Thursday, Sept. 17, when they jumped from second-story windows as a fire blocked their escape in an apartment complex in downtown Riverside, the incident commander said. Three people, including a pregnant woman, suffered broken legs, said Battalion Chief Matt Stibel of the Riverside Fire Department. A lithium-ion battery might have ignited the fire, Stibel said, but that was under investigation.

- Evacuation orders were issued Tuesday afternoon, Sept. 22 after a lithium-ion battery fire broke out at a Metropolitan Water District facility in La Verne, authorities said. The fire involved a battery energy storage system near a solar panel field on the northeast side of the property, which also houses the Weymouth Water Treatment Plant, officials said. The district said the safety of its water supply was not affected. Due to the hazardous nature of lithium batteries, fire crews were mainly spraying the area with water to prevent the flames from spreading. A hazmat team is on site and, out of an abundance of caution, has required us to do an evacuation," Councilmember Tim Hepburn said. "Most of it is shelter-in-place, but there are evacuations for certain areas close to the fire as we are concerned about toxicity.

- The cause of a fire at Kiki's Tiki Bar in Waikiki, Hawaii was a lithium-ion battery that experienced thermal runaway in a storage room, according to the Honolulu Fire Department. HFD has classified the cause of as accidental. An HFD investigator said a lithium-ion battery-powered light was charging when it experienced thermal runaway and ignited nearby combustibles in the storage room. Damages are estimated at around $1.9 million total, with $1.7 million in property damages and $150,000 in damaged contents.

- William Pham, Cenergy's co-founder, said the project has been in development for around eight years, and is located on the Skyway in between Chico and Paradise, California known as North Chico Solar LLC. He added that it is located within Butte County's designated solar overlay — the county's land-use planning map that has been specifically identified as suitable for utility-scale solar projects. *The proposal for the project covers approximately 1,711 acres of land, though roughly 1,300-1,400 acres would be used for solar arrays, battery storage, a substation and a switchyard — with around six acres being donated for a fire station on the property.* The project is also expected to generate 300 megawatts through around 500,000 solar panels and 120 megawatt battery storage. Kevin Osborne, who works with Cenergy, said the environmental impacts are important to the company, and gave a presentation on those impacts. A big point of contention in the meeting was the possible removal of 2,000 Blue Oak trees, which are abundant in the area where the project is proposed to be. Osborne said Cenergy sent out a team to count and identify every tree on the property, categorizing each tree by its health level. He added that, of the 7,000 Blue Oak trees counted on the site, around 5,000 were healthy. Emily Alma, a community member who attended the meeting, said that while she supports solar energy, she feels that the blue oaks are very important to the ecosystem in the area and said there are better places for the solar farm. Going forward, Cenergy will submit an application with the California Energy Commission in October, which will go through some "back-and-forth" between the company and the commission. According to Cenergy, February 2028 is when the company will find out if it gets approved. Construction is estimated to begin in April 2028, with an expected completion at the end of 2029.

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Next Breakfast will be held Sunday October 4th from 8 to 11:30am

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You're Invited! Firefighter's Home Open House September 26

Join us on Saturday, September 26th, for The Firefighter's Home Open House.
When: Saturday, September 26th from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

We salute all of the kitchen help who hustle, giving up their Sunday mornings, to make these events special for all the attendees and work hard to support their fire company's. Thank you for your tough work and dedication.

GENERAL INTEREST TO ALL

Cantankerous Wisdom: FIRECARS, A-Eye and Baltic's Luverne Rig

Bill Adams

Old people often wander off topic when carrying on a conversation. However, writers and commentators usually don't admit to wandering off the reservation. But I'll admit it did happen to me recently. Over morning coffee, Raisin Squad members were verbally vilifying a local department for spending a hundred grand plus for a grass fire truck. Later that week, before continuing the tirade, I inadvertently veered off topic. If the memory bank is still functioning, I'll get back to grass fire trucks.

SOUTH DAKOTA

Twelve hundred miles away in South Dakota, Doug Nohava is a firefighter/EMT and former white coat with the Baltic Volunteer Fire Department. He's a history buff and unofficial historian for both Baltic and the nearby Garretson Volunteer Fire Department where he was a former member. At Garretson, he became acquainted with fellow volunteer Wyatt Compton who works at Spartan ER.

Doug sent Wyatt a delivery photo he found of a Luverne-Chevrolet rear-mount pumper that Baltic purchased in 1933 (photo #1) and still owns (photos #2 and #3). Knowing my fixation for rear-mount pumps, Wyatt sent me the photo. If he was setting me up, it worked. He also sent a scanned copy of a faded and wrinkled late-1930s brochure (photo #4) from the former Luverne Fire Apparatus Company of Luverne, Minnesota, located about 40 miles from Baltic. Luverne is a legacy Spartan ER manufacturer.



The brochure advertised the Luverne-Ford FIRECAR for "rural and suburban service," featuring a rear-mounted power take off (PTO) pump. The FIRECAR was new to me. Wyatt got me; I was hooked. My self-imposed mission became investigating a fire truck I had never heard of. Doug and Wyatt were inundated with many of my multi-question emails.

There's a saying that a young buck will run into the meadow to *meet and greet* a doe, whereas an older buck will walk into the meadow to *meet and greet* ALL the does. I was like a young buck in researching the FIRECAR and Baltic's pumper. I should have looked before leaping.

EARLY 20TH CENTURY FIRE SERVICE

Before commenting (aka passing judgement) on the Luverne rigs, I should recognize that era's fire service. Mostly career departments in the early 1920s protected large cities that usually had pressurized domestic water systems. Outside the metropolitan areas was rural America, where fire protection — if any — was provided by volunteers. Water was scarce and provided by nature, not the local Department of Public Works. Cities primarily ran pumpers with custom chassis, large pumps, and small booster tanks. Rural departments that could afford custom apparatus made do with them as built. Custom-chassied apparatus were seldom modified. Financially strapped rural departments either built their own rigs, or had local shops modify commercial chassis into fire apparatus to meet the needs of specific locales. The latter was the start of many regional apparatus builders.

1930S APPARATUS MARKET

In late 1929, the Great Depression began, followed by a recession, resulting in about a 50% reduction in domestic industrial production, including fire trucks. The economy recovered at the start of World War II, but supporting the war effort took manufacturing priority. During a two-decade era, fire departments were forced to maintain what they already owned, or judiciously spend whatever monies were available, if and when production slots were opened.

The FIRECAR addressed that predicament. Luverne is long-gone; it was sold once, then absorbed by Spartan, which was purchased by REV, which is now Terex. Wyatt says Spartan's archives of the old Luverne records amount to no more than "binders of handwritten records." Hand-written or not, they're interesting. More on them later.

DARLEY AND A-EYE

Credit must be given where credit is due. Luverne wasn't alone in addressing Depression-era fire apparatus purchasing. W.S. Darley, of Illinois, was focusing on low-cost apparatus before the Depression. Unlike Luverne's records, there's a multitude of written documentation and books about Darley. And, there are still people working there bearing the name Darley.

"A-Eye" is my derogatory term for artificial intelligence which generates answers to inquiries. In my opinion, A-Eye only tells parts of a story, and one response may be contradictory to others. Answers should be taken with a grain of salt or corroborated by verifiable sources and not just another computer.

The below bullet points paraphrase, combine, and semi-plagiarize numerous A-Eye responses as well as bona fide written sources — too many to individually recognize. They give an overview of how manufacturers addressed Depression-era fire apparatus sales. It'll help readers understand the marketing strategy behind the Luverne-Ford FIRECAR.

- The fire equipment portion of Darley's municipal-orientated supply business became catalog-based in the 1920s. Mail-order fire apparatus "kits" were offered where fire departments could order the pump and tank, along with body components if desired, as well as ancillary loose equipment to be shipped to them for installation locally on a chassis of their choice.
- Specific pricing for the W.S. Darley Model T fire pump kit in the 1920s is not explicitly detailed in available historical records.
- Darley introduced its own small centrifugal pumps suitable for attachment to Ford Model T trucks, providing an inexpensive fire truck option for small towns. Its strategy focused on providing the pump and mounting hardware at a fraction of the cost of a custom-built fire truck, enabling small towns to create a functional fire apparatus for significantly less than the price tag of a fully assembled competitor vehicle.
- The Howe Fire Apparatus Company sold complete Model T pumpers for approximately $1,800 in the early 1920s. Darley's product was marketed specifically as an inexpensive kit for departments to assemble themselves.

- The cost of a Ford Model T or TT chassis by itself ranged from roughly $300 to $600 during the decade, depending on the year and configuration.
- According to Darley history, major manufacturers sold custom fire trucks for $3,500 to $5,000 in the mid-1920s. Darley introduced a complete fire truck built on a Ford Model T chassis for approximately $690 in the mid-twenties.
- Some early fire pump and apparatus manufacturers were less than forthcoming when advertising their product, especially pump performances. One said its apparatus could move roughly 200 to 250 gallons per minute (gpm) when drafting from a static source or hydrant at low discharge pressures. (I've never heard of drafting from a pressurized hydrant system, and I'm sure the local DPW would frown upon it.)
- Another noteworthy A-Eye statement is, "At higher pressures required for effective firefighting streams (e.g., 100+ psi), the flow rate would drop significantly, likely to under 100 gpm, due to the limited power of the Model T engine (approx. 20-22 hp) and the single-stage centrifugal design."
- *A statement certain to draw the ire of today's fire pump gurus and authors of firefighting tactics and strategy is: "This capacity was modest compared to larger, custom-built apparatus of the era, <u>but was adequate for the initial attack capabilities expected of volunteer departments</u> using converted commercial chassis." I'm not touching that one. Underlining is mine for emphasis.

The mechanics and technicalities between early small front-mount centrifugal pumps, small rotary gear pumps, and the available horsepower of motors of that era, are not discussed except to point out that early manufacturers' industrial and commercial water pumps were adopted for fire apparatus. Fire apparatus expert Tom Shand says, "Knowing the time frame when these trucks were built, it is probable mechanics found local supply houses, acquired a pump, and figured out how to make everything work."

Baltic's 1933 Luverne pumper had a Viking PTO-operated rotary gear pump. Viking is shown on the pump's casting. Viking was a supplier of mainly commercial and industrial pumps. It is still in business today as part of the IDEX Corporation, along with Hale.

IRONY

Despite Luverne and Darley being competitors, Wyatt said at one time, Darley contracted with Luverne to supply bodies. An A-Eye response to a similar inquiry said: "In the 1930s, Darley expanded operations to provide complete fire apparatus using front-mount Barton pumps and, initially, bodies built by Luverne."

BACK TO BALTIC'S LUVERNE

The Baltic pumper chassis is a 1931 Chevrolet that Luverne outfitted and delivered in 1933. I've tagged it "the 31." When Wyatt sent the 31's photo and the FIRECAR brochure, my immediate presumption was that they were both FIRECARs because both had rear-mounted pumps. I was mistaken, again. I raced forward at full speed without looking before leaping. I know how the aforementioned young buck could have felt — possibly frustrated.

There were many differences between the brochure and pictures of the 31, so e-mails flew back and forth to Wyatt and Doug asking why and how come. Two of them are: The 31's pump was mounted on the rear step, while the FIRECAR brochure said it was semi-recessed and heated. The 31s delivery photo (photo 1 above) shows two suction hose troughs, instead of the four shown in a later picture (photo #6). Hopefully the towhead sitting on the front seat didn't play with that carbon tetrachloride extinguisher next to him.

I inappropriately claimed the delivery photo's rig was not the original Baltic rig. That was another mistake. One of my grandkids enlarged the 31's delivery photo showing a side view of the rear step and pump area. I should have asked to have the portion showing the engine cowl enlarged. It shows the original lettering as in photo 6 taken before an early restoration. Oops.

In Wyatt's original e-mail sending 31's delivery photo, he wrote: *"Found a good new delivery photo from 1933 – the first of its kind mass-produced Luverne rear-mount pumper."* I misinterpreted that. He said it was the first of its kind of rear-mount pumpers, not necessarily the first or the prototype of the FIRECAR series. That's a month lost I'll never get back.

SALES & MARKETING

The flip side of the FIRECAR brochure describes the unique relationship between Ford and Luverne in marketing the apparatus. It is an interesting read. It also shows an approximate price tag of $2,500 for the rig, plus a way to suggest to potential purchasers how they can raise money to purchase it!

I asked fellow Raisin Squad member and Mack expert Harvey Eckart what he thought about fire trucks being sold by local non-firematic dealerships. He replied: "It makes sense on a lot of ways, as many towns could not afford fancy equipment, Ford dealers were everywhere, and there used to be a strong desire to 'buy local'. I do marvel today when I see little towns that used to run rigs like this, with a new big custom pumper *to keep up with the Joneses.*"

Naturally, Harvey followed up with a pro-Mack statement. "Mack had dedicated fire truck salesmen around the country that I think operated on commissions and salary. They were usually based at a Mack dealership for commercial Mack trucks and chassis. Regular Mack dealer salesman could start a sale but usually turned it over to a regular Mack fire truck guy. Toward the end, they branched out and even included a fire equipment dealer as one of their fire truck dealers. One of Mack's strengths was they had a good fire truck division but could lean on the regular truck operation if necessary." There's no doubt Harvey has a Bulldog embroidered on his shorts.

I brought a draft of this article with a bunch of photos for Raisin Squad review at morning coffees. Their comments and my biased ones will be in the next column. Amazingly, these white hairs found a bunch of firematic differences between the FIRECAR and the 31.

TAKE A MOMENT TO SMILE

They begin the evening news each night with "Good Evening", the proceed to tell you why it's NOT!

CLASSIFIED

CAFDA IS SEEKING A TREASURER FOR OUR FIRE SERVICE NOT-FOR-PROFIT ASSOCIATION.

Our current excellent treasurer has announced that he will be giving up the position as soon as we find a replacement due to increased workload with his own business. Any candidate should be familiar with Quick Books and the structure and operation of a not-for-profit organization as well as some familiarization with the operation of fire districts in New York State. CAFDA offers a stipend which won't make you rich, but you get to hang out with some great people, get free meals prior to meetings and trying to provide a service to fire district officials. The Association requires our treasurers to be bonded. If you are interested let us know by providing a resume and cover letter to secretary@cafda.net.

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I. Shall collect all dues, be the custodian of all funds of the Association, and shall keep all Association funds in such bank accounts as may be designated by the Board of Directors

II. Shall send to all member organizations the Membership Forms and Dues Invoices for membership

III. Shall pay the bills of the Association, keep accurate financial records of all transactions and shall present a brief report at each meeting

IV. Shall submit a detailed financial report to the Board of Director's at year's end, which is to be audited by the Auditing Committee and approved at the March General Membership meeting

V. Shall be bonded at the expense of the Association in the amount of $100,000.

VI. Shall transfer money into and out of investment accounts upon approval of the Board of Directors.

VII. Shall be paid a salary as determined by the Board of Directors

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We would consider expanding the number of Directors if individuals from other counties would volunteer to participate!!

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The Capital Area Association represents any fire district that wishes to join CAFDA. Fire District Officials include Commissioners, Treasurers, and Deputy Treasurers. Secretaries and Chiefs are also invited to join in!
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Wish to become a member of CAFDA, go to CAFDA.net/membership to apply.

CAPITAL AREA BUSINESS PARTNER'S

Welcome to Siddons-Martin Emergency Group, apparatus sales and service.

Business Partner Applications Available At: WWW.CAFDA.NET

We invite our business partners to submit educational information to be included in this Bulletin for district commissioners and chief officers

We want to thank all of our Business Partners for renewing their partnership for 2026. You are invited to our monthly membership meeting and to any of our social events..

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This is a service of CAFDA through the effort of Tom Rinaldi who can be reached at tom@rinaldi1.com for comments and content contributions are always welcome.

Setting the Record Straight – Fire Service Organizations Express Concern Over Lack of Support for Nominal Compensation Initiative

Organizations Renew Call for Collaboration to Address Volunteer Firefighter Recruitment and Retention Challenges

New York State, August 2026 – Representatives from the Association of Fire Districts of the State of New York (AFDSNY), the New York State Association of Fire Chiefs, the County Fire Coordinators' Association of the State of New York (CCASNY), and Long Island Fire Service legislative advocates are expressing concern over what they describe as a lack of meaningful support from the Firefighters Association of the State of New York (FASNY) regarding efforts to advance nominal compensation for volunteer firefighters.

The coalition states that volunteer firefighter recruitment and retention remain among the most significant challenges facing the New York fire service. Supporters of nominal compensation believe that providing limited compensation or reimbursement for time and expenses could help address those challenges while preserving the volunteer nature of the fire service.

Volunteer firefighters dedicate substantial time to emergency response, training, meetings, fundraising, public education, advocacy, and maintaining operational readiness. In addition, volunteers often incur personal expenses related to fuel, vehicle use, childcare, meals, clothing, and equipment.

According to a 2020 survey conducted by the County Coordinators' Association of the State of New York, the main reason for the decline in volunteer firefighters is a lack of time. The demands on a volunteer firefighter due to the amount of required training, family obligations, secondary employment, and dual-income schedules often preclude people from joining or sustaining their membership.

"Many volunteers are balancing family responsibilities and multiple jobs while continuing to serve their communities," proponents said. "The concept of nominal compensation is intended to recognize those sacrifices and help remove barriers to service."

Currently, New York state does not allow this option to the authorities responsible for providing fire and emergency medical service. This needs to be addressed legislatively by elected officials in Albany. The Association Fire Districts of the State of New York (AFDSNY), New York State Association of Fire Chiefs (NYSAFC), County Coordinators' Association of the State of New York (CCASNY), and Nassau-Suffolk Long Island Fire Districts Legislative Committee collaborated with state officials to work on legislation to allow, on a voluntary basis, nominal compensation for volunteer fire department personnel.

These organizations, the actual stakeholders, represent the leaders who are responsible for making sure that communities have adequate and timely emergency services when people need it. There was a draft bill that had sponsorship in the New York State Assembly (A10630), along with a similar bill that unfortunately did not get to the New York State Senate in time before the legislative session ended. The aforementioned groups are committed to moving this initiative forward next year.

Supporters note that one of the original concepts discussed was expanding reasonable expense reimbursement for volunteers, an idea that was raised during joint discussions among state fire service organizations.

According to coalition representatives, FASNY was repeatedly invited to participate in meetings and discussions surrounding the development of nominal compensation proposals. While FASNY claims that they have supported this legislation from the beginning, that is totally untrue. On more than one occasion, FASNY has stated they will not support it at all. However, they have also stated they would support it, as amended by the coalition, but then the next day reverted to their position of opposition. Coalition members contend that participation by FASNY leadership has been inconsistent and opportunities for collaboration have not been fully realized.

"We have always believed that meaningful progress requires all statewide organizations to work together," coalition representatives said. "The volunteer fire service is strongest when we present a united front on major issues affecting recruitment and retention."

The organizations also expressed concern regarding what they view as conflicting public messaging concerning the state of volunteer firefighting in New York. While many fire service leaders have openly acknowledged
ongoing recruitment and retention challenges, coalition members believe certain public statements have minimized the severity of those issues.

Additional concerns raised by coalition members include:

· The absence of nominal compensation proposals within FASNY's recently released 14-point plan addressing volunteer fire service challenges.

· A perceived lack of member engagement regarding the organization's position on nominal compensation.

· Reports of internal communications that, according to proponents, discuss efforts to oppose or delay nominal compensation initiatives.
· Public comments and social media interactions that seemingly discouraged open discussion among volunteer firefighters with differing viewpoints.
Despite these concerns, coalition members emphasize that their goal is not to create division within the fire service. "This issue is bigger than any single organization," coalition representatives stated. "Every volunteer firefighter in New York deserves to have their concerns heard and their service valued. We remain committed to working with any organization that is willing to engage in constructive dialogue about solutions."
The coalition also believes it is important to address a recent article published in the July/August edition of The Volunteer Firefighter magazine. Unfortunately, the article presents a significantly different picture than what coalition members have experienced firsthand throughout this process. Several statements and characterizations in the article are inaccurate, incomplete, untrue or fail to reflect the reality of the discussions, negotiations, and actions that have occurred.
As a result, readers should be aware that the article does not fully represent the facts surrounding the issue of nominal compensation and the efforts undertaken by coalition members to advance this important legislation on behalf of New York's volunteer firefighters.
FASNY's mission, as stated on their website is, "To serve the volunteer fire and EMS services, and the public they serve, through education, advocacy, recruitment and retention, recognition and community service." Their organizational vision is, "To be the respected voice for legislation, regulation and standards while serving as the preeminent resource for recruitment, education and retention for the fire and EMS personnel." FASNY was established in 1872 and has provided an important voice for the volunteer fire and EMS service in New York state. However, they have no responsibility to provide fire and EMS service delivery. That is the responsibility of local government entities (towns, villages, fire districts) throughout the state. Respectfully, FASNY can be more accurately compared to a "union" for the volunteer fire and EMS service with a responsibility to advocate for benefits to support our brave first responders.
Unfortunately, they believe that because of the amount of financial assets they have, they are THE VOICE for the fire and EMS service at large. Although they do have a strong presence in the halls of Albany and political influence, they are not THE VOICE of the entire fire service. They are just "A" voice. Although they were at the table and agreed to support the nominal compensation initiative, it became evident that a small minority of FASNY representatives decided to undermine the effort being undertaken by the "stakeholders." They lobbied against the legislation and were able to stall its progression. Their main argument was that funding provided by the state is necessary so that all fire departments would have the ability to provide nominal compensation. The stakeholders are not against the need for funding; however, it was felt that it was most important to get the legislation passed so we could begin to assist our volunteer firefighters and fire departments and then go to the Governor and the Legislature during the budget process to obtain funding. By then, we had hoped to share success stories to use as evidence in the fight for funding. FASNY's shortsightedness, asking for funding with only days left in the session, caused the bill to die in committee.
New York state is a home rule state. Fire and EMS service delivery is a local responsibility, including its funding. Nominal compensation may not be necessary in all communities based on a local risk assessment, but for those fire departments that have a need or desire to provide that incentive, the legislation simply gives that authority on a voluntary basis. This is a win-win for both the community and for the members of those fire departments.
The coalition is encouraging volunteer firefighters, fire officers, fire district commissioners, and elected officials to review the nominal compensation concept and participate in discussions about the future of volunteer emergency services in New York state.

Provided by the NYS Fire Coordinators Association and Task Force and was this week sent out to all the fire coordinators in the state.

The Truth About the Status of Nominal Compensation Legislation for Volunteer Firefighters in New York: *FASNY Response to the August 18, 2026 NYSAFC Statement*

The Firefighters Association of the State of New York (FASNY) is compelled to respond to the recent statement issued by the New York State Association of Fire Chiefs (NYSAFC), in conjunction with the Association of Fire Districts of the State of New York (AFDSNY), and the County Fire Coordinators' Association of the State of New York regarding nominal compensation legislation. While NYSAFC is entitled to its own opinions, it is not entitled to invent its own facts to support such opinions. Among its many falsehoods, the NYSAFC statement mischaracterizes both FASNY's role in the legislative process and the benefits contained within the bill now advancing in both houses of the New York State Legislature.

We encourage you to review the article in the July-August 2026 issue of *The Volunteer Firefighter magazine.* Apparently, it is this article which prompted the public statement from NYSAFC and its so-called "coalition" cohorts. The article about the proposed legislation published in *The Volunteer Firefighter* was accurate when published and remains true today. It contains a straight-forward and detailed description of the benefits that volunteer firefighters in this State will realize when the legislation is passed. How that article became the basis for NYSAFC's vitriol and feigned outrage remains a mystery.

While the article in *The Volunteer Firefighter* gave credit to the aforementioned fire service organizations for our collective work on this initiative, the acknowledgement and accolades for collaboration went unappreciated. Some members of "the coalition" apparently took exception and chose to express their maligned thoughts publicly, rather than expressing them directly to FASNY leadership. The NYSAFC statement is both disappointing and disingenuous. Their claim for the need to present a "united front" for the fire service contained in the same statement that launches false and slanderous allegations against FASNY is a breathtaking example of their hypocrisy. Apparently, in their minds the unifying concepts of communication, collaboration, and cooperation are on a one-way street that runs only in the direction they are headed.

The most unfortunate part of the NYSAFC statement is that it fumbled away an opportunity to share the most important message to the reader, which is that the nominal compensation legislation that was endorsed by FASNY is now farther along in the legislative process than we have ever been with nominal compensation legislation, with identical bills sponsored in both the State Senate and State Assembly.

The Original Bill Promoted By The "Coalition" Was Never Going to Pass as Written

At a meeting on April 16, 2026 with legislative sponsors and every fire service organization—including FASNY — at the table, we were all told by legislative leadership that the original Assembly bill (A.10630) as introduced and as promoted by the coalition, was never going to pass as written. That bill required the authorizing local government "to fund the program" entirely on its own, with no opportunity for state assistance of any kind. It offered no payment option other than an arbitrary cash per-call or on-call stipend for interior firefighters, it did not include a state income tax exemption for the volunteers who received it, and it omitted any measure of oversight to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse. In addition, the original bill was only introduced in the Assembly and there was no companion bill being sponsored in the Senate.

The Big Lie

The NYSAFC statement attributes the original bill's inevitable failure as being a result of FASNY "asking for funding with only days left in the session". That claim ignores the truth, which is that representatives from all statewide fire service organizations were told on April 16, 2026 that the original bill would not pass as written. The shortcomings contained within the original bill itself caused it to be withdrawn. The fact that the original bill would have left smaller and financially constrained departments unable to compete with affluent ones — one of the gross inequities FASNY identified from the outset – was only one of a host of problems with the original bill.

The Current Bill Advancing Is a Stronger, Better Bill

Unlike the prior version, the current bill is sponsored in both houses of the Legislature — as Senate Bill S.10597 (Senator Monica Martinez) and its Assembly companion, A.10630-A (Assemblywoman Michaelle Solages), the chairs, respectively, of each house's Local Government Committee. Assemblywoman Solages sponsored the original bill, and then modified her bill in May 2026 to substitute it with the much-improved version of A.10630-A that is pending. The current Senate and Assembly bills are substantively identical, reflecting genuine, coordinated support behind the

legislation now moving forward. We appreciate the diligence and thoughtfulness that Senator Martinez and Assemblywoman Solages have demonstrated throughout their work on this bill.

It should not be lost upon the reader that the bill described and lamented in the NYSAFC statement does not exist. Rather, it was withdrawn and replaced in full by its sponsor to the current, improved version.

The current bill gives departments a wider range of compensation options that the original bill did not have. It expressly defines a "nominal fee" to include "a stipend, fee, gift card or gift certificate, gratuity, or other qualifying item of monetary value," so departments of every size can structure a program that fits their budget and their members' needs.

The current bill exempts these nominal fees "from payroll and income taxation under New York State law", in that it excludes the benefit from being included in a volunteer's income for New York State tax purposes. This was not in the original bill referenced by NYSAFC.

The current bill creates the State funding mechanism the original bill lacked entirely: the Volunteer Fire Service Nominal Compensation Assistance Fund, initially authorized at $15 million and prioritized for departments with demonstrated need and lower revenues under $400,000 annually. Where the original bill would have made every department pay for its own program out of local funds alone, the current bill ensures that a volunteer's ability to receive nominal compensation does not depend on the wealth of the community he or she serves.

Advocating for a Workable Program Is Progress, Not Opposition

FASNY has consistently supported the implementation of an effective, comprehensive, and thoughtful program for nominal compensation as a tool for both recruitment and retention. FASNY opposed endorsing a proposal that lacked responsible oversight and reporting responsibilities, failed to authorize a broad range of benefits including gift cards and other types of compensation, lacked income tax protections, and would have let departments in affluent communities outbid their neighboring working-class departments for the same volunteers, with no state-funding mechanism to level that playing field.

Each of the improvements now in the bill — sponsorship in both houses of the Legislature, the broader range of payment options, the State income tax exemption for recipients, and the State funding piece — are provisions the original bill did not contain and are exactly the safeguards that FASNY – and to our understanding, the other fire service organizations – identified as important to make this legislation work for every fire department in New York, not just those in the wealthy communities that can afford it. There is still more work to be done on the current version of the bill to further refine it and enhance it for New York's volunteer fire service.

FASNY remains committed to working with the Legislature and with every bona fide regional and statewide fire service organization to see this bill enacted as part of a broader recruitment and retention strategy. That strategy also includes an increase to the tax credit for volunteer firefighters and ambulance personnel, real property tax relief for volunteers, greater workplace protections for volunteers, and incentives designed to attract future generations of volunteer firefighters. That work is best done at the table, not through public tantrums and missives posted on blogs that deliberately misstate FASNY's longstanding positions and advocacy on key issues affecting the volunteer fire service.

While coalitions that seek to align various groups to promote their own self-interests and agenda will come and go, FASNY is and will remain as the only state-wide fire service organization whose mission is to serve the men and women that do the job that every other fire service organization depends on for its success and existence, you, the volunteer firefighters of the State of New York.

Rebuttal to FASNY's State Assistance Fund - Leave Funding Decisions to Local Authorities

While supporters of the revised nominal compensation legislation point to the addition of a $15 million state assistance fund as a major improvement, that provision should be removed. Decisions regarding volunteer firefighter compensation are best made and funded at the local level by the Authorities Having Jurisdiction (AHJs), which are the municipalities, fire districts, and fire protection districts directly responsible for providing fire service.

Volunteer fire departments operate under vastly different circumstances across New York State. A one-size-fits-all state funding program assumes that every community has the same needs, financial capacity, and staffing challenges. In reality, local officials are in the best position to determine whether nominal compensation is necessary, how much should be provided, and how it should be funded.

The inclusion of state funding creates an unnecessary burden on taxpayers statewide.

Residents in communities that choose not to offer compensation, or whose volunteer systems are functioning effectively without it, should not be required to subsidize compensation programs elsewhere. Local taxpayers already fund their fire protection systems through property taxes and district budgets. If a community determines that compensation is needed to recruit and retain volunteers, that community should decide whether it is willing to bear the associated costs.

Additionally, state aid programs often create long-term financial dependence. A $15 million fund may be available today, but there is no guarantee that future legislatures will continue the funding. Departments that structure recruitment and retention strategies around state subsidies could find themselves facing budget shortfalls if those funds are reduced or eliminated in the future. Local funding provides greater accountability and sustainability because decision-makers are directly responsible to the taxpayers who pay the bill.

Removing the state assistance fund would also preserve local control. Communities that support nominal compensation would remain free to implement it through their local budgets, while communities that oppose it could continue operating under the traditional volunteer model. This approach respects home rule principles and avoids having Albany influence local fire service compensation policies through state funding incentives.

If nominal compensation is a worthwhile recruitment and retention tool, local governments should have the authority to adopt and fund it according to their own needs and priorities. The legislation can still provide the legal framework that permits compensation, but it should not require taxpayers across New York to finance a program that is ultimately a local operational decision.

To AFDNYS Board Members,

If FASNYs intention is truly to set the record straight, then it is important that the full story be shared so that individuals can review all of the facts and draw their own conclusions.

On the morning of September 4, 2026, NYSAFC President Bill Owen hosted a meeting at the association's office outside Albany. In attendance were the sitting presidents of FASNY, AFDSNY, NYSAFC, and NYSCFC. The meeting was requested by FASNY President Don Farrell to discuss concerns surrounding the response issued by the other state fire service organizations regarding FASNY's article on Nominal Compensation.

The organizations represented at the meeting collectively expressed that they believed the FASNY article contained inaccuracies and did not fully or fairly represent the events leading up to that point. President Farrell stated that he felt the subsequent response from the other organizations was intended to damage his opportunity to serve as President of FASNY. He also emphasized that disagreements between organizations should not be aired publicly on social media and instead should be addressed professionally and constructively. Those in attendance appeared to share that sentiment.

A common theme throughout the discussion was the recognition that the New York State Fire Service is best served when its organizations work together rather than in opposition to one another. President Farrell stated that he did not wish to dwell on past disagreements and that the meeting represented an opportunity for a fresh start. He emphasized that, as President, his goal was to move beyond prior conflicts and focus on advancing the interests of the fire service.

The group engaged in a productive discussion regarding Nominal Compensation, OSHA 1910.156, the legislative process, and opportunities for greater collaboration among the state's fire service organizations. As a result, meetings were scheduled for October, November, and December to continue those conversations.

Participants also discussed the importance of direct communication, including addressing concerns and asking questions before disagreements escalate into public disputes.

During the meeting, there was also candid discussion about prior efforts to improve collaboration. Several attendees noted that on at least three previous occasions, they had left meetings believing meaningful progress had been made, only to be surprised by subsequent actions that appeared inconsistent with those discussions. Assurances were given that future interactions would be different and that all parties were committed to moving forward in good faith.

The meeting concluded on a positive note. Handshakes were exchanged, pleasantries were shared, and those in attendance left Albany optimistic that a new chapter of cooperation had begun.

Unfortunately, that optimism was short-lived. Less than four hours after the meeting concluded, leaders from the participating organizations began receiving numerous calls, messages, and emails from members expressing concern over a FASNY email and Facebook post that they believed sought to discredit the other New York State fire service organizations. Initially, many assumed the communication had been sent in error or without full context. It soon became apparent that this was not the case.

We are deeply disappointed that events have reached this point and that an opportunity for meaningful collaboration was so quickly undermined. The challenges facing the New York State Fire Service are significant, and they are best addressed through cooperation, mutual respect, and honest communication. Continued public conflict between organizations serves no constructive purpose and ultimately harms the very firefighters and communities we all exist to support.

AFDSNY Continues Efforts to Advance Nominal Compensation Legislation

The Association of Fire Districts of the State of New York (AFDSNY) is disappointed by the outcome of the 2026 legislative session regarding nominal compensation for volunteer firefighters. Despite the dedicated efforts of AFDSNY, the New York State Association of Fire Chiefs, the County Fire Coordinators Association of New York State, and many supporters across the state, the legislation was not enacted this year.

While this result is disappointing, it does not diminish our commitment to addressing the recruitment and retention challenges facing volunteer fire departments. AFDSNY will continue working with our legislative partners and stakeholder organizations to advance this important issue during the 2027 legislative session.

AFDSNY firmly believes that the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ), is best positioned to determine whether nominal compensation is an appropriate and necessary tool to help ensure adequate staffing levels for the communities they are charged with protecting. The legislation we have supported would simply provide locally elected officials and fire commissioners with the authority to make that determination.

Fire districts, along with villages and cities that rely on volunteer firefighters, are the governmental entities responsible for providing fire protection services. These local officials are accountable to the taxpayers and voters they serve and should have the flexibility to evaluate all available options and funding to meet community needs. This proposal does not mandate nominal compensation, nor does it require any municipality to implement such a program. Rather, it provides local governments with the ability to make that decision based on their own circumstances and in consultation with their volunteer members.

The decision whether to implement nominal compensation should remain a local choice. AFDSNY and its partners will continue advocating for legislation in 2027 that empowers fire districts, cities, and villages to make that determination at the local level and ensure they have the tools needed to provide effective and sustainable fire protection services.

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