



Barrington Fire & Rescue

774 Franklin Pierce Highway

Barrington, NH 03825

"Our Family Helping Yours"



Proposal to budget FF/EMT in FY 2022

August 1, 2021

- Objective:** Bring the Fire & Rescue Department to 24 hour coverage, 7 days per week, by two Firefighter/Emergency Medical Technicians (FF/EMT) with one full-time (F/T) on shift at all times as part of the Fire Chief's succession management plan. This will ultimately require increasing staffing from 228 hours per week to 336 hours per week.
- Rationale:** 24 hour staffing will allow the Fire & Rescue Department to better service our residents by providing quicker response times. Currently we average a 2 minute response time during the day and a 12 minute response time at night.
- 24 hour staffing would allow for a sustainable staffing model as we move in the direction of succession management.
- 24 hour staffing will allow us to better provide staffing on nights and weekends.
- Society today is less inclined to be able to devote large blocks of time to volunteer for Emergency Services, we are seeing less and less people willing to get out of bed at night to respond to calls when they must get out and work the next day.
- Proposal:** We recognize there are multiple ways to accomplish the stated objective over varying timelines. This following proposal would be the preferred option, but additional options are also summarized below.
- In FY 2022 we would propose budgeting for two F/T 48 hour a week positions for 9 months and budgeting another 12 hours a week for our current full-time staff (increasing both from 42 hours to 48 hours). The addition of the 2 new FF/EMT's and the 12 additional hours would allow us to operate with 1 F/T on 24 hours a day 7 days a week, in which they each would work 1 day have 2 days off, work 1 day and have 4 days off. This would bring our weekly staffed hours to 324. This staffing model is widely successful in the industry and multiple recent staff transitions cited 24 hour scheduling as a reason for transferring to another agency. With two additional F/T positions and the existing budgeted wages, we would be staffed with 2 FF/EMT's 24 hours a day Thursday to Monday. As the final step, we would propose adding the final 12 hours of staffing in FY 2023; this would accomplish the objective of 336 weekly staffed hours. This proposal still uses a mixture of full-time and part-time/per-diem people to provide the proposed staffing.
- Cost:** The cost to add two F/T FF/EMT's for 39 weeks including benefits as well as the additional 12 hour per week added to the current F/T employees would be

\$159,383 in the FY2022 budget. This equates to about \$0.14 per thousand on the tax rate.

Options: In order of preference:

1. Place the positions in the operating budget for 9 months in FY 2022 then budget a full year and the final 12 hours in FY 2023.
2. Place one position in the operating budget for 9 months in FY 2022 then budget that position for a full year in FY 2023, and budget the 2nd F/T position for 6 months in FY 2023 and full year and the final 12 hours in FY 2024.
3. Place one position in the FY 2022 operating budget for 9 months in FY 2022 budget the full position in FY 2023 add 24 hours of part-time/per-diem staffing in FY 2023 then add the F/T position for 9 months in FY 2024 and the total position in FY 2024.
4. Place both positions on a warrant article to the voters in FY 2022.

Cost Offset: While the intent of this proposal is not to save money, once this program is fully implemented there will be areas within the budget to show cost reductions as well as the potential for increased income from ambulance transports.

It is my intention to work with the Select board and Town Administrator to ultimately develop a plan that can be supported by all, to reach our intended goal.

Conclusion: I hope to first achieve consensus on the stated objective. Next, I hope to work with the Select Board to answer questions, provide additional information and crunch numbers to accomplish the objective. Finally, I hope to leave the Barrington Fire & Rescue Department in a successful and sustainable posture for the next Fire Chief.

Chief Rick Walker
Barrington Fire & Rescue