

Assembly Members,

It recently came to the attention of Hillside Community Council that Anchorage Fire Department leadership has mandated a \$2.4 million budget reduction. In south Anchorage the mandate includes an alarming reduction of apparatus that we believe may have adverse effects on AFD ability to respond to emergencies (please see the outline of targeted apparatus and explanation below provided by AFD). I certainly do not know the justifications for this reduction, but ask that HCC be provided those justifications and more importantly that you as assembly members look into this matter and ensure our city is adequately protected. In the past, AFD arbitrarily remove Tenders from their fleet that reduced the response capability of AFD in the event of a major emergency, this was done with no notice to the public.

My understanding is that the idealism behind these cuts is AFD is utilizing an event experience driven model that looks at the past to forecast equipment/apparatus needs in the future. Although this model in the business world has some benefits to reducing YOY operating cost, it does not flow well into EMS organizations and does not allow for future catastrophic events. In fact, it appears that if this is implemented will results in less than acceptable response times and ultimately result in an increase in the loss of life and property.

Outline of proposed cuts by AFD for the 2019 Budget:

Apparatus: Truck 12 (T12)

Location: Station 12 - Dimond & New Seward. Covers roughly the area from Dowling, South to Girdwood.

Staffing: A minimum of 3 firefighters or 4 when staffing allows

Tools:

- Ladders - for rescue and fire operations
- Fans - to assist with ventilation of smoke and gases from structures
- Salvage - items to assist with saving property during an incident
- Extrication - Hurst Equipment for vehicle extrication (JAWS of Life)
- Lighting - Scene lights and power for scene use

Scene Operations: This crew utilizes the tools above to accomplish tasks crucial to an emergency scene, not only to the public, but to the AFD crews as well. Within our operational guidelines we provide an internal Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) in the event that one of our own firefighters have the need for rescue. This task is given to our ladder truck crews in certain situations making them very valuable internally. During vehicle accidents that require patient extrication, trucks serve as the only apparatus that carry extrication tools (other than our 1 Rescue Rig at Station 4 Tudor and McInnes). T12 contains the only extrication equipment from Dowling to Indian, where we would call on Girdwood Fire Department if T12 is unavailable. The next available truck companies are located at Station 5 (Spenard) and Station 3 (Mountain View).

Apparatus: Tender 14 (Te14)

Location: Station 14 - Baxter & Tudor

Staffing: 1 Apparatus Engineer (Operator)

Operations: Tenders supply apparatus with water in the event an emergency scene occurs within an area without fire hydrants. This typically includes the hillside, mobile home neighborhoods, and in the case of Tender 14 it also includes the community of Stuckagain Heights. Tenders carry 2000-3000 gallons of water allowing fire suppression efforts to continue beyond the 750 gallons fire engines carry.

In summary, HCC would like the following to occur:

Provide an opportunity for AFD Chief to present her proposed reductions before the Community councils, to include justifications, anticipate benefits, and expected reductions in service as well the effects in the event of a major event.

Best Regards,

Bruce Vergason  
Chairman,  
Hillside Community Council  
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