

## **SUMMARY OF CAUCUS DISCUSSION AND MINUTES OF THE STRONGSVILLE CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, JUNE 15, 2020.**

The Council of the City of Strongsville met in the Caucus Room at the Mike Kalinich Sr. City Council Chamber, 18688 Royalton Road, on **Monday, June 15, 2020 at 7:30 p.m.**

**Present: Council Members:** Matthew A. Schonhut, Annmarie P. Roff, James A. Kaminski, Gordon C. Short Joseph C. DeMio, Kelly A. Kosek and James E. Carbone. Also Present: Clerk of Council Aimee Pientka. **Administration:** Mayor Thomas P. Perciak, Law Director Neal M. Jamison, Human Resource Director Steve Kilo, Service Director Joe Walker, Public Safety Director Charles Goss and Fire Chief Jack Draves.

Absent: Finance Director Joseph Dubovec, Economic Development Director Brent Painter, Building Commissioner Mike Miller, City Engineer Ken Mikula, Recreation and Senior Services Director Bryan Bogre, Communications and Technology Director David E. Sems and Police Chief Mark Fender.

Council President Schonhut called the caucus to order at 7:33 p.m.

The following Council Committees met to review legislation on the agenda:

Planning, Zoning & Engineering Committee: Chairman Schonhut advised Ordinance No. 2020-080 is to accept for recording purposes only the subdivision plat for Commerce Parkway. Resolution No. 2020-081 to declare the intent of council to accept for dedication certain streets within the Commerce Parkway subdivision. There was discussion at the last council meeting, and through Planning Commission, to make sure there was buffering along Prospect Road for this project. Mr. Short advised there were some questions about the level of payment that would be deployed and used up to Code standards. He would like to know how that is being addressed in terms of the construction of the new roadway over there. Mr. Walker advised he discussed this with City Engineer, Ken Mikula and reviewed their engineer's design plans. Currently, there is 8 inches of reinforced concrete there. Our Code calls for 9 inches. They will extend the width of that to make it up to Code (adding 5 feet), and will also do a 3 inch asphalt overlay; so that will be structurally greater than what the city's Code calls for. Mr. Walker and Mr. Mikula feel comfortable with their design and installation. The recommendation was to suspend and adopt this legislation. Suspension and adoption was also recommended for Ordinance No. 2020-093; an ordinance authorizing the mayor to enter into a release and vacation of an easement and accept a new grant of easement for the construction, reconstruction, maintenance, operation and repair of a storm sewer drainage system in connection with property located at 14356 Castelreagh Lane (sublot 46, PPN 398-17-041) in the Avery Walden Reserve Subdivision, Phase 2. Mr. Kaminski advised the homeowners would like to put in a pool and they had to move a swale to the back of the yard. Their neighbors will eventually be matching that so there will be no issues with water flowing in between the yards. This will be placed on first reading and referred to the Planning Commission for their recommendation.

Finance Committee: Chairman DeMio recommend suspension and adoption for Ordinance No. 2020-085; an appropriations ordinance for the annual expenses and other expenditures for the city. Ordinance No. 2020-086 is to amend General Salary Ordinance No. 2019-187 to establish, allocate and fix the compensation of the position of part-time firefighter-paramedic (Section 5-121) in the Department of Public Safety. Mr. Jamison advised he spoke to Mr. Schonhut and Ms. Kosek about potentially amending this legislation tonight to change Section 2 to add a sunset provision so that it would be added in the body, "...until December 31, 2021." This way, council would have to revisit this if they would want to extend this amendment. This ordinance is to establish payment for individuals who would be hired for this position. The actual enacting of the legislation to hire part-time employees was done in 1971. Ms. Kosek advised council would need to take affirmative action to extend this amendment by December 31, 2021; or it would expire at that time. The idea with this amendment is

the city is in a current financial emergency, but will have time in the future to determine if this will still be necessary on a long-term basis. Mayor Perciak agrees with this amendment. He advised it would provide an opportunity to continually review the city's cash flow and balance sheet. Mr. DeMio advised Chief Draves provided council with information pertaining to this. Chief Draves advised some of council reached out to him with questions regarding this; and he provided the answers through the information handout given to them. Mr. Kosek asked the mayor if he had an idea of how many part-time people he would like to hire for this position. Mayor Perciak advised he will defer to Chief Draves as to how many he thinks he would need for running of the operation. Mayor Perciak is hoping the current majority of full-time firemedics who are either out on sick leave or light duty will be back soon to report to duty. Mayor Perciak advised today, he swore in a full-time firemedic and he will be swearing in an additional one tomorrow. With this, Mayor Perciak is hopeful that will alleviate some of the manpower problems. Ultimately, it will be analyzed on a daily and weekly basis. Ms. Kosek asked how long the process took to hire the two recent full-time firemedics. Chief Draves advised that it takes a while going through the civil service process because the city first has to obtain a certified list; then you have to go down that list to see if they are still interested in the position. In addition, the recent Covid-19 pandemic has slowed the process down for polygraph and hospital testing. Ms. Kosek asked when was the retirement and resignation of the two employees. Chief Draves advised the resignation of the employee was April 6<sup>th</sup> and the retirement was April 30<sup>th</sup>. He advised the two new hires will be joining the shifts next week. They are in orientation this week. Mayor Perciak advised the gentleman he swore in this week is a part-time firemedic from Hinkley who is already well trained for the position. Chief Draves advised the other gentleman has experience from Perkins Township in Vermillion. Ms. Kosek asked if the hiring of a part-time firemedic would take a couple of months as well. Chief Draves advised it would; they would have to establish an application and hiring process, interviews will be needed in order to provide a list to civil service, as well as any other additional hiring steps. Ms. Kosek asked what other possibilities were considered besides the hiring of part-time employees. Chief Draves advised city administration did discuss some other options with the fire union. The union came up with a proposal to continue working overtime to keep the staffing level at 13. Instead of receiving money upfront, it would be banked and paid out at a later time when the city was fiscally able to. The issue was if that payment time went into 2021, the city could be paying out at a higher rate because of pay raises for that year. The city's labor attorney also advised the city could not do this because it was in violation of federal labor law. Chief Draves advised there isn't really a lot of options the city administration has as alternatives when it is in a temporary suspension of overtime. He has temporarily assigned some trained staff personnel to fill in and cover the shifts' manpower. The assistant chiefs have been placed on an altered schedule as well. Vacation time has been deferred or allowed to be cancelled, if the firemedic wishes, and can then be cashed out at the end of the year. Ms. Roff asked if straight comp time was considered as an option. Chief Draves advised that was considered but there were interpretation discrepancies of that in the contract language. Ms. Roff asked if the part-time firemedics the city is looking to hire have already taken a civil service test or would the city have to issue a new test. Chief Draves advised anyone to be considered can be taken off the city's current civil service list. That list has been extended to December, 2020. Firefighters in other cities can be considered on a lateral transfer list; so there's two options the city has to hiring. For any future civil service entrance exam tests, the candidate will have the option to check if they wish to be considered for full-time employment, part-time employment or both. Ms. Roff asked what is an approximate cost to train a part-time firemedic. Chief Draves advised anyone who is hired has to come with the required training for the position-they have to be a State of Ohio paramedic and they have to have their firefighter card. These are the rules established by the city's civil service commission. Once employed, there will need to be some on-the-job training to get oriented to the city's operation within the fire department. They will be working with 2 other firemedics in their crews during training. Ms. Roff asked what would be the preference with staffing once the city becomes financially responsible. Chief Draves advised that will be an economic and operational decision that will be determined at that time. Ms. Roff asked if he had an idea of the number of firemen he wanted to hire part-time. Chief Draves advised that is dependent on operational and financial issues at the time. He would like to start off conservatively. Mayor Perciak advised the city has been

working with the Ohio Senate and will be receiving some funding to help with the city's financial circumstances; however, it is hard to determine how the city will implement part-time firemedics because it is dependent on financial variables that are unknown to the city at this present time. Ms. Roff asked if overtime is currently happening for any other employees. Mayor Perciak advised at the present time, the only employees that were recently paid overtime were the employees who worked this past weekend during the protest and demonstration in Strongsville. Aside from an emergency situation like the demonstration, a severe storm that knocks down trees, etc., all overtime has been temporarily stopped. Ms. Roff asked what was spent in overtime in the fire department for 2019. Mayor Perciak advised the city paid \$587,349.00 in overtime to the department. Over the past three years, the overtime and benefits for the firemedics came to approximately \$2.5 million dollars. Ms. Roff asked how many full-time firefighters would need to be hired to cover the overtime gap. Chief Draves advised it is hard to determine because some of the overtime is contractual. Overtime is also dependent on how many people are sick, how much comp time is utilized, etc. Ms. Kosek asked what other departments in the city have been paid in overtime during the same time period. Mayor Perciak advised he will get her that information. Mr. Carbone asked if there would ever be 2-3 part-timers together at a station. Chief Draves advised it depends on the situation at that time. He would make sure there was always one full-time firemedic with them; however, his preference is no more than one part-time at each station. That will all be dependent on how many full-time firemedics are available that day and the other resources available. Ms. Roff asked if events that the city puts on are desirable for our full-time firemedics to work at. Chief Draves advised it depends what is going on in their personal lives or schedules at that time. For example, this weekend during the demonstration, there was difficulty in getting two firemedics to come in to work the ambulance. It resulted in him having to mandate two to come in. Mr. Schonhut asked in regards to the ordinance that was passed in 1971, that states that in the event any part-time person were to be brought into the city, they still have to be approved by the majority of council. Mr. Jamison advised it doesn't say approved by a majority; it states shall be accepted. It is Mr. Jamison's opinion that by passing the legislation tonight, council is accepting it by creating the funding source for it. Ms. Roff asked if the firemedics hired would be permanent part-time employees. Chief Draves advised that typically when openings are posted, the part-timers would sign up when they are available. Ms. Roff asked about outfitting the part-timers with gear. Chief Draves advised they would be issued gear and equipment just like every other firefighter.

Public Service & Conservation Committee: Chairman Kaminski recommended suspension and adoption for Ordinance No. 2020-087; an ordinance authorizing the mayor to enter into an agreement with a firm of consultants to provide engineering design and consulting services for the City of Strongsville's wastewater treatment plants and Westwood lift station. Resolution No. 2020-088 is to authorize the mayor to advertise for bids for the furnishing of solid waste, recyclable materials and yard waste collection services; for operation and maintenance of the city's transfer station; and for the receipt, transport and disposal of solid waste in the City of Strongsville. Suspension and adoption was recommended for that legislation.

Recreation & Community Services Committee: Ms. Kosek recommended suspension and adoption for Ordinance No. 2020-089; an ordinance authorizing the mayor to enter into a non-exclusive rental/occupancy agreement with the Greater Cleveland Seniors Softball Association on a limited basis for 2020 for use of various baseball fields in the City of Strongsville. Suspension and adoption was also recommended for Ordinance No. 2020-090; an ordinance ratifying and authorizing the mayor to apply for and accept funding from the Ohio Parks & Recreation Association Foundation in order to provide materials for certain recreation department programs.

Public Safety & Health Committee: Chairman Short recommended suspension and adoption for Ordinance No. 2020-091; an ordinance ratifying and approving the filing of an application for financial assistance with the Ohio Department of Administrative Services, 9-1-1 program office, and the Ohio Department of Commerce, for reimbursement of funds to be expended by the City of Strongsville for the Southwest Emergency Dispatch Center. This is for four new workstations for the dispatch center. The grant provides up to 60% of the cost, which is \$12,041.82.

Committee of the Whole: Mr. Schonhut advised Ordinance No. 2020-076 is to approve and authorize the acceptance of coronavirus relief funding under the Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act and Ohio Senate Bill No. 310, affirming the expenditure of said funds by the City consistent with the CARES Act. This legislation has had two readings. This will be amended tonight to reflect it now being called House Bill 481. The recommendation was to adopt as amended. Ordinance No. 2020-092 is to ratify and approve the filing of an application for financial assistance with the Office of Criminal Justice Services, Division of the Ohio Department of Public Safety, for reimbursement of funds expended by the City of Strongsville in connection with the Strongsville Coronavirus Mitigation Program. The reimbursement is for the total estimated costs of \$77,833.64. Suspension and adoption was recommended for that legislation.

**MINUTES OF THE STRONGSVILLE CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, JUNE 15, 2020 IN THE MIKE KALINICH SR. CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS.**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Council President Schonhut called the meeting to order at 8:05 p.m. All joined in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mr. Schonhut – So, just so, those of you who have never joined us before, we will go through some Committee reports, many similar to what some of you may just heard, some reports from the administration and then audience participation for any of you that wish to address us tonight before moving on to voting on our legislation.

**CERTIFICATION OF POSTING:**

The Clerk of Council certified that the meeting had been posted in accordance with Ordinance No. 2004-273.

**ROLL CALL:**

**Present: Council Members:** Matthew A. Schonhut, Annmarie P. Roff, James A. Kaminski, Gordon C. Short Joseph C. DeMio, Kelly A. Kosek and James E. Carbone. Also Present: Clerk of Council Aimee Pientka. **Administration:** Mayor Thomas P. Perciak, Law Director Neal M. Jamison, Human Resource Director Steve Kilo, Service Director Joe Walker, Public Safety Director Charles Goss and Fire Chief Jack Draves.

Absent: Finance Director Joseph Dubovec, Economic Development Director Brent Painter, Building Commissioner Mike Miller, City Engineer Ken Mikula, Recreation and Senior Services Director Bryan Bogre, Communications and Technology Director David E. Sems and Police Chief Mark Fender

**COMMENTS ON MINUTES:**

The Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held on June 1, 2020 were approved as submitted.

**APPOINTMENTS, CONFIRMATIONS, AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS:**

(None)

**REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES:**

**SCHOOL BOARD – Mr. Carbone:** Yes, at the last school board meeting, the treasurer talked about the medical prescription premiums increasing by 3.0...

Ms. Pientka – Mr. Carbone, can you put the mic by your mouth, please? Thank you.

Mr. Carbone – The last school board meeting, the Treasurer talked about the medical prescription premiums increasing to 3.03% effective July 1<sup>st</sup>. Also, the 2021 Athletic Handbook was approved and congratulations to Vardaan Shah and Nina Wei, members of the class 2021; both of them scored a perfect 36 on their ACT, and that ends my report.

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you Mr. Carbone, does anybody have anything else for Mr. Carbone or out of the School Board?

(No comments)

**SOUTHWEST GENERAL HEALTH SYSTEM – Mr. Short:** Thank you Mr. Schonhut. We did not have a board meeting as of yet through end of May; but, the hospital, as of June 2<sup>nd</sup>, is fully reopened for all non-essential and other procedures, according with the Ohio Department of Health regulations; so it is back to fully operational. Through June 2<sup>nd</sup>, they had a 100 total cases of COVID at the hospital. Three are still in-patient; again, the week as of June 2<sup>nd</sup>, and those numbers continue to decline as well; but, that was the total amount that they had to date at Southwest. That concludes my report and we should have a board meeting at the end of the month; but I will happily take any questions.

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you Mr. Short, any questions for Mr. Short?

(No comments)

**BUILDING AND UTILITIES – Mr. DeMio:** Nothing before this body tonight.

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you Mr. DeMio, anything else for Building and Utilities?

(No comments)

**COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY – Ms. Roff:** I do not have anything at this time; but, I will happily take any questions.

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you Ms. Roff, are there any questions for Ms. Roff?

(No comments)

**REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES (cont'd):**

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – Mr. Carbone:** Yes, we will be having an Economic Development meeting on Monday, June 29<sup>th</sup> at 7 o'clock. It's going to be at the center of town so we can social distance. We are going to be talking about how we can support our businesses here in Strongsville, supporting them in getting back on their feet from the last couple months. That email will go out to the committee; but all are welcome. 7 o'clock on The Commons on Monday, June 29<sup>th</sup> and that ends my report.

Mr. DeMio – If I can have a follow-up, Jim, I just want to take an opportunity, mayor, our law director, Mike Miller is not here; but, I asked them to come up with a plan to allow restaurants to expand their outdoor eating area since the restaurants' kitchen capacity is so much more than what is available to them by the Health Department. Our restaurants are taking advantage of that; some of them are and I want to thank them for that. That is a tremendous plus for those who are going to be able to do that. And I did share with them, mayor as you asked me to, that there is a cutoff of right around October 1<sup>st</sup>; but each restaurant will make sure that they know the proper date and time and I appreciate Mr. Goss working with the Liquor Commission and working with the safety of how those facilities can expand in a safe way. I just want to make sure that's a note, and so all of council knows as well, I that we're able to do that now.

Mr. Jamison – Right, and if I can just add Mr. Chairman that I had spoken to Mr. DeMio a couple times about that and we're already working with two establishments now. We are going to fast track those so they don't get delayed administratively; but as I told Mr. DeMio, by putting them in the parking lots, our biggest concern is to provide for the safety of the people in those parking lots so that a wayward motorist wouldn't run into anybody. So, we are going to make sure that safety is provided for those patrons for those areas that might designated. That is something we're going to work with everybody and hopefully, some will take advantage of it.

Mr. DeMio – And thank you, because that a crystal clear statement by myself and I know Mr. Goss, Charlie Goss, who also fielded or possibly fielded some questions. He was going to make sure they understood that as well because that's all our concerns. I just wanted to put that in the record and Mike Miller has been awesome and that's the person I asked them to contact first. So, we good then, Neal with that?

Mr. Jamison – Yes sir.

Mr. DeMio – Okay.

Mr. Schonhut – Anybody else have anything else for Economic Development?

(No comments)

**FINANCE – Mr. DeMio:** Thank you so much, we have Ordinance No. 2020-085; which is our annual expenses. We do this every year, get everything in order and there were no additions to this tonight. We're good to suspend and adopt. Also, Ordinance No. 2020-086, the part-time request by the administration. If our law director can share with everybody tonight what the addition and the amendments are that we did in caucus so everyone is aware exactly what we are voting on.

**REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES (cont'd):**

**FINANCE – Mr. DeMio (cont'd):**

Mr. Jamison – Okay, so, Ordinance No. 2020-086 is basically amending the salary ordinance for the City of Strongsville. Each community is different in terms of how they do it. In Strongsville, we assign basically a number and a range to how you get paid. The ordinance that allowed for part-time was actually enacted back in 1971; so, it's always been on the books and it's still there. It allows for the city to hire up to 20 part-time Firefighters for the fire department. The purpose tonight is to establish the pay range for that part-time firefighter/paramedic position. Council has proposed an amendment that would basically say that this amendment of the salary ordinance would be in effect until December 31, 2021; for the purpose to see that we get through the current crisis economically and also to see how it's working. Then, council would have the ability to revisit the issue at the end of 2021.

Mr. DeMio – Let's make it crystal clear, we have to vote on it, correct?

Mr. Jamison – Yes.

Mr. DeMio – We don't just let it go in limbo, we just don't let it go on forever...

Ms. Kosek – Well, if we don't vote on it then it would go away.

Mr. Jamison – Right.

Ms. Kosek – It would expire...

Mr. DeMio – Correct...

Ms. Kosek – We would have to take affirmative action to continue it.

Mr. DeMio – I understand...

Mr. Jamison – Correct.

Mr. DeMio – I just want to make sure that's crystal clear...

Mr. Jamison – Right, so if the council a year in a half from now decided to revisit and extend it, that would be up to that council at the time. If they chose not to, then basically the funding for that position would go away...

Mr. DeMio – Correct, and then mayor, what is the number, as of today, of our...that we're short; so we are all on the same page...

Mayor Perciak – I will give a financial update during my report...

Mr. DeMio – During your report, alright...

Mayor Perciak – Yes.

Mr. DeMio – Okay, and that's all we have tonight.

Mr. Schonhut – I know we had some, did...I know we were going with questions in Caucus...

**REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES (cont'd):**

**FINANCE – Mr. DeMio (cont'd):**

Mr. DeMio – Anyone wants to add anything, please, feel free.

Ms. Kosek – The questions that I had we answered in caucus and I'm sure we'll have some audience participation where there may be some addition questions; but right now, I'm satisfied with the answers that I received.

Mr. Schonhut – Okay, Ann?

Ms. Roff – I would just like to have more clarification at a future meeting or maybe an email as far as what we're spending opposed to hiring a full-time employee...what the gap is.

Ms. Kosek – Are you asking what it costs to hire a new employee, a new full-time employee?

Ms. Roff – How many we would need, a new full-time employee; how many we would need to cover the overtime that we're paying out right now that is overtime that's unexpected as opposed to overtime that is for special events.

Mr. Schonhut – I think that's a difficult question to give a solid, firm answer to; only because you don't know how much vacation, comp, sick time is ever going to be used. That number could probably fluctuate heavily based off of that.

Ms. Roff – Oh absolutely, that's why I'm asking, like what...the average...an average ballpark, I guess, of how many guys we would need to alleviate some of that gap I guess.

Mayor Perciak – Ann, I think we answered that earlier. We hired one gentleman or swore in one this afternoon. Another Firefighter/Paramedic will be sworn in tomorrow at 10 o'clock, and then we're hoping the three that are light duty or two that are on light duty and the third one will be coming back and then that will give the chief and the deputy's chiefs a better chance to analyze as to what they're going to need. Understand, no one is doing this because we take pleasure in doing this. This is all being done as a matter of the financial situation that no only this city could be in or would be in or the other cities. We're being proactive. We're meeting it head on at this time. I can only talk about the amount of overtime that was paid over the last three years; which I addressed in the caucus. Other than that, it's simply up to each line of business in the city and in this case, it's the fire department to determine how to run their line of business.

Mr. Schonhut – Anybody else have anything at this time?

Ms. Kosek – I guess I just have one additional question. Chief Draves, when you provided the handout today, you told us what it would be for a full-time firefighter with 15 years and gave us a total cost of about \$134,000.00 and some change. Do you know what the numbers would be for a first year firefighter if we hired someone completely fresh? What the difference would be?

Chief Draves – I have those numbers here. Give me one second please.

Ms. Kosek – Thank you.

Chief Draves – So, a first year firefighter annual total pay for hours worked is \$43,415.00 and then that carries \$44,430.00 of Fringe benefits. So, you're looking at about, what's that \$88,000.00-\$90,000.00 total compensation package.



**REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES (cont'd):**

**FINANCE – Mr. DeMio (cont'd):**

Ms. Kosek – Okay, thank you, I appreciate that.

Chief Draves – Sure, remember too, these individuals when in their first year don't have vacation time and some other things. That's stuff that needs to be accounted for as well.

Ms. Kosek – Totally understand, I was just trying to get a baseline of what the comparison would be. I appreciate that thank you.

Chief Draves – Yep, you're welcome.

Ms. Roff – I do have one more question actually...as far as part-time work goes, if we have somebody here that's part-time and they are from another fire department full-time, if they were to be injured here on the job, what does that look like for...?

Mr. Schonhut – In relation to workers comp?

Chief Draves – Well, we carry a workers compensation on our employees; so, they would be covered here and then however that's going to work with their...if they're going to be injured off duty at their other job and so they'll have to work that with their employer how they're going to be off for potentially for the next three or four months.

Ms. Kosek – So, following up on that; but we would be responsible for their full pay if they were injured here, correct?

Chief Draves – They're an employee here, yep.

Ms. Kosek – Okay.

Ms. Roff – Would we be responsible for their pay at their other job?

Chief Draves – I don't believe so, no. No, we'd cover them for here, for the hours and job that they're doing here...

Mr. Schonhut – Steve, do you want to address that at all?

Chief Draves – That's my understanding. I'm not the human resource director or a labor attorney; but, no.

Mr. Kilo – Their time would only be relative to what they worked here and we wouldn't be responsible for any other agency they worked for.

Ms. Kosek – So, they would just claim on their workers comp for their other job even though they were working here? Sorry, I'm not a labor attorney; so I don't...that's why I'm asking.

Mr. Kilo – Basically, where your injured is where you're going to file your workers comp claim and how you're related in your employment to that agency is going to determine how much you...you know, how you qualify. It's not going to be if you get injured here that the City of Strongsville is going to be responsible for their wages from someplace else.

**REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES (cont'd):**

**FINANCE – Mr. DeMio (cont'd):**

Ms. Kosek – Okay.

Ms. Roff – One more question, do we have any firefighters that are present right now that work in other fire departments part-time.

Chief Draves – Yes, about 25% of our current full-time firefighters work part-time somewhere else.

Ms. Ross – For another fire department or just part-time...?

Chief Draves – Yes. Yeah, there may be one or two that work at an EMS agency or an emergency department as a paramedic; but, they're using their skillset that use here in other function part-time somewhere else.

Ms. Roff – Okay.

Mr. DeMio – Matt, you good? Any questions? Gordon?

Mr. Short – I'm good.

Mr. DeMio – Jim?

Mr. Kaminski – I'm good.

Mr. DeMio – Mayor, nothing else you want to add?

Mayor Perciak – No.

Mr. DeMio – Okay, I'll close the committee otherwise.

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you Mr. DeMio.

**PLANNING, ZONING AND ENGINEERING – Mr. Schonhut:** Three things on the agenda tonight, first is Ordinance No. 2020-080 and also sister to that Resolution No. 2020-081. This is accepting for recording purpose the subdivision plat of Commerce Parkway is 80, we will suspend and adopt that tonight, please. Resolution No. 2020-081 is accepting for dedication the certain streets on Commerce Parkway; so, that will also suspend and adopt tonight. Lastly, we have a grant of easement for a house over on Castlereagh Lane that's going to be put on first reading and sent over to Planning Commission. Does anybody have any questions on any of that?

(No comments)

**REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES (cont'd):**

**PUBLIC SAFETY AND HEALTH – Mr. Short:** Thank you Mr. Schonhut, we have Ordinance No. 2020-091; which is to apply for a grant for financial assistance with the Ohio Department of Administrative Services through the 9-1-1 Program for four workstations at the dispatch center. This will pay for 60% of the total cost; which that 60% is estimated to be about \$12,041.82. Again, the other 40%, which is \$4,816.73, will be paid for locally here. The recommendation there is to suspend and adopt. I just also want to recognize that we had some peaceful demonstrations in city over the weekend. I think our police, our safety forces handled it well. I think the demonstrators were peaceful and I think it just reflects on the community as a whole of how we are inclusive and how we are open to other points of view; but it was also done peacefully and everything was safe and you know Strongsville, I think is a better place for it. I do want to commend Safety Director Goss, Chief Fender, the Mayor, Chief Draves, and the fire/paramedics and also the police that we there, in case they were needed; but happily they weren't, and I think that's what America is about- is to have those types of demonstrations and voices heard that doesn't resort to violence or anything like that; so hats off to our safety forces. That will conclude my report but I will happily take any questions.

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you Mr. Short, any questions for Mr. Short?

(No comments)

**PUBLIC SERVICE AND CONSERVATION – Mr. Kaminski:** Yes, we have two items on the agenda this evening. Ordinance No. 2020-087; which is to go into an agreement for engineering design and consulting services for the wastewater treatment plant and the Westwood lift station. The recommendation is suspension and adoption. Also, Ordinance No. 2020-088 which is to advertise for bids for the waste collection service and transfer station. That's also suspension and adoption this evening and that concludes my report.

Ms. Kosek – I do have a question...

Mr. Schonhut – Go ahead, yup.

Ms. Kosek – We didn't get to talk about it because we were kind of rushed in caucus a little bit. I just wondered what the RFP looks like for the trash. I know that we've had a lot of discussion going back and forth about changes that might be coming. So, I'm just asking, what are we asking people to bid on and what does that look like?

Mr. Walker – The solid waste side of it is going to remain just as our service is currently. The operation of the transfer facility, everything from the residential drop off to the operation of the transfer station itself, is remaining the same. In the recycle part of this, we're bidding it with three different options. One of them is the current program. The second is with the toter system, the tippers if you will, weekly and then we're bidding a third item which is the toter system bi-weekly; because with the size of those toters, a lot of the communities say they can actually do that on a every other week collection. So, we are going to bid that all three different ways.

Ms. Kosek – Okay, just so that I make sure that I understand, I think you said it and I just want to make sure. So, there would be no change to the regular garbage. We're not going to get big bins for regular garbage or change bulk pickup or anything like that. That is going to remain the same?

Mr. Walker – Correct, we're not making any changes to that program.

Ms. Kosek – Okay, and then we're getting three options for recycle?

**REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES (cont'd):**

**PUBLIC SERVICE AND CONSERVATION – Mr. Kaminski (cont'd):**

Mr. Walker – Yes.

Ms. Kosek – Okay, thank you.

Mr. Walker – You're welcome.

Mr. Kaminski – Any additional questions?

Mr. Schonhut – I would just say that is probably somewhat pending to make sure those costs come back within a reasonable, affordable level too- that we don't have to make any changes beyond that.

Ms. Kosek – But that's what we're asking for right now.

Mr. Schonhut – Correct.

Mr. Walker – And that's correct, that's one of the reasons why we're offering the three options with the recycle industry has gone down the tubes here lately; so we're looking at different options to try and minimize that cost.

Mayor Perciak – And if I may, Mr. President, we've had these discussions in the past. Especially at the end of last year when really our, our current carrier wanted to increase some of our fees because of the recycling crisis and at that time we already started preliminary discussions with them as to what really do you need so that we can keep our contract pretty much flat. To be honest with you, they looked at me like...if I was a man from another planet. I think that's a safe assessment, isn't it Mr. Walker?

Mr. Walker – Yes sir.

Mayor Perciak – So, am I looking for the trash total contract to come back at the same level of three years ago? Yes. Is that a realistic hope? No. We're going to pay more and that's just the way it's going to be. How much more, I don't know; but that's why we started early so that we'll have time to go through all these things line by line and understand them, and understand where we're spending our money.

Mr. Walker – The last time we went out to bid on this program, the recyclable dollars were so high that they offset some of the cost on the solid waste side and that is not only completely gone away, but now the recycle side of life is actually costing the contractor's money. We'll be lucky to come out of this without a large increase.

Mr. Schonhut – Anybody have anything else on that?

(No comments)

Mr. Schonhut – If not, that's all you got Jimmy?

Mr. Kaminski – Yep. That concludes my report.

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you.

**REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES (cont'd):**

**RECREATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES – Ms. Kosek:** Yes, we have two ordinances on the agenda tonight; Ordinance No. 2020-089 and Ordinance No. 2020-090. Ordinance No. 2020-089 is giving the Mayor authorization to enter into a non-exclusive rental agreement with the Greater Cleveland Senior Softball for the 2020 season. Ordinance No. 2020-090 is authorizing the Mayor to apply and accept funding from a grant for, excuse me, from Ohio Parks and Recreation Association, which would be in the amount of \$500.00, to allow us to do some virtual sporting events for our people at the recreation center because COVID has kind of cut down on what we can do there. Both of those should be to suspend and adopt, please. Does anybody have any questions? If not, I'll end my report.

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you Ms. Kosek.

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – Mr. Schonhut:** We have two ordinances tonight. Ordinance No. 2020-076; this is on third reading; so there will be no need for suspension, just to adopt. This was Senate Bill No. 310; which turned into Bill No. 481, as our law director pointed out, we'll have a couple amendments to that tonight when we get to that portion of the meeting; so we'll ask that we adopt that tonight so we can get the funds rolling in for that. Ordinance No. 2020-092; this is an application for financial assistance from the Office of Criminal Justice Services, just north of \$77,000.00, in relation to the coronavirus mitigation program. I ask that we suspend and adopt that tonight, please. Does anybody else have anything out of any reports before we move on?

Mr. Kaminski – Just the addition of 2020-093; that's the first reading, send to Planning.

Mr. Schonhut – Yup that was under Planning Commission, we covered that part. Yep, go it. Anybody have anything else?

(No comments)

**REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR, DIRECTORS OF DEPARTMENTS AND OTHER OFFICERS:**

**MAYOR PERCIAK:** Thank you Mr. President, good evening everyone. Just a...I know there's a full house here today; but just an update as I have ever since this coronavirus pandemic started on our financial situation or the State of the City to the best we know as of June 12<sup>th</sup>. As of June 12<sup>th</sup>, our R.I.T.A collected taxes, and these are the numbers that come to us from R.I.T.A, our income taxes, our net profit tax and our credit reduction tax, the total amount is down \$4.7 million, or if you'd like an exact amount, \$4,704,588.00. Now, what is more startling, which I presented to the council people and to some of our firefighters at the civil service meeting last week is the Strongsville unemployment rate. These are numbers furnished to us by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. This is not something that we track here. Just to give you an example, in December, 2019, our unemployment rate was 2.7% and the number of unemployed we had to according to the Bureau was 656. The latest numbers that I have is as of April 30<sup>th</sup> and our unemployment rate went from 2.7% in that short period of time to 20.7% and our number of unemployed is 4,830. That would tie significantly to the amount of dollars that R.I.T.A submits to us on a daily basis. Now, we have been addressing this as most of the council knows and some of our residents, since this pandemic started. The first thing we did was make as many cutbacks in spending as we could. Those cutbacks, as most of you know were in excess of a million dollars and at today's Staff meeting, with all the directors, I again repeated to them the need for further cutbacks as this bleeding continues; and so I am waiting to hear as to what those further cutbacks could be; but a million dollars is a million dollars and we're doing that so that we can literally keep cash to meet all our payroll expenses and our day to day expenses here.

**REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR, DIRECTORS OF DEPARTMENTS AND OTHER OFFICERS:**

**MAYOR PERCIAK (cont'd):** Now, what we also have also done, is we have asked all of our non-bargaining employees and our Teamsters, our service department workers, and each one of them have agreed to take a 20% pay cut and that became effective, what day was that Neal?

Mr. Jamison – June 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mayor Perciak – June 1<sup>st</sup>, so including me, the council, everyone, in addition to that 20% pay cut at our rec center, as most of you know, more than half of our employees have been laid off there and are not back even though we have reopened the center. Because of the COVID restrictions, we believe we don't need as many employees as we once did simply because we just cannot accommodate them with the restrictions that are there; so those people are on layoff. The Teamster union members have taken a pay cut. The employees have taken a pay cut. The council has taken a pay cut. There is no overtime. We've saved so far, since the implementation here in April, over \$163,000.00 just in overtime. We're doing our best to reduce our expenses so that we can continue to keep everybody employed because we do know everyone has responsibilities and families and bills to pay. We have done the best we can and I want to thank the employees who have agreed to take the 20% pay cut. I want to thank our service department workers for taking the 20% pay cut and needless to say, everybody at the rec center. That is a substantial sacrifice on our employees' parts. Now, another bug a boo that's come up; which I handed to council today is an article written by Peter Krouse of Cleveland.com about, "*Working from home trend could imperil some Northeast Ohio communities.*" I presented this to the council and to anybody who wants a copy of it I have some extras here. I have no idea how that's going to affect our balance sheet; because as of now and most of you know, wherever the employer is located at that address and that 34 number is where the W-2 issued out of and the taxes are withheld. I have no idea what that is going to mean to us in the future at all. Then, I talked about the departments that have reduced all the unnecessary spending. I think Mr. Walker is here and he can tell you we didn't even buy fertilizer for the fields this year; so, at this time, we just didn't think it was necessary and we also have laid off all part-time people that we considered non-essential. The only place we've kept any part-time people is our IT Department, simply because they fill in because of the flex hours there and just by letting all the part-time people go, we saved another \$334,000.00 as of now. We're doing our very best with what we have and it hasn't been a picnic. It's been serious business and we're doing our best to move forward and the faster we get through this, the sooner people get back to work, the sooner we can bring our people back to work, the sooner we can get everyone off layoff and get back to normal here. I don't have a crystal ball and I wish it were already today that I could say that this red ink, this red ink would become black. Not one of us in this room can do anything about this. Facts are facts. Anybody who would like to see any of these numbers, I'd be glad to share it with you; be happy too, and I'm just asking for everybody's patience until we can get through this and we hope by January of next year, that this mess will be behind us and it will be nothing but history. That's the end of my report, Mr. President.

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you Mayor Perciak, I know none of those decisions have been easy for many people to make and the burden that a lot of our employees have taken with that pay cut; so again, I know we discussed it at the last meeting but we thank them for helping us in a tough spot that we are at right now and thank you for your leadership through this because we know that you have not had any good days in the last three months.

Mayor Perciak – That's an affirmative statement sir.

**REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR, DIRECTORS OF DEPARTMENTS AND OTHER OFFICERS:**

**FINANCE DEPARTMENT – Mr. Dubovec:**

Mr. Schonhut – Mr. Dubovec is not here tonight; so, we will go to our Law Director, Mr. Jamison.

Mr. Jamison – Thank you Mr. Chairman. On behalf of Mr. Dubovec, “Based upon careful review of the proposed June 15, 2020 council meeting agenda, I hereby certify that funds will be made available for all ordinances and resolutions of such agenda requiring certification of funding.” So signed by, Director of Finance, Joseph Dubovec, dated June 15, 2020. That concludes his report.

**\*\*A copy of the memo is attached to the back of these minutes. \*\***

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you Mr. Jamison and we’ll go Law Department, right back to you.

**LAW DEPARTMENT – Mr. Jamison:** Thank you Mr. Chairman, I just would report that all ordinances and resolutions are in proper legal form. That concludes my report.

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you Mr. Jamison.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:**

Mr. Schonhut – That brings us to our...

Chief Draves – Mr. Schonhut?

Mr. Schonhut – Yes, sir.

Chief Draves – Excuse me. As I mentioned in Caucus, I have a prepared statement that I was going to read.

Mr. Schonhut – Yes.

Chief Draves – So, this is probably the appropriate time before we move into audience participation.

Mr. Schonhut – Please.

Chief Draves – President Schonhut, Members of city council. Before you tonight is an ordinance, Ordinance No. 2020-086 which if passed would amend the general salary ordinance to add part-time firefighters to the department of public safety. This is the next step in a process to allow the city to hire part-time firefighters. Last week, Strongsville City Civil Service Commission amended the civil service rules and regulations to establish a process by which part-time firefighters could be hired. If Ordinance No. 2020-086 is approved tonight, the administration would take the necessary steps to finalize the qualifications and hiring process. You may ask yourself, why part-timers and why now? There have been on and off discussions regarding fire department staffing over the past couple years. However, in 2020 as the mayor related, the country entered a public health crisis; which in turn created an economic crisis. The financial impact is real as the city has seen a \$4.7 million drop in revenues since the start of the crisis. When this happened, Mayor Perciak did three things; he declared an emergency in the city, cut discretionary spending and discontinued all overtime. The mayor did this with the goals of keeping all full-time employees employed with healthcare benefits for their families and ensuring the long term financial stability of the city.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (cont'd):**

Chief Draves (cont'd) - The mayor has also responded to the economic situation by implementing a furlough program where in all non-bargaining units, all service department employees and all building inspectors would work and be paid 32 hours a week from June 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup> of this year. In addition, city council amended the general salary ordinance on June 1<sup>st</sup> so that all council members and the mayor have their compensation reduced by 20% during the same period. Public safety employees have not had any layoffs, furloughs or salary reductions since the crisis started. With several members of the fire department on injury leave and an unanticipated retirement and a sudden resignation, the discontinued use of overtime effected the ability of the fire department to maintain current staffing levels. This is neither a situation we anticipated or desired, yet we were forced to deal with. On April 27<sup>th</sup>, the city administration met with the fire union to discuss all this. At that meeting, the mayor asked the union for patience and cooperation. At that meeting, the union presented a proposal to keep on duty staffing at 13 firefighters by working overtime and deferring payment. This proposal was rejected by the city's labor attorney because it violated Federal Labor Law. The administration, looking for an opportunity to address fire department staffing concerns informed the union on June 4<sup>th</sup> at a labor management meeting of a plan to hire part-time firefighters as a measure to ensure and maintain on duty staffing at 13. The administration believes the city can provide the same quality services without paying overtime. Part-time firefighters will have the same qualifications, training, and education as full-time firefighters and they will be head to the same level of performance standards. Employing part-time firefighters is not a new concept. In fact, numerous departments throughout Cuyahoga County, including Brecksville, Independence and Broadview Heights are combination of departments that use part-time firefighters to supplement their full-time staffs. The City of Strongsville has a part-time firefighter ordinance on the books since 1971 that allows the mayor to hire up to 20 part-time firefighters. Additionally, about 25% of current Strongsville firefighters work part-time in other fire departments. We feel using part-time firefighters is a viable option to fill manpower shortages related to injuries, illness, cover full-time firefighters while they are attending training, and to work special events. As fire chief, I'm committed to providing the residents and businesses of Strongsville the best quality fire/EMS and technical rescue services based on our availability of resources. I take my job seriously and work to ensure operational efficiencies while being fiscally responsible. Therefore, I believe it is my duty and responsibility to provide city council with valid staffing alternatives given these unprecedented economic times, thank you.

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you chief. We'll move on to audience participation and see if there is any discussion after that, if need be, we do ask...first and foremost, we thank all of you for being here tonight. We thank you for being respectful here tonight. It's a great showing of just how strong all of you are and how tight knit your group is. We do ask, if you do with to address us tonight, to please state and spell both your name and address and city, if it is not Strongsville, please. We kindly ask that you limit your comments to around five minutes. We do have one person signed in; however, any and/or all of you are able to address us should you so wish. The person signed in is Mr. Matt Kasza. If you'd like to come to the podium please.

Matt Kasza, 17000 Prospect Road, Strongsville, OH: Matt Kasza, 17000 Prospect Road, Strongsville, Ohio 44149. I want to start off with a letter that I received today. It states, "Middleburg Heights Local 2018 has been informed the City of Strongsville is preparing to hire part-time firefighters for staffing needs. The union members of International Association of Firefighters and u union members of Middleburgh Heights Local 2018 do not agree with or support this decision; therefore, members of the Middleburg Heights Local 2018 in solidarity is here by informing the City of Strongsville that no member from this union will be applying for any part-time firefighter jobs for the City of Strongsville, thank you.

***A copy of this letter is attached to the back of these minutes.***



**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (cont'd):**

Mr. Schonhut – If you could hand it to Aimee on your way out, as you go back to your seat that will work. Thank you very much.

Mr. Kasza – I talked to you earlier before the meeting. I said I might be a little bit more than five minutes...

Mr. Schonhut – That's okay.

Mr. Kasza – So...

Mr. Schonhut – Yep.

Mr. Kasza – As you guys know, I am president of Strongsville Firefighters Association Local 2882, and I am here before you tonight to speak on a matter of public safety concern in regards to the implementation of part-time firefighters. Before I get into that discussion I'd like to say something to council. I just want to let you guys know that we're not putting undue blame on you or anything. We understand the difficulty of your job. We just want you guys to...I'm sorry...our intent is to educate council on how the fire department operates because we feel you have received only one side of the story. Tonight, you will be potentially voting on probably one of the most important issues that will ever come across your desk and we want to help you make an informed decision. How you decide to vote tonight will forever change the landscape of the Strongsville fire department. The Strongsville fire department has had full-time professional firefighters for almost 50 years and hiring part-time firefighters would be going backwards for the safety and security of this great city and fire department. I'd like to bring up an email that was forwarded to me by a resident that they received from a councilman. The email contained inaccurate information and I just wanted to clarify what the residents are being told. This is not an indictment of council they are just telling residents the information they have been given. In the email it states since mid-March fire and EMS calls are down 45-55% per week compared to pre-COVID shut down. We just ran the numbers a couple days ago and from mid-March until June 13<sup>th</sup> our call volume is down 25% compared to last year. For the year total, it's roughly 16%. Departments across the region have seen a drop in run volume during the pandemic but those numbers are starting to rebound. The union understands the unprecedented times that affects not only the City of Strongsville but the country as a whole, and I'd like to thank the mayor for hiring two full-time firefighters during this time and they will be starting this week. We have tried to help the city navigate through these times of decreased revenue in a number of ways. We have had firefighters cancel some of their vacation and holidays to come into work in an attempt to help maintain staffing levels. We have also agreed to not use personal time, comp time, or any continuing education hours. We offered to help the city apply for a SAFER grant that would help with the hiring of full-time firefighters. We proposed an idea to the city that would allow us to maintain the minimum staffing level of 13 where it would not cost the city any money at this time when their revenue is lower than normal. The city has told us this proposal would violate FLSA; however, to this date we have still not been told what the violation is despite repeated requests for a written opinion from the city's labor attorney. At the recent labor management meeting, we were given Chief Draves legal interpretation and were told the violation falls under attorney client privilege. If the city were to tell us what the violation is, perhaps we could change the proposal so it would be acceptable to the city's labor attorney. It is important to note the union's attorney has said it is not a violation of FLSA and we forwarded her opinion to the chief. Lastly, I'd like to bring up the questions and concerns we have with implementing part-timers. I have been told there is an assertion floating around that this idea has been discussed with the union. That is a false statement. The only mention of the issue was by the chief, it was one time and it was a brief discussion. When he told us that he was thinking about part-timers, I told him that the union would be opposed to it and he said he wouldn't pursue it.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (cont'd):**

Mr. Kasza (cont'd) - Then on June 4<sup>th</sup> at the labor management meeting, union officers were handed sheet of paper with the language for part-timers. We were told the language had been submitted to Civil Service and the meeting was scheduled for June 10<sup>th</sup> where they would vote on it. This is not a collaborative discussion and there was no input considered by the administration from the union on the part-time language. Then, we have questions to the council and the city. What type of research has been done by the city to determine if hiring part-timers would be a viable option? Has the city done independent surveys of other fire departments? Has the city looked at industry recommendations? Has the city done a cost analysis of part-timers? Has the city researched any literature and studies that are out there about replacing full-time firefighters with part-time firefighters? The union has prepared documents for council to review. Included in these documents are three studies from fire departments located in Ohio, which evaluate filling full-time positions with part-timers, and at the end of all three the recommendation was to hire full-time firefighters. There is also an article from a number of chiefs on the east side who discuss the difficulties with hiring part-timers due to a limited pool. One of the chiefs even states it is a disservice to the residents. No plan has been shared or made public as to how many part-timers the city is planning on hiring, how they will be integrated into the department or if this is a long-term or short-term solution? We will get you those documents when I'm done.

Mr. Schonhut – Do you have them? You can bring them up.

***A copy of those documents are attached to the back of these minutes.***

Mr. Kasza – There are many documented downsides to hiring part-timers. One of them is turnover. We will see a large turnover rate with part-timers. Most part-time firefighters will only be on department for a year or two, until they take their training that Strongsville paid for them to get and move on to a different department for a full-time position or leave the fire service completely. Full-time firefighters provide a 25 year career of dedication to the city. The large turnover rate will require constant retraining of new employees and affect crew continuity, both of which are safety concerns. Another issue is training. Part-timers will be certified as firefighter/paramedics; however, they will need to be trained on Strongsville Fire Department policies and procedures. This is why a full-time firefighter is on probation for two years and has a two year training program to complete. Will the part-timers be held to same standard? Many part-time firefighters work at multiple fire departments, this may become an issue if policies are different from employer to employer. Part-time firefighters will only be allowed to work 1500 hours in a year, so how will they maintain the same level of training as the full-time firefighters? There are also hidden costs that I don't know if you are aware of. Firefighters are required to have 2 sets of custom fitted fire gear, which costs roughly \$4,500.00. Fire gear often lasts a firefighter several years before needing to be replaced. The need for additional gear to keep up with part-time turnover will be an increased cost that adds up when considering proposed savings. There is an accepted ratio used by combination fire departments that say you need 10 part-time firefighters to fill 1 full-time position. To hire 10 part-timers with two sets of gear would cost around \$90,000.00. Station uniforms, dress uniforms, workers compensation, medical exams, and training are also added costs. Another problem with part-timers is the reliability, dependability, and loyalty to the City of Strongsville. Part-timers will not have the same loyalty to the city as a full-time firefighter. They will cancel shifts to work at other jobs or come in late because they are coming from their other job. It will also be a nightmare for scheduling. We will be relying on people giving their availability at the beginning of the month and when something comes up the shifts will be cancelled. Deployment may also be an issue, for safety reasons full-timers on probation can't drive the squad until they've had six months on the job and its 18 months to drive a fire apparatus. It will be a logistical nightmare to juggle around all the personnel. The work environment; introducing part-timers into a department that has never had part-timers will almost certainly create management and personnel problems.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (cont'd):**

Mr. Kasza (cont'd) - It will create animosity between full-time and part-time employees. This will lead to issues, which will lead to discipline, which will lead to grievances. Lastly is experience. Most of the part-time employees will likely be young individuals that have just graduated from the fire academy and paramedic school, and are looking to gain experience. The Strongsville Fire Department will be used as a stepping stone for people to get experience and then leave, forcing the department to start the entire hiring process again with new less experience part-timers. It is for all these reasons the Strongsville Firefighters Association Local 2882 stand opposed to the hiring of part-timers. We are asking council to send the ordinance back to committee for review to give them a chance to look over the information we have provided and begin a deeper dive into the challenges of a part-time firefighter program. The residents of Strongsville desire and expect premium services from the fire department. I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to present our concerns over this matter and I want to let you guys know that if they ever have questions for the union you can contact us, thank you.

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you very much. If you would please give that speech, if you don't mind, to our dearest Aimee. It will make her minutes for this meeting significantly easier to type that out...

Ms. Kosek – Matt, before you walk, I do have one question, I'm sorry. I should have said it before you walked away and I didn't mean to talk over you Mr. Schonhut...

Mr. Schonhut – No, you're fine. I just saw the smile on Aimee's face when she wanted that.

Ms. Kosek – My question...you said that there are, you need to hire 10 part-time individuals to fill one, full-time slot. Is there...can you tell me where you got that information?

Mr. Kasza – It's in those studies...

Ms. Kosek – It's in these studies...

Mr. Kasza – And in the article that's provided.

Ms. Kosek – Thank you.

Mr. Schonhut – Is there anybody else that wishes to address council tonight, you are welcome to should you so choose. Again, if you could just state and spell your name and address for the record, we would appreciate it.

Larry Petrick Jr. 19100 Stony Point Drive, Strongsville, OH: Sure, thank you. My name is Larry Petrick Jr. I reside at 19100 Stony Point Drive here in Strongsville, 44136.

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you.

Mr. Petrick – The previous speaker, well certainly said a lot of comments that I was going to bring up. As a resident of Strongsville, I've seen the city grown over the years and as we've gone to...from one station to four stations, you know, the manpower has grown a little bit; but should have grown maybe more. The idea of the cross, cross jumping apparatus obviously leaves some high risk as it is a high risk game. That's a different issue all together, I understand that; but, most certainly, the idea of part-timers...I don't agree with the idea of part-timers. It's a professional occupation. It's a vocation, not an ad vocation, and I believe that the professional training and the attitude, the moral of the professional firefighters most certainly should be continued. The previous speaker really laid out a lot of good points. The chief mentioned other cities.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (cont'd):**

Mr. Petrick (cont'd) - A lot of these combination cities started out as part-time fire departments and probably even as volunteers and moved to part-time, moved to combination, and move to more full-time. Going full-time and moving backwards can cause some problems and team work is a big thing and having full-time firefighters that work as a team, not with someone coming in, going out, not understanding; especially if you jump (inaudible), you know you're doing the jump training. That's the team work in this city really has to be efficient. With that, I oppose the part-time issue and thank you for the time.

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you very much.

Kelley Stetter, 16970 Stag Thicket Lane, Strongsville, OH: My name is Kelley Stetter I am a...my address is 16970 Stag Thicket Lane, I'm in Hunting Meadows...

Mr. Schonhut – If you could just spell your last name for the record...

Ms. Stetter – S-T-E-T-T-E-R...

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you very much.

Ms. Stetter – I'm in Ward 2. I'm here as a resident. I have some notes in my phone, just so I make sure I cover everything. I'm a 20 year homeowner with my husband. We have two kids. Our kids are in the school systems. I also work for a small business that has been very...not in Strongsville, but has been hit very hard by COVID; so I understand the devastation that hits, not only small businesses that I work for, but cities like this. As part of my job, I'm responsible for HR. I'm responsible for hiring, I'm responsible for firing and so I have seen, I've been in job for over 15 years. I have seen the difference between part-timers and full-timers. I don't care what the industry is. There is a level of dedication and trust a full-timer and a passion that they bring and I ask you to think of your businesses that you have and those employees that you have that you trust- that you trust with your business, that you trust with maybe confidential information of your business. You think of different things in your business and who comes to mind? Are any of them part-timers? Are any of them temporary? Are any of them people that are still looking for the next best thing? No. There's those that are dedicated and want to...they are dying to get on a department or into your businesses and have a career. That's what...and those people are going to give it their all to be their best. So, I feel like, that's a big difference and that's our business, right? This is business. This...we don't...I don't save lives at work. I don't even come close to saving lives. These guys save lives. Paramedics helped my daughter when she had a severe allergic reaction. Paramedics saved my grandfather's life when he had 13 heart attacks. Paramedics, whose ambulance broke down when my other grandfather had a heart attack couldn't save him, because they couldn't get to the hospital because of a broken down, not maintained squad. So to think of putting the safety of this city, of my kids, of all my family and friends that live in this city, it's absurd to me that we're even talking about this. So, I am not willing to sacrifice the safety of this city and I ask you...while I pay premium taxes and I have for 20 years at this city, I'm okay with our fields not being fertilized this year. I'm okay with that. I'm okay with service workers getting off Fridays for the summer. And while yes, I applaud them for taking that 20% pay cut, they didn't have choice. I took a pay cut at work. I didn't have a choice. I either kept my job or took a pay cut. These guys aren't here for money. They don't feel safe at work. I feel safe at work making half pay. I feel safe at work on a reduced staff. These guys aren't here to be millionaires. They're here to save lives and protect our city and I certainly, certainly, hope that you guys will support them; because if you call 9-1-1, they will be there to support you, regardless of what happens, thank you.

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you Ms. Stetter.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (cont'd):**

(Applause)

Tom Grucza, 8640 Ashwood Drive, Strongsville, OH: Hello, my name is Tom Grucza. I live at 8640 Ashwood Drive, Strongsville, Ohio 44149.

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you.

Mr. Grucza – I'm a 26 year career firefighter with this city. I have a handicapped grandbaby that I need to make sure I have people that come that know what they're doing to take care of my grandbaby. I don't want a part-time guy. They're not going to care. Full-time guys care. Part-time guys don't care. That's all I have to say. Thank you.

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you.

Jim Loparo, 17000 Prospect Road, Strongsville, OH: Hello, my name is Jim Loparo, 17000 Prospect Road, Strongsville. I've been a full-time firefighter here for 14 years almost. I'm one of the guys the chief mentioned. I started out part-time in the city that my grandparent's grew up in, that I grew up in, that I raised by kids in, in the City of Independence. I want to talk briefly about the part-timers; but that place is a revolving door when it comes to part-timers. A lot of them move on to better places, you know, full-time positions. My Chief, not too long ago, told me directly in a meeting that you are not considered the same as a full-time firefighter in the City of Independence Fire Department. You're not the same. You're not...it's not plug and play. Those guys have more responsibilities. What I really came up to talk about though is that this part-time idea isn't going to fix the problem that's going on right this minute. For the last couple of weeks, we've had two guys at each station, okay. There's a 13 man minimum for over 20 some years here for a reason. Minimum manning is exactly that. It's a minimum that you drop below. Our administration made a decision to get rid of that, to crumple that up and throw it over their shoulder, okay. They didn't drop down to 12 and say okay our shift commander is going to be a part of station 4's crew. Apparently, our new minimum manning now is 10 because when it dropped down to 10 a few days ago, then they filled guys. They mandated guys, okay. You can look at all the statistics over the last, you know five years about how many guys that had graduation parties and other things planned for their next day and they were mandated to stay. They were told you cannot leave or you will be disciplined. Okay, so look into the mandating of our firefighters over that time period. The last thing that I have to say is, both of my parents are 76 years old and every day I go on shift, I get a text message from them, how many guys do you have at your station Jim? Do you have two or three? Because when you show up to an accident, a medical emergency, God forbid a fire, when Station 1, you know, with 280 gallons of water on fire truck we're first due in at Ward 1 and you have two guys on it an apparatus as opposed to three, that's a huge difference. Three is not enough and our president has been saying that for the last several years. In '08, we started dropping down, where we didn't have an extra crew at Station 4 and that's when all of this started. We've been told, over and over and over, this isn't about overtime; but, we were told over and over and over that it's cheaper to fill overtime than hire a full-time guys. Well, we didn't agree with it then, and now it's a safety issue. It's not an overtime issue for us, because you can look at the statistics of how many guys got mandated and didn't want to stay- were forced to stay or would be disciplined if they left. Ask Tim Fetzer what he thinks about mandatory overtime. Thank you very much, I appreciate it. And by the way, this is a great city. It's a great fire department and I'm proud to be a Strongsville firefighter/paramedic. Thank you.

(Applause)

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (cont'd):**

Jon Bouts, 32048 Cottonwood Crest, North Ridgeville, OH: Good evening. My name is Jon Bouts, I live at 32048 Cottonwood Crest, North Ridgeville, Ohio 44039. Recently retired from fire department within the last several months. As Matt Kasza said, I hope that you would consider reading the material you that you were given tonight before you make a decision. I do not agree with part-time firemen, and I agree with what was said about the reasons why. I initially started on a part-time, full-time department and it's true. There's a lot of turnover. Myself, I was only there for like two years and then I went on to be full-time somewhere else. So, I've had the privilege to serve in the City of Strongsville. I was in fire service 35 years, 25 full-time. I started out as a volunteer when I was 15. That's how much I wanted to do this job. I'm that little boy that dreamed about being a firemen and I did it; because that was my dream. These guys I work with are dedicated and they do care about not only the people of Strongsville's safety; but we care about our own safety. If we can't protect ourselves, we can't help them. This minimum manning of two guys in a station, I'm sorry, I understand with...this is an unprecedented time; but we need at least the 13. We've had trouble with staffing for many years. This is not a problem that just crept up because of COVID, okay. I can remember back as far as I can remember to when Station 1 at Albion and Webster opened in April 2001, they took three guys out of the main station, which was Station 5 just across the way here and out them there. We never got that manpower back. We've always asked, when I was asked when I left in my interview, what...how do...what to do you see that we need to move the department forward? It's staffing. For safety. For safety. It's not about the money. I could've stayed longer and made a lot more money; but I knew it was my time to go. It was a hard decision for me to make because I care about the people here and I care about my guys. Back in February, I went on the worse call of my career. Three of my guys on my shift got hurt in a wreck out here and I was first on scene. My crew...my guys...I couldn't even believe it. I still sometimes think about that really happened. That's how tight we are. We have integrity together. We work together. We know what each other does. You bring these part-timers in and out and like Matt said, there's going to be turnover. It's going to cost to retrain some more. They don't...they're not...some would like to probably become full-time here, but most won't. They're going to go where they can get full-time and there's no loyalty. So, I ask that tonight as I finish, that you would consider at least taking what was given to you tonight and read over it and consider it before you make a decision on this issue. This is a bit...a major decision. Again, I know it's unprecedented times with the COVID and everything; but it is going to affect the Strongsville Fire Department permanently; and I believe we're taking a step backward by hiring part-timers, thank you.

(Applause)

John Douglas, 3418 Lincoln Avenue, Parma, OH: Good evening council, mayor, safety director, chief of fire, chief of police. My name is John Douglas. I live at 3418 Lincoln Avenue in Parma, Ohio. I'm a 19 ½ year service member of the City of Strongsville Fire Department. I'm proud to say that. Or at least I use to be. You guys are about to make a decision, from an ordinance that was written in 1971. Some of you weren't even born in 1971. That ordinance was written when this City of Strongsville Fire Department was created as a full-time fire department from a volunteer service...1971. You are now going to vote on bringing part-timers in which, if you read your studies that we have provided that I'm sure you have not seen before, I just ask that you look. Take this back to a committee. Do not vote tonight. Delay your vote. Do your research. Understand what you are truly voting on before you decide to vote. I placed my hand on a Bible raised my right hand and I gave my life to the City of Strongsville. A 1/3 of my life is spent here. A 1/3 of my life is spent away from my own family to protect you, you, you, you, everyone one of you, every resident in this city. I would die for these residents. All of y'all placed your hands on a Bible yourself and said you would do what's best for the residents of the City of Strongsville. If you have a single question that has gone unanswered, that you have before you make this vote, you're doing a disservice to the residents. This is about safety for the residents. I cannot say that enough. I just want you guys to take the information that was given, look at the research studies.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (cont'd):**

Mr. Douglas (cont'd) - They were given to the National Firefighters Association for program- for fire officer executive program...numerous chiefs. The east side study in Geauga County. I just want you guys to look at it. Understand what you are truly voting on before you decide vote. That's all I ask of you...is to do your duty to protect the residents of the City of Strongsville by doing your research before you decide to vote on something you just found out about Thursday. Thank you.

(Applause)

Andrew Novick, 18622 Stafford Drive, Strongsville, OH: Good evening. My name is Andrew Novick. Never thought I'd be standing up here, coming to a council meeting; so, bear with me...

Mr. Schonhut – I hate to cut you off Andrew, your address as well, if you would please.

Mr. Novick – Oh, I'm sorry. 18622 Stafford Drive, Strongsville, 44149.

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you.

Mr. Novick – Mr. Douglas actually took all the words right out of my mouth. As a citizen, yes, part-time does work for some departments. Please, do your homework. Look at Independence. Did they go from a full-time back to a part-time? Again, backwards; did these departments go from a full-time, backwards to a part-time? It was discouraging to hear Mr. Douglas say, he wasn't proud to be a Strongsville Firemen. I'm sure he still is; but look at him. He's not happy. These Firemen aren't happy. We pay amazing taxes for this city. You drive anywhere in this city, there's land being developed. There is income. I understand COVID hit, overtime shuts down. This seems to be an issue that happened prior to COVID hitting. You can't account for firemen getting hurt. It happens; but these, these firemen deserve to have the full-time men and women working next to them. It's just very concerning that at the start of this meeting, they said you have to vote tonight on this. It has to be voted on tonight. If it was something that was introduced June 4<sup>th</sup>, that's 10 days, give or take. I hope you guys did all your homework in those 10 days and the firemen provided you guys with some outstanding studies. They didn't make those numbers up. Those are studies. They're true. So please, if it's possible, to withhold your vote. Please do the homework before you make a vote tonight. If there is any kind of doubt in your stomach about what you're about to vote on, don't...follow that gut feeling. There's a lot of questions that seem to come up that you kind of danced around answers with. All right, so please, like everybody said before me, just think about your vote tonight, okay? That's all I've got to say and thank you for listening.

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you.

(Applause)

Mr. Schonhut – Is there anybody else that wishes to address Council at this time?

Francis Lally, 16187 Drake Road, Strongsville, OH: The name is Francis Lally. Strongsville resident. I live at 16187 Drake Road. I lived in Strongsville nearly all my life. Graduated with Jimmy and Jimmy. Jimmy was a few years ahead, Jimmy was two years behind. I'm also a firefighter in the City of Cleveland. I'm the President of the City of Cleveland's Firefighters Association and I can tell you unequivocally that whether you go to...your staffing numbers are below where they need to be to fight fires and provide services to the residents of this city, unequivocally. You need to have four men on an engine, you need to have four to six men on a hook and ladder. Fires are no different in the City of Strongsville then they are in the City of Cleveland, and in order to put those fires out, you need to have a team. These men work as a team.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (cont'd):**

Mr. Lally (cont'd) - We all work as part of a team. Where one member is part of an overall team, a crew. You're going to start introducing part-timers into that team, you're not going to be as successful as you should be. I've had the experience to watch these guys work. My father was sick for a number of years and they would come the house and they would provide service to him. On the day that he passed away, these guys were here. Doing their best to save him and they worked as a team. Although they weren't successful that day, I know that he got the best treatment that he could have possibly had. What you're going to do by passing this legislation is take that away from my neighbors, my mother, my friends, children in this community. You're going to take that professionalism, you're going to that team work away from them and you're going to insert somebody who doesn't care about the city, who doesn't care about Strongsville the way these people do, the way I do, the way my wife does, the way my family does and you're not going to get the same level of service. God forbid that we have a crew out there at a station with multiple part-timers at it, who have never worked together before, that are sent out to traffic accident or sent to a house fire and they have to effectuate a rescue or an extra case and try to get that person to the hospital. It's going to be a disaster...absolute disaster. I'm getting a little worked up because I take this so personal. To sit back and to see that this is just nothing but numbers on a page. That people's lives are just nothing but numbers on a page. Every time there is a budget shortfall they come to public safety. They come to layoffs. They want more and more back; but you don't see them changing the contracts of other services or other contracts in the city that they purchased. You don't see them trying going back and get that money back. It's always on the backs of the police, fire, and EMS, what have you. The city workers take a 20% pay cut, it's...so, I just want to leave you with the thought, that these guys are some of the best and when they come to your house, they're coming to the house of someone who is having the worse day of their life, absolute worse day and you're going to have three or four part-timers coming there; who may have just shown up for work for the first time in Strongsville, not caring about those residents and you're going to entrust those residents belongings and their lives and everything in that house to them. From some part-timer that maybe here today and gone tomorrow? It's absolutely unacceptable to me and I hope that you take this into consideration when you take your vote tonight. Thank you.

(Applause)

Mr. Schonhut – Is there anybody else that would wish to address council this evening? If not, then I cannot disagree with Mr. Douglas's assertion that it would not be...go ahead sir.

Mark Biley, 19790 Tanbark Lane, Strongsville, OH: My name is Mark Biley. I live in Strongsville at 19790 Tanbark Lane. I've been a resident of Strongsville for nearly 50 years. It's a great city to grow up in. It's great city to live in. I'm really proud to be in Strongsville and living in Strongsville with my family. I have been a firefighter in Strongsville for about, well, over 25 years and I'm very proud to be a firefighter in Strongsville. It's a great department and I concur with a lot of what was said regarding part-time. I definitely appose part-time employees being hired for the Strongsville Fire Department to go from a full-time to a combination fire department; but, I just wanted to ask, kind of a little different subject is regarding finances. I understand, I heard \$4.7 million deficit in revenues over this COVID virus which...what three months, over a three month period. What I was wondering was, on the Strongsville website, I thought that I saw a financial ledger showing \$50 million dollars in reserved total monies and I heard that that money was unavailable for staffing or anything other than what it was designated for. I would think during a local, a declared local, state, federal pandemic emergency that monies might be available for other than what's it originally designated. I just wanted to ask, request clarification on it. If that's true, that money is unavailable for things other than designated, which I'm not sure...?

Mayor Perciak – Mark, let me answer that.



**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (cont'd):**

Mr. Biley – Which I'm sure would not be streets...

Mr. Schonhut – Yep.

Mr. Biley – But, I was just curious about that.

Mayor Perciak – Mark, I'll answer that. I approached the Auditor of State and I asked him, I said Mr. Faber, can we borrow against those funds? There was silence on the call. I repeated the question the second time. Can we use those dollars for operating purposes? The answer was, "I'll get back to you." I'm still waiting. So here's your answer. It's not that we haven't tried, so you know. We have and we have...its silence, radio silence from Columbus and I can't use that money.

Mr. Biley – It's just sad that people are stepping up and being forced, well some are stepping up, others are being forced to take 20% cuts in salary and furloughs and saving \$100,000.00 here and maybe a \$100,000.00 there when on the ledger it's showing \$50 million plus in reserve or I would call rainy day fund; but...

Mayor Perciak – It's anything but. If you want to come on in, come on it, I'll show it to you. I'll go through it with you.

Mr. Biley – Okay. All right.

Mayor Perciak – I don't have any problem with that.

Mr. Schonhut – And I don't disagree with that. So there's different funds that monies go to, whether it's sanitary sewer funds or emergency vehicle funds or fire levy funds to fund some of the payroll here. If we can all band together and put the pressure on Columbus to get that changed, that would make it not only easier here in this community but everywhere; for all of you that are working in different communities as well because that would be something monumental that would help drastically change everybody's situation from community to community; so if there is one thing that we should all band together it is on that issue specifically because that would make things a lot easier with where we're at right now.

Mr. Biley – I hear you; but, just seeing a ledger showing \$50 million plus in reserve not being allocated, I guess, is the way I see it. It's just hard to see that and then people struggling and taking salary cuts, being forced to take salary cuts, layoffs, when you see in the ledger \$50 million plus reserve; but, thank you.

Mr. Schonhut – I again don't disagree with that and there's certain things like our sanitary sewer fund has about \$13 million in it, if I'm not mistaken, and we're about to undertake a major project that's going to utilize a lot of those funds; but, that project only comes up once every 30 years so you have to build it to be able to afford that. None the less...

Mayor Perciak – You are correct. They are restricted funds and at this point we as a municipality, you as a council, myself and the administration just have no authority to do that at this time.

Mr. Schonhut – We would love to see that changed. Is there anybody else that wishes to address council tonight?

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (cont'd):**

Dave Haffner, 17000 Prospect Road, Strongsville, OH: Dave Haffner, I'm a captain on the fire department. I am the shift commander for A shift. I had spoken with Assistant Chief Rozman and Chief Draves letting them know I was strongly opposed to part-timers in Strongsville and I'd like to do the same thing in front of council and the mayor here. Bottom line is you get what you pay for. If you want to save money, you will save money with part-timers; but, you get what you pay for. You will not get the same services. I can tell you as a shift commander it's reassuring to me that when I give out assignments that I know that they are going to get carried out. I know they are going to get carried out because the guys that I assign them to, I know when they are at their stations, they're training. They work together as crews. As a shift commander, crew continuity and integrity is so important and I wish all of you could actually see, through the lens of my eyes, when I go on scenes and give out assignments and see these guys carry it out. It's more than impressive. Unfortunately, you guys never get to see that but I do. You're not going to get the same thing with part-timers integrated into these stations; so again, I'd just like to end with I'm strongly opposed of part-timers. I hope you guys don't rush to a judgement on this because it's going to be key to the success or failure to this department. Thanks.

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you.

(Applause)

Mr. Schonhut – I did have the opportunity about six years ago to go through a mock burn on a house in full turn out gear with some of the members of the Strongsville Fire Department and some of the media members as well. I get it. It's not easy what you do and we appreciate everything that everybody in this room does.

Ms. Pientka – Mr. Haffner? Mr. Haffner?

Mr. Haffner – Yes?

Ms. Pientka – Would you like me to use 17000 Prospect as your address?

Mr. Haffner – Yes, thanks.

Ms. Pientka – Okay.

Doug Kallin, 4598 Rambler Drive, Mentor, OH: Hi everyone, Doug Kallin, 4598 Rambler Drive, Mentor, Ohio. I'm...I consider myself somebody who doesn't really say much. I like to go with the flow. I'm super thankful to be an employee here in Strongsville. Super thankful for Chief Draves giving me a shot five years ago when nobody else wanted to and for that I'm forever grateful; but I just want to share my views on part-time. Just to...that you guys would at least look over those studies. I'm from the east side. I'm so proud to work here. I drive an hour, every day. I'm on light duty, I'm one of the people that is injured and I'm very thankful they are helping me out. They certainly didn't have to and they are; but on the east side, I talk to plenty of full-timers in Mentor. They have their combination department, they have always been. Mentor use to be very similar to Strongsville. Different cities and then when they combined, some of the cities in Mentor had only part-timers. Some had only full-timers so when they combined to one big city, they were a combination department; but you talk to a lot of full-timers and they're exhausted with the turnover rate. It was one of the things that I was really happy about here was there were no part-timers and I'm not against that. I started part-time. I worked in Madison and I'm forever grateful for the opportunity they gave me; but, I recently had decided to step away because I realized, and I had told the chief, I'm like, I'm really sorry, I just...you know, I was just coming here for a paycheck.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (cont'd):**

Mr. Kallin (cont'd) - I didn't really care about, I didn't really care, as much as I do in Strongsville and here I'm really proud to be here. I'm really proud to work for Strongsville and I just knew that I didn't have that same passion. I wasn't willing to bring that same passion at my part-time. So, I just ask that you guys would consider, everybody consider and just look at those studies and realize you are making a very big decision; but I'm very proud to be here. I'm very proud to work for this city. It's an amazing city. I'm not going anywhere. I'm going to drive an hour for the rest of my career here and it's worth every minute driving here. So, thank you guys.

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you.

(Applause)

Mr. Schonhut – So, here is what we're going to because I don't disagree that it would be irresponsible for us not to review what you submitted to us tonight. That would not be fair to you. It would not be fair to us to not at least review that and come up with any questions that we may have, either for the administration and/or for the union. So, Mr. DeMio, I know this is in your committee, so if you could, maybe within the next week or two weeks...

Mr. DeMio – So, what, yeah, what I'd like to do and I appreciate this because we figured something would come up tonight and the president of your union, I want to you know, we have been playing phone tag the last four...three, four days and I'm sure this what he wanted to share with me, and it...what I'd like to ask is there anything else you think you're going to get us? Is there anything else that you're going to give us? Is there more to come? What do you think; because, I want to do this the right way; give enough time. I'm guessing there's 50 pages or so or better in this packet and Aimee's phenomenal. If you give her something, she gets it to us. Whether she still does it the old fashion way, getting it to us physically or emailing. What do you think?

(Unidentified voice from the audience) – Currently, I (unintelligible) everything you have. Properly informing you on that information and...

Mr. DeMio – You know, it might be better if you come on up, so the record...if you don't mind. If it's okay with the president. So, I'll start over. Some of it will go back and forth. We want to make sure at this time, I know that you don't have anything else. If you do have anything else, we need it. So, I know you work hard. I know President Lally may have some things for you. I know, maybe, your counsellor may have something else; but whatever team you have, all our addresses are public. They can be dropped off at our homes, you know, so we can get that; but we definitely, definitely want every document that you think is important for us to read.

Mr. Kasza – Okay.

Mr. Kaminski – And I do have one question I get from resident quite often and I would like some guidance on an answer so that I can give that to the residents as they call me and ask about this issue; but, if the 25% that do work part-time for another force, the question I get from residents if that is safe and their safe and their great employees for us, they're obviously great employees for the other cities that they are working for part-time. Are we saying that those type of people aren't available for us to be able to find? B You know, in this same situation. During this crisis. I get that question a lot. I need guidance on that because, you know, it's a double edge sword. So, I want to be able to answer that question fairly to the residents.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (cont'd):**

Mr. Kasza – I think Doug Kallin kind of hit on that. You know, he didn't have the passion for the job. If you talk to these guys that do work part-time, they'll tell you all the issues that I cited. They occur and I can probably say they don't have same loyalty at their part-time job that they do here. So...

Mr. DeMio – Okay, then officially for the record, we will make this a first reading and I expect we will vote on it on the first...

Mr. Schonhut – Let's get a committee...we have three weeks in between now and our next council meeting just because of...

Mr. DeMio – Oh, I will...

Mr. Schonhut – ...the way the schedule works out, so our next meeting is...

Mr. Kaminski – July...

Mr. Schonhut – July 6<sup>th</sup>, If we could, maybe, get a committee meeting together so that we could take time to discuss that; in between now and then and review what you gave us tonight and whatever questions that came up at the microphone because there were plenty of them and we appreciate that. Obviously, we could continue dialogue like I said with both the administration and our union guys here to try to come up with...

Mr. DeMio – Sounds good...

Mr. Schonhut – The right answer moving forward.

Mr. Kasza – I just want to thank you guys again for listening to us and if you have any questions, you can contact us.

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you and...

Mr. DeMio – Appreciate it...

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you and I just want to thank all of you again for being here tonight. Obviously, it does not go unnoticed and we certainly are appreciative of what each and every one of you do on a daily basis. I know none of us take that lightly, administration and council included in that. Safety is always our number one priority, not only for our residents but for each and every one of you as you are working to make sure that each and every one of you is safe as well. We appreciate you coming here tonight. You are more than welcome to stay should you so choose. At this point, I don't anticipate any further discussion on this item; but, you are welcome to stay. If not, those that choose to leave, we will give you a minute to do so if you'd like.

Ms. Roff – Can Aimee give us the list of those questions that they asked also?

Mr. Schonhut – Either of these. Either of these is fine. Either committee.

*A moment was given for audiences members to leave the Chambers.*

Mr. Schonhut – Is there anybody else in the audience that would like to address council at this time? Ladies? Michelle, do we have a new School Board member yet or not yet?

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (cont'd):**

(Unidentified voice from the audience) – Thursday at 7 pm where...

Mr. Schonhut – Gotcha...

Ms. Pientka – I can't understand her. Could you repeat that Mr. Schonhut, I won't be able to get that for the record?

Mr. Schonhut – She said they have a special...that was Michelle...

Ms. Pientka – I can't pick you up with your mask. I apologize...

Mr. Schonhut – Yeah, go ahead...welcome. Sorry, I didn't mean to drag you to the mic; but...

Ms. Bissell – The question was about the new school board member in light of George Grozan resigning at our last meeting. We did hold interviews Saturday and we do have a meeting, a special meeting called this Thursday at 7 pm at the administration building to continue to address that matter.

Mr. Schonhut – Awesome.

Mr. Short – How many applicants did you have for the position?

Ms. Bissell – As a matter of public record, there were 12...

Mayor Perciak – 12.

Ms. Bissell – Yep. 12.

Mr. Short – It's a good number.

Mr. Schonhut – Good.

Ms. Bissell – Thank you.

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you very much. All right, we will close audience participation...

Mayor Perciak – Mr. President?

Mr. Schonhut – Yes, Mr. Mayor?

Mayor Perciak – I just have one question for you. Are we convening finance to study this or are we convening public safety? You confused me a bit.

Mr. Demio – Gordon and I agreed we do this...no, I'm just kidding...it will stay...

Mr. Schonhut – I think it...

Mayor Perciak – I don't know what to think here or who to talk to.

Mr. Schonhut – Although the...a combination of both really. It's a difficult...

Mr. Short – Joint committee meeting?

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (cont'd):**

Ms. Pientka – Committee of the Whole. You can have a Committee of the Whole...

Mr. DeMio – Who cares?

Mr. Short – We're all going to be there anyways.

Mr. DeMio – We're all going to be there.

Mr. Jamison – Do it as Committee as a Whole.

Mr. Short – All right, do it as Committee as a Whole.

Mr. Schonhut – Is that okay?

Mayor Perciak – No, it's fine. As long as I know, you know, what you're going to need from the administration.

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you and if any of your team so chooses to go, Mr. Mayor, you're welcome to discuss...

Ms. Roff – I do just have one question though, if I could ask. What is the amount of hours a part-time firefighter can put in before they would be considered a full-time? Or given full-time work?

Mr. Kilo – Just, because of the ACA is still the Law of the Land, the part-timer couldn't work over 28 hours a week without risking, potentially, running into problems where they would qualify for medical benefits.

Mr. DeMio – I just encourage everyone to possibly have some questions, if they know, submitted ahead of time to the administration. If we can do it that way.

Mr. Schonhut – Please...

Mr. DeMio – If it doesn't stay in my committee, it goes Council as a Whole, it goes...I don't care; but, just however we do it we do it. Things will come up, regardless at that meeting. From those questions. They're not locked in, if it's under my committee to just the questions you submit.

Mr. Schonhut – Thank you. Let's go to Ordinances and Resolutions.

**ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS:**

**Ordinance No. 2020-076** by Mayor Perciak and All Members of Council. AN ORDINANCE APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUNDING UNDER THE CORONAVIRUS AID, RELIEF AND ECONOMIC SECURITY (CARES) ACT AND OHIO SENATE BILL NO. 310, AFFIRMING THE EXPENDITURE OF SAID FUNDS BY THE CITY CONSISTENT WITH THE CARES ACT, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Mayor Perciak – You need to turn on the microphone.

Mr. Short – Sorry. Motion to amend and our Law Director, Neal Jamison, please state the amendments.

**ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS (cont'd):**

Mr. Jamison – Yes, so in the second last whereas, after the No. 310, we'll insert, "...now House Bill 481 of the 133<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly ("Ohio Senate Bill No. 310") and then in section two, replace the number in the last line, 610(d) with the number "801."

Mr. DeMio – Thank you Gordon, I will second that.

Motion by Mr. Short to amend the legislation with the changes reflected, seconded by Mr. DeMio. All members present voted aye and the motion carried.

**Motion to adopt as amended by Mr. Short, second by Mr. DeMio.**

**Roll Call: All ayes. Motion carries. Ordinance No. 2020-076 ADOPTED AS AMENDED.**

**Ordinance No. 2020-080** by Mayor Perciak and All Members of Council. AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING FOR RECORDING PURPOSES ONLY THE SUBDIVISION PLAT FOR COMMERCE PARKWAY, IN THE CITY OF STRONGSVILLE, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motion by Mr. Short to suspend the rules requiring every ordinance or resolution to be read on three different days, second by Mr. DeMio. All members present voted aye and the motion carried.

**Motion to adopt by Mr. Short, second by Mr. DeMio.**

**Roll Call: All ayes. Motion carries. Ordinance No. 2020-080 ADOPTED.**

**Resolution No. 2020-081** by Mayor Perciak and All Members of Council. A RESOLUTION DECLARING THE INTENT OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF STRONGSVILLE TO ACCEPT FOR DEDICATION CERTAIN STREETS WITHIN THE COMMERCE PARKWAY SUBDIVISION, IN THE CITY OF STRONGSVILLE, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motion by Mr. Short to suspend the rules requiring every ordinance or resolution to be read on three different days, second by Mr. DeMio. All members present voted aye and the motion carried.

**Motion to adopt by Mr. Short, second by Mr. DeMio.**

**Roll Call: All ayes. Motion carries. Resolution No. 2020-081 ADOPTED.**

**Ordinance No. 2020-085** by Mayor Perciak. AN ORDINANCE MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE ANNUAL EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES OF THE CITY OF STRONGSVILLE, OHIO, FOR THE YEAR 2020 AND REPEALING ORDINANCE NUMBER 2020-057.

Motion by Mr. Short to suspend the rules requiring every ordinance or resolution to be read on three different days, second by Mr. DeMio. All members present voted aye and the motion carried.

**Motion to adopt by Mr. Short, second by Mr. DeMio.**

**Roll Call: All ayes. Motion carries. Ordinance No. 2020-085 ADOPTED.**

**ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS (cont'd):**

**Ordinance No. 2020-086** by Mayor Perciak and all Members of Council. AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE GENERAL SALARY ORDINANCE NO. 2019-187 TO ESTABLISH, ALLOCATE AND FIX THE COMPENSATION OF THE POSITION OF PART-TIME FIREFIGHTER-PARAMEDIC (SECTION 5-121) IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY; REPEALING ALL OTHER ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT HEREWITH; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

***Placed on first reading and referred back to the committee.***

**Ordinance No. 2020-087** by Mayor Perciak and all Members of Council. AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH A FIRM OF CONSULTANTS TO PROVIDE ENGINEERING DESIGN AND CONSULTING SERVICES FOR THE CITY OF STRONGSVILLE'S WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS AND WESTWOOD LIFT STATION, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motion by Mr. Short to suspend the rules requiring every ordinance or resolution to be read on three different days, second by Mr. DeMio. All members present voted aye and the motion carried.

**Motion to adopt by Mr. Short, second by Mr. DeMio.**

**Roll Call: All ayes. Motion carries. Ordinance No. 2020-087 ADOPTED.**

**Resolution No. 2020-088** by Mayor Perciak and All Members of Council. A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ADVERTISE FOR BIDS FOR THE FURNISHING OF SOLID WASTE, RECYCLABLE MATERIALS AND YARD WASTE COLLECTION SERVICES; FOR OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE CITY'S TRANSFER STATION; AND FOR THE RECEIPT, TRANSPORT AND DISPOSAL OF SOLID WASTE IN THE CITY OF STRONGSVILLE, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motion by Mr. Short to suspend the rules requiring every ordinance or resolution to be read on three different days, second by Mr. DeMio. All members present voted aye and the motion carried.

**Motion to adopt by Mr. Short, second by Mr. DeMio.**

**Roll Call: All ayes. Motion carries. Resolution No. 2020-088 ADOPTED.**

**Ordinance No. 2020-089** by Mayor Perciak and All Members of Council. AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A NON-EXCLUSIVE RENTAL/OCCUPANCY AGREEMENT WITH THE GREATER CLEVELAND SENIORS SOFTBALL ON A LIMITED BASIS FOR 2020, FOR THE USE OF VARIOUS BASEBALL FIELDS IN THE CITY OF STRONGSVILLE, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motion by Mr. Short to suspend the rules requiring every ordinance or resolution to be read on three different days, second by Mr. DeMio. All members present voted aye and the motion carried.

**Motion to adopt by Mr. Short, second by Mr. DeMio.**

**Roll Call: All ayes. Motion carries. Ordinance No. 2020-089 ADOPTED.**



**ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS (cont'd):**

**Ordinance No. 2020-090** by Mayor Perciak and All Members of Council. AN ORDINANCE RATIFYING AND AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO APPLY FOR AND ACCEPT FUNDING FROM THE OHIO PARKS & RECREATION ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION IN ORDER TO PROVIDE MATERIALS FOR CERTAIN RECREATION DEPARTMENT PROGRAMS; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motion by Mr. Short to suspend the rules requiring every ordinance or resolution to be read on three different days, second by Mr. DeMio. All members present voted aye and the motion carried.

**Motion to adopt by Mr. Short, second by Mr. DeMio.**

**Roll Call: All ayes. Motion carries. Ordinance No. 2020-090 ADOPTED.**

**Ordinance No. 2020-091** by Mayor Perciak and All Members of Council. AN ORDINANCE RATIFYING AND APPROVING THE FILING OF AN APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE WITH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES, 9-1-1 PROGRAM OFFICE, AND THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF FUNDS TO BE EXPENDED BY THE CITY OF STRONGSVILLE FOR THE SOUTHWEST EMERGENCY DISPATCH CENTER; AUTHORIZING ACCEPTANCE OF FUNDS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motion by Mr. Short to suspend the rules requiring every ordinance or resolution to be read on three different days, second by Mr. DeMio. All members present voted aye and the motion carried.

**Motion to adopt by Mr. Short, second by Mr. DeMio.**

**Roll Call: All ayes. Motion carries. Ordinance No. 2020-091 ADOPTED.**

**Ordinance No. 2020-092** by Mayor Perciak and All Members of Council. AN ORDINANCE RATIFYING AND APPROVING THE FILING OF AN APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE WITH THE OFFICE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES, DIVISION OF THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY, FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF FUNDS EXPENDED BY THE CITY OF STRONGSVILLE IN CONNECTION WITH THE STRONGSVILLE CORONAVIRUS MITIGATION PROGRAM; AUTHORIZING ACCEPTANCE OF FUNDS, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Motion by Mr. Short to suspend the rules requiring every ordinance or resolution to be read on three different days, second by Mr. DeMio. All members present voted aye and the motion carried.

**Motion to adopt by Mr. Short, second by Mr. DeMio.**

**Roll Call: All ayes. Motion carries. Ordinance No. 2020-092 ADOPTED.**

**Ordinance No. 2020-093** by Mayor Perciak and All Members of Council. AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A RELEASE AND VACATION OF AN EASEMENT AND ACCEPT A NEW GRANT OF EASEMENT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION, RECONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE, OPERATION AND REPAIR OF A STORM SEWER DRAINAGE SYSTEM IN CONNECTION WITH PROPERTY LOCATED AT 14356 CASTELREAGH LANE (SUBLOT 46, PERMANENT PARCEL NO. 398-17-041), IN THE AVERY WALDEN RESERVE SUBDIVISION, PHASE 2, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

***Placed on first reading and referred to the Planning Commission.***

**COMMUNICATIONS, PETITIONS AND CLAIMS:**

(None)

**MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:**

Mr. Schonhut – Is there any miscellaneous business? The only thing, Aimee, I know these minutes are going to be a lot, if you could focus on getting us the audience participation portion, maybe before anything else, specifically if anybody brought up any specific comments or questions. I'm sure we would all appreciate that.

Ms. Pientka – Sure.

Ms. Roff – If you could forward, also, maybe scan in for what you got from them as far as, those list of questions that were given to you and forward that to us? Possibly...the list of...

Ms. Pientka – I did not get any questions.

Ms. Roff – Well, some of what Matt, the union had...

Mr. Schonhut – That will be in the minutes. Just focus on the audience participation...

Ms. Pientka – Okay.

Mr. Schonhut – Portion if you could...

Ms. Roff – I would like a copy of what he gave her. Is that...

Mr. DeMio – Are you talking about the...

Mr. Schonhut – You want his speech?

Ms. Roff – Yeah, yeah, if I can have a copy of that...

Mr. Schonhut – Yeah, it will be in the minutes.

Ms. Roff – If I can have a copy of that...

Mr. Schonhut – Yeah...

Ms. Roff – Yeah...not...just a scan of what he...yeah. Is that okay?

Mr. Schonhut – Yeah.

Ms. Roff – Okay.

Ms. Kosek – Does that make sense Aimee?

Ms. Pientka – Sorry no. Are you talking when Mr. Kasza spoke, his speech?

Ms. Roff – Yes.

Ms. Pientka – I can forward that yes. Okay.

**MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS (cont'd):**

Ms. Roff – Yes, thank you.

Ms. Pientka – Sure. Absolutely, now I got it.

Mr. Short – Aimee, who's on first?

(No comments)

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business to come before this Council, President Schonhut adjourned the meeting at 9:53 p.m.



Aimee Pientka, MMC  
Clerk of Council

7-6-20

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

CITY OF STRONGSVILLE, OHIO

FINANCE DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUM

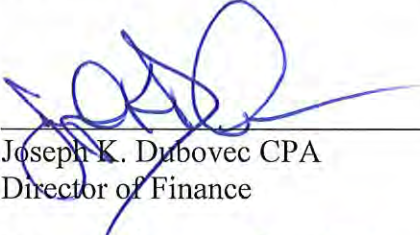
**Date:** June 15, 2020  
**To:** President and Members of Council  
**From:** Joseph K. Dubovec CPA, Director of Finance  
**CC:** Mayor Thomas P. Perciak  
Neal M. Jamison, Law Director  
**Subject:** Certification of Funding for June 15, 2020 Council Meeting

---

Since I will not be present at the June 15, 2020 Council meeting, I respectfully request that the "Certification of Funding" listed below be read at the meeting in my absence in order to confirm and document the funding in accordance with law.

**CERTIFICATION OF FUNDING  
FOR  
June 15, 2020 COUNCIL MEETING**

Based upon careful review of the proposed June 15, 2020 Council Meeting Agenda, I hereby certify that Funds will be made available for all Ordinances and Resolutions on such Agenda requiring certification of funding.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph K. Dubovec CPA  
Director of Finance

Date: June 15, 2020



## Middleburg Heights Firefighters Local 2018

Dave Dacek, President

Steve Schnell, Vice President

John Fazio, Secretary

15800 Bagley Road

Middleburg Heights, Ohio 44130

### Part Time Work

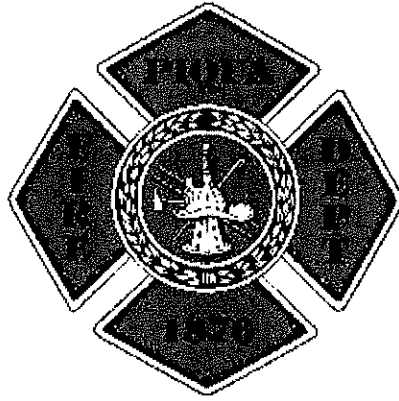
Middleburg Heights Local 2018 has been informed that the City of Strongsville is preparing to hire part time firefighters for staffing needs. The Union members of International Association of Firefighters and Union members of Middleburg Heights Local – 2018 do not agree with or support this decision. Therefore, members of Middleburg Heights Local – 2018, in solidarity, is here by informing the City of Strongsville that no member from this union will be applying for any part time firefighter job for the City of Strongsville.

Middleburg Heights Local – 2018

Dave Dacek, President

Steve Schnell, Vice President

John Fazio, Secretary- Treasurer



City of Piqua Fire Department  
Part-Time Staffing Evaluation  
& Elected Official Concerns  
Fire Chief Michael G. Rindler  
Captain Chad Kennedy  
Administrative Assistant Rhonda Meckstroth  
December 20, 2010

Table of Contents

<b>Evaluation Introduction</b>	
Reason for the Evaluation	Pg. 3
Message from the Fire Chief	Pg. 5
Demographics	Pg. 5
<b>Overview of the Part-Time Blended System</b>	
Advantages to the Use of Part-Time Staff	Pg. 6
Challenges to the Use of Part-Time Staff	Pg. 8
Noted Trends	Pg. 12
Overcoming Problems with a Blended Program	Pg. 14
<b>Examining Blended System Use</b>	
Site Visits to Fire Departments Utilizing Part-Time Staffing	Pg. 16
Non-visited Departments Mentioned in Comparison	Pg. 22
Survey Comparisons of Blended Departments	Pg. 24
Potential Areas for Evaluation	Pg. 27
<b>Cost Saving Concerns</b>	Pg. 28
<b>Related Points of Concern</b>	Pg. 36
<b>Recommendations</b>	Pg. 49
<b>References</b>	Pg. 54
<b>Appendixes</b>	
Appendix 1: Survey & Comparisons	Pg. 56
Appendix 2: Full-Time/Part-Time Staffing Schedule Comparisons	Pg. 62
Appendix 3: Response Times by Census Tract	Pg. 64
Appendix 4: City of Piqua Financial Records	Pg. 66
Appendix 5: Budgetary Variables	Pg. 69

## **Reason for Evaluation**

The current economic condition of the City of Piqua has created a need to evaluate all possible cost saving measures. Income tax revenue that is mainly responsible for sustaining the General Fund has seen a decrease due to disappearing industry/business and a shrinking employment base. The Public Safety departments within the City of Piqua receive a large portion of their budgetary resources from the General Fund. In an effort to reduce the General Fund budget, the city began discussion of replacing some full-time staff with part-time staff within the Piqua Fire Department. During discussion with fire department staff, city manager Fred Enderle, spoke of a possible cost saving measure by replacing four full-time members per shift with part-time members. This scenario would replace a total of 12 members; four members from the three different shifts.

City Manager Fred Enderle directed several city staff members to visit the following Ohio fire departments utilizing part-time staffing; Loveland Symmes, Oxford, and Vandalia. These locations were selected by City Manager Fred Enderle. The results of those visits combined with an independent survey of 21 Ohio fire departments, literature research, and industry recommendations were compiled in an effort to present an unbiased view of the use of part-time staffing to replace some full-time staff as a possible source for reducing General Fund operating costs.

The evaluation sought to determine whether replacing some full-time staff with part-time staff was a viable option for the City of Piqua. Some fire departments operate with a blended force of full-time and part-time staff and consider it an optional method of reducing budgetary costs while maintaining industry recommended staffing levels needed to perform the job effectively and safely. The evaluation considers how the City of Piqua community is situated



compared to those who utilize part-time personnel and recognizes the benefits and challenges of using a part-time system. There is discussion of cost savings as well as areas of increased budgetary expenditures experienced when adding part-time personnel. Current trends and special considerations were also assessed for implementation of part-time staff. The final section entitled *Related Points of Concern* were included in an effort to address issues and questions posed by current elected officials regarding staffing, emergency response, services, and financial liability.

For the purpose of this report, part-time employees are those who work less than 1500 hours a year based on Ohio Revised Code. Full-time employees are those who work the traditional 24/48 schedule; Piqua Fire Department full-time staff work 2,928 hours annually. Paid on-call and volunteers were not considered in the evaluation. Paid on-call and “pure” volunteers are diminishing nationwide. Research notes the following causes have attributed to the decline: unpredictable availability, difficulty in providing proper training, increase in the number of calls, lack of employer support to leave work for calls, lack of benefits and incentives, legal and labor issues including potential for uncompensated disability. This is supported by the recent transition the City of Kettering Fire Department experienced in replacing their volunteer program, used to supplement their full-time staffing, with paid part-time (Dayton Daily News September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2010 articles *Volunteer decline leads to paid part-time firefighters* and *Kettering switching volunteer firefighters to hourly pay system*). Pure volunteers (receive zero compensation) are near extinction and most in the fire/EMS service are compensated in some manner. For example, Covington Fire Department compensates their staff with a monetary amount per fire event. The modern day fire department responsible for providing EMS services has moved beyond the simple social organization it once was due in large part to increased need

for service, increased risk, and standardized training requirements mandated for those who wish to serve. For the purpose of this evaluation, only paid part-time staff is considered.

### **A Message from the Fire Chief**

As Fire Chief for the City of Piqua, I feel it is my responsibility to investigate and thoroughly research financial accountability to the citizens of Piqua. For this reason, I took it upon myself to coordinate the development of a written evaluation of replacing some full-time staff with part-time staffing. It is the intent of my staff to present their findings in an unbiased format, as members who understand all facets of providing fire based EMS coverage including but not limited to financial consideration. At the conclusion of our report, as Fire Chief, I will provide my professional recommendation.

How can we staff emergency personnel for our community needs with limited funds? The fire service and local governments have implemented a strategy to add part-time paid members to handle emergency calls for service. It is imperative to recognize that the use of part-time staffing in Ohio fire departments is wide spread and allows for budgetary savings in adding personnel. The key to success is most departments rely heavily on mutual aid agreements and shared employee pools when using part-time staffing. Be clear that fire departments use part-time staffing for growth. The City of Piqua and this report are not evaluating hiring additional part-time staff verses additional full-time staff for growth; we are evaluating if it is fiscally responsible to replace some full-time staff with part-time staff.

### **Demographics**

The Piqua Fire Department is a career full-time staffed public safety agency operating year round, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The department has been in operation since 1876. The EMS/Fire coverage area consists of 10.9 square miles inside the City of Piqua limits

and contracts exist to provide coverage for both Washington and Springcreek Townships. The overall coverage area is 56.9 square miles. Population for the coverage area is 24,367 based on the 2000 Census. The nearest mutual aid for the City of Piqua consists of Covington (EMS & Fire) and Fletcher volunteer fire departments (Fire) located 6-8 miles on the west and east, Lockington volunteer fire department (Fire) and Houston Rescue (EMS) 6 miles north, Saint Paris (EMS) 15 miles east, and full-time staffed departments of Sidney (13 miles) and Troy (10 miles) located to the north and south. A recent risk assessment of the City of Piqua was conducted for the Miami County Emergency Management Association and 199 targets were identified as critical infrastructure or substantial hazard to human life. The City of Piqua has seven facilities for elderly citizens, multiple large businesses, four shopping centers, a community college, eleven educational facilities, and multiple pre-schools. Major modes of transportation include interstate/state/county roads, a railroad, and a municipal airport.

The Piqua Fire Department has 28 full-time staff certified for both paramedic and firefighter level II. Additionally, all the full-time staff have received certifications for NIMS/ICS, Hazardous Materials, Confined Space Entry and Rescue, Advanced Cardiac Life Support (both Adult and Pediatric), and CPR. Many members also have certifications as fire inspectors, fire investigators, fire and EMS instructors. The department maintains a technical rescue team for high angle, rope, and trench rescue, as well as one of the two certified dive teams in the Miami County. The department responds to an average of over 3,000 EMS calls and 500 fire calls annually. The operations are based from one station located in the heart of downtown.

### **Advantages to the Use of Part-Time Staff**

Growing demand for fire/EMS services coupled with a difficult economical climate has paved the way for growth in utilizing part-time staffing. As fire departments experience need for

additional staffing they are choosing to grow with the use of part-time members. The main advantage anticipated by government entities who decide to supplement and utilize part-time staff is budgetary savings in salary and benefits. Full-time union employees negotiate salary and benefits with government staff and are ultimately approved by elected city officials; but also tie the financial hands of government who are unable to reduce labor costs due to binding contracts. Research indicates that some fire departments are utilizing part-time staffing for the following advantages:

- Lower hourly wage - Average pay range is \$13-\$15.00 an hour based on certification levels. A paramedic certified as a Firefighter Level II will be paid at a higher pay scale than an EMT Basic and/or Firefighter Level I.
- Lower benefits costs – Generally speaking part-time staff do not receive health insurance or life insurance.
- Lower retirement contribution – Full-time firefighters receive Ohio Police/Fire Pension at a rate of 24%. Social Security is typically the only retirement benefit paid on part-time firefighters.
- Lower costs for minimum staffing coverage (Reduction in overtime costs) - If personnel drops below the daily minimum staffing the vacancy is filled with overtime for full-time staff members and part-time members could fill these vacancies at a reduced rate.
- Part-time staffs currently are not represented by the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) – Union contracts dictate additional employee benefits such as sell of accrued time, overtime compensation, sick/vacation/funeral/personal leave, pay rates/step increases. These benefits are typically not offered to part-time staff.

- Cross seeding of ideas – Part-time staff typically work for multiple agencies and can share learned techniques amongst all.

### **Challenges to the Use of Part-Time Staff**

It would be a natural assumption during economic instability to simply compare hourly wages and benefit costs of part-time staff versus full-time staff when looking to reduce budgetary costs. Is replacing full-time staff with part-time staff simply a reduction of salary and benefits? What is the cost of experience, training, and commitment to a community? What are the disadvantages, can the disadvantages be overcome, and are there direct and/or indirect monetary costs to replacing full-time staff with part-time staff? When considering utilization of part-time staff the following disadvantages were experienced by some blended departments surveyed:

- High turnover rate of part-time employee base
  - Loss of knowledge/skills/financial investment once an individual is trained and leaves.
  - Average length of service for part-time staff is 2-3 years.
    - Current full-time financial investment typically results in a 25 year commitment.
  - The U.S. Department of Labor notes on average it can cost one and a half times an employee's annual salary and benefits to replace that employee. There are both direct and indirect costs. Direct expenses relate to the leaving, replacement, and transitions costs while indirect expenses relate to the loss of production, reduced performance levels, unnecessary overtime, and low morale.
- Increased hiring costs – This is relative to the hiring ratio of part-time to full-time personnel. Research and survey respondents indicate the need for six part-time members

to replace one full-time member. The city may also need to conduct the hiring process more frequently (Civil Service examinations) due to depleting active lists.

- Overworked employees – Many part-time members work multiple jobs/travel longer distances that can cause fatigue while on the job.
- Possibility for lower reimbursement rates for EMS billing – based on certification levels of responding members – Advanced Life Support (ALS) rate at \$1,000 per call vs. Basic Life Support rate at \$500 per call (BLS). The City of Piqua collects ALS rates for EMS runs because there is always a paramedic on the service call. Hiring lower paid certification levels (EMT Basic) combined with current run volume (number of multiple calls) could result in some EMT Basic only service calls.
- Potential for increased Unemployment and Workers Compensation costs
  - What are the direct and indirect costs of layoffs? Unemployment costs for twelve firefighters who would be laid off may negatively affect unemployment rates.
- Substantial financial need for stockpile and subsequent maintenance of firefighter equipment/gear/clothing. The department currently does not have an outlay of equipment/clothing/gear; we outfit current staff only.
- Potential increased training costs: Constant state of training new employees (due to high turnover rate) referred to as “revolving door” of employees.
- Reduced levels of competency/training certifications – Examples: Paramedic verses EMT-Basic, Confined Space, and Hazmat Operations. What certifications will we expect part-time staff to have or obtain? Levels of certification and competency affect hourly rate compensation.

- Lost productivity due to vacant positions – 6 month average to replace vacant positions
  - Increased overtime for vacant positions
- Scheduling issues - 1500 hour annual limit: Ohio Revised Code 4113.11 (G) (3) and 505.60 (F) (1). Ohio Revised Code defines the use of part-time staff as those who work less than 1500 hours annually.
  - Scheduling of blended certifications – Example: EMT Basic verses Paramedic – Consideration of Paramedic to Basic ratio for squad crew. Part-time staff would be compensated at a higher rate for Paramedic certification.
  - Increased overtime related to using part-time employees above their regular schedule (minimum staffing shortages) causing furlough once they reach the 1500 hour limit for the remainder of the year.
- Lack of reliability - Call-offs and discipline problems. Some part-time staff may have worked a full shift at other agencies prior to reporting for duty and can call-off for their part-time position when need arises at the other agency. Part-time staff members could harbor resentment for being paid at a lower rate than full-time staff and may have expectations of performing less than full-time staff.
  - Part-time employees can be late because of being held at their previous employment and it cannot be held against them by law – Ohio Revised Code 4113.41 and 146.01
  - Increased overtime costs to cover part-time staff held over at other employment until the staff member arrives.
- Lack of availability – Part-time staff generally works multiple jobs – This is a major factor for recall of emergency staff due to multiple calls for service. If lower paid part-

time staff members are working at other agencies on their days off, they will not be available for emergency call backs for multiple EMS calls or large fires.

- Recall of staff for emergency calls is frequent due to current staffing levels verses call volume/simultaneous calls.
- Limited continuity - The use of part-time staff limits continuity experienced with a group of full-time staff working together every day. Limited continuity can interrupt the work flow, inhibit teamwork, and limit the group's overall effectiveness.
  - To illustrate the point it is noted the difficulty management would face if every other week the main administrative staff was different.
- Lack of department/community familiarity – Hiring a large group of new employees at one time will most likely negatively affect emergency response due to staff being unfamiliar with equipment/location and community streets/business.
- Inexperienced employees –Some of the part-time pool are new employees to the fire service who have just recently completed training/education.
- Reduced level of responsibility, and conflict – Management most likely will have to deal with an atmosphere of conflict between part-time and full-time staff members as well as part-time staff resenting the fact they are doing the same job for less pay and none of the benefits. In an occupation where teamwork is absolutely essential, conflict could result in negativity and dysfunction within the department.
- Lack of dedication and loyalty - Part-time staff will be full-time staff from another department, looking for full-time employment, or leave for other part-time positions offering better pay/incentives.



- Recruiting and retention issues – As noted from the research and surveyed departments it is becoming more difficult to recruit and then retain part-time staff. What training/certifications will we require in our recruits, what hiring process will we utilize, will we require extensive background investigations, how we will compete with other agencies hiring part-time staff?

### **Noted Trends**

In conducting the research regarding the use of part-time staff, several trends were noted that are worth mentioning. First, when departments use part-time staff it is usually the result of an up and out progression. Director of the Fire Service Division of the Legal & Liability Risk Management Institute, retired fire officer, and practicing attorney, Curt Varone, notes that “Fire departments evolve from all-volunteer fire brigades to professional departments. Combined departments, mixing full-time and part-time firefighters, are in a transition stage on the road to a full-time department (Eberth, 2008)”. Staff was unable to locate an example of regression where full-time staffing was replaced by part-time staff. The majority of departments utilizing part-time staff began as volunteer departments or has added part-time staff in addition to their full-time staffing. Many have operated blended since their inception. This life-cycle finding is consistent with every known blended department that was surveyed. Piqua would be unique in resorting to a reduction of full-time staff and replacement with part-time staff to form a blended department. In addition, several attempted the part-time blended system and went away from it because of the issues they experienced. Those departments include Anderson Township and Hamilton Township both near Cincinnati and the City of Delaware north of Columbus.

Inquiries revealed that the part-time pool continues to dry up. As it does, recruiting and retention efforts result in competitive hiring, increasing wages and offering incentives. These

practices offset savings part-time staff brings to the department. The Miami Valley Fire/EMS Alliance examined the problems member departments were having staffing their part-time positions. They set out to determine how the Alliance could combat issues with attracting and retaining part-time members and found that the main issues with part-time staff satisfaction included workload, flexibility, and opportunity for a full-time position, even above pay and benefits. If the opportunity didn't exist for full-time employment, the call volume was high, or the department inflexible, recruiting and retention could be a serious problem. Attempting to resolve these issues could lead to competitive hiring, bid wars, and incentive programs that negate the cost savings part-time staff are supposed to provide.

Part-time staff is also growing disgruntled as they come into a profession hoping for the full-time job and realize it is a slow process. While the IAFF will not represent part-time firefighters, other representation is there for these employees. The Service Employees International Union is a bargaining unit for part-time firefighters. Literature suggests that this change will inevitably come across the fire service. The Ohio Fire Chief's Association has also recently surveyed members about making a legislative push to allow all part-time firefighters into the Public Employee Retirement System since they are currently not entitled to Ohio Police and Fire Pensions.

Those attending the National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer Program are beginning to perform studies to consider the narrowing savings and question whether the excessive challenges that are part of a part-time program are worth it. Studies are also being conducted to determine what the threshold is for conversion to all full-time and at what point that move makes economical and functional sense.

Another area that has experienced recent change is in the area of health care. Health care reform works to address those in part-time positions who currently are not required to be provided health insurance. Both the State of Ohio and the Nation has experienced health care reform that has impacts on employers and insurance companies. In the near future, organizations that do not provide health insurance to part-time employees will be required to pay a monthly per-employee penalty (Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act [PPACA]).

Relative to part-time staffing options, the fire service has begun to see another important trend developing relative to firefighters leaving the fire service. As government agencies struggle to reduce annual budgets by decreasing salary and benefits, increased job insecurity, coinciding with changes in the fire service for increased training to maintain certifications, combined with personal safety/health risks...firefighters with low morale are choosing other careers. This trend is noted within the Piqua Fire Department. In the last several years there have been three members leave due to disability, three left for career changes, and also multiple staff members have recently acquired nursing degrees and/or pursuing enlistments in the National Guard or Reserves.

### **Overcoming Problems with a Blended Program**

There are suggestions for overcoming problems with running a blended program and some “outside the box” ideas are discovered from the literature review. Caution should be taken when considering these options because every one of them will cost money in one form or another, be it directly or indirectly.

One of the main ideas includes hiring full-time staff exclusively from the part-time pool. This helps motivate part-time employees to do the best they can while they are on the job as part-time employees and encourages some loyalty since they ultimately are striving for the full-time

position. Transition to full-time then becomes competitive from within the part-time ranks and only requires an interview process and a look at the part-time employee's service record. That means, though, that every part-time employee needs to go through the same rigorous hiring process as full-time staff including civil service testing, physical agility, interviews, background checks, polygraph, physical exam, psychological testing, and credit checks. Literature cites some discussion within jurisdictions about reducing the steps used in the hiring process. Given the nature of their responsibilities, it could be costly to eliminate or reduce the stringent hiring procedures of the public safety departments. Exploration noted issues such as theft, drug use, and sexual abuse among public safety employees hired without a thorough screening process.

The city could provide incentives to employees including attendance bonuses, incentive pay for weekends/holidays/nights, being offered choices on retirement plans, health insurance options, and offer disability and/or life insurance. Tuition benefits could be provided to part-time staff. Part-time employees could elect representatives to give that employee group a voice in matters like negotiations, policy setting, or discipline matters. These measures will negate the cost savings gap. Depending on the number of part-time staff that would be desired, Piqua Fire would have to draw from other departments that have been running part-time programs and might already offer various benefits to their staff. In order to stay competitive the department will need to be attractive to potential employees. It should be noted that some of these are benefits not offered to the fire department's current full-time staff and implementing them to attract part-time staff may create animosity or become a bargaining issue for full-time members.

Grants could be written to help offset costs of the part-time program and attempt to secure items that will be necessary like fire gear, uniforms, and training. Each person hired receives their own fitted fire gear and that will get very expensive. One area blended department

accomplished this by writing a grant that paid for 80 sets of gear to be provided to their part-time employees. Of concern is the city needs to provide matching funds for grants received and grants are competitive and not a guarantee of funds.

## **Site Visits to Fire Departments Utilizing Part-Time Staffing**

### **Loveland-Symmes Visit**

At the direction of City Manager Fred Enderle, Chief Rindler and other city staff members took the opportunity to visit with the Loveland-Symmes Fire Department. The purpose of the visit was to review their use of part-time firefighters.

Loveland-Symmes is located in a major metropolitan area near Cincinnati. The Fire Collaborative that Loveland-Symmes Fire Department is associated with consists of 5 separate agencies (Blue Ash, Sycamore Township, Loveland, Symmes Township, and Sharonville), 11 fire stations, and collective staffing of 365 members. A fire collaborative is a multi-jurisdictional group of fire departments operating as a single entity for the purpose of providing fire and EMS services.

Upon review of their daily operations, it was noted there are minimal similarities between the two departments in regard to funding, staffing, training, and equipment. Loveland-Symmes has 41 full-time members and 21 part-time members. All members have the 240 hour fire certification (Firefighter Level II) and all full-time staff are paramedics while part-time staff is a combination of EMT-basics and paramedics. They do require at least one paramedic on every medic call. The area's population changes dramatically with over 125,000 during the day and only 30,000 at night. Due to the population variation, Loveland-Symmes Fire Department utilizes peak staffing. Minimum manning is 13 members during off peak hours (night) and 17 members during peak hours (day).

Loveland-Symmes Fire Chief Otto Huber advised that their initial response for a structure fire is a minimum staffing of 26 members. The Collaborative agreement allows for mutual aid response within 5 minutes. Chief Huber advised the luxury of ceasing EMS responses while his staff has a working structure fire; EMS responses are handled by other agencies within the agreement. They never have emergency call back overtime due to the Fire Collaboration mutual aid agreement. It should also be noted that there are designated technical rescue teams within the Fire Collaboration. The funding and resources available in this Fire Collaborative serve the citizens of Loveland in a fashion that is superior to most cities and allows for their use of part-time members to supplement their full-time members.

The Loveland-Symmes Fire Department operating budget is \$4.2 million with an average of \$900,000 per year additional for capital purchases. It is a private fire department contracted to provide emergency response and the city & townships fund the department through property taxes. There is an automatic 5% increase to their contract annually and employees have received 3% raises every year. The department has an ISO rating of 2.

Since it is obvious that we are not comparing apples to apples in regard to the Piqua Fire Department (City of Piqua) and the Loveland-Symmes Fire Department, the following summarizes staffing of part-time and personnel costs learned from Chief Huber:

- Turnover of part-time employees is an issue – typically a part-time employee only employs with Loveland-Symmes for 18 months. They do have part-time members that have full-time jobs at other departments and their length of employment is typically 3 years.
  - Full time firefighter/paramedic positions are typically career so the outlay of costs to hire, outfit, and train are dispersed over 25 years.

- Part-time employees must work less than 1500 hours per year or they are considered full time and entitled to benefits.
- Part-time members are paid on average between \$14 to \$18 per hour based on their certification level (EMT vs. Paramedic) and length of service. This is base pay, no overtime/benefits.
  - All members of the Piqua Fire Department are paramedic level.
- Training is also an issue for part-time employees at Loveland-Symmes. Both firefighter and paramedic certifications require minimum hours of training to maintain and it is difficult to schedule mandatory training for part-time staff due to scheduling. Overtime is often necessary.
  - Piqua Fire Department members are trained on regular shift duty days for EMS/Fire certifications. No overtime is paid for certification training.
- Due to the high turnover of part-time employees Loveland-Symmes maintains an extensive outlay of equipment for outfitting their members. The Fire Collaborative has purchasing power to offset the high cost of equipment needed.
  - Piqua Fire Department does not have a stock pile of equipment or purchasing power. Equipping/outfitting a firefighter is very expensive (turnout gear, helmet, boots, duty uniforms, radio, fire gloves, SCBA face mask, etc.).
- Since they are a private fire department they can choose to provide retirement benefits to their part-time staff. They provide 5% to a 401K after 1,000 hours of service.
  - The City of Piqua currently pays 14% retirement to PERS for existing part-time or seasonal employees.

- Part-time employees are still funded for other benefits (ex. Medicare and Workers Comp).
- Loveland-Symmes has a designated staff member to coordinate training and scheduling of staff. Scheduling of staff includes having paramedics on all EMS calls.
- Part-time employees receive vacation and holiday pay and have the option to purchase health care benefits and disability pension.
  - Chief Huber also noted that current proposed health care changes will affect health care costs for part-time members.
- Full-time staff members have an annual pay range of \$59,000 to \$77,000 base salary, no overtime or benefits are included in that figure. There is opportunity for overtime due to minimum manning. This is an hourly range of \$20 to \$27.
  - The Piqua Fire Department member's hourly base pay range is from \$17 to \$26.
- Chief Huber noted that it takes six part-time staff members to cover one full-time position. Annual base salary cost for that part-time member coverage is \$131,400 at \$15.00 an hour. No overtime or benefits are calculated in the salary.
  - Piqua is outfitting (equipment/clothing) one member verses 6 members at Loveland-Symmes.
- The proximity of surrounding communities at Loveland-Symmes is a great asset to their department in regard to part-time staff and mutual aid agreements/responses.
  - The closest full-time mutual aid department for the City of Piqua is Troy and volunteer departments are Covington, Lockington, and Fletcher. It is important to note that the three volunteer departments struggle to employ candidates with Fletcher recently giving up their EMS function due to lack of staffing.



Loveland-Symmes Fire Department appears to have an advantage with being located in a major metropolitan area and being a member of the Fire Collaborative. Their use of part-time firefighters and EMT's/paramedics is utilized to complement their existing full-time staff.

### **City of Oxford Visit**

After visiting with Loveland-Symmes, the city scheduled a trip to the City of Oxford to examine their department. Chief Rindler and other City of Piqua staff went to Oxford and met with the City Manager and Fire Chief John Detherage to discuss the daily operations of the Oxford Fire Department. The City of Oxford is 6.3 square miles and has a population of 23,000 when Miami University is in session with over 44% of their population being college age 20-24. Outside of the school year their base residential population is 7,000.

The fire department has one station and transports to a hospital located in the center of town. The closest mutual aid is the volunteer fire department of Liberty Township. The department made 672 fire runs and 1748 EMS runs in 2009. Their annual budget is \$1.3 million in 2010 and is funded 100% from the City of Oxford General Fund.

Until 2008, the fire department was strictly a volunteer response and their annual budget was \$212,449. The City of Oxford recently experienced growth in their fire department staffing with the addition of part-time firefighters and EMT's/paramedics. They provide around the clock coverage to their citizens by staffing a maximum of four (4) members on duty at all times. This includes the Fire Chief, who is their only full time member. The Fire Chief responds and is part of the firefighting and medic response crews. When asked about structure fire responses, Chief Detherage commented "I get a sick feeling in the pit of my stomach every time we receive tones for a fire". The City of Oxford fire department must often initiate exterior attack for fires

until additional resources arrive on the scene. The fire department does not provide any type of technical rescue or hazardous materials teams.

Oxford Fire Department has a total of 28 members; all are part time, with blended certification levels and pay on average of \$14.00 an hour. They also experience turn over in employees averaging 3-4 a year. Oxford does not offer health insurance and pays Social Security, Workers Comp, and Medicare for members. Training is based on available funds and they do provide custom fit equipment for part-time staff. Oxford Fire Department has a limited amount of equipment stock. Yearly equipment maintenance and testing is outsourced to other city departments or contracted with outside agencies. The scheduling of staff is done a month in advance and “requires constant supervision”. Chief Detherage advised that 100% of his part-time staff work for other agencies on their days off and also live too far away to be helpful for call back situations.

There is a stark contrast between Loveland-Symmes and Oxford Fire Department. The situation in Oxford is perhaps best described by Chief Detherage; “severely understaffed”.

### **City of Vandalia Visit**

Chief Rindler met with Chief Chad Follick of the City of Vandalia Fire Department to discuss part-time staffing. Vandalia Fire Department relies on mutual aid and paid-on call to supplement responses. They receive automatic aid from Butler Township through their dispatch system. They also have three fully staffed mutual aid fire departments within one mile. Their community is approximately 11.9 square miles with a population of 14,600 people. They respond to approximately 2,300 calls for EMS and 500 calls for fire.

Chief Follick noted that the advantage to their use of part-time staffing is more bodies for the same amount of money. However, he also noted that the main disadvantage is high turn-over

and decreasing availability for part-time recruitment. It is becoming difficult to utilize part-time staffing for call-backs due to the majority of them having multiple fire department jobs. They currently employ 18 part-time members who work 24 hours every six days. Vandalia Fire Department has one full-time staff member on per day and three part-time staff responding out of two stations along with a few 40-hour staff members (Chief/Fire Prevention). Part-time staff receives backgrounds, psychological evaluations, physicals, and drug testing. Vandalia does hire outside agencies to conduct some of their annual testing and maintenance responsibilities for vehicles, equipment, and building.

### **Non-Visited Departments Mentioned as Comparison**

At the time of this report, only the three previously mentioned departments have been visited. However, city administration has mentioned several other locations as potentially being similar to Piqua and may be visited in the near future.

- **Kettering** –Kettering is listed as an example for a strong volunteer program in the ICMA textbook *Managing Fire Services* that supplements their full-time staff. Kettering recently eliminated their volunteer program and added paid part-time personnel to their paid career staffing. They staff full-time during the day and utilize part-time to supplement full-time staff. They have 52 career firefighters and formally had over 100 volunteers that responded out of seven stations. Volunteer numbers have decreased significantly requiring part-time staff to be paid \$12-\$18 an hour based on certifications. Kettering also relies on very close mutual aid resources. The community is approximately 18.7 square miles with a population of 57,500 people.
- **Englewood** – Englewood uses a combination of seven full-time members and 50 part-time members to staff a minimum of eight per day responding out of two stations. Their

call volume is 332 fire runs and 2648 EMS runs. Their community is 6.2 miles with a population of 12,235 people. Mutual aid for Englewood is within a mile in three directions and they only experience multiple calls about 10% of the time.

These communities differ from the City of Piqua in that they operate with multiple stations and most significant of all is the close proximity these communities have to their mutual aid which consists of staffed departments.

### **City of Delaware Consultation – Failed Part-Time Program**

As mentioned previously, we located three departments with failed part-time programs. A conference call was established between Chief Rindler/staff and Delaware Fire Department Chief John Donahue/staff. The City of Delaware Fire Department (a municipality north of Columbus) implemented part-time staffing from 1998 to 2000. At the time, a second station was being opened and needed staffed. The city administration and fire chief at the time decided to utilize part-time members in addition to already employed full-time staff verses hiring additional full-time staff. There were attempts to get the union in support of the part-time staffing but negotiations on development of such a program eventually reached an impasse.

The part-time staff had a different hiring process than full-time members, different training requirements, and different uniforms and turn-out gear. Chief Donahue states there were issues with discipline, criminal activity, high turnover, knowledge deficits of the equipment and community, and difficulty in maintaining needed training. The feeling was that there was no “control” over the part-time staff. Animosity amongst members was also an issue. “The quality and commitment” of full-time staff was superior in comparison to his part-time staff. Chief Donahue describes similarities between staffing part-time to military guard and mercenary units. His analogy was that if your full-time staff was regular army, how would you hope to perceive

your part-time staff; as guard/reserve members with loyalty, commitment, and professionalism to the nation or mercenaries who are disloyal, indifferent, and lack of discipline? The experience in Delaware, according to Chief Donahue, was one where part-time staff members could be compared to mercenaries.

### **Survey Findings Regarding Blended Departments**

Members of the Ohio Fire Academy provided a list of 45 Ohio fire departments that operate in a blended manner. They were contacted with requests for information using the survey in Appendix 1. Over 20 fire departments responded to the survey and gave vital insight to the growth of their agencies with the addition of part-time staffing. Many of those contacted acknowledged that part-time staffing was utilized to meet their staffing requirements since department inception, further expand their daily staff, or better compliment their existing full-time staff. It is viewed as an economical system to increase daily staffing needs; this is contrary to the City of Piqua's consideration of eliminating/reducing full-time staff and replacing them with part-time personnel.

The departments were then surveyed asking for information on the structure of their department, the demographics of their community, wages, budget information, minimum staffing, call volumes, operations, scheduling, and so on. The information is summarized in Appendix 1.

Several things should be pointed out regarding these departments that run in a blended manner. First is their location. The majority of blended departments operate in areas where there are a large number of departments within a small geographical area. Second, related to the first, is the distance to mutual aid. Most blended departments have extremely close mutual aid

resources to supplement their response to calls. In addition to these resources being close, they are also manned 24 hours a day and run both EMS and fire.

The significance of location and mutual aid is a critical element that needs to be examined with the implementation of part-time staffing. This is a major demographical factor that allows for the success of a blended department enabling them to overcome the disadvantages associated with blended staffing (e.g. lack of availability for call-back, staff reduction caused by late arriving part-time staff, etc.). To illustrate the point of mutual aid and location, a 16 square mile bird's eye view comparison of the area around the City of Piqua and the same area around the City of Dayton (who has several blended departments, some mentioned in comparison to our city) is provided on the next two pages.

### Mutual Aid Comparison for the City of Piqua and surrounding communities

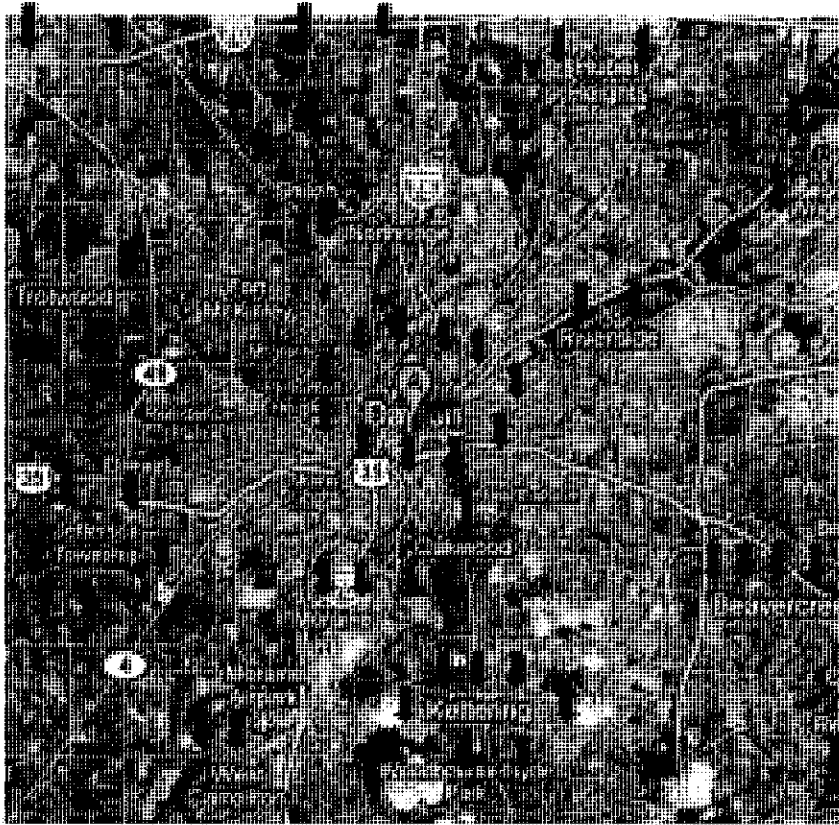
(Google map centered on the city of Piqua at a scale of 2 miles per ¾ inch and extending 8 miles in all directions from city center)



In addition to Piqua with its stations, surrounding departments include:

- Covington Volunteer Fire Department - Unmanned
- Covington EMS - treated 12 hours a day and from 3 am Friday to 3 am Saturday
- Lockington Volunteer Fire Department - Unmanned (no EMS)
- Plaster Fire Department - Unmanned (no EMS)
- Troy Fire Department - Station 2 - Manned with two firefighters per machine
- Only Cincinnati provides EMS in addition to Piqua and Troy and all departments in this area operate out of one station. When the area is divided in two several unattended volunteer departments could be included and two manned multi-station departments (Stoney and Troy)

**Mutual Aid Comparison for the City of Dayton and surrounding departments**  
 (Google map centered on the City of Dayton at a scale of 2 miles per ¼ inch and extending 8 miles in all directions from city center)



In addition to the City of Dayton with 11 municipal stations, surrounding departments include:

Englewood - Manned: 2 stations  
 Butler Township - Manned: 2 stations  
 Hills Heights - Manned: 2 stations  
 Wright Patterson - Manned: 3 stations  
 Loveland - Manned: 3 stations  
 Haystack Township - Manned: 2 stations  
 Riverside - Manned: 2 stations  
 Jefferson Township - Manned: 4 stations  
 Miamina - Manned: 2 stations  
 Jackson - Manned: 1 station  
 Beavercreek - Manned: 4 stations  
 West Carrollton - Manned: 2 stations  
 Kettering - Manned: 7 stations

All departments include Fire/EMS. Many more staffed departments with multiple stations exist when the area viewed is doubled in size.

Most of the blended departments surveyed had lower volume of fire and EMS calls, had multiple stations to cover their jurisdiction, had a smaller response area, and a lower number of multiple calls when compared to the City of Piqua. All the departments experienced a much higher turn-over of part-time staff during the same time that full-time staffing levels remained stable supporting findings in research.

In examining full-time pay, the City of Piqua wages for firefighters are comparable to surveyed departments (see Appendix 1). One of the main causes for increased annual salaries for Piqua fire staff is the overtime factor. It has been determined by past administrations that it was cheaper to keep daily minimum staffing at lower levels and pay overtime when additional personnel are needed based on actual emergency responses. An average annual overtime budget for the Piqua Fire Department is \$180,000.

### **Potential Areas for Evaluation**

One area that is not well understood is the impact of moving to a blended department and what that means when considering the union contract, civil service rules, mutual aid agreements, and service contracts with local businesses. Language in the union contract may need to be examined and adjusted when moving to a blended system to account for issues that may arise. How will overtime be handled between part-time and full-time employees, how will layoffs and cuts be addressed, will certain benefits be provided to part-time employees as it is to full-time employees regarding paramedic bonuses, time off, different types of leave, uniforms and equipment, annual physical exams and fitness testing, training, promotions and appointment, and so on? Housing and storage (bedding/lockers) for added equipment as well as added personnel will need to be addressed. Currently, civil service rules address hiring and promotions. Will changes need to be made to civil service rules and regulations to account for the change into a



blended department? Consideration should be given to entry level applications, testing, eligibility lists, background investigation of applicants, reemployment, and reinstatement depending on how the conversion to a blended department is to be handled.

### **Cost Saving Concerns**

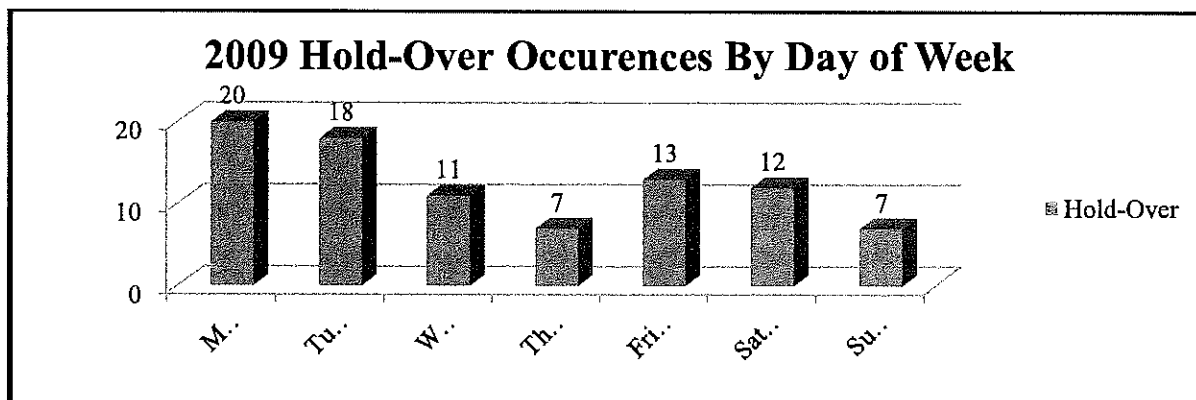
The primary reason to consider replacing some full-time staff with a blended staff is the possibility that may exist to reduce budgetary expenditures. However, the anticipation of savings should be analyzed thoroughly. Salary and benefit savings of full-time staff verses part-time staff could result in higher costs than is currently being allocated to operate the existing fire department.

### **Staffing**

While literature review and blended departments suggest a hiring ratio of six part-time members to replace one full-time member, the bare minimum best case scenario involves hiring two part-time staff members to replace every full-time member laid off. A 2:1 ratio staffing example is outlined in Appendix 2. There are three staffing options outlined for part-time members (one 24-hour shift every six days, one 12-hour shift every third day, or one 8-hour shift every other day), this would mean the hiring of 24 part-time employees to replace 12 laid-off full-time firefighters. However, that does not take into consideration any additional hours of work the part-time members might acquire throughout the year above their regular schedule that could cause a furlough due to the Ohio Revised Code 1500 hour rule. It is very likely that more than the required minimum part-time schedule will be needed to adequately staff the City of Piqua Fire Department due to current staffing needs to perform the critical functions provided to the citizens.

## **Furlough**

Overtime due to reliability issues of part-time staff members and vacancies caused by turn-over of part-time employees has already been discussed, but another aspect of part-time staff use needs to be considered. As addressed in appendix 2, reaching 1500 hours within a year will require furlough of a part-time employee creating overtime to cover the vacancy. If part-time staff members are furloughed, full-time staff will be covering the vacancies at overtime rates. Handling of call-ins, scheduled overtime, and filling vacancies due to employees calling off will impact the 1500 hour limit. The argument cannot be made that there will not be call-ins of off-duty personnel because the department is not increasing staffing levels. It is merely replacing some full-time firefighters. The current level of multiple runs experienced and the related need to call-in additional personnel will still exist. In addition, there will be times when part-time staff will be held over at the end of a shift due to a late shift fire or EMS call. As you can see in the graph below, there were 88 instances of hold-overs in 2009.

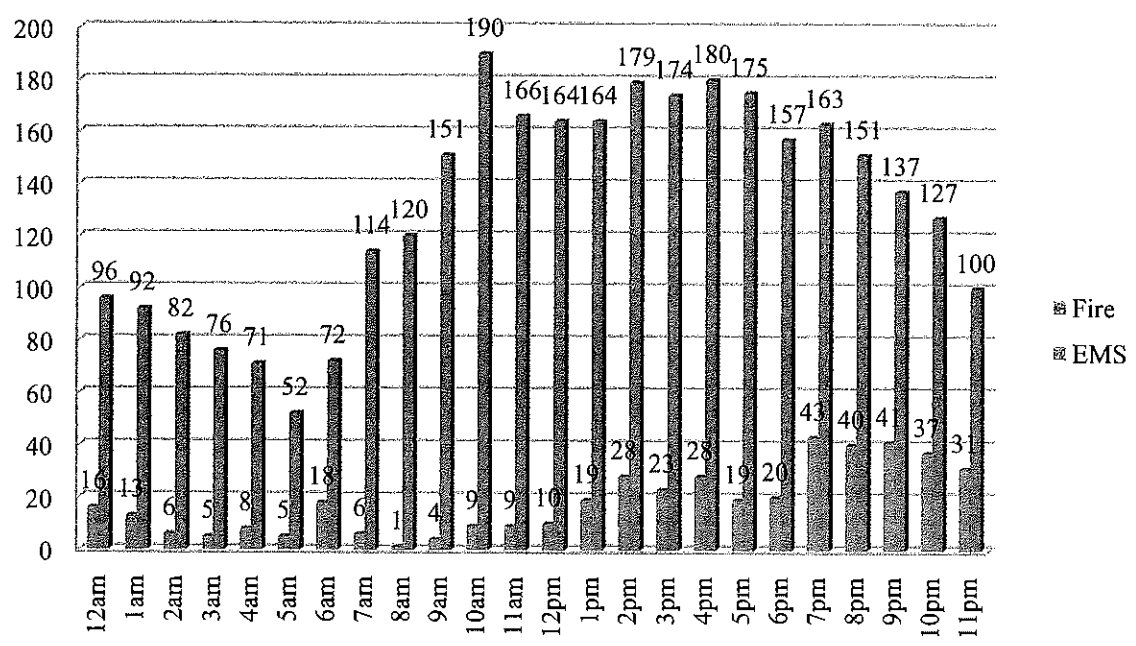


These issues will likely contribute to the furlough issue creating full-time firefighter overtime at the end of the year. The best way to deal with such an issue is to increase minimum staffing and hire even more part-time staff eliminating the need for call-ins. However, hiring even more part-time staff will then increase hiring costs, hourly costs, benefits, gear and equipment, training needs, and so on.

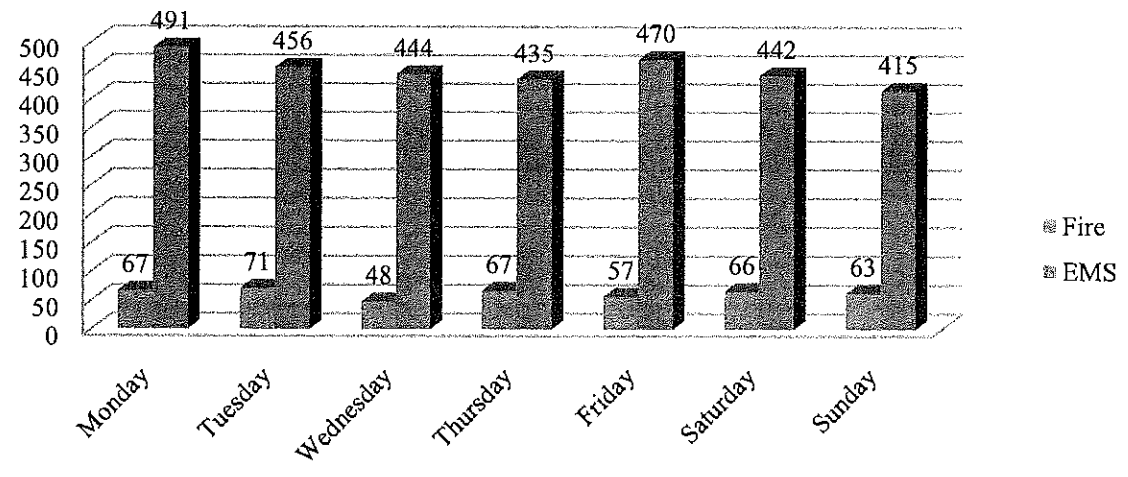
### **Call Distribution**

Examining our fire and EMS calls by hour of day and day of week (Graphs 1&2/ pg. 32); the City of Piqua would find it difficult to use alternate staffing levels throughout the day like other blended departments. Calls are distributed throughout all hours of the day and all days of the week. The increase in calls during the day accounts for a large part of the fire department's overtime budget in calling back off-duty firefighters which, when graphed, mirror the increase in calls (Graphs 3&4/pg.33). The graphs illustrate that current minimum staffing of six are able to handle the call volume during non-peak hours, while time periods of increased emergency calls demand a need for additional call back staffing. To underscore the importance of our staffing levels it is vital to understand the increase in the department's call volume. While staffing has remained virtually stagnant for the fire department, the call volume has grown by a large margin (Graphs 5 & 6/pg.34). In about 25 years the department has seen an increase in fire calls of 12% while EMS has realized an increase of 154%. In the same time frame staffing has remained relatively unchanged with the exception of lay-offs of three members in 1981. These lay-offs reduced daily staffing to eight members and additional members were hired, one annually, in '97, '98, and '99 to bring staffing back to nine members per shift. Beginning in 2010, staffing is once again being reduced to eight members per shift with the non-replacement of retiring members.

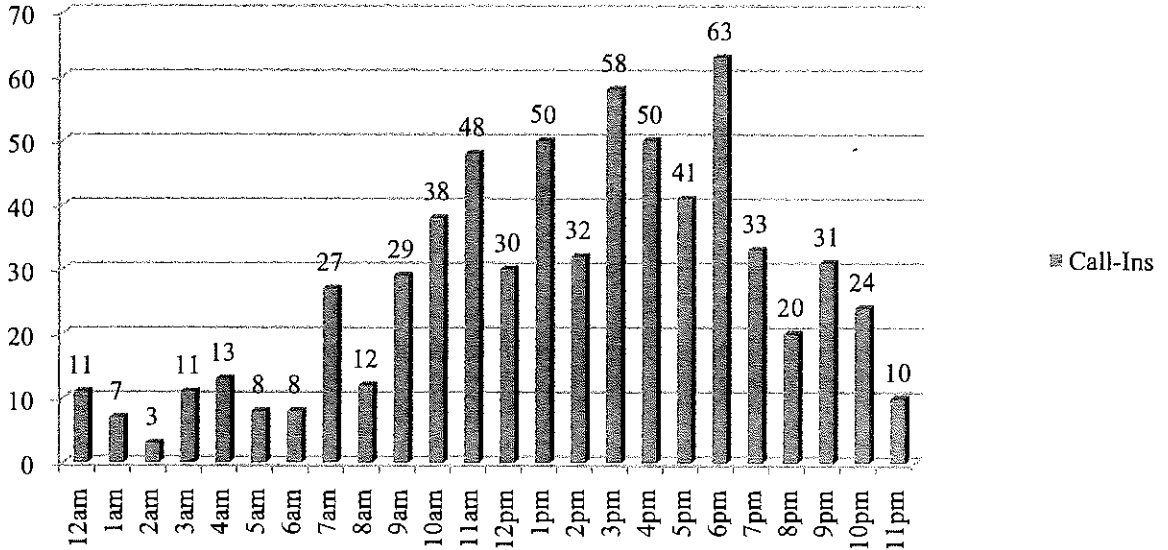
### 2009 Call Volume Distribution By Hour of Day



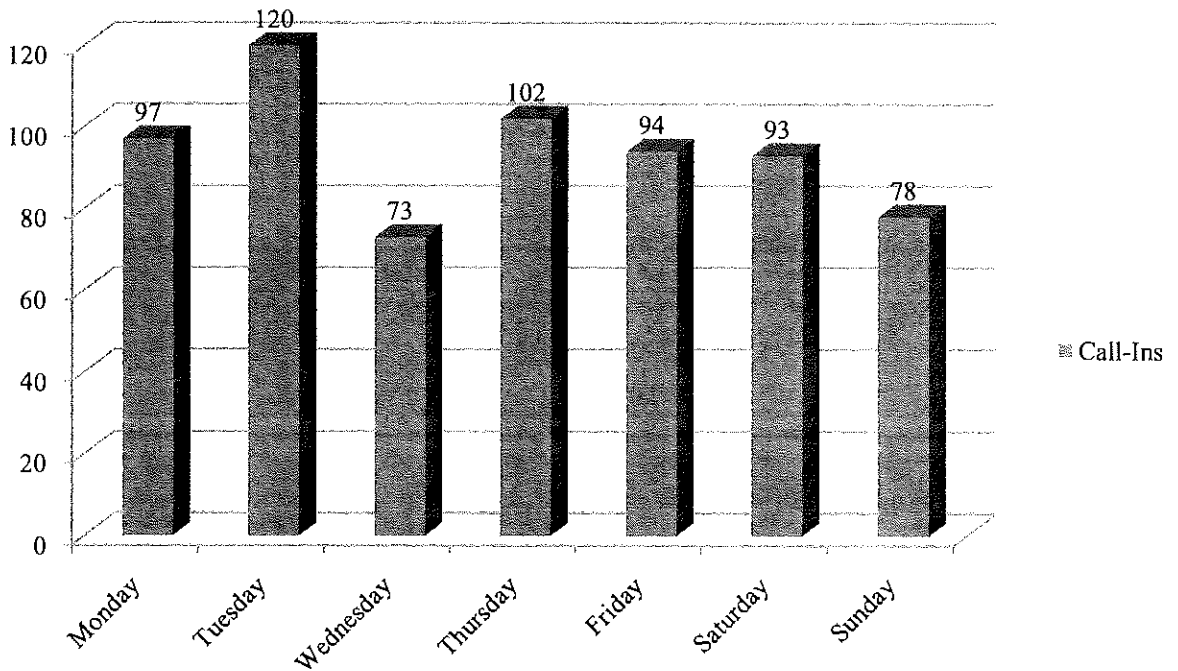
### 2009 Call Volume By Day of Week



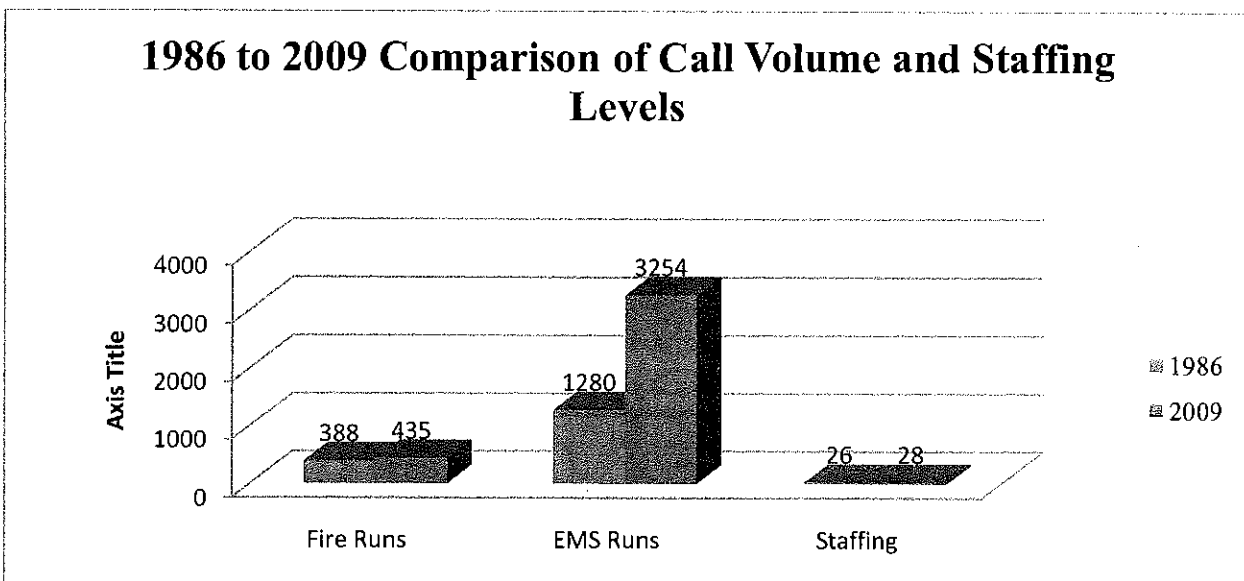
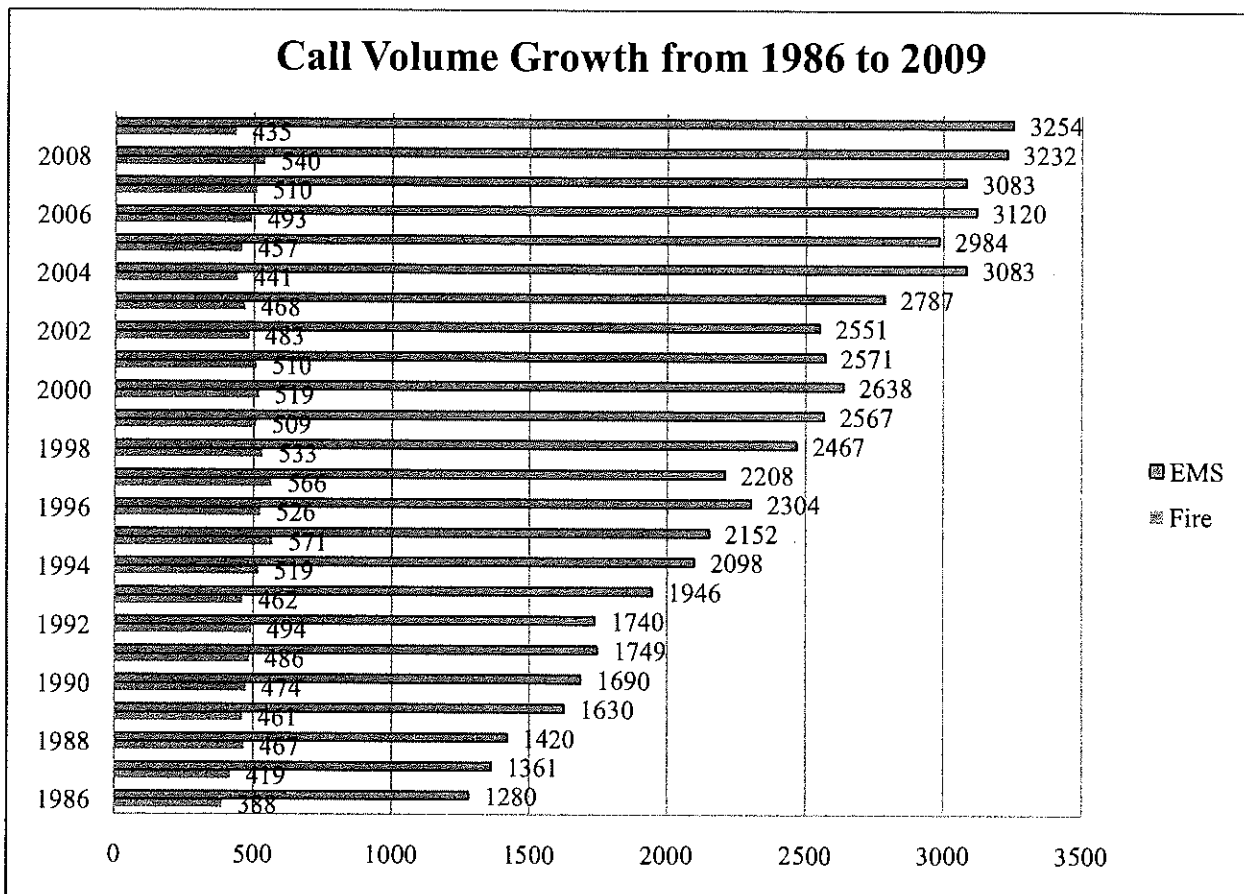
### 2009 Call-Ins for Overtime Due to Multiple Calls



### 2009 Call-Ins by Day of Week



Graphs 5 & 6



### **Equipment and Gear**

Each of the part-time staff members will need to be outfitted with fire gear, uniforms, SCBA masks, and inserts if they have vision correction. Gear currently costs \$3000 a set for bunker gear, helmet, boots, and face piece. Each set of day wear uniforms are approximately \$200 and several sets will need to be provided. Additional radios/pagers will need to be purchased. Benefits currently provided to full-time staff for running shoes and service boots may also be a factor. *Each* new part-time employee will incur these costs.

### **Hiring Costs**

The hiring process for public safety employees with the City of Piqua as outlined in union contracts and Civil Service rules is a highly efficient system designed to eliminate employment issues by hiring exemplary candidates. The hiring process begins with a written Civil Service exam; the top thirty candidates (from the written score) undergo a physical agility test; the top ten candidates (after the agility test) then receive a polygraph examination and an extensive background investigation of previous employers, neighbors, review of educational history/ records, financial as well as criminal and civil violation history. Once a candidate is offered employment it is conditional on the successful completion of a pre-employment physical (includes drug testing) and a psychological evaluation. In 2009, the year of our last employment hire at the fire department, the costs outlined above were: Background investigation \$250; Polygraph \$400; Pre-employment physical \$915; and Psychological evaluation \$350. These costs are per person totaling \$1,915 in 2009. There are also costs associated with offering a Civil Service exam and a physical agility test. Current Civil Service rules require a new exam be conducted every year with a possible one year extension. A need may arise for additional Civil

Service testing if active hiring lists are exhausted due to the hiring of part-time staff and high turn-over.

### **Previously Mentioned Cost Saving Concerns**

We also cannot ignore other issues that will need to be considered that have already been mentioned. Health care reform penalties or providing health insurance, shift incentives, retirement, recruitment and retention incentives like tuition, holiday pay, paid time off, hiring process costs, unemployment, and many other cost adding issues will all be a factor.

At what point will we exceed our current operating expenses? There are concerns that the savings window is narrowing and attempting to draw enough part-time staff and retain them to fill those vacancies may prove difficult. What certification and training levels are we going to require in our part-time staff? If we require the same certifications as full-time staff that will limit the number of qualified applicants and make filling vacancies more difficult. But if the certification requirements were reduced it could impact the level of service provided to the city. If part-time staff are hired with less than the highest requirements, but then are required to obtain it within a certain period of time, there will be a cost for the courses and pay to attend.

Other issues include hidden added costs in payroll and scheduling. Someone has to perform these tasks and that will increase work load in man hours and processing costs. There are also the maintenance roles that are currently done within the department by current staff. Many of the blended departments contract some or all of these functions out to third party vendors. Building maintenance, vehicle maintenance, hose testing, ladder testing, pump testing, and so on may very well add to the cost and they will not be cheap additions. Blended departments may simply lack those experienced in performing these tasks due to the revolving door associated with part-time employees and the constant need to provide entry level training.



## **Related Points of Concern**

In the process of evaluating the use of part-time staffing for the Piqua Fire Department it became necessary to assimilate additional areas of concern. These additional areas should be applied in the decision process on the use of part-time as well as staffing and operational changes in general. Questions and concerns posed by current elected officials regarding budget, staffing, emergency response and service levels are answered within these additional related points of concern.






### **Staffing/Service & Response Time**

Many changes have occurred in the past two budget years regarding staffing and operations of the Piqua Fire Department. It is important to remember these recent changes when considering the replacement of some full-time staff with part-time staff for budgetary savings. These changes include reducing daily minimum staffing from seven to six, the non-replacement of two retired members (one in January of 2010 and one in January of 2011), and reducing the medic crew from three to two on the majority of EMS calls. Will these operational changes have a negative effect on service or response when combined with the hiring of part-time staff to replace some of the current full-time staff?

Currently, the City of Piqua benefits from an immediate response from their fire department. The department response times have been evaluated by census tract and are provided in Appendix 3. All involved agree to the need for an immediate response to a fire or EMS call and the negative outcomes of a delayed response. However, response times may suffer directly and indirectly when considering changes to the City of Piqua's fire department structure or organization. The response time could be affected directly with the use of part-time staff on

apparatus that are not familiar with the community, vehicles, equipment, or standard operating procedures, and unavailability for call-back due to other jobs or distance they live from Piqua.

Emergency staffing is a complicated and erratic juggling act to find balance between public safety, staff safety, and budgetary constraints. Why is the number of personnel and their function important on a fire or EMS call? The following table illustrates the roles/function, based on our current staffing levels, for several basic call types.

<b>Call Types, Minimum Manning of Six Daily, and Typical Job Assignments</b> (Each Piqua Fire Department staff member is a certified <i>Firefighter AND Paramedic</i> and conducts <i>both</i> roles in providing services. In this table they are referred to as officers or firefighters.)			
Call Type	Assignments	Number on INITIAL Response	
<b>Basic Structure Fire</b>	<b>1 Officer</b> = Command <b>1 Firefighter</b> = Driver/Pump Operator <b>1 Officer and 1 Firefighter</b> = Initial Entry/Attack <b>2 Firefighters</b> = Hydrant hook-up, Vent/Enter/Search from exterior, Pull a second attack line, and/or relieve first entry/attack crew. <i>[No members left on station – others called in.]</i>		
<b>Code – Person not breathing/no pulse</b>	<b>1 Firefighter</b> = Driver/IV/Medication Administration <b>1 Firefighter</b> = Establish airway and provide ventilations. <b>1 Firefighter</b> = Conducting chest compressions. <b>1 Firefighter</b> = Monitor, record keeping, medication administration, in charge of the code. <i>[Two members left on station.]</i>		
<b>Vehicle Accident with Entrapment</b>	<b>1 Firefighter</b> = Driver/Patient Care <b>1 Firefighter</b> = Command/Patient Triage <b>2 Firefighters</b> = Rescue Tools <i>[Two members left on station.]</i>		
<b>Unstable Patient</b>	<b>2 Firefighters</b> = Patient Care <b>1 Firefighter</b> = Driver/Patient Care <i>[Three members left on station.]</i>		
<b>Stable Patient</b>	<b>1 Firefighter</b> = Patient Care <b>1 Firefighter</b> = Driver/Patient Care <i>[Four members left on station.]</i>		

It is important to note that the number of personnel (listed above) on initial responses may require further manpower as determined by the officer on the scene; as well as the number of firefighter/paramedics left at the station for the call type. It may be necessary to call in additional manpower for complex situations and to insure that staffing is at a minimum of four

members in the station house for additional calls. This requires personnel being available for call back; part-time staff may not be available or too far away to respond. A very important statistic to consider is the volume of multiple calls experienced by the city. Multiple calls are instances where we have two or more vehicles/crews/incidents occurring at the same time; multiple calls occur approximately 50% of the time. Informational requests from Commissioner Wilson regarding staffing prompted the department to begin statistical data tracking of shortages. In August of this year the department began tracking instances when the engine house staffing was below four (due to multiple calls); statistical data indicates this occurs on a daily basis. There were 119 instances in four months. Statistical tracking also indicate that there were four instances where the department responded to a fire with less than four members during the same four month period. Lack of staffing due to multiple calls also caused the department to seek mutual aid from Fletcher Fire Department to handle a fire call during the same four month period.

### **ISO, NFPA, ICMA, and NIST Considerations**

Staffing and response time concerns are underscored throughout much of the written information regarding the fire service. When considering changes to the way our career department operates, it is prudent to consider the impact staffing changes could have on the community's Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating and how the department meets professional standards. Since the fire/EMS service is reactionary there is no way to anticipate what events any one department may be called upon to mitigate. Call volume distribution, response times, risk assessments, industrial transportation and process inventories, and call type studies may provide a historical or current trends analysis or risk concerns list but do not provide a guarantee that those prior trends accurately predict what we might face in the future.

ISO rating is a public protection classification that is derived from a fire suppression rating schedule analysis consisting of three areas each worth a certain amount of points. Utilized are an evaluation of fire alarms and the handling of communications (10 points), fire department distribution, training, and staffing (50 points), and water supply (40 points). The total number of points then translates into an ISO class; a class one rating is most optimal. ISO recently completed a field evaluation of the City of Piqua and the results were provided in the City of Piqua Public Protection Summary Report dated February 2010. The City of Piqua currently has a class four ISO rating. The fire department scored 29.02/50 points in their portion of the evaluation. The score noted low levels/distribution of personnel, training, low ladder truck use, and lack of training aids/facilities. Staffing and training scored 11.33 of the 29.02 points towards the total score of 65.83 for the city. Any changes to staffing or management of that staffing and/or training of said staff could impact that score. A loss of 5.84 points would lower the ISO rating from a 4 to a 5. Impact on insurance rates depend on the insurance carrier and how the rates are banded (for example, some band ratings one through four into one rate band and five and six in another). Communities that have researched impact on ISO ratings indicate a finding of 0-2% change in residential insurance premiums between the rating difference of 4 and a 5. Nonresidential properties could experience changes between 2-36% depending on construction type, age, use, contents, and fire protection systems in use in addition to the band in which they fall. In short, the city's ISO rating could be impacted and may result in a change to residential and nonresidential insurance rates for those properties in the City of Piqua.

The National Fire Protection Administration (NFPA), using nationwide statistics, line of duty death reports, and expert input establishes standards of operation for fire departments throughout the United States. The most influential standard is NFPA 1710. NFPA 1710 is the

standard for *Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments*. The standard outlines requirements that address functions and objectives of fire department emergency service delivery, response capabilities, and resources. The NFPA is non-binding, but is recognized as an ideal by which all jurisdictions should strive to achieve. Current staffing standards in NFPA 1710 call for minimum staffing for the first arriving fire response as four (NFPA's two-in, two-out rule) and 15 firefighters should be on the scene in the first eight minutes of a residential fire. Large commercial settings would require many more. The department currently operates with a minimum staffing level of six in the City of Piqua. With the frequency of our medic calls and each call requiring two personnel and often a chase vehicle, only three members are left on station. Additional personnel are typically not re-called in unless a second medic run is dispatched before the first run is back in service and then, the practice is, to hold calling in additional personnel if the first squad is very close to or at the hospital and can make a quick turn around and return to service. During that critical time frame, should a fire call be dispatched, responding crews fall below the minimum staffing of four personnel and cannot make an interior attack; such was the case recently with the Hopewood Drive fire occurring weeks after minimum manning was reduced to six per day. Fire operations will be exterior only and a defensive posture taken until further staff arrives on the scene, unless a viable rescue is deemed possible by the Incident Commander at extreme hazard to firefighter safety. With modern construction materials (that are lighter and fail quicker under fire conditions), time is of the essence and when additional assets arrive, the window of opportunity may have dissipated for an interior attack altogether. Life safety and rescue scenarios move frustrating situations of unnecessary loss into dire straits with lethal potential, for citizens and firefighters alike. NFPA's two-in, two-out rule

echoes the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines and the Ohio Administrative Code.

In the text *Managing Fire Services* published by the International City Management Association (ICMA), studies are cited that fire suppression involves three basic functions; (1) rescue; (2) laddering, ventilating, conducting search, making forcible entry; and (3) water application. Conducting these operations, according to the ICMA, requires at least four and often eight or more firefighters under the supervision of an officer. The text goes on to state additional studies have shown that if about 16 trained firefighters are not operating at the scene of a working fire within the critical time period, then dollar loss and considerable injury are significantly increased as is the square feet of fire spread. Finally, the ICMA text mentions firefighting tactics being conducted and judged for effectiveness found that 5-person companies were 100% effective, 4-person companies were 65% effective and 3-person companies were only 38% effective. These findings are also collaborated in the most recent National Institute of Standards and Testing (NIST) discussed in detail later. The City of Piqua's current minimum staffing creates a situation where the initial fire response involves a 3 or 4 person crew (ex. Hopewood Drive Fire).

Finally, NIST completed a comprehensive independent study looking at the effects the size of a firefighting crew has on residential fires. The results found that the size of the fire crews and their response times have a substantial impact on firefighter's ability to protect lives and property. The study involved 60 controlled residential fire experiments and found that 4-person crews were able to complete 22 essential fire ground tasks 30 percent faster than 2-person crews and 25 percent faster than 3-person crews. The essential tasks involved all major fire ground functions including search and rescue elements, putting water on the fire, laddering and

ventilation. Staggering of later arriving crews was also included in the study (one minute versus two minutes). The results showed that 2-person crews can face a fire twice the intensity of a fire faced by 5-person crew due to the speed and efficiency with which the attack is deployed. Modeling of the fires also demonstrated that trapped occupants are subjected to more toxic combustion products such as carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide if crews of less than three respond. The concern for the City of Piqua is in the definitions of the study. *Each experiment included three engines, a ladder, a battalion chief and an aid. When considering two, three, four, and five person crews, that is the number of firefighters in each engine and ladder.* The lowest level in the study (2-person crews) resulted in a total of 10 personnel on the scene. The City of Piqua operates well below this threshold with 3-8 being the initial attack crew under current operating guidelines. The worst case scenario in this study is better than our typical response capabilities.

ISO, NFPA, ICMA, and NIST are all professional organizations establishing guidelines, setting industry standards, and measuring the effectiveness of the recommendations they make, or conducting independent tests keeping life safety and property preservation a priority with due regard for the safety of the emergency responder. While the findings and recommendations are not currently mandated requirements, they are all from reputable entities with regard to community and fire department operations. Going by the above industry standards, the department is operating in a less than ideal capacity even with the career staff we currently employ, the training they receive, their familiarity with the equipment and the community, and their cohesion as a department.

### **Service Reductions**

One of the strongest assets in the community is the fire prevention office. The recent reduction in staffing is causing the need to consider eliminating the office of fire prevention. Where do we have a greater need for staff, emergency response or prevention? The result would be no industry, community, or school educational classes. Lack of fire prevention will severely hamper the ability to complete inspections, set-up community displays, investigate complaints, city ID card management, large special projects like county risk assessments, EOP/EOC preparedness, lack of oversight for investigations, incident cost recovery, lack of community event representation, and result in overtime when department representation is needed on special committees or projects at higher levels.

Additional changes might include elimination of emergency responses outside of routine fire and EMS calls. Nuisance illegal burn or recreational fire calls may be deferred to the police department. Reliance on mutual aid requests to distant departments, should the department's resources be exhausted, will mean a much longer response for aid. As has happened with other communities, we can foresee alienating the good graces of closer departments we would be utilizing if this became the rule rather than the exception. Without the needed manpower or proper level of training and or certifications, there will be a need to evaluate and reduce services.

### **Budget/Financial Impact**

City administration, both elected officials and City Manager Fred Enderle, have informed the public and public safety entities of the need to decrease costs and/or increase revenue. In 2010, we as a city have seen revenues decline in comparison to budget year 2003. The following evaluates the differences in budget from 2003, 2010, and 2011 for the fire department. The figures used were derived from City of Piqua budgetary financial records (Appendix 4).



Table 1 below compares the major budgetary components of 2003, 2010, and 2011(both expenditures and revenue generated); the table lists our overall budget then breaks down the major categories such as personnel, benefits, operation & maintenance, capital, non-government transfers, revenue, and final cost. Budget comparison in Table 1 reflect that fire department 2010 estimated budget expenditures are \$2,890,549 after revenue is deducted; an estimated 3% increase in costs from 2003 actual expenditures & revenue. Table 1 also shows 2011 estimated costs at \$2,707,395 after revenue is deducted; an estimated 6.75% decrease in costs from 2010 expenditures and revenue.

**Table 1**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Personnel</b>	<b>Benefits</b>	<b>O&amp;M</b>	<b>Capital</b>	<b>Transfers</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	<b>Final Cost</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>2003</b>	\$2,909,622	\$1,931,174	\$768,218	\$208,895	\$1,335	0	\$103,412	<b>\$2,806,210</b>	
<b>2010</b>	\$3,698,506	\$2,312,888	\$930,882	\$384,633	\$40,000 FEMA	\$70,707	\$807,957	<b>\$2,890,549</b>	<b>3% Increase from 2003</b>
<b>2011</b>	\$3,606,665	\$2,077,244	\$909,311	\$389,398	\$161,677 FEMA	\$69,035	\$899,270	<b>\$2,707,395</b>	<b>6.75% Decrease from 2010</b>

When comparing the operation and maintenance costs (O&M) note that a collection fee is assessed to the fire department budget (in 2010 & 2011) associated with EMS billing and is just one example of additional charges that were not present in the 2003 O&M. The third party EMS billing company is paid 6.3% of the actual revenue collected; the fire department budget was assessed approximately \$47,000 in 2010 to pay these fees from the O&M budget.

The 2010 capital expenditure budget (\$40,000) is an installment payment for a sprinkler system to be installed at the fire department associated with a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grant. FEMA grant awards for purchases require 10% matching funds from the government entity and once items have been received and paid in full, the government entity

is reimbursed 90% of the approved purchases. So the \$40,000 in 2010 capital will be reimbursed at \$36,000 with the FEMA grant award; actual outlay for City of Piqua will be approximately \$4,000. The 2011 capital costs (\$161,677) are all associated with FEMA grant awards.

Non-government transfers assessed in the 2010/2011 budgets include the loan payment for the fire engine that was also assessed in the 2009 budget (\$400,000). The department did not have non-government transfers in the 2003 budget.

The second table outlines a revenue generated comparison between 2003 and 2010. Successful grant writing by fire department staff, charging for EMS/Fire coverage at special events such as football games, invoicing for hazmat recovery, and EMS billing have resulted in a major increase in revenue for the fire department budget. Revenue in 2011 has been estimated at \$899,270. This table does not include revenue from income tax levies.

**Table 2**

<b>2010 Estimated Revenue</b>		<b>2003 Actual Revenue</b>	
FEMA Grant	\$36,000	Township Contracts	\$96,385
Township Contracts	\$120,035	EMS Grant	\$6,377
EMS Grant	\$6,492	Donation	\$650
Hazmat/ Event/Donation	\$10,430		
EMS Billing	\$635,000		
	<b>Total \$807,957</b>		<b>Total \$103,412</b>

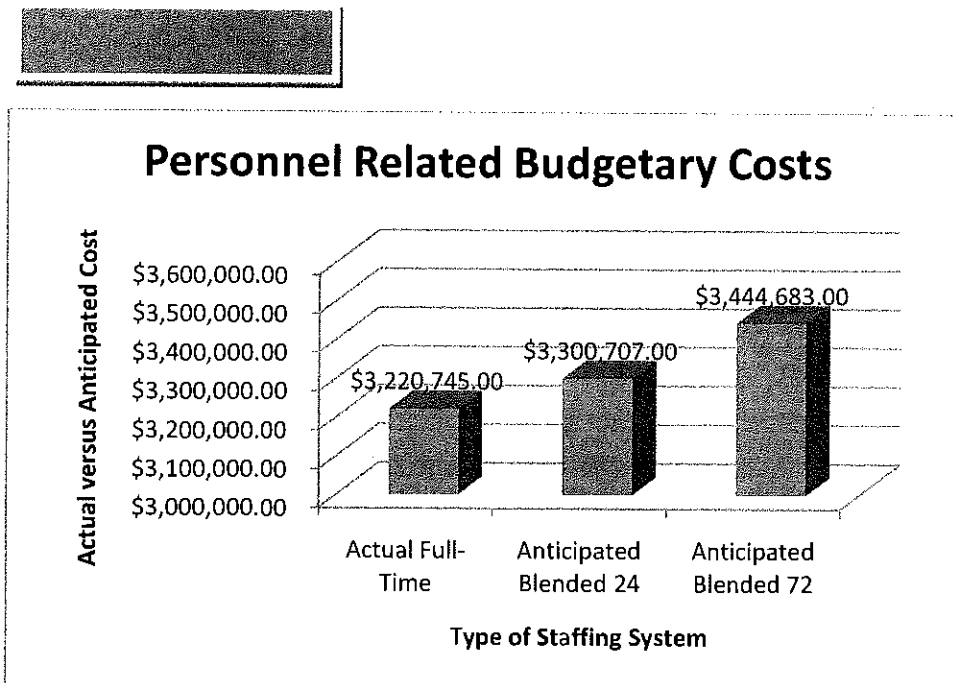
Why is this information relevant? It exemplifies the goals of both increasing revenue and decreasing costs and illustrates the financial impact of recent changes, such as EMS billing and reductions in staff, which allow the department to mirror financial liability of 2003. Regardless of the financial liability as a department, there is recognition that the City of Piqua is struggling financially and must investigate all possible sources to reduce budgetary expenditures as a whole.

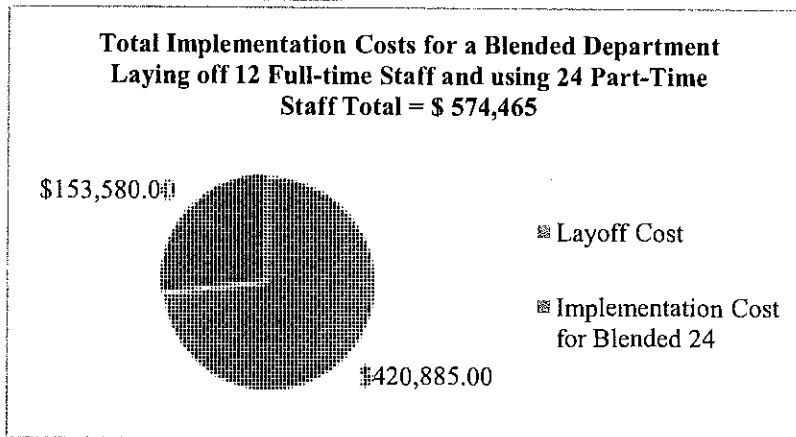
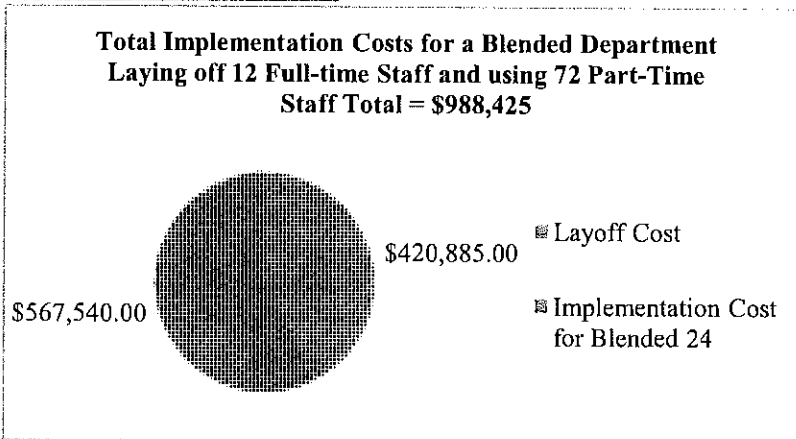
The main concern is alterations to the current system could result in increased financial liability and a possible lack of anticipated financial savings. One can look at recent financial examples when we as a city made the decision to utilize 2-person squad crews in an attempt to reduce the need for emergency call-back overtime. Subsequently, in the spring of 2010, another attempt was implemented with a reduction of the daily minimum staffing from seven to six in an effort to reduce scheduled overtime. Unfortunately, these attempts have not produced the anticipated savings desired. The reduction of daily staffing minimums negated the decrease of call-back overtime that 2-person medic crew reductions were meant to prevent. Another example is the hourly wage analysis of the officer salary structure. The negotiated reduction in the weekly salaried officer rank resulted in the positions becoming overtime and FLSA eligible. While these officers have a lower weekly (hourly) wage than previously promoted officers; the actual cost savings has not been recognized. The main point is to understand that strategies have been implemented, in theory, designed to reduce budgetary costs but in actuality the anticipated savings have not been realized.

Surveyed fire chief's warned that there would be no realized cost savings from the use of part-time blended operations for 5-10 years after that method of staffing was introduced due to initial costs outlined in this report. Chief Wagner of Trotwood Fire Department stated he conducted a simple salary study to determine the savings from utilizing needed part-time staff to fill the same positions as 12 full-time firefighters and his findings netted a savings of \$200,000 a year. Chief Pavlock of Sugarcreek Township conducted a similar salary study for cost savings and it resulted in \$280,000 a year. With very different results, one Executive Fire Officer Study found replacing 12 part-time staff with the hiring of six full-time members actually results in a savings of over \$700,000 annually. This is due to the actual realized costs attributed to part-time

use like turn-over and overtime required utilizing an unreliable part-time system. The Fire Executive study considered all factors (mentioned in the report) while the two prior studies were a simple wage analyses. None of the studies had considered health care changes and all operate in a manner different than the City of Piqua regarding level of service, contracting third parties for maintenance and testing, and are located in an area where part-time use is prevalent and with close mutual aid.

In an effort to provide a budgetary analysis relative to the Piqua Fire Department and the current staffing system against proposed staffing changes, graph 1A considers salary, benefits, and variables listed in appendix 5. The costs associated with the staffing changes are depicted on an annual basis. Graphs 1B and 1C also outline additional initial implementation needs of a part-time system and the costs associated with displacing 12 full-time members (leaving five full-time staff per shift, Chief, Fire Prevention Officer, and secretary). All graphs illustrate costs for current staff, a blended staff with 24 part-time members (2:1 ratio), and a blended staff with 72 part-time members (6:1 ratio).



**Graph 1B****Graph 1C**

The figures used for the anticipated annual costs are derived from research, a median wage of \$15 an hour for part-time staff, contacts with the State of Ohio and third party vendors, blended departments, and math calculations based on current costs of operations. Implementation costs include testing and hiring the needed number of candidates, fire gear and uniforms, and additional pagers. Layoffs include unemployment the city would pay being a reimbursement and not a contributory agency, and the payout of sick and vacation time. All figures were kept conservative. Even with conservative figures both blended systems are anticipated to exceed current operational costs even without considering the one-time

implementation and layoff costs. The blended 2:1 ratio system is considered unrealistic by many who use a blended system and the more realistic approach is a blended 6:1 ratio.

Fire department staff and union members realize the financial burdens of the City of Piqua and have made efforts to affect the bottom line in the areas of operations, overtime costs, restructuring, and salary reductions. It is an unfortunate aspect of contract negotiations and economical downturn that pit city government against union members (vice versa), each side battling their cause and opinion. We are perhaps better charged with working together as a team to recognize and support each other in an effort to resolve financial burdens.

### **Fire Chief Recommendations**

This evaluation was the result of a lengthy six month process to gather information on the financial feasibility of replacing some full-time staff with part-time staff within the City of Piqua Fire Department. The intent is to provide a comprehensive and objective piece of information to the city manager, community leaders and citizens, as well as address questions and concerns of elected officials, as we consider alternatives during tough economical times.

Part-time staffing is widely utilized and viewed by surveyed fire chiefs as an economical system in regard to the addition of personnel; but I reiterate that adding personnel is not the proposal being evaluated. This assessment is not about adding personnel but replacing some of our current full-time staff with part-time staff. They are not the same premise. It needs noted that current consideration of part-time staffing for the Piqua Fire Department is not a new concept. Piqua fire chiefs have been challenged to evaluate part-time or volunteer staffing in the past. When faced with a similar economic crisis, Fire Chief Greg Fashner (1988-1998) responded to suggested reductions in staffing and services to the fire department saying, "In my opinion, there is another ball game in town, and it is called safety. Who wants to live where

there is a second class safety service? After all, isn't that one of the main reasons for being in a city? Let's not take a giant step back, and that is what the alternatives discussed here amount to. We should try to keep what we have and plan to improve the future."

City Manager Fred Enderle recognizes that the Piqua Fire Department provides a great service to the community; it is a matter of being sustainable financially. It is then my responsibility to review possible cost savings, such as hiring part-time staffing to replace some existing full-time staff, but in my opinion this could be a risky financial option that may result in higher costs than the current system. As a team, we need to continue researching and think "outside of the box" for cost savings or revenue generating ideas before we replace some full-time firefighters with part-time staff.

It is my position that fire department staffing is maintained at current levels and therefore, I do not recommend replacing some full-time staff with part-time staff. While there is a small possibility the city may realize some kind of savings by blending full-time and part-time staff, I believe our research clearly indicates those savings not being what the city administration will have hoped for and could very well exceed current operating expenses. If there is a savings to be realized, it may take years to come into fruition. We also have to ask if it will be worth the problems that are going to arise with the use of part-time staff.

After looking at the information I feel that there is, in fact, a greater chance that part-time staff replacing some full-time staff could result in an actual rise in the financial liability of the fire department through overtime created in turn-over vacancies, furloughs, and lack of coverage by part-time call backs, the cost of the required hiring process, the cost of required gear and uniforms, the cost of incentives that may be required to attract qualified candidates, the cost of recent changes regarding health care, the actual number of part-time employees that will be

needed, potential for hidden costs like having to contract out many of the inter-department functions we currently do in house to third party vendors, and so on. Current administration must understand the costs associated with recruitment, retention, and turnover when considering financial responsibility. Financial salary savings by replacing some full-time staff with part-time staff comes with a cost. Based on our findings it would be difficult to speculate if the city would ever see actual financial gain to replacing some full-time staff.

In addition, it is all too clear that the City of Piqua will face many challenges with the use of a blended system giving the distance to our mutual aid, the type of mutual aid available, the size and population of our response area, and the number of calls we receive, the number of those runs that become multiple call situations, and the fact that we do not experience any type of population flux throughout the day or week that allows us to flex how we staff. It is important to recall the struggles of our neighboring volunteer communities in employing/maintaining emergency personnel. Fletcher recently had to disband their EMS operation due to lack of staffing.

It is clear in our emergency call graph (graph 5) that increased demand for our services has grossly escalated while staffing has not. In fact, budget year 2010/2011 reflects a backward direction with the elimination of two firefighter/paramedic positions; reducing daily minimum staffing to six, for two of the three shifts. In 2011, the department will be evaluating the demands of the recent eliminated positions in the areas of overtime and services offered.

The responses from those who actually run blended departments contain words of caution and warnings of failure in replacing some full-time staff with part-time staff; that is contrary to their use of part-time staff. These are leaders that actually utilize and praise this type of a system. The advice of these experienced fire chiefs accent the needed hiring ratio as being six



part-time members to replace each laid-off member, this would mean hiring 72 additional members. Even if we look at a 2:1 ratio, against recommendations, there would be a need to hire 24 new members at a minimum.

Finally, the City of Piqua Fire Department currently operates with a minimal system with one station and less manpower than neighboring full-time departments in similar communities. In addition, there would likely be a need to reduce services we currently provide to the community. Hiring and training qualifications may also affect how emergencies are handled; the situation may be a matter of containment or waiting until qualified departments respond to mitigate the situation in areas such as technical rescue. During these difficult economical times we are being challenged with difficult decisions that are often viewed as unfavorable. One has to ask, at what point we will have reached the limit where we can no longer “do more with less”. Utilizing part-time staff will require a thorough evaluation of the services we provide and the manner in which we respond. We as a city will need to accept responsibility for changes to policy and standard operating guidelines regarding all levels of our operations and would have a responsibility to make those changes public.

Prior city management and fire department leadership has always maintained that our current system of calling back staff for emergencies (overtime) was less expensive than adding additional staffing. In considering part-time staff, the City of Piqua could evaluate the use of part-time staff in order to eliminate the overtime budget. While this approach would most likely be budget neutral; it would allow for an evaluation of the use of part-time staffing; an opportunity to study the real costs of using part-time staffing while at the same time increasing daily staffing to a number that allows us to prevent overtime. Utilizing part-time staff on top of

our current staffing levels will also allow us to better meet industry staffing recommendations and allow us to respond with larger crews who have been proven to be more efficient.

The Piqua Fire Department is a public entity balancing the safety needs of the community (both private and industry), safety of personnel, with financial accountability based on public expectation. The difficult aspect of this research is noting that as a city we cannot accurately predict the true costs to operate an emergency services department with the implementation of a blended staffing operation (replacing some full-time staffing with part-time staff).

It then becomes my task as fire chief to offer a professional opinion that will withstand public scrutiny. This is accomplished by removing personal opinion and referencing fact, while considering public safety as the main objective in conjunction with financial responsibility to the tax payers.

Research indicates that change during an economic recession is risky and perhaps the best show of financial restraint is to retain the best qualified employee. It is my hope that our findings clearly illustrate the possible risks and potential for decreased levels of service.

It is my official recommendation as Fire Chief that there is a financial risk that could result in a higher liability than present full-time staffing with the implementation of a part-time system to replace some full-time members.

---

Michael G. Rindler  
Fire Chief

References

- Berger, Anna, Bondo, Mark, & Tomes William (2007, January). *The impact of improved protection classification ratings on homeowner's insurance rates in Richland County*. University of South Carolina; Institute for Public Service and Policy Research  
<http://www.ipspr.sc.edu/publication/Final%20Report2.pdf>
- Bromen, Nathan P. (2000, December). *Understanding part-time staffing issues in the fire service*. (Executive Fire Officer Research Project). Emmitsburg, MD: National Fire Academy
- Caudill, Michael D. (2005, March). *Investigating part-time firefighter staffing issues with Miami Valley (Ohio) Fire/EMS Alliance Member Fire Departments*. (Executive Fire Officer Research Project). Emmitsburg, MD: National Fire Academy
- Eberth, J. (2008). Olean Times Herald. *Some communities mix full-time, part-time firefighters*. Interview with Curt Varone July 20, 2008. Olean, NY. Retrieved September 9, 2010 from <http://www.oleantimesherald.com/articles/2008/07/20/news/doc>
- Gleason, Sean. (2002, August). *The impact of inadequate staffing on initial fire attack at Pittsfield Township Fire Department*. (Executive Fire Officer Research Project). Emmitsburg, MD: National Fire Academy
- Haigh, Craig A. (2005, July). *Viability of the part-time firefighter program*. (Executive Fire Officer Research Project). Emmitsburg, MD: National Fire Academy
- International City/County Management Association (1988). *Managing Fire Services*, 2nd edition.
- International City/County Management Association (2002). *Managing Fire and Rescue Services*.
- Lehmbeck, April (2010, July). *Eastpoint to end mutual aid pact with Harper Woods*.  
 CandGNews.com as retrieved September 24, 2010 from

<http://www.candgnews.com/Homepage-Articles/2010/07-28-10/Eastpointe-aid-Harper-Woods.asp>

National Institute of Standards and Technology (2010, April). Report on residential fireground field experiments.

Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (May, 2010). As retrieved September 8, 2010 from <http://docs.house.gov/energycommerce/ppacacon.pdf>

Reeves, Mike (2006, August). The legal and political aspects of staffing. Fire Engineering. As retrieved May 26, 2010 at

<http://www.fireengineering.com/index/articles/display.articles.fire-engineering.volume-159.issue-8.features.the-legal-and-political-aspects-of-staffing.html>

Silva, Joseph P. (2001, April). *Motivation of volunteer firefighters in combination fire departments*. (Executive Fire Officer Research Project). Emmitsburg, MD: National Fire Academy

Stacy, Shawn (2008, December). *The failing part-time system – planning for the future*.

(Executive Fire Officer Research Project). Emmitsburg, MD: National Fire Academy

Varone, Curt (2010, September). *Liability around staffing issues*. Personal communication

**Appendix 1**  
**Piqua Fire Department**  
**Part-Time / Full-Time Employee Survey & Survey Comparison**

**Department**

Department

Address

IAFF local number associated with the department

Person Completing the Survey and Title

Phone Number

Is this the only department you have worked for?

If not, please name your prior department and indicate if it was fulltime, volunteer, or blended.

**General Information**

How many part-time employees do you have?

How many full-time employees do you have?

What is your turn-over rate in average number of employees annually for part-time?

What is your turn-over rate in average number of employees annually for full-time?

How many stations does your department have?

**Compensation and Benefits**

What is your average hourly wage for part-time staff?

What is your average hourly wage for full-time staff?

Do you provide health insurance for part-time staff and what is the annual cost for the employee and the employer?

If you do not, are you aware of any provisions in the recent health care reform that need to be taken into consideration by not providing health insurance?

Do you provide uniforms for part-time staff and are they custom fitted to the individual?

Do you provide fire gear for your part-time staff and are they custom fitted to the individual?

Do you provide running shoes and/or duty boots for your part-time staff?

Do you provide individual SCBA masks for your part-time staff?

Do you provide SCBA inserts for your part-time staff?

Do you provide retirement for your part-time staff and what is the employee/employer contribution and through what retirement system if you do?

Do you provide training for your part-time staff and at what levels and in what capacity (fire, hazardous materials, EMS, etc.)?

Do you provide liability insurance for your part-time staff?

Do you provide life insurance for your part-time staff?

Do you provide worker's compensation for your part-time staff?

**Hiring and Promotions**

Do you provide annual physicals for your already employed part-time staff?

Do you require part-time staff to pass a medical physical for hiring?

Do you require part-time staff to pass a physical agility test for hiring?

What is your process for hiring part-time employees (interview, background checks, polygraph, psychological, etc.)?

What is your process for hiring full-time staff (open competitive or from within the part-time pool)?

- Do you utilize civil service in your hiring and promotions and what is their role?
- Are your full-time staff and part-time staff held to the same standards (training, hiring requirements, continuing education, etc.)?
- Do you require minimum certifications for those you hire part-time or do you train them through initial certifications?
- Do you have instances where full-time staff answers to part-time staff?
- Is there a clear chain of command in your department (please include a copy of your chain of command)?

### Department Functions

- What is the ratio of full-time to part-time staff on any given shift?
- How do you staff your fire trucks for response utilizing full-time and part-time staff (number of full-time and part-time and certification levels)?
- How do you staff your EMS vehicles for response utilizing full-time and part-time staff (number of full-time and part-time and certification levels)?
- How do you split station responsibilities between full-time and part-time staff?
- How is your facility set-up to allow for extra gear and personal belongings and sleeping arrangements of your part-time staff?
- Who takes care of your yearly testing (regarding hose, ladders, hydrants, pumper, etc.)?
- Who is responsible for your building maintenance?
- Who is responsible for your vehicle maintenance?
- Who is responsible for your daily cleaning around the engine house?

### Scheduling and Coverage

- Who is in charge of your scheduling your part-time staff and are they 40 hour or a shift employee?
- How long does it take to produce the part-time schedule?
- How often does it need to be modified after it is created?
- How far out does your scheduling go for any scheduling period?
- How many part-time staff does it take to fill a full-time position and please explain *(for example if you are a 24 hour department and utilize a 24/48 schedule for full-time staff, and your part-time staff work a 24 hour shift [covering a full 24 hour period] you might schedule part-timers 1 - 24 hour shift every 6 days. That would require 6 part-time employees to fill the boots of one full-time employee making it a 6:1 ratio)?*
- How do you handle hold-overs with your part-time staff in the event of a fire or late call?
- What happens if part-time staff exceeds their allowable hours in any scheduling period?
- How often do you have call-offs (sick time, etc.) by part-time staff?
- How often do you have call-offs (sick-time, etc.) by full-time staff?
- How compliant is your part-time staff with call-backs?
- How compliant are they with filling call-offs by other staff?
- What percent of your part-time staff have other jobs?
- Do you pay extra for part-time staff for working holidays?
- Do you pay extra for part-timers working more than their scheduled hours (are they overtime eligible)?
- When you have a part-time member leave, how is the separation usually handled (2 week notice, immediate separation, etc.)?
- When there is a part-time vacancy, how long is it usually open before being filled?
- Is there a probationary period for a part-time member?
- How long does it take to fully "season" a part-time member where they are trusted to act independently with your department's vehicles, equipment, and in your response area?
- Do part-time employees accumulate vacation, sick, or personal time?
- Do you allow part-time employees to cash in accumulated time when they leave?

### Level of Service

How do you feel your response time is impacted with the use of part-time staff and their knowledge of your jurisdiction?

Has the use of part-time staff reduced your level of service or limited the services you provide (responding with basic EMS crews instead of ALS, operating at hazardous materials awareness level instead of having technicians, etc.)?

What is your daily minimum manning for full-time and part-time staff?

What percentage of your calls are part of multiple call runs (one or more dispatches for separate incidents come in while a prior call is still being mitigated)?

### Community Demographics

What is the size of your community in square miles and population?

Does your community population fluctuate throughout the day?

Does staffing change throughout the 24 hour day?

What is your call volume annually for fire/EMS?

What is the closest community you rely on to supplement your staffing issues/call volume (mutual aid)?

What is the closest neighboring station in each of the four directions from your jurisdiction's boundary?

### Miscellaneous

How often are you dealing with disciplinary action regarding a part-time employee?

How often are you dealing with disciplinary action regarding a full-time employee?

How would you judge the working relationship between your full-time and part-time staff?

How is your department funded?

What is the total amount of your city budget?

What is the total amount of your department budget?

What portion of your department budget is from general funds and how much from a public safety specific levy or revenue?

In utilizing part-time staff, was it a progressive growth (volunteer, to part paid, to fulltime) or a response to cuts (reducing fulltime staff and adding part-timers)?

What is the added cost of payroll processing for part-time employees?

Does your department have a union and how are part-time staff contributing to/covered by/and treated with regards to the union?

What is your town's ISO rating?

How does your staffing compare to recommendations in local GIS studies, ISO recommendations, or NFPA standards?

### Additional Comments:

Please use this area to provide any further comments regarding any additional information you feel prudent in considering pros and cons of utilizing part-time staff in what is currently a full-time department.

## Survey Comparisons

Department	PT	FT	PT-TO	FT-TO	PT Wage	FT Wage	Min Manning
Beavercreek	34	39	4	0	\$11.00	\$23.00	18 (7)
Butler	60	9	7	1	\$10.76	\$19.41	NA
Cheviot	25	8	3	0	\$12.25	\$26.68	3 (2)
City of Reading	6	20	1	0	\$14.21	\$26.00	4 (3)
Colerain	127	53	24	0	\$16.78	\$23.79	26 (11)
Delhi	120	60	4	0	\$15.46	\$19.99	10(3)
Englewood	50	7	4	0	\$10.00	\$19.34	8(1-3)
Hamilton Township	50	13	3	0	\$11.17	\$16.67	6
Harrison Township	36	23	10	0	\$12.00	\$18.00	8
Liberty Township	60	30	4	0	\$15.32	\$21.89	13 (any)
Little Miami	45	11	5	0	\$13.50	\$22.67	6 (2)
MIHJFD	25	17	1	0	\$15.00	\$24.34	4
Montgomery	27	9	6	0	\$14.94	\$26.73	5 (1)
Moraine	11	30	4	2	\$12.77	\$30.00	7(4)
Oxford	28	1	4	0	\$14.00	\$35.33	3
Sharonville	37	38	4	1	\$15.50	\$26.46	12
Springdale	14	24	0	0	\$15.71	\$23.81	8
Sugarcreek	32	12	2	0	\$10.25	\$19.53	7
Sycamore Township	70	32	4	0	\$14.00	\$19.57	14 (7)
Trotwood	50	22	2	0	\$10.96	\$17.35	15
Westerville	18	90	4	4	\$12.44	\$20.61	21 (18)
<b>Averages</b>	<b>44.05</b>	<b>26.10</b>	<b>4.76</b>	<b>0.38</b>	<b>13.24</b>	<b>22.91</b>	<b>7.88</b>
<b>Piqua</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>22.68</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Difference</b>	<b>-44.05</b>	<b>2.90</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>0.62</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>-0.23</b>	<b>-1.88</b>
Troy	0	39	NA	0	NA	22.32	8
Sidney	0	35	NA	1	NA	19.25	8

LEGEND	PT	Number of part-time staff.	Stations	Number of stations utilized by the department.
	FT	Number of full-time staff.	Multiple Calls	Percentage of calls that result in a second dispatch prior to first call being back in service.
	TO	Turnover annually.	Mutual Aid Distances	Distances in miles to closest mutual aid department.
	PT Wage	Median hourly wage for part-time staff.	Population Flux	Does the population change in the jurisdiction throughout the day?
	FT Wage	Median hourly wage for full-time staff.	Staffing Flux	Does staffing levels change throughout day as a result of the population flux?
	Min. Manning	Minimum manning per day / ( ) = number required to be full-time.	PT Evolution	Evolution resulting in operation as a blended department.
	NA	Not applicable to the department.	NP	Not provided by department.



## Survey Comparisons

Department	Community Size		Run Volume			
	Miles	Population	Fire	EMS	Stations	Multiple Calls
Beavercreek	48	41700	1274	3821	4	NP
Butler	18	9000	800	1500	2	50%
Cheviot	1.5	9600	333	1084	1	3%
City of Reading	4	10800	505	1511	2	18%
Colerain	44.5	62000	2988	6206	5	72%
Delhi	11	30000	500	2600	3	1%
Englewood	6.2	12235	332	2648	2	10%
Hamilton Township	34.5	23000	493	1146	2	10%
Harrison Township	7.5	24202	1000	5800	2	60%
Liberty Township	35	33000	650	1300	3	15%
Little Miami	5	6000	305	695	2	20%
MIHJFD	24	14830	600	1000	2	12%
Montgomery	5.3	10163	483	1029	1	NP
Moraine	9.3	7000	615	1500	2	30%
Oxford	6	27000	672	1748	1	15%
Sharonville	10	14-40000	499	1784	3	15%
Springdale	6.2	15000	1000	2000	1	15%
Sugarcreek	34	8100	NP	NP	2	22%
Sycamore Township	15	20000-150000	1852	2379	2	20%
Trotwood	28	28000	1200	3850	3	40%
Westerville	16.5	48000	3300	5000	3	33%
<b>Averages</b>	<b>17.6</b>	<b>22085.79</b>	<b>970.05</b>	<b>2430.05</b>	<b>2.29</b>	<b>24%</b>
<b>Piqua</b>	<b>56.9</b>	<b>20738</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>3153</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>Difference</b>	<b>39.30</b>	<b>-1347.79</b>	<b>-531.05</b>	<b>722.95</b>	<b>-1.29</b>	<b>26%</b>
Froy	92	31,000	1266	3646	3	NP
Sturkey	46	20,000	500	3000	2	20%

### Survey Comparisons

Department	Mutual Aid Distances				Flux		Budget	PT Evolution
	N	S	E	W	Population	Staff		
Beavercreek	3.5	6.5	2.5	2	no	no	\$10,000,000.00	up
Butler	1.5	2.5	5	4.5	yes	yes	\$2,800,000.00	up
Cheviot	5	5	5	3	no	no	\$800,000.00	up
City of Reading	2.6	3.1	4.3	.75	no	no	\$2,100,000.00	up
Colerain	1.5	3.5	1	4	yes	no	\$12,000,000.00	up
Delhi	5	NA	1	1	yes	no	\$4,000,000.00	up
Englewood	0.5	1	1	5	no	yes	\$1,770,000.00	same
Hamilton Township	NA	5.4	4.9	4.7	no	no	\$2,265,000.00	up
Harrison Township	2	2	2	2	yes	no	\$3,800,000.00	Up/down
Liberty Township	2	2	3	3	yes	no	\$5,000,000.00	up
Little Miami	1	2	1	1.5	yes	no	\$2,600,000.00	up
MIHJFD	2.5	3	3.5	4.5	no	no	\$2,900,000.00	up
Montgomery	4	4	3.5	3.5	yes	no	\$2,100,000.00	up
Moraine	1	1	1	NA	yes	no	\$4,000,000.00	up
Oxford	NA	5	6	NA	yes	no	\$1,300,000.00	up
Sharonville	2	2	2	2	yes	no	\$6,700,000.00	up/down
Springdale	3	3	3	3	yes	no	\$3,200,000.00	up
Sugarcreek	1	1	3	3	yes	yes	\$2,100,000.00	up
Sycamore Township	.5	.75	1.5	2	yes	no	\$4,300,000.00	same
Trotwood	2	2	3	3	no	no	\$4,100,000.00	up
Westerville	1.5	1.7	1.7	1.2	yes	no	\$13,300,000.00	up
<b>Averages</b>	<b>2.00</b>	<b>2.69</b>	<b>2.80</b>	<b>2.55</b>	<b>14/21</b>	<b>3/21</b>	<b>\$4,339,761.00</b>	<b>18/21</b>
<b>Piqua</b>	<b>12.94</b>	<b>10.01</b>	<b>6.67</b>	<b>7.03</b>	<b>no</b>	<b>no</b>	<b>\$3,698,506.00</b>	<b>NA</b>
<b>Difference</b>	<b>10.94</b>	<b>7.32</b>	<b>3.87</b>	<b>4.48</b>	<b>no</b>	<b>no</b>	<b>(\$641,255.00)</b>	<b>NA</b>
Troy	8	3	2	5	no	no	\$4,300,000	NA
Sidney	7	13	3	13	yes	no	\$3,200,000	NA

### Summary of Comparisons

The City of Piqua has 44 less part-time employees (since they are not utilized), 2.9 more fulltime employees, experiences no part-time turn-over compared to 4.76 annually for blended departments, has a greater full-time turn-over of .62 annually, has no part-time wage, pays \$0.23 less than the average full-time wage, utilizes a minimum manning that is lower by 1.88 daily, covers a larger response area by 39.3 square miles, has an average population that is lower by 1347, responds to 531 fewer fire runs, responds to 722 more EMS runs, utilizes almost 2 fewer stations, experiences multiple calls 26% more of the time, has mutual aid distances greater in all directions from 3 to almost 11 miles, does not have the luxury of having a population flux that can be utilized in staff planning, a budget that is lower by more than \$283,000, and no part-time evolution when compared to blended department averages that utilize part-time staff and responded to survey questions.

Appendix 2

**Full -Time/Part-Time Staffing Schedule Comparison**

Type of Staff	Schedule	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Ratio of part-time staff needed to replace a full-time member based on scheduling method
<b>Full-time 24/48</b>	<b>7am-7am</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>NA</b>
Part-time 24/120 24 hour shift	7am-7am	A	B	C	D	E	F	A	2:1
	7am-7pm	A	C	E	A	C	E	A	2:1
Part-time 24/120 12 hour shift	7pm-7am	B	D	F	B	D	F	B	
	7am-3pm	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	2:1
Part-time 24/120 8 hour shift	3pm-11pm	B	E	B	E	B	E	B	
	11pm-7am	C	F	C	F	C	F	C	

Each letter indicates a separate employee needed to fill the schedule as indicated based on the type of scheduling used to employ part-time employees. Replacing 12 full-time firefighters with part-time staff working a 24 hour, 12 hour, or 8 hour schedule requires 24 employees minimum working a regularly scheduled shift in one of the respective formats.

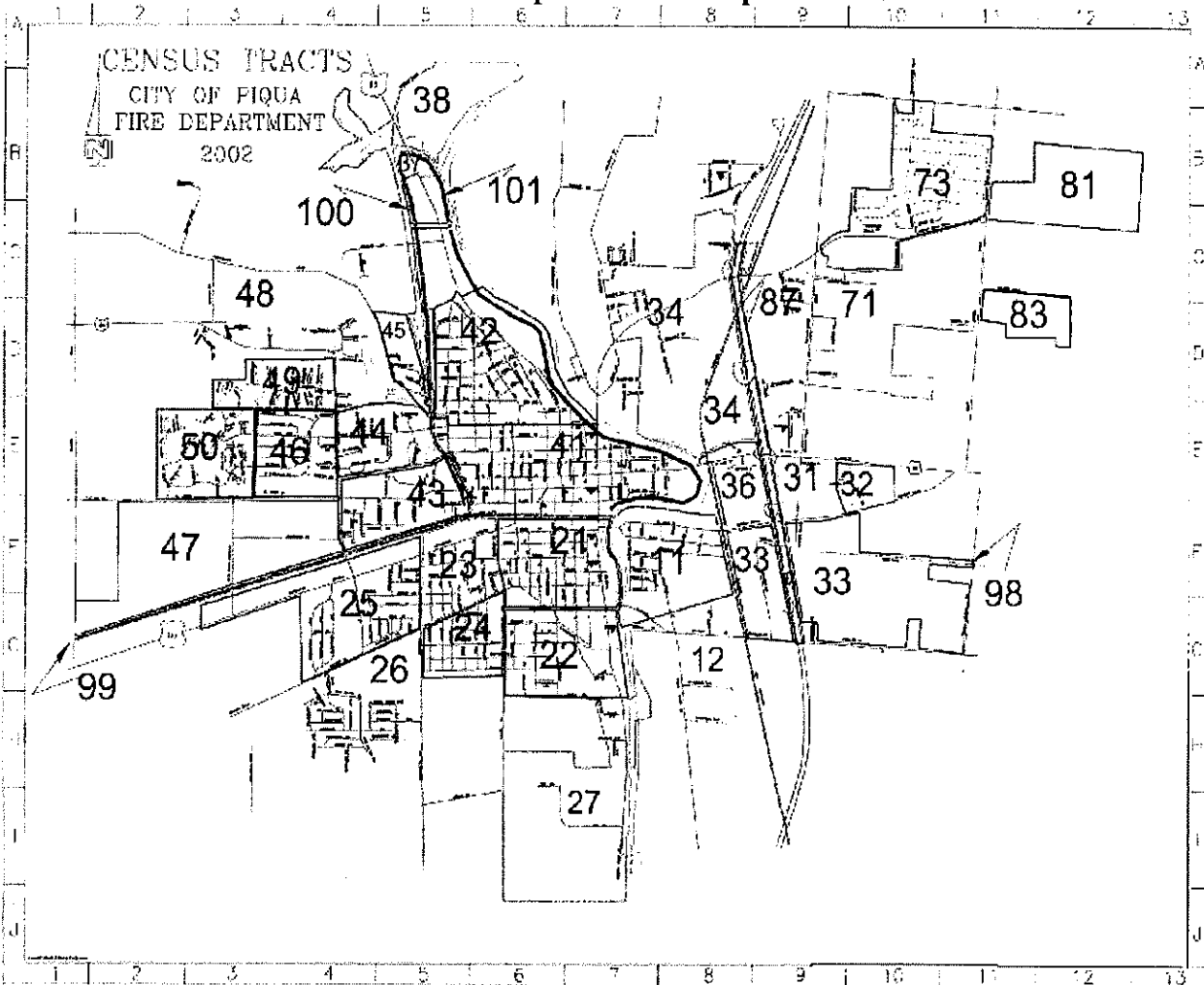
Different staffing levels are considered in this appendix with consideration towards staffing members around the clock. Each has their own appeal. Utilizing part-time staff in a 24/120 schedule keeps part-time staff working with full-time staff in a similar schedule but the system is not the most commonly used by blended departments and may not be attractive to potential applicants. Using 12 hour shifts allows us to provide a more attractive schedule using the most common staffing method used by blended departments but may require shift incentives for night shifts. Finally, using an 8 hour schedule most closely mimics a majority of jobs in society and may allow us to attract even more candidates but may require two levels of incentives.

Looking at our call volume by hour of day and day of week provides no evidence of a flux in calls that would allow the department to flux the staffing level. That means the fire department would staff part-time members around the clock or deal with call-in overtime on every squad (and some fire) calls during the hours such an attempt to reduce staffing was made. For example, if staffing is arbitrarily reduced to four at night from 12 am to 6 am because the call columns for those hours were below 100 in 2009 [see graph 1], there would be a minimum 2 members called in to staff the department due to two men leaving on squad (which is a minimum response and could be more). That, using 2009 as an example looking at graph 1, would happen a minimum of 541 times or 1082 instances of paying 2 hours and 40 minutes of call-in overtime rate at the employees respective level. Minimum personnel on the station *at any time* during an existing run are four in order to man a fire call or additional medic call that might be dispatched.

Part-time employees working public service are defined in law as those working less than 1500 hours (O.R.C. 4113.11[G][3] and O.R.C. 505.60 [F][1]). Using a 24/120 schedule means the part-time employee would accumulate 1464 hours over 61 working days working every sixth day or some equivalent. An employee working a 12 hour schedule would accumulate 1464 hours over 122 working days working every third day or some equivalent. Finally, an employee working an 8 hour schedule would accumulate 1464 hours over 183 working days working every other day or some equivalent.

Despite the drawback of needing to hire more employees than the minimum number, it may be necessary for one point in particular. It allows more flexibility in filling other interdepartmental needs. Once the part-time employee reaches 1500 hours, they will need furloughed until the start of the next year (meaning overtime by full-time staff to fill the vacancies). This impacts their ability to respond to call-ins for overtime, staffing through straight pay or working scheduled overtime for events and activities, or providing coverage for employees who call off on their scheduled day to work. These part-time schedules only allow 36 hours, annually, of flexibility for the minimum number of part-time staff required to replace 12 displaced full-time employees. In addition to furlough, it is important to remember that these numbers are minimums required just to meet the roles 12 full-time personnel currently fulfill. There could be problems above and beyond the aforementioned furlough including turn-over, call-offs, or difficulty recruiting needed personnel at different times. It may be necessary to hire more than these minimum numbers and attempt to maintain them, or the department could experience a rise in the use of full-time personnel in overtime situations to meet needs.

### Appendix 3 Census Tract Map/Definitions/Response Times



### Census Tract Border Definitions:

NO.	DESCRIPTION	NORTH	SOUTH	EAST	WEST
11	Shawnee	Miami River	Garnsey & Bridge to CSX RR	CSX RR	Miami River
12	Barlow, Stadler, Windham Way	Garnsey/Bridge to CSX RR	City Limits	CSX RR	Miami River/Piqua-Troy
21	Bike Path/Garnsey-Miami River/Gordon	Bike Path	Garnsey	Miami River	Gordon St
22	Garnsey/Henn-Hamm-Miami River/Gordon	Garnsey	Henn Rd	Atami River	Gordon St
23	Path/South-Gordon/McKinley	Bike Path	South St	Gordon St	McKinley Ave.
24	South/Mansie-Gordon/McKinley	South St	South of Marker (City Limits)	Gordon St	McKinley Ave.
25	Landon Park area	Bike Path	South St/Convection Ave.	McKinley Ave.	City Limits
26	Dandlewood	South St	City Limits	McKinley Ave.	City Limits
27	South of Henn Rd.	Henn Rd/City Limits	City Limits	Miami River/City Limits	Draw/City Limits
31	Miami Valley Crossings Area	City Limits	Garby Rd	City Limits/W. of Almoda	I-75
32	Kiehl & Almoda	E. Ash	Garby Rd	City Limits	West of Almoda
33	Coonra Industrial Park, Garby	E. Ash	Stadler/City Limits	Troy-Sidney	CSX RR
34	Paul Sherry area	City Limits	Miami River/Hollow Park	I-75	City Limits
35	I-75 in Piqua City Limits	Exit 83 (City Limits)	Stadler (City Limits)	I-75	I-75
36	Miami Valley Center	Highway Park	Garby Rd	I-75	CSX RR
37	SL Rt. 65, Wester Plaza	City Limits (South Run)	Forest & Maple	City Limits	City Limits
38	Johnston Farm	City Limits	City Limits/Spillway runoff ditch	City Limits	Harden Rd.
41	Park/Bike Path-Miami River/Washington	Park Ave	Bike Path	Miami River	Washington Ave.
42	R. Park-Miami River/Forest	City Limits	Park Ave.	Miami River	Forest Ave.
43	High Street hill area	Dubois to Harb/Wash	Bike Path	Washington Ave.	Sunset Ave.
44	Park Avenue hill area	Alpha to Echo Lk. & Forest	Dubois to North & Washington	Washington	Sunset Ave.
45	Echo Lake Drive area	City Limits	Echo Lake/Camp & Forest	Forest Avenue	Echo Lake Dr.
46	Partridge	Caryville Parkway	W. High St	Sunset Ave	Westview Dr.
47	R.H. Davis area	W. High St	Bike Path	Sunset Ave	City Limits
48	City Golf Course area	Vandalia Rd	City Lim/Alpha to Echo Lake	Echo Lake Drive/Vandalia	North Rd
49	Explos Heat	City Limits	Caryville Parkway	Sunset Ave.	City Limits
60	Deerfield	City Limits to Caryville	W. High St	Westview Dr.	City Limits
61	Springbrook Township				
62	Washington Township				
63	Other Townships				
64	I-75 Station Township	Loy Road	Great Miami River	I-75	I-75
71	Libbey & City Schools	CR 25A/South of CR25A	City Limits	Troy-Sidney/City Limits	Looney Rd.
73	Indian Edge	City Limits	CR 25A/South of CR25A	CR 25A	City Limits
81	Troy-Sidney/CR25A (annex)	City Limits	City Limits	City Limits	CR25A/Troy Sidney
83	Snyder, Troy-Sidney	City Limits	City Limits	City Limits	Troy-Sidney
87	Sawell area	CR 25A/City Limits	City Limits	Looney Road	City Limits/I-75
98	Linear Park, East end	Bike Path	Bike Path	City Limits	Main Street
99	Linear Park, West end	Bike Path	Bike Path	City Limits	Main Street
100	Linear Park, Water Works	French Park	City Limits	City Limits	Canal Run
101	Linear Park, Water Works	Lock Near		The River's Edge	

### Response Time Chart by Census Tract

Census Tract	Number of Fire Calls	Fire Response Time	Number of EMS Calls	EMS Response Time
11	8	5:37	103	4:45
12	0	NA	8	4:57
21	47	4:58	437	4:21
22	49	5:25	126	5:07
23	9	6:49	107	4:41
24	5	7:35	75	5:50
25	24	6:42	242	5:45
26	6	7:49	109	7:27
27	6	3:55	17	4:58
31	13	5:59	72	5:25
32	0	NA	154	6:18
33	8	6:56	106	6:04
34	12	5:08	76	5:04
35	3	5:35	23	7:07
36	18	6:15	48	4:15
37	0	NA	0	NA
38	0	NA	0	NA
41	95	4:28	619	4:09
42	20	3:42	198	4:58
43	4	5:03	62	5:20
44	2	7:38	26	6:06
45	10	6:44	8	7:01
46	13	5:54	236	6:48
47	6	5:06	11	4:45
48	0	NA	9	7:19
49	3	2:56	7	8:18
50	3	8:15	37	7:25
51	18	7:21	116	7:51
52	8	7:02	112	8:28
53	1	7:53	37	10:45
54	1	6:16	3	8:23
71	7	5:17	39	7:05
73	2	9:30	20	7:15
75	0	NA	0	NA
77	0	NA	0	NA
79	0	NA	1	3:00
81	0	NA	8	5:30
83	0	NA	0	NA
85	0	NA	0	NA
87	1	9:00	32	6:58
97	0	NA	0	NA
98	2	3:01	0	NA
99	0	NA	0	NA
100	0	NA	0	NA
101	0	NA	0	NA
<b>Totals</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>5:39</b>	<b>3284</b>	<b>5:44</b>

Times are an average of the response times in 2009 with first out vehicles only: Medics 9, 1, 14, and 3 for EMS and Engines 1, 2, and 10 for Fire. No chase vehicles supporting the medics, utility trucks as are used for CO runs, secondary dispatches as used for the rescue truck, or grass truck dispatches were included due to the fact that they respond without lights and sirens a majority of the time. Times may be elongated for medics that are third and fourth out because their response is largely dependent on the arrival of call back personnel before response can be initiated. It is difficult to sort those calls from others because medics are rotated when the first two being called out are out of service. The time is defined as the span between when the department receives the dispatch until the point firefighter/paramedics set foot on the scene. This response time study is dependent upon accurate data entry by the firefighter/paramedics entering the information and is impacted by weather, multiple calls, and availability of personnel. Census tracts have been added that are not reflected in the map including tracts 75,77,79,85, and 97.

**Appendix 4**  
**City of Piqua 2010 Budget Detail Reports**

TIME: 13:51:44  
 DATE: 11/04/10  
 BAS445

CITY OF PIQUA  
 DEPARTMENT BUDGET DETAIL

FUND: 106 SAFETY DEPT.  
 DEPT: 009 FIRE

PAGE - 1

	2008 ACTUAL	2009 ACTUAL	2010 BUDGET	2010 AUG TO DATE	2010 ESTIMATE	2011 REQUEST
PERSONAL SERVICES						
CAPITAL	0	0	.00	.00	.00	.00
002 SALARIES-SUPERVISION	164,582	122,661	102,595.00	64,043.82	95,943.00	98,045.00
003 SALARIES-REGULAR	2,293,281	2,148,980	2,085,388.00	1,460,278.66	2,133,665.00	1,959,199.00
004 SALARIES-TEMPORARY	0	0	.00	.00	.00	.00
010 SALARY-COMP ABS-EARNE	89,206	89,206	141,800.00	.00	89,000.00	.00
011 SALARY-COMP ABS-USED	0	0	.00	.00	.00	.00
452 PERSONNEL SVC CREDIT	140,130	11,392	20,000.00	5,724.78	5,724.00	20,000.00
PERSONAL SERVICES TOTALS	2,337,039	2,171,043	2,308,783.00	1,518,597.70	2,312,698.00	2,077,244.00
*****						
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE						
103 ADVERTISING	569	34	300.00	661.07	1,500.00	500.00
175 DAMAGES	0	0	.00	.00	.00	.00
179 DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS	1,630	1,332	1,634.00	824.00	1,634.00	1,634.00
200 EXPENSES-COLLECTIONS	40,156	44,267	50,810.00	26,506.52	47,000.00	45,000.00
203 EXPENSES-MEDICAL	8,153	10,619	15,000.00	550.00	12,500.00	12,500.00
204 EXPENSES-REPAIRS & MA	0	0	.00	.00	.00	.00
206 EXPENSES-SAFETY	1,955	1,999	2,357.00	1,649.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
225 FEES-AUDITORS	4,100	4,501	4,880.00	3,923.18	4,880.00	4,531.00
229 FOOD & MEALS	262	278	400.00	76.83	200.00	200.00
230 FREIGHT, EXPRESS & POS	328	607	572.00	240.92	572.00	572.00
231 FUEL/HEATING	13,374	9,323	18,700.00	7,549.06	11,500.00	11,500.00
235 FUEL/VEHICLE-DIESEL	19,849	11,903	19,912.00	9,133.59	17,000.00	19,912.00
236 FUEL/VEHICLE-GASOLINE	5,736	3,353	3,812.00	3,959.46	6,000.00	6,000.00
238 FUEL/NON VEHICLE-GASO	897	710	878.00	427.88	878.00	878.00
244 FIRE SUPPLIES	14,550	19,761	22,200.00	16,537.05	22,000.00	26,750.00
314 INS - PROPERTY/LIABILI	0	0	.00	.00	.00	.00
402 MTLs & LBR - AUTOMOTI	18,858	16,187	22,850.00	16,651.94	22,850.00	34,900.00
403 MTLs & LBR - BUILDING	7,952	24,834	9,050.00	5,904.28	9,050.00	14,050.00
404 MTLs & LBR - EQUIPMEN	15,602	14,421	16,975.00	9,204.55	16,975.00	25,125.00
405 MTLs & LBR - GROUNDS	0	0	.00	.00	.00	.00
453 O&M CREDIT ALLOCATION	0	92	.00	.00	.00	.00
487 ADMINISTRATIVE EXP AL	34,517	32,124	31,382.00	18,624.74	31,382.00	33,097.00
549 SERVICES-REUSE	516	325	320.00	240.24	400.00	400.00
553 SERVICES-CONTRACTUAL	1,021	3,399	16,500.00	10,530.66	13,000.00	13,000.00
554 SERVICES-INFO TECHNOL	22,467	26,052	24,657.00	16,438.00	24,657.00	30,625.00
558 SERVICES-PROFESSION/T	4,555	9,489	.00	894.21	.00	.00
564 SUPPLIES-DEPARTMENTAL	9,545	3,800	9,620.00	6,496.55	11,620.00	14,695.00
565 SUPPLIES-OFFICE	1,667	1,198	2,000.00	916.40	.00	.00
576 TELEPHONE	17,707	20,198	15,200.00	13,097.09	19,200.00	19,200.00
577 TIRES, BATTERIES & AC	4,983	3,422	4,640.00	2,173.16	4,640.00	3,000.00
578 TRAINING	16,203	9,076	28,507.00	5,673.00	15,000.00	15,050.00
579 TRAVEL	425	809	4,850.00	3,529.81	3,600.00	4,900.00
596 INF TECH EQUIP NON-CA	2,162	8,711	1,391.00	902.42	1,391.00	4,775.00
600 UNIFORMS & CLOTHING	26,769	23,982	24,000.00	15,148.44	19,600.00	19,600.00
601 UTILITIES (EL,WTR,SW,	20,181	20,173	27,136.00	13,672.55	22,000.00	25,000.00
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE TOTALS	316,691	327,205	384,633.00	211,246.60	344,029.00	389,398.00
*****						

CITY OF PIQUA  
DEPARTMENT BUDGET DETAIL

TIME: 13:51:44  
DATE: 11/04/10  
BAS445

FUND: 106 SAFETY DEPT.	2008 ACTUAL	2009 ACTUAL	2010 BUDGET	2010 AUG TO DATE	2010 ESTIMATE	2011 REQUEST
DEPT: 005 FIRE						
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT						
701 INS.-HOSPITALIZATION	263,796	265,791	405,500.00	239,597.78	375,000.00	375,000.00
702 INS.-LIFE	3,121	2,942	3,318.00	2,030.40	3,318.00	2,977.00
703 INS.-WOMEN'S COMP.		0	.00	.01	.00	3,817.00
704 OHIO UNEMPLOYMENT COM		0	.00	.00	.00	.00
705 P.E.R.S.	4,821	5,955	5,985.00	3,965.06	5,985.00	5,985.00
706 FIRE & POLICE PENSION	517,917	490,523	514,856.00	327,857.86	514,856.00	493,076.00
707 MEDICARE	26,305	26,702	31,723.00	18,587.29	31,723.00	28,956.00
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT TOTALS	814,860	791,914	961,382.00	552,028.40	930,862.00	909,311.00
CAPITAL						
CAPITAL	257,385	430,792	329,980.00	.00	40,000.00	161,677.00
TOTALS	257,385	430,792	329,980.00	.00	40,000.00	161,677.00
OVERHEAD TRANSFER						
450 OVERHEAD TRANSFER	0	0	.00	.00	.00	.00
TOTALS	0	0	.00	.00	.00	.00
NON GOVERNMENT/TRANSFERS						
938 TRANSFER OUT - 255	0	53,444	48,718.00	32,478.64	48,718.00	47,523.00
971 TRANSFER OUT TO 249	0	21,689	21,989.00	14,659.36	21,989.00	21,512.00
NON GOVERNMENT/TRANSFERS TOTALS	0	75,133	70,707.00	47,138.00	70,707.00	69,035.00



TIME: 13:51:44  
 DATE: 11/04/10  
 BAS445

CITY OF FIQUA  
 DEPARTMENT BUDGET DETAIL

PAGE - 3

	2008 ACTUAL	2009 ACTUAL	2010 BUDGET	2010 AUG TO DATE	2010 ESTIMATE	2011 REQUEST
FUND: 106 SAFETY DEPT.						
DEPT 009 FIRE						
PERSONAL SERVICES	2,337,039	2,171,043	2,309,783.00	1,518,597.70	2,312,888.00	2,077,244.00
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE	316,691	327,205	384,633.00	211,246.60	344,023.00	389,338.00
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT	814,840	791,914	981,382.00	592,028.40	930,882.00	909,311.00
CAPITAL	257,385	430,793	323,980.00	.00	40,000.00	161,677.00
OVERHEAD TRANSFERS	0	0	70,707.00	47,138.00	70,707.00	69,035.00
NON GOVERNMENT/TRANSFERS	0	75,133	0	0	0	0
DEPARTMENT TOTALS	3,725,975	3,796,088	4,086,485.00	2,369,010.70	3,698,506.00	3,606,565.00

**Appendix 5**

Variable	Cost Factor	Explanation	Fulltime 30 Staff	Blended Full-Time 18 & Part-Time 24	Blended 72 Full-Time 18 & Part-Time 72
A	Full-Time Wages	Includes hourly wages and the selling of accumulated vacation and sick time. Actual 2009 figure.	\$2,171,043.00	\$1,302,626.00	\$1,302,626.00
B	Full-Time Benefits	Health and life insurance. Actual 2009 figure.	\$268,733.00	\$143,324.00	\$143,324.00
C	Full-Time Retirement	24% of wages for Ohio Police and Fire Pension. Actual 2009 Figure.	\$490,523.00	\$277,893.00	\$277,893.00
D	Full-Time Initial Training	Not required... Hired with firefighter level 2 and paramedic.	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
E	Full-Time Continuing Education	Contracted services for monthly training for EMS. Fire continuing education is currently done in house but will further increase these costs in the future as the state moves to require continuing education be provided by a chartered and credentialed institution.	\$3,600.00	\$3,600.00	\$3,600.00
F	Full-Time Members Gear	Currently stocked... replace 3 sets annually.	\$9,000.00	\$9,000.00	\$9,000.00
G	Full-Time Medicare	1.45% of wages	\$26,703.00	\$16,789.00	\$16,789.00
H	Full-Time Workman's Compensation	3% of wages	\$65,131.00	\$34,737.00	\$34,737.00
I	Full-Time Testing and Hiring Costs	Costs associated with giving the civil service exam, providing a physical agility test to top 30 candidates, and putting 10 through the rest of the process including background, polygraph, psychological, fire staff interview, and then putting final five through medical and final interview once every two years.	\$6,012.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
J	Normally Experienced Overtime	Applies to both current staffing and with the use of a blended system because members are being replaced and manning is remaining the same – not increasing. Appears cheaper in the blended system because it is assumed part-time staff	\$180,000.00	\$157,500.00	\$157,500.00

		would make an estimated 50% of call back or scheduled overtime depending on availability.			
K	Part-Time Wages	On a wage scale of \$12-\$18 an hour, the median wage would be \$15 an hour.	\$0.00	\$525,600.00	\$525,600.00
L	Part-Time Benefits	Assuming no benefits are provided to part-time staff, there would be a penalty under new legislation (number of employees in the city – 30 x 1/12 of \$2000 monthly).	\$0.00	\$466,128.00	\$561,744.00
M	Part-Time Retirement	Part-time firefighter contribution would be to social security/Medicare at 7.65%.	\$0.00	\$40,208.00	\$40,208.00
N	Part-Time Initial Training	Depends on services the department continues to provide. Cannot rely on hiring all firefighter level two/paramedics because those requirements would drastically limit the hiring pool. Estimation is based on having all fire fighter level twos and EMT-Basic minimums.	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
O	Part-Time Continuing Education	Same as fulltime continuing education but estimated additional fees to provide teaching services for additional staff and at additional time periods OR paying for part-time staff to attend when not on shift.	\$0.00	\$6,480.00	\$19,440.00
P	Part-Time Gear	Would expect to replace 10% of part-time staff sets annually and plan on needing 10% additional sets each year for new employees with their own requirements.	\$0.00	\$15,000.00	\$45,000.00
Q	Part-Time Turnover/Replacement Cost	Estimated 25% annually. Due to vacancy overtime/hiring efforts/unemployment etc. or approximately 1/2 annual wage for each employee that leaves per the department of labor.	\$0.00	\$67,500.00	\$202,500.00
R	Part-Time	Estimated 50% of 24 part-	\$0.00	\$129,600.00	\$0.00

	Furlough	time staff. Additional staff prevents furlough so none is estimated with 72 staff.			
S	Part-Time Induced Overtime	Estimated figure due to late arrivals due to other jobs.	\$0.00	\$2,738.00	\$2,738.00
T	Part-Time Induced Third Party Fees	Estimated costs related to losing staff members capable of doing vehicle and building maintenance in house, hose testing, ladder testing, pump testing, etc. and having to pay third party vendors to conduct the labor.	\$0.00	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00
U	Part-Time Shift Differential	Estimated costs of paying the late 12 hour shifts a 10% shift differential to half the part time staff.	\$0.00	\$6,570.00	\$6,570.00
V	Part-Time Medicare	1.45% of wages	\$0.00	\$7,621.00	\$7,621.00
W	Part-Time Workman's Compensation	3% of wages	\$0.00	\$15,768.00	\$15,768.00
X	Part-Time Testing and Hiring Costs	Costs associated with giving the civil service exam, providing a physical agility test to top 30 candidates, and putting 10 through the rest of the process including background, polygraph, psychological, fire staff interview, and then putting final five through medical and final interview once every year (different than full time due to list exhaustion and need to hire many more staff).	\$0.00	\$12,025.00	\$12,025.00
Y	Part-Time Induced Reductions in Revenue	The occasional instances where we might be required to send an all basic crew on medic calls. Estimated at 10% of the call volume.	\$0.00	\$45,000.00	45,000.00
<b>Totals:</b>			<b>\$3,220,745.00</b>	<b>\$ 3,300,707.00</b>	<b>\$3,444,683.00</b>







# An Evaluation of the Aurora Fire Department Staffing

By: David W. Barnes, Assistant Chief

Aurora Fire Department

Aurora, Ohio

An applied research project submitted to the Ohio Fire Executive Program

April 2002



## ABSTRACT

The Aurora Fire Department staffs two fire stations twenty-four hours a day with fourteen full-time and twenty-six part-time employees. The staffing consists of a lieutenant and three firefighters at Station 1 and two firefighters at Station 2. Part-time employees staff two of these positions each day. Two problems exist with the current staffing method. Station 2 is understaffed at two personnel per day and it is difficult to maintain a six-person shift between two stations because of the availability of part-time employees. Staffing often drops to a minimum of five personnel and if necessary overtime is paid to a full-time employee to maintain that minimum.

The purpose of this research project is to evaluate current staffing methods and explore ways to improve and increase staffing that are efficient and cost effective. This project used a combination of historical and evaluative research to answer the following questions:

1. How does the staffing of the Aurora Fire Department compare to national staffing standards and combination fire departments of similar sized cities in our area?
2. What is a safe and cost effective number of firefighters needed to staff the Aurora Fire Department?
3. What is the right combination of full-time and part-time firefighters needed to accomplish the staffing needs of the Aurora Fire Department?

The procedures used in this project included a literature search of current national standards affecting fire department staffing and previous research of staffing in other combination fire departments. A survey was conducted of local area combination

fire departments to compare their staffing to Aurora. Budget and financial records were examined and the finance director of the City of Aurora was consulted to determine future revenue available from a fire department tax levy.

Results from the research showed that the Aurora Fire Department does not staff enough personnel to meet nationally recognized standards for a first alarm response to a structure fire. They currently staff enough personnel to meet the standard for an initial response of four firefighters within five minutes but cannot get the balance of the first alarm assignment to the scene within nine minutes. Fire department reports showed that they were short staffed a total of 1237 hours in 2001, which also reduced the initial response manpower.

Results from the survey showed that the Aurora Fire Department's staffing was above average when compared to other area fire departments. Most of the fire departments with less staffing only had one station and had fewer runs than Aurora. The fire departments with larger staffs had larger populations and more runs than Aurora.

Financial records and information showed that the current combination of part-time and full-time firefighters was a cost effective way to staff the fire department. This method becomes less cost effective as the number of part-time positions per day is increased, because a greater number of part-time employees are needed to draw from to fill those positions. Full-time employees are more expensive but they can cover more hours with fewer employees. Research showed an increase in revenue from the next renewal of the fire department levy could fund three new full-time firefighters.

Recommendations from this research include; hiring three full-time firefighters to staff an additional position per day at Station 2, maintain the current staff of part-time employees to fill two positions per day, and revise the Aurora Fire Department's MABAS boxes to send more apparatus early in the alarm to try to meet nationally recognized response standards.

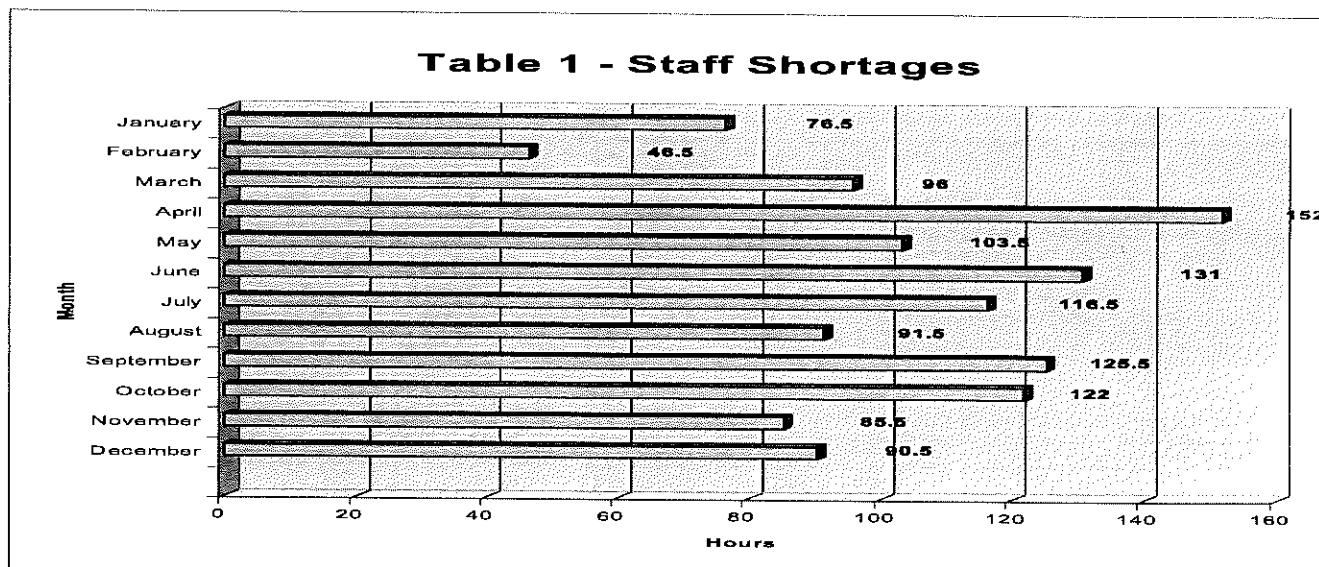
**TABLE of CONTENTS**

Abstract.....	2
Table of Contents.....	5
Introduction.....	6
Background and Significance.....	7
Literature Review.....	10
Procedures.....	14
Results.....	16
Discussion.....	18
Recommendations.....	23
Reference List.....	26
Appendixes.....	27

## INTRODUCTION

The Aurora Fire Department currently staffs two fire stations with a combination of full-time and part-time personnel. Full strength staffing is currently four personnel at Station 1 and two personnel at Station 2. There is a full-time lieutenant and three full-time firefighter/paramedics assigned to each shift. Part-time personnel staff the remaining positions and any days off for the full-time personnel. The current staff consists of a chief, an assistant chief, three lieutenants, nine full-time firefighter/paramedics, and twenty-six part-time firefighters holding paramedic or EMT certifications.

The problem with the current staffing method is twofold. First, we feel Station 2 is understaffed and we would like to add an additional person per shift. Secondly, we have problems maintaining six men per shift because of the availability of the part-time firefighters. We often drop down to a minimum staff of five and when necessary pay overtime to a full-time firefighter to maintain that minimum. Part-time shifts were short a total of 1237 hours in 2001. Table 1 shows these hours totaled by month occurred.

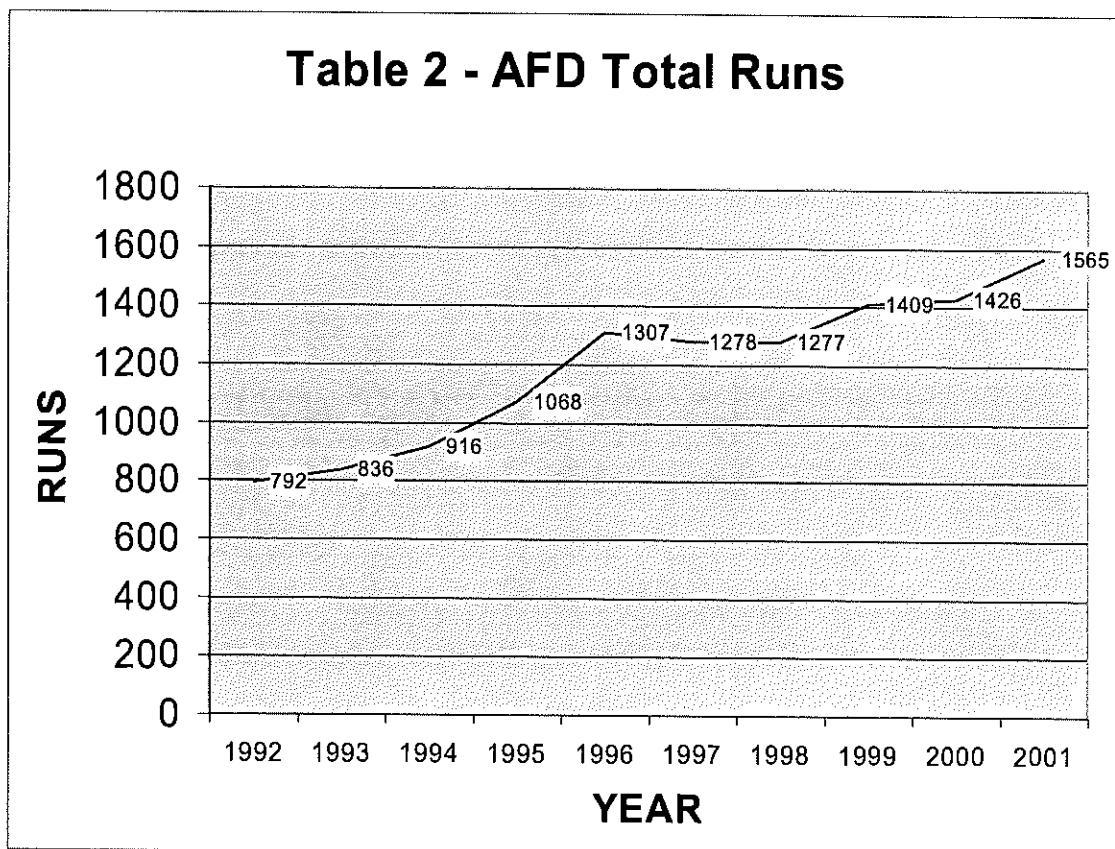


The purpose of this research project is to evaluate our current staffing method and explore ways to improve and increase staffing that are efficient and cost effective. This project will use a combination of historical and evaluative research to answer the following questions:

1. How does the staffing of the Aurora Fire Department compare to national staffing standards and combination fire departments of similar sized cities in our area?
2. What is a safe and cost effective number of firefighters needed to staff the Aurora Fire Department?
3. What is the right combination of full-time and part-time firefighters needed to accomplish the staffing needs of the Aurora Fire Department?

## **BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE**

The Aurora Fire Department is responsible for fire and emergency medical services for the City of Aurora, Ohio. The City of Aurora is a growing community located in Portage County, approximately twenty-five miles southeast of Cleveland. In the last ten years, the population has increased by five thousand people and our calls have nearly doubled (Table 2). In addition, the city is home to the Six Flags amusement park, that includes the former Sea World animal park and can bring as many as fifty thousand additional people into our city on a busy day.



In the same period, the Aurora Fire Department has increased staffing from a two man per day shift operating out of one station, to a six man per day shift operating out of two stations. In order to staff these positions, we hired six additional full-time firefighter/paramedics. Station 1 manning consists of a lieutenant and three firefighters and Station 2 manning consists of two firefighters. In order to avoid excessive overtime, we will drop to three men at Station 1 if no part-time personnel are available to fill the shift.

We currently have twenty-six part-time employees on our roster, but many times, we are unable to fill shifts because of their availability. Fourteen of our part-time

employees work for other fire departments and the rest work predominantly day shifts at private business or industry. Part-time shift shortages occur mostly during weekday shifts and holidays. In the past, we have added part-time employees to try to cover these shortages. Many of these new employees were young, enthusiastic men and women who aspired to be full-time firefighters. They gained training and experience from our department and used it to achieve their goal. We hired some of them for full-time positions and others achieved full-time positions elsewhere. Some of those stayed on part-time but were now unable to work as many hours. Their full-time jobs often cause them to arrive late or leave early for their shift in Aurora.

Our runs have increased to the point where we no longer feel we can get by dropping down to a five-man shift. When both squads are out at the same time, the only person left on duty may be the lieutenant. When this happens, we call back off duty full-time firefighters but eleven out of twelve have second jobs and may not be available to return in a reasonable amount of time.

Adding an additional person per shift would help correct two staffing problems. It would allow us to staff a third person at Station 2 and would help to maintain a total staff of six per shift in the times when part-time personnel are unable to work. The additional person at Station 2 would increase efficiency and safety on fire runs. A three-man engine enables two firefighters to be ready when they arrive at the scene to attempt a rescue or attack the fire and still have a pump operator with the apparatus. The additional person on squad calls would help the paramedics manage critical patients quickly and without relying on help from Station 1.



The additional person per shift would help maintain a minimum staff of six per shift at the times when we are now working with five. A seven-man shift would allow us to respond to fire calls with two engines and a squad. If a squad were already out, we would still be able to respond with at least one adequately staffed engine. In addition, late arriving or early departing part-time personnel would not cause as much of a scheduling problem as they do now.

The addition of a seventh position per day does not eliminate the need for part-time firefighters. All current part-time staff will continue to staff two positions daily and cover vacations. To replace these two part-time staffed positions with six full-time employees would cost approximately \$390,000. The part-time budget for these positions, vacation coverage, and training wages is only \$299,000.

Additional personnel need to be hired to staff a seventh position per day. Three full-time firefighters would be needed to staff this additional position working twenty-four hour shifts. If part-time firefighters were used, many more firefighters would need to be hired to draw from to cover those hours. If we are able to increase the full-time staff to fill these three positions, we continue to build a sufficient nucleus of full-time staff supported by the current part-time staff at a reasonable cost to the city.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) and OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) standards applying to fire department manning were researched for comparison. As early as 1993, NFPA attempted address the issue of fire

department manning. Research of their standards found a temporary interim amendment to NFPA 1500, Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Programs. The amendment required the assembly of at least four firefighters before initiating interior firefighting operations at a working fire. Although the intent of the amendment was to staff fire engines with four firefighters, it did allow them to arrive on different apparatus and assemble into four man crews after arrival. This allowed smaller paid, combination, and volunteer fire departments to staff their apparatus with fewer personnel and rely on multiple apparatus, volunteer members, or mutual aid departments to assemble a crew.

In May of 1995 a memorandum was issued by the U.S. Department of Labor, in response to an interpretation of an OSHA requirement for workers operating in hazardous atmospheres. Code of Federal Regulations 1910.120 requires workers entering hazardous atmospheres to enter with a "buddy" and have another team of two standing by outside of the hazard as backup. This memorandum written by James W. Stanley, Deputy Assistant Secretary U. S. Department of Labor, became known as the "two in two out" rule. This memorandum references NFPA 1500 and correlates the four persons assembled for interior firefighting to the two in two out rule. Although federal OSHA does not have jurisdiction over state and local government employees, states that have their own OSHA programs such as Ohio must adopt standards that are at least as effective as federal OSHA standards and must provide coverage for state and local government employees as effective as that provided to private sector employees.

In May of 2001 NFPA 1710 and 1720 were passed creating new staffing and response time standards for career and volunteer fire departments to strive for. NFPA

1710 applies to career and paid fire department that regularly staff their stations. NFPA 1720 applies to volunteer fire departments that normally do not staff their stations. The Aurora Fire Department is staffed twenty-four hours a day and would fall under NFPA 1710. NFPA 1710 requires the arrival of four firefighters within five minutes and a full assignment of fourteen to fifteen firefighters to arrive within nine minutes, at the scene of a structure fire (Appendix A). The initial response of four firefighters still may arrive on more than one vehicle, as may the balance of the assignment. The standard also specifies a five-minute response for EMS with a first responder or EMT crew. If your department has paramedic level service, at least two paramedics are required to be on the scene within nine minutes. The goal NFPA 1710 is to meet these response times ninety percent of the time.

In an article by Steve N. Pegram in Fire Rescue Magazine (August 2001) the author discusses the reason to have fourteen to twenty firefighters dispatched to a residential structure fire. The tasks, which should be accomplished simultaneously at the scene, include command, water supply, fire attack, primary search, ventilation, back-up line, and laddering the building; usually require teams of two each. In addition you may need a safety officer and a rapid intervention team on serious fires that are not controlled quickly.

Gary Ludwig discussed the staffing and response requirements for EMS in an article in Firehouse Magazine (July 2001). In addition to meeting the response time requirements, the initial crew must be trained to at least a first responder level and have an AED (Automatic External Defibrillator) on board. If the call is an ALS (Advanced Life Support) call, the minimum crew should consist of at least two EMTs and two

paramedics. Fire departments can use automatic or mutual aid to comply with the standard.

Recent research on the use of part-time staffing was found in an EFO paper by Tom Riemer (1998). His paper was on the use of Extra-Board (part-time) firefighters in the Anderson Township, Ohio Fire Department. These extra-board firefighters are used to supplement the full-time staff instead of paying overtime to maintain minimum staffing. Extra-board firefighters were used only to replace full-time firefighters off for vacation, sick, or other benefit hours, as opposed to other departments that regularly use part-time firefighters as part all or part of their daily staffing. In the first year of implementation this method of staffing saved the fire department over \$90,000 in overtime cost. Problems encountered with this system included opposition of the full-time staff and the availability of the extra-board firefighters. The full-time staff felt their jobs were being threatened by the extra-board firefighters and had to be reassured that they were only supplemental to reduce overtime. Riemer recommended a larger pool of extra-board firefighters to draw from because of turnover, availability, and short notice when a full-time employee would call off.

A paper on fire department staffing in Hamilton County, Ohio by Stephen Ashbrock (1996), showed several of the problems the part-time staffing problems encountered by Hamilton County fire departments are the same as the ones encountered by Aurora Fire Department. Ashbrock reported that the number of part-time firefighters in Hamilton County seemed to be too few to meet staffing needs. Ashbrock's survey showed that departments that employed at least twenty-five part-time members needed a ratio of 4.8 firefighters for each daily shift to be filled. This means

that for each daily shift available, at least 4.8 part-time employees were needed to draw from in order to be able to staff that position. He found that as many as twenty-five percent or more of part-time firefighters in smaller suburban departments belonged to multiple departments. This not only reduced their availability but also enabled firefighters to pick and chose shifts at the departments that paid the most. Multiple department membership also reduced the chance of the firefighters being available for call back in case of a large fire or other emergency. Ashbrock reported that several departments were investigating replacing part-time employees with full-time employees as a way to reduce equipment and training costs and to reduce the complexity of scheduling.

## **PROCEDURES**

Although it is obvious to most who work at the Aurora Fire Department that we do not always staff at full strength, I needed to be able to prove how often that it actually occurred. Payroll records, lieutenant's monthly reports, and station logbooks were reviewed to determine the hours that were not staffed. Employee timesheets showed how many hours were worked but often did not specify if they were on duty, responded from home to fill the station, or were at the station for training. Since January of 2001, lieutenants were required to list all staff shortages in their monthly reports so the mayor and city council would see these statistics. These reports were the most accurate tabulation of hours that were not staffed.

In order to compare our staffing to other area combination fire departments, a survey (Appendix B) was developed and sent out to twenty-one area departments. These departments were selected because their location in proximity to Aurora and similarities of employee composition, run volume, or community population. Experience from union negotiations has shown that politicians in our community need comparisons to communities they know and can relate to Aurora. Twenty surveys were returned and one was not included because the department had no full-time employees. Most surveys were returned by fax or e-mail and phone calls were placed to clarify some of the data received. The survey information was charted for comparison.

Budget and financial records were examined to determine costs for employees and funding methods. The finance director for the City of Aurora was consulted to determine future revenues available from a fire department levy. Five-year plans showing distribution of funds and budget projections were very useful.

### **Definitions**

Automatic-Aid – Responding apparatus from other fire departments are dispatched as soon as an alarm is received according to established guidelines.

EMS – Emergency Medical Service

Engine Company – A crew of firefighters assigned to respond on a fire engine

Full-time firefighter – An employee hired to respond to fire and EMS calls who receives salary and benefits and works at least 2080 hours per year.

MABAS – Mutual Aid Box Alarm System – Pre-determined mutual aid responses for large fire and disaster situations.

Mutual Aid – Rendering assistance to other municipalities or fire departments when requested.

NFPA – National Fire Protection Association – Non-profit organization that develops fire, electrical and other life safety standards.

OSHA – Occupational Safety and Health Administration – Federal agency that regulates workplace safety and health rules.

Part-time firefighter – An employee hired to respond to fire and EMS calls who works less than fifty-two hours per week and does not receive benefits.

Squad – A vehicle used to transport ill or injured persons

## **RESULTS**

The Aurora Fire Department cannot now and is not likely in the near future, to meet all the standards contained in NFPA 1710. We will be able to arrive at the scene of a working fire with six members within five minutes ninety percent of the time. However, even with automatic mutual aid and MABAS boxes, we will not be able to have the balance of the first alarm assignment arrive within nine minutes ninety percent of the time. To staff this kind of manpower ourselves would be cost prohibitive and unrealistic for approximately ten working fires we respond to each year in our city. Normal delays between municipal dispatch centers and travel distances between communities, keep automatic aid and MABAS apparatus and manpower from reaching our calls within the nine-minute time frame. Staffing of mutual aid apparatus may not always be at full strength and more apparatus may be needed to obtain the desired manpower. Our department may be able to achieve the recommended manpower by redesigning the

MABAS boxes to include more apparatus in the initial response or by having the incident commanders call for multiple alarms sooner.

When comparing the staffing of the Aurora Fire Department to other combination departments in our area, the survey showed our staffing was above average. The average minimum staffing was 3.79 compared to our minimum of five and the average maximum staffing was 5.26 compared to our maximum of six. We were above average in the categories of full-time employees and total employees and only slightly below average for part-time employees. The population of our city and our run totals were also above the average, which is consistent with other fire departments with larger staff (See Appendix C).

Our current staffing method of a combination of full-time and part-time employees is cost effective. If full-time employees replaced the two positions per day currently staffed by part-time employees, it would cost an additional \$91,650 per year for six full-time employees. However, when a third position per day is added to the staff, the cost of using full-time employees is only an additional \$22,425 per year. This cost is based on three full-time employees (\$195,273-Appendix D) versus thirteen part-time employees (\$172,848-Appendix E) needed to cover these additional hours would have to increase significantly. Currently we use twenty-six part-time employees to staff two positions per day. These two positions usually require two part-time employees each per day to staff. Employees may work the entire twenty-four hour shift but because of their full-time jobs this usually occurs only on weekends. Using four part-time employees per day from a staff of twenty-six, is a ratio of 6.5 for each daily shift.

Applying this ratio to staff an additional position per day would require an additional



thirteen part-time employees to staff an additional 8760 hours per year. Staffing this position with a full-time employee although more expensive (Appendix D), makes scheduling easier and the hours are covered by only three employees. Full-time employees cover an average of 2912 hours each per year and don't have to arrive late or leave early to accommodate their full-time job. The reason the cost of full-time is reduced when adding the additional position is because of the initial cost of turnout gear, physicals, and uniforms and the continual cost of some benefits for a greater number of part-time employees (Appendix E).

Reviewing budget plans and consulting the city's finance director supplied the necessary financial information to compare full-time and part-time employee costs. The Aurora Fire Department currently receives funding from the city's general fund and a dedicated fire levy. The current general fund budget is \$1.7 million and the fire levy generates approximately \$450,000 per year. The fire levy is 1.3 mils and runs for five years. The current levy expires on December 31, 2002 and has never been defeated when placed on the ballot for renewal. Based on the increasing tax base the finance director projects the 2003 levy will generate approximately \$650,000 per year. The additional \$200,000 could be used to pay the salaries of three additional full-time employees to staff an additional position per day.

## **DISCUSSION**

NFPA 1710 was developed to improve firefighter safety with appropriately staffed fire apparatus and timely responses to alarms. Tests have shown a fire doubles in size

every thirty seconds and responding quickly with enough manpower to effectively fight the fire before it gets out of control is the objective of this standard. Although NFPA standards are only guidelines and not law or requirements, many fire chiefs and municipal officials will choose to ignore them and use cost for their reason. In an editorial by Bill Manning in *Fire Engineering* (August 2001), the author is very critical of fire chiefs and politicians for short staffing fire apparatus and points out that just as many firefighters are killed and injured today as there were twenty-five years ago.

Chief Ashbrock (1986) cited a Dallas Fire Department study that compared the efficiency of a four-man engine company versus a three-man engine company. The study found that a four-man company could rescue a victim eighty percent faster than a three-man company. Our two-man engine at Station 2 can only have one firefighter wearing an SCBA when they arrive at the scene and cannot perform a rescue or start an interior fire attack without abandoning the pump.

Like many other standards and mandates from government, these standards do not come with funding. Unions will try to use these standards to try to negotiate minimum manning clauses into their contracts and cities will continue to complain about the cost. If a firefighter is killed or seriously injured at a fire scene and their fire department was not complying with 1710, lawyers may use this standard against that department and it's municipality. Aurora Fire Department will have to rely on automatic and mutual aid to deploy enough manpower to comply with this standard. We still must try to staff enough people for an initial response that provides a quick and safe initial fire attack or rescue crew.

The survey that compared the staffing of the Aurora Fire Department to similar area combination departments revealed surprising results. I anticipated that our staffing levels would be lower than average but the survey proved we were above average. The average minimum staffing was 3.79 and the average maximum staffing was 5.26. Our minimum staffing is five and the maximum is six. As expected the departments with higher levels of staffing generally had a larger population or more runs. Two used more full-time staff, one used more part-time staff, and one staffed less than average.

We ranked fifth in number of runs and the departments with more runs either had a higher population or large industrial parks, which increased their daytime population. Run numbers can be deceiving depending on the method used to compile them. Some departments count every piece of apparatus that responds to a call as a separate run. Some departments count training and inspections as runs. Our run totals reflect one incident per number including motor vehicle crashes with multiple victims.

The Hamilton County staffing study by Chief Ashbrock (1996) contained some of the same concerns about part-time staffing as I have stated. Multiple department membership and overall availability caused departments to carry large numbers of part-timers on their rosters to staff their daily shifts. Some departments reported as many as eighty-two part-time employees were needed to cover ten part-time shifts per day. Ashbrock questioned if these shifts could be more efficiently staffed by a fewer number of full-time employees. Many part-time employees are testing to become full-time firefighters and will lose or reduce their availability to work part-time when hired full-time. Ashbrock reported many departments limit their part-time employees to 1500 hours per year to avoid paying benefits under federal rules. Our part-time employees are limited to

106 hours in a two-week pay period to avoid paying overtime as requires by the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Another concern is fourteen of our twenty-six part-time employees belong to other fire departments. If there is an emergency or they are needed for overtime, they call off at our department causing us to run short or pay overtime. The IAFF currently has a policy against union members working or volunteering at another union fire department. Most of these employees are union members and if our full-time employees would choose to file a complaint, we could loose all fourteen at once. The rest of the part-time staff could not cover all the available hours and much of it would have to be covered by overtime.

Hiring three additional full-time employees to staff a seventh position per day would help to solve most of our staffing problems. The 1237 hours that we were short staffed in 2001 can be covered easily by the new full-time employees. Full-time employees are able to cover 2912 hours per year each minus vacation, holidays, and sick time. Part-time employees can only cover a maximum of 1500 hours per year without being eligible for benefits afforded to full-time employees. Part-time employees are obligated to their full-time jobs and we must schedule them around those jobs and any family requirements. Full-time employees are obligated to report to work on time, for the full shift or longer if needed. These additional employees would keep our staffing at six more often and enable Station 2 to have a three-man engine company most of the time.

The cost of these full-time employees may be higher, but the benefit of their availability and the number of hours they can cover makes scheduling much easier. The

estimated cost to hire an additional three full-time employees is approximately \$195,273. The estimated cost to hire additional thirteen part-time employees and staff three positions per day would be approximately \$172,848. Part-time employees will still be needed to cover all of the hours currently available to them and to cover time off for the new full-time employees.

Training for full-time and part-time firefighters can differ greatly. New full-time employees are required to be paramedics when hired and remain certified throughout their career. Part-time employees are only required to have basic EMT certification. Full-time firefighters are required to complete 240 hours of basic fire training within one year of appointment. Part-time firefighters are only required to have 120 hours of basic fire training. In addition, full-time firefighters usually receive more additional training than part-time firefighters because they have more opportunity to attend training on duty while the part-time firefighters are at their full-time jobs. Full-time employees are often compensated with overtime or time off for attending additional training, creating an incentive not available to part-time employees.

The service provided by the Aurora Fire Department to the people who live, work and visit the City of Aurora is essential to their safety. It is the responsibility of fire department administrators and city government to provide this service as efficiently and cost effectively as possible. The rescue squad is often diverted from the closest hospitals to those with open beds, sometimes as far away as Akron. The additional time to transport patients to these hospitals increases the chance of simultaneous calls requiring more manpower. The number of firefighters needed to fight a structure fire contained in NFPA 1710 is based on a 2000 square foot single family dwelling without a

basement. Most of the houses in Aurora far exceed that size and range in price from \$200,000 to \$1,000,000. In 2000, the Aurora Fire Department responded to a structure fire caused by a ruptured gas line. That structure required mutual aid from ten other fire departments to summon enough manpower to fight the fire. This structure was a single family dwelling of approximately 5000 square feet that resulted in a fire loss of \$1,200,000. The initial response of six firefighters was just enough to keep the fire from spreading to other structures until help arrived.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The most effective way to maintain adequate staffing at the Aurora Fire Department is to hire an additional three full-time firefighter paramedics. Although the cost is greater than hiring more part-time firefighters, they can cover more hours consistently with fewer employees. Research showed an additional \$200,000 would be generated from the fire levy in 2003. This amount will fund the initial cost of the three full-time employees and is projected to increase over the five-year term providing for wage and benefit increases. This staff increase will provide five full-time firefighter/paramedics on each shift and if necessary they could operate from two stations, even if no part-time firefighters were available.

These additional employees will be used to add an additional person to each shift at Station 2 increasing our daily shift strength from six to seven. This will enable Station 2 to run a three-man engine and keep the staffing level at six more often when part-

timers are not available. Scheduling will be less complicated because part-time employees who arrive late or leave early could be scheduled at either station. The current staff of twenty-six part-time employees should be maintained to cover existing shifts and time off for the three new employees. To replace these employees at this time would cost an additional \$390,546. Many of these employees have a long history of service to the department and should not be simply cast aside. The general fund budget currently provides \$299,000 for part-time employees and will only need to increase as wages increase. No increase is anticipated to cover the time off for the three new full-time employees because 1237 hours cannot be staffed currently.

In order to meet first alarm response times and manpower standards contained in NFPA 1710, I recommend the Aurora Fire Department revise its MABAS boxes. If an additional engine company is added to the first alarm, the increased manpower could arrive faster and be available if needed. Normally only one engine from a surrounding community is called on a first alarm for a working fire. Most engines arrive with a four crew of four and with a full shift on duty we would have fourteen to fifteen firefighters on the scene with two mutual aid engines.

Fire chiefs I know in other communities have spoken of similar staffing problems. The research survey showed communities with higher run numbers have compensated by hiring more full-time or a large number of part-time employees. Firefighters in surrounding communities are often anxious to be involved when a neighboring community has a fire. Involving other departments in these alarms strengthens working relationships and builds teamwork between the departments.

Inter-department training can help to build teamwork faster and work out any problems before they occur on the fire-ground.

Fire department staffing is an issue that affects every community whether they have volunteer or totally full-time staffing. NFPA standards are a helpful way for fire departments to measure their staffing to specific nationally recognized goal. When staffing shortages occur, they must be documented to help the department to provide statistics to support their claim. Until 2001, the Aurora Fire Department did not document short-staffed hours. Everyone in the department knew that we are unable to staff all available hours but the documentation did not exist to prove it. In 2001, the shift lieutenants recorded staff shortages providing statistics for comparison that were used in this research.

The finance department of the City of Aurora was a valuable source of information for funding and cost comparisons used in this research. The finance director provided information about fire levy funding, which was not available from any published information within the city. Wage and benefit information for employees was also easily obtained and contained all the percentages and costs needed to calculate the benefits. Anyone attempting to research these things for their department can save time and effort by using these resources.



**REFERENCE LIST**

- Ashbrock, S. (1996). Hamilton County Fire Department Staffing Study.  
(MPA Research Paper)
- Ludwig, G. (2001, July). How NFPA 1710 and 1720 Affect Fire Service EMS.  
Firehouse Magazine
- Manning, B. (2001, August). NFPA 1710: The New "Accountability" Standard. Fire Engineering, pg. 4
- National Fire Protection Association. (1993, April). Tentative Interim Amendment NFPA 1500 Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health. Quincy, MA
- Pegram, Steve N. (2001, July). Number Crunch: How many firefighters does it take to knock out a structure fire? FireRescue Magazine, pg. 27
- Riemer, Tom (1998, March). Extra-board Firefighters: Part-time Employees as an Alternative to Overtime. (Executive Fire Officer Research Paper, Emmitsburg MD: National Fire Academy).
- United States Department of Labor. (1995, May). Response to IDLH or Potential IDLH Atmospheres. Memorandum. Washington, D.C.

**APPENDIX A****NFPA 1710****Full Alarm Assignment**

1 – Incident Commander

1 – Chief's Aide

2 – Pump Operators

2 – Attack line

2 – Back-up line

2 – Search & Rescue

2 – Ventilation

2 – Rapid Intervention

1 – Aerial Operator

15 – Total

\*Additional Personnel that may be necessary

1 – Safety Officer

2 – Additional Rapid Intervention

1 – Support for each hand-line

**Appendix B****Manpower Survey**

1. What is the approximate population of your community or district? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How many combined fire and E.M.S. runs did you have in 2001? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many stations do you have? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How many full-time firefighters do you employ? (all ranks) \_\_\_\_\_
5. How many part-time firefighters do you employ? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What is your maximum daily shift strength? \_\_\_\_\_
7. What is your minimum daily shift strength? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Do you pay full-time firefighters overtime to maintain this? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Do part-time firefighters have a monthly minimum # of Hours? \_\_\_\_\_
10. What is the average hours/week a full-time firefighter works? \_\_\_\_\_
11. How many full-time employees are assigned to fire prevention or  
public education as their primary duty? \_\_\_\_\_
12. How many full-time employees are administrative? (Chief, A.C.) \_\_\_\_\_

Fire Department Name:

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone #:

\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C

### Staffing Survey Results

Department	Population	Runs	FTE	PTE	Total FF	Min. Shift	Max. Shift	FTE-Admin./Prev.
Mayfield Village	4000	874	7	23	30	4	4	1
Rootstown	7000	822	4	25	29	2	2	1
Independence	7100	2125	24	8	32	5	7	3
Kirtland	7500	1052	10	40	50	4	5	1
Highland Heights	8000	1600	18	12	30	4	5	3
Brimfield	8500	932	4	27	31	2	3	1
Ravenna Twp.	9900	1150	4	36	40	4	5	0
Macedonia	10000	1400	12	18	30	3	4	3
Richmond Heights	10000	1174	15	15	30	4	6	1
Bath Twp.	10000	1281	9	49	58	2	4	4
Mantua	12000	1153	7	23	30	2	4	1
Brecksville	12849	1281	15	21	36	4	5	1
Aurora	14000	1565	14	26	40	5	6	2
Cuy Twp.	14000	1818	13	40	53	4	8	3
Streetsboro	15300	1397	3	32	35	5	6	3
Tallmadge	16000	1847	11	45	56	5	6	2
Concord Twp.	17000	1477	11	41	52	5	7	2
Franklin Twp.	17000	1715	14	11	25	2	4	2
Twinsburg	19500	2161	30	18	48	6	9	5
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>219649</b>	<b>26824</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>735</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>39</b>
Average	11560	1412	11.84	26.84	38.68	3.79	5.26	2

**APPENDIX D**

## First Year Full-time Firefighter Cost

<b>BENEFIT</b>	<b>COST</b>
WAGES	\$39,755.00
PENSION	\$5,386.80
MEDICARE	\$576.45
WORKER'S COMP	\$1,590.20
HOSPITALIZATION	\$12,600.00
DENTAL	\$1,600.00
VISION	\$400.00
LIFE INSURANCE	\$200.00
	<hr/>
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$62,108.45
 <b>ADDITIONAL COSTS</b>	
PHYSICAL EXAM	\$633.00
POLYGRAPH	\$50.00
TURNOUT GEAR	\$1,300.00
UNIFORMS	\$1,000.00
	<hr/>
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$2,983.00
 <b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	 <b>\$65,091.45</b>

**APPENDIX E**

## First Year Part-time Firefighter Cost

<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Avg. Wages	\$10,219.00
FICA	\$633.57
Medicare	\$148.17
Worker's Comp	\$408.76
Life Insurance	\$86.53
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$11,496.03</b>
<b>ADDITIONAL COSTS</b>	
Physical Exam	\$200.00
Polygraph	\$50.00
Turnout Gear	\$1,300.00
Uniforms	\$250.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,800.00</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>13296.03</b>









**UNDERSTANDING PART-TIME STAFFING ISSUES  
IN THE FIRE SERVICE**

**EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT**

**BY: Nathan P. Broman  
Deerfield Township Fire Rescue  
Deerfield Township, Ohio**

**An applied research project submitted to the National Fire Academy  
as part of the Executive Fire Officer Program**

**December 2000**

*Appendices Not Included. Please visit the Learning Resource Center on the Web at <http://www.lrc.fema.gov/> to learn how to obtain this report in its entirety through Interlibrary Loan.*

## ABSTRACT

The problem was that communities underestimated the negative ramifications of choosing part-time employees in lieu of full-time personnel for their fire department staffing.

The purpose of this research project was to identify the benefits and drawbacks associated with the utilization of part-time staffing. The evaluative research method was utilized to answer the following questions:

1. What benefits can be realized by utilizing part-time staffing?
2. What drawbacks are commonly experienced when utilizing part-time staffing?
3. What are the administrative/management issues related to part-time staffing ?
4. What types of costs can be encountered when utilizing part-time personnel?
5. What are the issues related to the part-time employment market?

After learning about the research project in the Executive Development course at the National Fire Academy, the topic of understanding the part-time staffing issues was selected, researched, and evaluated. A literature review, a local and regional survey, and a follow-up interview were helpful in documenting the issues for evaluation. Recommendations were made after the information was analyzed, and then the research report was completed.

The results clearly showed the benefits and drawbacks of the part-time system, as well as the common administrative challenges routinely faced by departments using part-time staffing, the types of costs encountered, and the issues related to the part-time employment market.

The recommendations made included the balancing of the full-time and part-time staffing levels to the available resources of the community, the continued evaluation and monitoring of the part-time employment pool, and the preparation of a full-time hiring list in case short-notice hiring was needed to deal with manpower shortages.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	<b>PAGE</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>LITERATURE REVIEW</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>PROCEDURES</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>RESULTS</b> .....	<b>19</b>
<b>DISCUSSION</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b> .....	<b>32</b>
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	<b>34</b>
<b>APPENDIX A (FIRE CHIEF SURVEY ON PART-TIME EMPLOYEES)</b> .....	<b>35</b>
<b>APPENDIX B (SURVEY MAILING LIST)</b> .....	<b>39</b>
<b>APPENDIX C (SURVEY RESULTS)</b> .....	<b>42</b>
<b>APPENDIX D (PART-TIME STAFFING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS)</b> .....	<b>52</b>

## **INTRODUCTION**

The problem is that communities underestimate the negative ramifications of choosing part-time employees in lieu of full-time personnel for their fire department staffing.

The purpose of this research project was to identify the benefits and drawbacks associated with the utilization of part-time staffing. The evaluative research method was utilized to answer the following questions:

1. What benefits can be realized by utilizing part-time staffing?
2. What drawbacks are commonly experienced when utilizing part-time staffing?
3. What are the administrative/management issues related to part-time staffing ?
4. What types of costs can be encountered when utilizing part-time personnel?
5. What are the issues related to the part-time employment market?

The procedures used to complete this research project included a literature review, a survey of local and regional fire service administrators, and a follow-up interview with a fire chief who wrote a master's degree paper on the subject of part-time staffing. This research project directly impacted the Deerfield Township Fire Rescue Department because it faced the challenge of evaluating the benefits and drawbacks of both part-time and full-time staffing.

## **BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE**

For the past ten to fifteen years, municipalities have incorporated the use of part-time employees for providing both fire and emergency medical services to their jurisdictions (Bennett, 1995). Problems related to using part-time staffing have arisen, and existing issues have become increasingly more difficult to manage. The question about when it is advantageous to continue utilizing only part-time employees, or when it is advantageous to hire additional full-time staff is being considered in many organizations, including the Deerfield Township Fire Rescue Department (DTFRD). Some organizations may consider a total switch to full-time personnel,

although the fiscal impact is usually cost-prohibitive. The use of part-time staffing has worthwhile benefits, but also has several drawbacks to the organizations that use this type of system.

The DTFRD was created in October of 1998, after the split of a joint fire district. As a new department with much to accomplish, priorities had to be set related to the management of the organization, and fiscal limitations played a significant role in how this new organization was structured. A replacement tax levy was approved by the citizens at the same funding level as the previous joint fire district levy. Although eight full-time personnel were hired to manage the organization and operations of the department, all of the remaining front-line staffing positions were filled with part-time employees. The Township Trustees believed that the department could not afford to have additional full time personnel, or be an entirely career department. The part-time staffing impact was initially quite positive, and this newly formed department created a significant draw of qualified and talented personnel. The organization has grown in experience and confidence, and has developed a healthy reputation for quality service to the community. During the time since the organizational startup, however, some common issues associated with part-time organizations began to surface. These challenges continued to escalate, and have caused the fire administration to re-evaluate the current staffing plan, and look toward alternative staffing solutions.

The Trustees have agreed to revisit the staffing issue, and the problem of choosing between full-time and part-time staffing is a serious issue for Deerfield Township. The solution may result in a choice between the fiscal impact and the level of quality service, which are both important to the community. This research provides a summary of the many issues involved in the problem, which can result in continued, effective decision making for the community's future. This research project will also be significant to DTFRD because the many related issues

have an immediate and direct impact on the daily operation of the department. The primary issue that directly impacts the department is the staffing. Since most employees want a full-time job, DTFRD could face a large reduction in employees if they learn that the community will wait to add, or will likely never add, full-time employees. The probable future impact of these increasingly challenging issues may be a lowered ability of the organization to continue providing quality service to the community. The research is also important to our personnel because it documents the justification for potential hiring of full-time staffing, which is of utmost interest to the employees. Likewise, the Trustees need hard research, pertinent data, and a factual foundation to justify the expenditure of the taxpayer's revenue.

This research project is related to the Executive Development course because it involves issues similar to the class topics of managing change, researching solutions, and taking leadership toward continual improvement. A fire executive must use the information from the class topics like effective research, management, and leadership to help solve the issues within their own organization. The process of researching an issue, which was learned in the Executive Development class, was utilized to identify the factors involved in part-time staffing issues that affect our organization. This research project has directly impacted the DTFRD because, as a newly created department, it currently faces the challenge of evaluating the cost-benefit ratio between part-time and full-time staffing.

In summary, this research project was invaluable to the DTFRD because, after two years as a new, start-up organization, it faced the decision of choosing between continuing part-time staffing or adding more full-time staffing. The research project helped provide the foundation necessary to make an informed decision on future staffing needs.



## LITERATURE REVIEW

Research was conducted both at the local and regional level in southwest Ohio, near Cincinnati, and at the National Fire Academy Learning Resource Center (LRC) in Emmitsburg, Maryland. The evaluative research methodology included a review and study of related written work, an interview with an author who completed a master's degree paper on related portions of this research, as well as the use of a survey instrument with regional distribution. The research project is directly related to the Executive Development course, because learning to solve issues with the available resources is part of the class. The relationship is complimentary because not only was the proper process of researching learned by personal involvement, but the topic directly relates to the part-time staffing issues being faced at the DTFRD. Following through with research on a current issue also meets the course objectives of demonstrating executive leadership.

### **Research Question 1-Benefits of Part-time Staffing**

Several resources related to part-time staffing were available. Although very few sources documented multiple benefits of part-time staffing, all of the benefits that were discussed were significant. The primary benefits noted were lower costs for salaries, fringe benefits, etc. (Ashbrock, 1998). In addition, Ashbrock (1998) elaborated by noting that part-time employees have become the norm in many industries as employers seek to cut costs of health care insurance and other fringe benefits. As local fire service agencies began to review the part-time staffing system, it was noted that communities have experienced no reduction in their need for firefighters (Ashbrock, 1998). Lipe (1990) concluded that part-time staffing is a viable alternative for administrators who are faced with shrinking budgets and limited personnel involvement. In formerly volunteer departments, a quicker response would be achieved by an all career department; however, because of the expense, a totally full-time operation was promptly

and clearly ruled out (Silvati, 1991). Positive implications will include on-station response, cost-efficiency, political leverage, and better operational flexibility (Lipe, 1990). Communication among personnel is easier than ever before with the use of pagers. The personal pager has allowed notification of many persons at many locations simultaneously, and the belt-worn pager has become the standard means of alerting firefighters (Ashbrock, 1998). Another benefit, from a differing perspective, is the use of part-time employees for specific issue resolution, such as managing overtime costs.

A system, which integrated part-time employees, called Extra Board firefighters, was determined to be the best alternative and was officially implemented in 1996. Under the Extra Board system, fully-trained firefighter/paramedics were assigned to a shift, but only worked when the department was faced with paying full-time firefighters overtime to maintain minimum staffing levels (Riemar, 1998).

When faced with inadequate manpower challenges, including the need for additional personnel due to community growth and an increased call volume, we have to work on a solution. Part-time staffing may be an alternative choice when the costs of full-time personnel are considered. One thing is for sure, there have been significant changes in the manner in which fire departments in the county are organized and the staffing that goes along with changes in the organization (Ashbrock, 1998).

### **Research Question 2-Drawbacks to Part-time Staffing**

There were many noted part-time staffing drawbacks identified in the research. The disadvantages are more subtle; employees under such a system of staffing are transient and may lack dedication and loyalty to a particular department (Ashbrock, 1998). The disadvantages of the part-time system manifest themselves in scheduling, reliability, competency, and training

(Ludwick, 1996). A bidding war causes nearly constant migration of the part-time member pool, a phenomenon most often observed during summer months and especially on weekends (Ashbrock, 1998). In addition, firefighter fatigue was a noted issue. Moving from one 24-hour shift to a 12 or 24-hour subsequent shift raises concerns about fitness for continued emergency response (Ashbrock, 1998). One firefighter was found with five department memberships in two counties (Ashbrock, 1998). Other drawbacks were identified. Departments employing such members, especially the larger employers, report high costs of maintaining equipment and training for these part-time members (Ashbrock, 1998). Scheduling difficulties, employee competency, and employee inconsistencies are negative implications an organization should expect (Lipe, 1990). Some pay no premium or incentive pay for required EMS continuing education, but require continued certification for employment, deferring to their employee's other departments for funding such obligations (Ashbrock, 1998).

Departments using this type employee report the following observations:

there is a migration of employees from department to department based on hourly wages, increasing multiple department memberships on the part of their employees, seasonal shortages (summer time is harder to cover), day of the week shortages (weekends are harder to cover), migration to departments with newer facilities or better equipment, or partially funded health insurance plans, etc. Many report increasing difficulty in obtaining and maintaining a roster of qualified employees to fill the number of part-time positions they need to fill on a daily basis (Ashbrock, 1998).

At the very least, members with multiple department part-time employment may not be available to your department in an emergency that is area-wide (Ashbrock, 1998). The increasing technical nature of the firefighter's job, reflected in increased state requirements for certification

for firefighting and especially EMS, has been included in the explanation for the decreased availability of volunteers (Ashbrock, 1998).

### **Research Question 3-Administrative and/or Management Issues**

Departments with a greater number of emergency medical service runs are more often staffed with paid members (Brudney and Duncombe, 1992). Chiefs that operate under the 1500-hour rule report that their need for part-time firefighters has grown faster than the number of qualified and available part-time employees (Ashbrock, 1998). Today we see studies being conducted by departments using 40-60 part-time members to evaluate the benefit of reducing equipment and training costs and administrative overhead by replacing these with 6-9 full-time members (Ashbrock, 1998). Although the part-time system appeared advantageous initially, turnover required high maintenance (Wright, 1998). Other problems seemed to appear. There was limited continuity on shifts (Wright, 1998). Ashbrock (1998) summarized Lipe (1990) by reporting that an overwhelming number of administrators are positive about part-time, despite disadvantages in personnel scheduling, reliability, competency, and training. One consistent theme was noted throughout the literature; the majority of part-time employees want full-time employment in the firefighting profession (Ludwick, 1996).

Part-time employees have demonstrated decreasing loyalty, except where they anticipate career employment opportunities in the near future....additionally, training is often duplicative but necessary because of operational and equipment differences between departments. Members report, and departments verify, problems with members remembering where they are and what procedures are in place on any given day. When this problem is realized it is frequently during emergency operations (Ashbrock, 1998).

#### **Research Question 4-Types of Costs**

There appear to be hidden overhead costs associated with using part-time employees. The administrative time and effort required to ensure adequate staffing by part-time members is reported as high and increasing (Ashbrock, 1998). Many departments are researching a threshold of when converting part-time employees to full-time employees makes economic and functional sense (Ashbrock, 1998). Incentive pay is given for additional specialized training such as driver, apparatus operators, and paramedic (Reilage, 1993). Incentives were offered--an annual bonus dollar amount, uniform and clothing allowances were instituted (Ashbrock, 1998). An additional cost was the administrative overhead cost. This maintenance was in the area of training, equipment, and expense of the hiring process (Wright, 1998). Included are concerns about increasing costs of part-time employees to a point of equivalency to full-time employee's hourly wages (Ashbrock, 1998). Being examined are reduction in administrative overhead and headache, reduction of equipment and training costs, creation of an employee with department loyalty, and employees that are more likely to be able to be recalled in a disaster (Ashbrock, 1998).

#### **Research Question 5-Adequate Employment Pool**

As the number of departments using part-time employees increases, the pool of competent and willing part-time employees to cover the area demand for such employees is reported to have decreased (Ashbrock, 1998). It has become a reality that there are far more part-time positions, than qualified applicants (Bennett, 1995). Many report increasing difficulty in obtaining and maintaining a roster of qualified employees to fill the number of part-time positions they need to fill on a daily basis (Ashbrock, 1998). The recruitment of viable candidates will be accomplished through a classified newspaper ad placed in the local newspaper...the department would also evaluate entry-level testing procedures (Ludwick, 1996).

Departments are employing as many as 82 part-time members to fill ten, 12-hour positions per day (Ashbrock, 1998). The largest employers of part-time firefighters had multiple department membership percentages ranging from 12% to as high as 66%, with an average multiple department membership for the 12 such departments of 36% (Ashbrock, 1998). An average for the departments that employ over 25 part-time members is 4.8 firefighters on the roster for every shift to be filled (Ashbrock, 1998). Scheduling for these positions has become a nightmare and departments report frequent short-notice vacancies -- particularly on weekends in the summer (Ashbrock, 1998). Fire chiefs express concern about the extent of reliance on part-time members -- there seem to be too few to meet staffing demands (Ashbrock, 1998). Ability to call back off-duty employees in a reasonable time could be a challenge in those departments (Ashbrock, 1998). Some types of part-time systems had specialized problems. This daytime non-availability (of on-call-paid personnel) has severely hampered the departments capability to make timely, safe responses to citizens for help (Ludwick, 1996).

### **Interview Information**

The interview was a follow-up to a 1998 master's paper on the part-time system in the region. The interview was conducted to document any continuation or changes in the part-time staffing issue, and to assure current information for the research project. Chief Steve Ashbrock was interviewed on November 2, 2000, at the Madeira-Indian Hill Fire Headquarters. The interview questions in Appendix D were asked to provide an up-to-date picture of the current status of the part-time system in southwest Ohio. This interview influenced the project by giving a current synopsis of the part-time system, as well as any additional thoughts not included in the paper.

Chief Ashbrock was asked about the benefits of part-time staffing. He said that another often unmentioned benefit of utilizing part-time staff was to have personnel available to choose

from if the department did wish to upgrade to full-time staff (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000). In addition, he mentioned that there are also secondary benefits to utilizing part-time employees. He reported that many good ideas are transported with personnel who have multiple fire department memberships (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000).

When asked in the follow-up interview about any part-time trends since researching the master's paper, Chief Ashbrock reported a continued difficulty in filling shifts with qualified employees (personal communication, November 2, 2000). He also noted that an additional issue not included in the research might be the higher apparatus wear and tear costs from multiple drivers with differing driving habits (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000). He also mentioned that if departments use part-time personnel only for overtime fill-in, they may see associated problems because of infrequent or inconsistent use of those personnel (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000). Further, discussion regarding the impact of the part-time employees who work at multiple departments for up to 120 hours per week led to concern about the family impact from lack of balance (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000). Furthermore, there seems to be an increased number of married part-time personnel, many with children (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000). When asked in the follow-up interview about any additional drawbacks of using part-time personnel, Chief Ashbrock noted that making discipline effective with a part-time employee is very difficult when they can simply leave due to high employment demand (personal communication, November 2, 2000).

We also discussed that situational ethics and ethics of convenience often come into play. Besides the reduced loyalty, there is a reduced level of responsibility (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000). Chief Ashbrock stated that employees seem to have no

integrity (personal communication, November 2, 2000). We have to let them go to their full-time jobs when they are offered overtime, instead of holding them accountable for their obligations (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000). He stated that the two predominant occasions when part-time employees are actually very productive are during times of promotion or prospective full-time hiring (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000). We want these employees to stay, and many administrators string them along with promises of full-time jobs (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000). Later, we are upset when they move on (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000).

When asked in the follow-up interview about any additional costs relating to using part-time personnel, Chief Ashbrock noted that there was a narrowing savings associated with the use of part-time employees (personal communication, November 2, 2000). The interview with Chief Ashbrock confirmed that, with regard to the 1500-hour rule, the challenge of using part-time employees was the furlough of personnel in the late months of the year (personal communication, November 2, 2000). Filling these shifts normally covered by the furloughed employee caused overtime, or the need for additional part-time employees (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000). He stated there were other part-time challenges such as having routine shift call-offs, pay disparities, disjointed loyalties, administrative overhead, training inconsistencies, and a decreased market of qualified candidates from which to select (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000).

### **Summary**

In summary, the literature review, survey data, and interview results indicate the benefits and many challenging facets of utilizing part-time staffing. The findings and observations of the authors in the literature review influenced the project by providing a broad base of findings that showed the quantity and magnitude of challenges. They are an accurate, trustworthy



representation of the problems faced by communities that use part-time staffing. The information from these authors will be very helpful in providing community leaders an understanding of the scope of the problems faced by fire departments that use part-time staffing.

## PROCEDURES

The procedure used in preparing this research paper began with learning about research projects by participating in the Executive Development course at the National Fire Academy (NFA). A topic related to an on-going issue within the researcher's department was selected. The most prominent issue being faced in the DTFRD involved the challenges related to utilizing part-time staffing. The problem is that communities are underestimating the negative ramifications of choosing part-time employees in lieu of full-time personnel for fire department staffing. After the process of selecting and defining the specific problem was completed, the purpose of the project was defined. The purpose of the project was to identify the benefits and drawbacks associated with the utilization of part-time staffing, so that informed decisions about the best staffing choices could be made by community leaders. An extensive review of the related literature was then started after the evaluative research methodology was selected for the project. The literature review was completed by reviewing related articles, books, and Executive Fire Officer Program research papers at the LRC. In addition, a 1998 master's degree paper on the same issue was secured and reviewed. This extensive documentation was followed up by an interview in November of 2000 with the author of the master's paper, Chief Steve Ashbrock of the Madeira-Indian Hill Fire Department. Finally, a written survey was circulated to 56 local and regional fire chiefs in southwest Ohio to document the impact of the issue in our region. This survey information was critical, because it allowed the evaluation of current data with previous data secured by other researchers with the same or similar issue. Responses were

received from 31 of the 56 departments. The results from these surveys were tabulated in a spreadsheet format by documenting the responses from the administrators that replied to the survey. The results were then easily analyzed. The results of the analysis were then evaluated with regard to how they compared to others' findings. Recommendations were then compiled, and the report was finalized.

### **Interview Procedures**

Chief Steve Ashbrock of the Madeira-Indian Hill Fire Department was contacted prior to the survey distribution. A request was made to include interview data with the research literature to provide up-to-date information on the status of the part-time staffing issue. The interview was scheduled, and was completed after the surveys were distributed. A listing of the questions in Appendix D was faxed two days in advance, with a follow-up confirmation of the interview appointment. The interview lasted about one hour, and was quite beneficial to the research.

### **Limitations**

The research was limited to surveys from 31 responding departments, the written sources from the master's degree paper and LRC resources, the effects of the part-time system in our own organization, as well as the personal follow-up interview with the fire chief who authored the master's paper on part-time personnel. Of the 31 responding departments, several were able to provide only limited data, because they had already converted to only full-time staffing. In fact, only 17 of the 31 responding agencies used part-time employees.

### **Definitions**

balance – the status of equilibrium among family, fire service work, daily priorities, rest, and recreation

call-offs – a situation where a scheduled employee cancels an obligation to work for a pending shift, often on short notice

combination department – a fire department organization that is comprised of a ratio or mix of part-time and full-time personnel

employee migration – a phenomenon where employees will call off, call in sick, or refuse to work for an employer that they have previously scheduled to work with, for the purpose of working at another employer for a higher wage

employment pool – the available, qualified candidates or prospects for fire service employment in a specified region or area

extra-board firefighter – a type of part-time employee that is substituted in lieu of full-time personnel only for overtime shifts to reduce excessive overtime costs; this may be the sole type of part-time employee used by a department

fatigue – the decreased mental and physical alertness, and increased physical tiredness from excessive work (at other fire service employment)

fringe benefits – employment benefits, such as pension contributions, health insurance, etc. that usually accompany full-time employment

full time – an employment status where the employee is paid a salary and benefits for working a designated number of hours annually

furlough – a temporary discontinuation of workable hours or layoff from fire service hours for the purpose of controlling the maximum number of annually worked hours; employees are typically reinstated after the first of the year

joint fire district – a combined fire service organization representing two or more government bodies, usually for the purpose of shared resources and efficiencies

on-call-paid personnel – personnel who standby for emergency calls, and are paid by the number of calls to which they respond, as opposed to an hourly rate

overhead – the fixed costs, hard costs, labor costs, and/or administrative costs involved in running an organization or business

pager – a one-way, alpha-numeric communication device capable of receiving messages and dispatches to individuals or groups of personnel

part time – an employment status where the employee is paid an hourly rate with no or few benefits

shift – grouped number of hours that employees work at one time, usually in 12 or 24-hour continuously-worked periods of time

staffing – personnel assigned at a fire station to cover emergency responses and daily duties in a fire department

the 1500-hour Rule – A state law, found in the Ohio Revised Code and possibly other state statutes, requiring paid benefits to any employee hired with the expectation to work beyond 1500 hours in a calendar year

Trustees – elected public officials responsible for the Township form of local community government

turnover – the seemingly continual hiring and replacement of personnel who leave employment for other jobs, or other selected reasons

### **Summary**

In summary, the evaluative research process included the examination of the historical findings of other researchers, the tabulation of responses to survey questions to administrators in the local area and region, the analysis of the items researched, and the follow-up interview comments that provided current information on this staffing issue. The evaluation of the information ensued, and recommendations were then compiled and documented.

## RESULTS

### **Research Question 1- Benefits of Part-time Staffing**

The literature research showed that the primary benefits noted were lower costs for salaries, fringe benefits, etc. (Ashbrock, 1998). Part-time employment is the normal means to cut the costs of health care insurance and other fringe benefits (Ashbrock, 1998). Keeping these costs down was the primary factor in the utilization of part-time personnel. Another noted benefit associated with part-time staffing was to have personnel available to choose from if the department did wish to upgrade to full-time staff (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000). Hiring costs can be significant, and reduction in these costs may be offset if you have knowledge of the firefighter's background and character (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000). Communication for scheduling and response purposes is easier than before with alpha-numeric pagers (Ashbrock, 1998). Volunteers are no longer available or are less frequently available due to training requirements and job obligations (Ashbrock, 1998). When departments wanted to improve their results by using part-time personnel to reduce their full-time employee overtime, those results clearly indicated that the system was effective in controlling overtime expenditures (Riemar, 1998). Part-time employment is an alternative solution to volunteer or full-time staffing. Ashbrock (1998) summarized Lipe (1990) by stating chiefs are positive about part-time, despite the disadvantages in personnel scheduling, reliability, competency, and training.

In addition, the survey results indicated a value in using personnel from their community, even if it meant hiring less qualified personnel. The survey also confirmed, in some cases, that full time personnel were not always the only desirable option, and that part-time personnel were still a viable alternative for staffing. Some chiefs preferred a combination department because a balanced mix allows local people to remain involved. One chief said part-time employees are

more cost-effective and often can be highly professional. One response was that having part-time personnel would always be important to have a pool of personnel from which to select full-time personnel. One chief noted that part-time personnel have a lot to offer. Some were specific, noting that a 50-50% mix would be the preferred balance. Again, some said there is a place for part-timers.

The interview results revealed that there was a benefit in being able to monitor the progress and performance of a part-time employee for future full-time hiring (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000). In addition, the interview showed that part-time employees that do migrate from department to department tend to bring new ideas from other departments, which may result in improved operations (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000). Another comment made by Chief Ashbrock in the interview, which could be deemed as a benefit, was that part-time employees tend not to be involved in labor unionization (personal communication, November 2, 2000). Caution was made, however, that as the reliance on the part-time system increases, the possibility of unionized part-time personnel increases as well (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000).

### **Research Question 2-Drawbacks to Part-time Staffing**

The literature research showed that the disadvantages of the part-time system include scheduling reliability, competency, and training concerns, including scheduling challenges, employee retention, and high hiring process costs (Wright, 1998). Commitment was low because most employees work at more than one department (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000). Working at more than one department means they may not be available in the other community for a crisis because they may already be working somewhere else (Ashbrock, 1998). Additional issues included poor employee dedication and loyalty, and fatigue from working multiple hours on multiple departments (Ashbrock, 1998).

The 1500-hour rule limits the maximum workable hours, so more employees are needed (Ashbrock, 1998). The high costs of maintaining equipment and providing continual training are ongoing (Ashbrock, 1998). On some occasions, training costs are diverted from other departments who won't pay for classes, causing an unfair burden on the departments that do pay for courses (Ashbrock, 1998). There is low productivity reported from supervisors, migration of employees to whichever department pays more, bidding wars over pay, seasonal shortages, short-notice vacancies, and day of the week shortages (Ashbrock, 1998). Departments have to employ large numbers of personnel to have an adequate pool of workers to cover daily shifts (Ashbrock, 1998). Incentives are often required to attract and keep quality employees, such as an annual bonus, uniform allowances, and in some cases limited insurance coverage (Ashbrock, 1998). There has been limited continuity on shifts reported (Wright, 1998). Finally, employees are not sure of procedures because they work at so many places (Ashbrock, 1998).

The survey revealed that there were many challenges with the part-time system of staffing, and many chiefs preferred full-time staffing. Turnover of personnel is a major problem, which affects crew performance and reliable staffing. One of the primary issues identified was dependability. Several chiefs noted that using full time would be more efficient on cost, dependability, and operating as a team. They commented that full time is the only dependable way to staff. The level of experience, training, and reliability of career employees exceeds that of part-timers. Most chiefs noted that full-time staffing is more reliable. They noted that there were less personnel issues with full-time staffing. One chief agreed that full-time staffing would make the department more stable and more responsible. One comment stated that with full-time staffing, there was better control over personnel. With full-time personnel, scheduling issues would be greatly reduced, and the professional standards would enhance the service we provide. One chief claimed that full-time staffing resulted in less cost, and more efficiency.

The interview information showed a continued pattern of difficulty in filling shifts with qualified personnel (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000). Employees either work too much, often with required overtime premiums, or too little to fill the needed shifts (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000). The interview results also indicated that families are impacted when employees work too much, sometimes over 120 hours per week (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000). Chief Ashbrock reported seeing more part-time personnel who were married with children (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000). The training inconsistencies noted by other authors were confirmed. Also, the reduced loyalty discussed among other authors was tied to the reduction in responsibility taken by the individuals who work in the part-time system (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000).

### **Research Question 3-Administrative and/or Management Issues**

The literature research showed that departments with more EMS runs tend to have more full-time staff (Ashbrock, 1998). There is a reported decrease in the number of volunteers that are available for staffing (Ashbrock, 1998). The 1500-hour rule affects the operations (Ashbrock, 1998). Many studies are being conducted involving moving from part-time to full-time (Ashbrock, 1998). Although it appeared advantageous initially, the turnover required high maintenance (Wright, 1998). There is a concern about limited continuity on shifts (Wright, 1998). An overwhelming number of administrators are positive about part-time, despite disadvantages in personnel scheduling, reliability, competency, and training (Lipe, 1990). The majority of part-time employees want full-time jobs in the fire service (Ludwick, 1996). Loyalty to a department is decreased, except when there is a possibility of a full-time job (Ashbrock, 1998). Training is often duplicative, but necessary, because of different operational procedures in the many departments these employees work (Ashbrock, 1998). Employees are often not sure



of the right procedures on a given day because of working at multiple departments; this usually shows up on the scene of an emergency, when it matters most (Ashbrock, 1998).

The survey results indicated multiple reasons for employee turnover. The individual responses to the question about why their employees left are noted in Appendix C, and include: four resigned due to lack of time; four were terminated; they want to work part-time at another department; they left for career positions; probationary release; time; full-time employment; 10 left for full-time jobs for local departments or full-time promotion; some left for full-time jobs that were out of our region; family commitments/time; time commitment; our pay is too low; schedule incompatibility; one unhappy with his loss of rank in organization; schedule conflicts; unhappy because unable to get a full-time job; more money; better chance to move toward full-time; some released for attendance problems and not maintaining in-service training; to get better paying jobs is the main reason; virtually all to take full-time positions; to other full-time jobs; one left because of not being hired full-time; higher wages; full-time employment. There were, however, a few reasons the employees moved on that may not have been related to the part-time staffing issue. One left for medical reasons. One left for military service. Two employees retired, one went into medical school, and some secured full-time employment outside of the fire service.

A noted item from the interview was the realization of situational ethics. Part-time employees are placed in dilemmas that test their ethical foundations. If they are offered part-time hours at an agency that pays more, they often choose the higher paying job despite their obligation to work at the department they first promised their time (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000). Another significant issue identified by the interview was that discipline is difficult to impose because employees have so many options that the penalties won't really impact them because they can work as many hours as they want for other

departments time (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000). The interview also confirmed the often unrealized administrative overhead required with the part-time system of staffing time (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000).

#### **Research Question 4-Types of Costs**

The literature research showed that recruitment costs from newspaper ads, hiring costs like pre-employment testing (Ludwick, 1996), background checks, hiring or pay incentives (Reilage, 1993), partial health insurance, training, turnout gear, and increasing wages were among the costs often not considered when weighing the difference between full-time and part-time employment options (Ashbrock, 1998). Overhead cost in administrative time is high and increasing with time (Ashbrock, 1998). Competition among employers over wages often times causes employees to cancel work with one employer, only to work for the department paying more, especially during summer time and weekends (Ashbrock, 1998). There is an awareness that many departments are researching a threshold of when the conversion to full-time from part-time makes economical and functional sense (Ashbrock, 1998). Continual hiring requires continual time and resources for background checks. Wage differentials are commonly offered as an incentive for cross-trained personnel, drivers, apparatus operators, and paramedics (Reilage, 1993). Training costs, equipment costs, and the expense of the hiring process are not usually factored into the overall cost comparison between full-time and part-time options. Chiefs are worried about recall availability and the inability to create employee loyalty (Ashbrock, 1998).

The survey revealed several types of hidden costs with the use of part-time staffing. One type included hiring costs, such as interview time, background checks, polygraphs, medical physicals, physical ability testing, processing forms, etc. Another type was administrative overhead, such as supervisory time covering open shifts on the schedule. There were some

direct costs, such as more regularly authorized overtime from vacancies related to high turnover. One chief reported that his overtime expenses from having to use full-time personnel to directly cover part-time vacancies and to answer recalls because of part-time shortages amounted to \$124,000 this year. Training costs were also noted. Additional costs were for providing more uniforms, alpha-numeric communication pagers, alerting pagers, turnout gear, SCBA facepieces, extra gloves, hoods, helmets, accountability tags, and station supplies. There were also reported costs from insurance-related issues like increased vehicle damage from more accidents, higher insurance policy premiums, an accidental death and disability policy for employees, and more on-duty injury claims with the Bureau of Worker's Compensation.

During the interview, Chief Ashbrock did provide an updating comment that three local departments had made a move toward a higher percentage of career personnel (personal communication, November 2, 2000). The Forest Park, Sycamore, and Miami Township fire departments in the region all chose to increase their full-time staff (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000). Finally, Chief Ashbrock reported in the interview that the savings from using part-time staffing was narrowing (personal communication, November 2, 2000).

#### **Research Question 5-Adequate Employment Pool**

The literature research showed that the number of fire departments using part-time personnel is increasing (Ashbrock, 1998). Several departments who are switching to full-time personnel are hiring from the same personnel pool, causing the number of available personnel in the pool to decrease and the competition for personnel to increase (Ashbrock, 1998). If one part-time employee has three department memberships and stops working any part-time hours after being hired full-time, the shortage occurs more quickly. This results in increasing difficulty in covering shifts. Employee fatigue is a serious concern among chiefs, since so many employees

work at more than one department. They cannot usually work more than 1500 hours for any one employer, so they work for multiple employers to earn enough money to pay for their health insurance. Chiefs also report a migration of employees based on hourly wages, increasing department memberships, seasonal shortages, day of the week shortages, migration to departments with newer facilities or better equipment, and to those with partial health insurance (Ashbrock, 1998). Many departments can't fill their daily roster with the pool of available workers (Ashbrock, 1998). Some departments employ high numbers to allow for enough coverage to fill ten 12-hour positions per day (Ashbrock, 1998). Scheduling can be a nightmare with short-notice vacancies, particularly on nights and weekends when part-time employees want to exercise their social time (Ashbrock, 1998). Chiefs in the area are concerned about the reliance on part-time members because there are too few to meet staffing demands (Ashbrock, 1998). The amount of the overhead administrative time is high and increasing (Ashbrock, 1998). It is hard to find high productivity among employees because many employees are eager to work hard only when there is a chance or likelihood of becoming full-time (Reilage, 1993). Another issue related to the employment pool involves on-call-paid personnel. The daytime non-availability of personnel has severely hampered their departments capability to make timely, safe responses to citizens for help (Ludwick, 1996). 4.8 firefighters are on the roster for every shift to be filled (Ashbrock, 1998). Several departments are examining proposals to go totally full-time (Ashbrock, 1998). Callback availability is also limited because the resource that is being relied upon is already deployed somewhere else (Ashbrock, 1998).

The survey results supported the literature findings. Of those that responded to the question, 17 of 18 administrators thought there was a shortage of part-time personnel. The survey results documented that through the previous 12 months, 124 personnel had left these departments for various reasons, as noted in Appendix C. A total of 17 departments answered

the question about multiple department memberships. The results indicated that 304 personnel work at a minimum of one other fire department, and of those 304, over 119 work at more than one other fire department besides their reporting department (or three or more total department memberships). 16 of 18 departments, or 88.8%, were concerned about firefighter fatigue. Nine departments had hired employees that were less than qualified, while 9 did not. In total, the 17 departments had tried to hire 274 personnel, and were only able to hire 177 personnel. This was despite having 516 candidate applications, of which about 229 were qualified.

During the interview, Chief Ashbrock commented that when part-time employees reach the 1500-hour threshold of hours worked in the year, they are furloughed until the next year (S. Ashbrock, personal communication, November 2, 2000). This causes the employee to search for other opportunities, and may result in the employee not returning for shifts at the beginning of the new year.

### **Summary of Results**

There are many issues, but they involve much more than just cost. There is an apparent concern about quality, scheduling, turnover, employee shortages, fatigue, and loyalty (Ashbrock, 1998). The process of reviewing prior research, initiating a current, regional survey, documenting the survey data, and tallying the survey responses, resulted in a fair and current assessment of the part-time system in this region. The results indicated multiple challenges with the part-time staffing system.

### **Unexpected Findings**

It was surprising to find that so few departments replied to the survey about an issue that directly relates to them. In those that did respond, it was amazing how overwhelming the issue is to each department and their department operations. It was somewhat surprising that a few departments had to provide raises to their personnel to remain competitive. There was actually a

surprisingly small number of resources on part-time staffing challenges, which is quite a current issue in southwestern Ohio; this may suggest that the issue may be more prevalent in this area, where part-time employment is more common. Overall, the magnitude of the situation was bigger than expected. Also, a poorly worded question in the survey about the average number of part-time hours could not be used because accurate responses could not be assured.

### **Conclusions**

In conclusion, the part-time system of staffing has some benefits, but is quite challenging. Many departments use this system because it seems to have some benefits, such as apparent cost savings. These benefits, however, may be overridden by the increasing challenges reported by departments that use the system. Many are looking at converting to more full-time personnel, or a totally full-time system. The literature review, the follow-up interview, and the regional surveys all confirm that serious problems are found when utilizing the part-time system. The surveys indicate that the problem is worsening with the dwindling number of available qualified people in the employment pool.

## **DISCUSSION**

The literature review and research have shown some clear advantages and disadvantages with the part-time system. Many departments that previously had only volunteer firefighters see part-time staffing as an acceptable alternative (Lipe, 1990). Since volunteers are often no longer available due to training requirements and job obligations (Ashbrock, 1998), using part time staffing in this circumstance can be a solution. The true question is how extensively should a combination department utilize part-time personnel for its permanent staffing needs. Initially, it appears obvious that part-time employees are much more cost effective. The research clearly

points to the benefits of that aspect of the part-time system. There are, however, competing advantages and disadvantages. The disadvantages, although not directly monetary in nature, eventually have an impact on the quality and adequacy of the service provided. Should the delivery of emergency services be measured by the quality of care and level of service, or in the dollars required to provide a basic level of service? Is the service merely adequate, or truly superb? Is the service being affected by the on-going challenges? The answers come down to the preferred quality, and often the affordability.

It is important to know what the issues are, particularly for the community and area that is served. The survey was helpful in identifying the issues that directly impacted the DTFRD, because the surrounding departments share the same issues. Specifically, the survey results are comparatively similar to the findings of the other authors involved in the research project. Some major issues with part-time staffing that were identified in the research include scheduling challenges, short-notice employee call-offs, and high absenteeism (Ashbrock, 1998). Additional major issues found in the surveys include poor employee retention from losing quality employees to departments offering full-time employment, supervisor-reported low productivity, and a decreasing pool of qualified applicants.

Seemingly continual difficulties in dealing with the part-time staffing system include the administrative time and cost in constantly replenishing the part-time employees from the proverbial revolving-door syndrome of hiring and resigning employees. These objective issues include costs for recruitment/news ads, pre-employment testing, background checks, incentives, partial health insurance, orientation costs, training costs, extra turnout gear costs, providing wage differentials, keeping up with the cost of increasing wages, and providing for overtime to fill open shifts (Ashbrock, 1998). The survey results validated the findings of previous authors, because the same issues were continually resurfacing.

More subjective issues include uncertainty of job functions because the employee works at too many places to remember pertinent department procedures, decreased reliance for call-back availability during a disaster or crisis, limited continuity on shifts, having to employ large numbers to have an adequate pool of workers to cover daily shifts, decreased employee loyalty and dedication, and fatigue from working too much on multiple departments (Ashbrock, 1998). One Chief reported in his survey (and it is common practice) that they allow firefighters to rest during the day if they were up all night at the employees other job the previous night. This acceptance of lower performance is questionable, and may be difficult to explain to community leaders or the visiting public. Also many employees are eager or show initiative only when there is a chance of being promoted or becoming full-time. The number and severity of challenges seem to continue escalating.

These challenges have been approached in many ways by fire administrators, and yet they still remain. Many fire administrators try to think of new solutions. One such theory is to hire totally green or inexperienced personnel from outside of any fire service affiliation, and mold them to your culture. This drastic approach could be quite dangerous when you consider putting very training-limited or inexperienced personnel, with the sometimes already low-experience level of part-time employees. Sooner or later, quality of service and/or safety will be jeopardized

This researcher's interpretation of the results are that the survey confirms the challenges being faced, and expands on the magnitude of the situation. The research shows that the saga continues, or that it is worsening. As the pool of employees dwindles, the challenges increase in intensity. The results show that although full-time personnel are more desirable, having only full-time personnel is not realistic because of limited resources. Having a correct balance of full-time and part-time is the best possible answer. This researcher's interpretation of the results is



that the part-time system, although cost effective in the area of wages and benefits, leaves a department with excessive challenges that are not worth the decreasing amount of savings.

The implications on the organization are significant, and will ultimately end in a choice between living with the part-time challenges or hiring more full-time personnel. The challenges must be dealt with, because we will continue to see a shrinking pool, with increasing problems. The organizational leadership must focus on the proper balance between the quality level of service desired, and the ratio of needed part-time and full-time employees. It is obvious that the challenges faced by these department administrations are real. It was quite surprising to find that departments tolerated the amount of call-offs and scheduling challenges that were reported. The DTFRD now has clearly documented information about the challenges that affect their organization. It confirms many of the same challenges that other organizations experience, within their own organization. However, it is not necessarily in the best interest of DTFRD to convert to only full-time staffing because some part-time members have much to offer. There is a value to using residents of the community who may not want to become full-time employees, and having a small pool of qualified part-time personnel from which to select future full-time employees is a valuable benefit.

In summary, providing fire-related services costs money. Keeping these costs down is usually the primary purpose for utilizing part-time personnel. The research does identify, however, that there are hidden costs that cannot be taken for granted. The challenges that are routinely encountered have a cost associated with them. There may not be easy answers to solving the part-time staffing issue, but starting with an understanding of the issue is the responsible thing to do. A total switch to full-time from part-time may not be the best choice, but often a balance between two competing priorities is the best solution.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The issues discussed in this research project indicate the many complexities in the part-time system of employment. Although cost is often the primary consideration when choosing the employment makeup of an organization, this research clearly indicates that there are many additional factors that can affect productivity, operational efficiency, and quality of service. With these in mind, community leaders should carefully evaluate the choice between utilizing full-time employees and part-time employees. Specific recommendations include increasing the number of full-time personnel in the department. It is obvious that a complete change to a full-time department, in many cases, may not be feasible, and the total elimination of part-time personnel would limit the organization's ability to have a pool of employees to draw from. A certain percentage of part-time employees may be desirable for this reason alone. Certainly, a move toward more full-time personnel is appropriate. It is true that using only full-time personnel may be too expensive, but community leaders are encouraged to consider the most cost-effective balance of full and part-time employment for their organization.

The research clearly supports that chiefs believe fewer challenges result with more full-time employees. Specifically, issues related to employee loyalty, poor attendance, fatigue, confusion over operating procedures, excessive training costs, etc. will be controlled by hiring more full-time personnel. The community leadership is encouraged to balance the benefits and drawbacks based on the knowledge obtained through this research, their own understanding of the organizational dynamics, and the resources of the community.

Continued monitoring of the employment pool in the region will be critical to providing a baseline of part-time employees necessary for community service requirements, as well as securing quality full-time employees in the field. Leaders should continue to follow-up on itemized costs, should continue to monitor the size and changes of the employment pool, and

should document those other communities that are converting from part-time. The community leaders may choose to protect their future staffing by having an active hiring list of ranked personnel. In the event the employment pool reaches a drastic potential decrease in qualified personnel, they could quickly convert a number of employees to full time without losing out to other agencies during the hiring of the remainder of the employment pool.

## REFERENCES

- Ashbrock, S. M. (1998). *Staffing patterns in Hamilton County, Ohio, fire departments 1985-1996*. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Cincinnati.
- Bennett, D. G. (1995). *An analysis of the process utilized for selecting part-time employment in emergency organizations* (Tech. Rep. No. 25191). Emmitsburg, MD: National Fire Academy, Applied Research Project.
- Brudney, J.L. & Duncombe, W.D. (1992, Sept/Oct). An economic evaluation of paid, volunteer, and mixed staffing options for public services. *Public Administration Review*, 52(5), 474-481.
- Lipe, H. (1990, January). *Part-time employees: a full-time solution for the emergency services of southwest Ohio* (Tech. Rep. No. 14654). Emmitsburg, MD: National Fire Academy, Applied Research Project.
- Ludwick, M. E. (1996, October). *Are part-time personnel a viable solution for daytime* (Tech. Rep. No. 27166). Emmitsburg, MD: National Fire Academy, Applied Research Project.
- Riemar, T. (1998, March). *Extra-board firefighters: part-time employees as an alternative to overtime* (Tech. Rep. No. 28234). Emmitsburg, MD: National Fire Academy, Applied Research Project.
- Rielage, R. R. (1993, September). Alternate staffing for combination departments. *Voice*, 32-33.
- Silvati, J. J. (1991, August). *Innovation in fire department staffing: a case study* (Tech. Rep. No. 18261). Emmitsburg, MD: National Fire Academy, Applied Research Project.
- Wright, L. (1998, April). *Review and evaluation of part-time firefighters for the Addison Fire Department* (Tech. Rep. No. 97974). Emmitsburg, MD: National Fire Academy, Applied Research Project.







[www.news-herald.com/news/geauga-county/northeast-ohio-fire-departments-face-staffing-issues/article\\_f9bbd008-91...](http://www.news-herald.com/news/geauga-county/northeast-ohio-fire-departments-face-staffing-issues/article_f9bbd008-91...)

## Northeast Ohio fire departments face staffing issues

*Kristi Garabrandt kgarabrandt@news-herald.com @Kristi\_G\_1223 on Twitter*

6-8 minutes

---

Chester Township Fire Chief John Wargelin says his department is among those nationwide facing an epidemic.

He's talking about staffing issues.

His department has battled an 85 percent turnover rate in the past five years.

Mentor Fire Chief Robert Searles referred to The US Fire Department Profile, 2017, released by the National Fire Protection Association in March that reported 1,056,200 firefighters in the U.S. in 2017 -- a 2% decrease from 2016.

The number of non-career/part-time firefighters dropped to its lowest estimate since NFPA began reporting this statistic in 1986, the study found.

"What is concerning about the study is that the trend continues and we are feeling it here in Lake County, especially with a decrease in our part-time ranks," Searles said.

Fire Chiefs Anthony Hutton of Kirtland, Todd Ungar of Willoughby and Rob Gandee of Willoughby Hills all attribute the decline in part to the increase of jobs available in the technology sector.

"I think some might just be a lack of interest in a hands-on-type career or job," Ungar said.

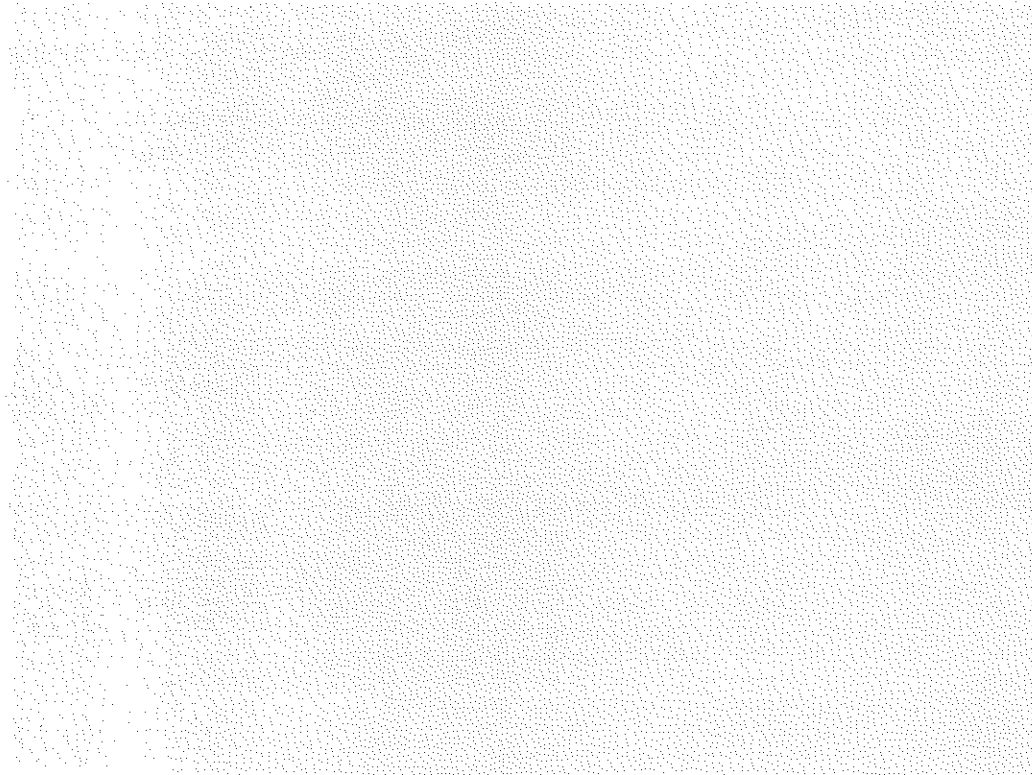
Ungar also attributes the decline to lack of pension and benefits for part-time employees and the risks of the job such as nights of no sleep and exposure to carcinogens, bodily fluids and other substances.

Kirtland, Mentor, Wickliffe, Willoughby and Willoughby Hills rely on both full- and part-time fire fighters. Chester Township is an all part-time department with only the chief in a full-time position.

Part-timers "don't cost nearly as much as a career member when you are not paying pension and health benefits," Ungar said. "It's a huge drop to a community to have part-time staff."







Derrick Gardner, a part-time firefighter, prepares to interview with the hiring committee at Mentor Fire Department for a full-time position on June 21.

Kristi Garabrandt - The News-Herald

Ungar also points out that there is a danger to relying heavily on part-time staff -- if they don't sign up for a shift, then the department has to run without them.

While Willoughby is fortunate to maintain its minimum staffing level, other departments have not been able to meet goals in hiring or retaining part-time firefighters.

Wickliffe Fire Chief Jason Powers said his department's goal is to have 21 to 23 part-time firefighters, but they have not been able to meet that for the past several years. Currently they have 18 part-time firefighters.

"Our past practices and some research show that for every 24/7 part-time position a department needs, they will need 10-12 part-time firefighters," Powers said.

For many area departments, it's not just a lack of qualified applicants. The departments face turnover issues as they lose their part-timers to other departments hiring for full-time positions.

Wickliffe has lost nine part-time firefighters in the past 30 months to other departments.

Gandee and Powers agree that high turnover can impact a city financially as there are costs associated with hiring firefighters.

Ungar is quick to point out, though, that despite the staffing issues, the chiefs are not giving up. Many of them are looking into alternative hiring methods.

The chiefs are working together to come up with solutions, Searles said.

"We need to think outside the box, and here in Mentor we are taking a more aggressive approach to how we recruit fire candidates," Searles said. "The best way I know to do it is to create a desirable work environment. We have incredible support from our community and we attract good people, but as the shortage of qualified fire candidates, and other public safety workers continues, we know our need is only going to increase because our calls for service volume is rising."

Kirtland's Hutton is looking into rekindling an interest in the fire services among students through school career days.



Searles and Gandee have also expressed plans to reach out to high school students.

Gandee has talked with Ungar about departments working together to restart a Fire Explorers program to get youth interested in a fire service career.

Gandee feels that it could come down to a wage war with departments competing over better wages for part-time employees. He also believes it may come to the point where cities will have to look at benefits for part-time employees to make the job more attractive.

This could pose more of a problem for some departments than others.

"Our city is not in the position to compete with the more affluent communities for applicants," Wickliffe's Powers said. "We are in the position to make them be part of a strong team that will train them and make them into exceptional firefighters/paramedics that deliver quality services daily."

Chester Township recently increased its part-time pay rate. The department also works with flexible scheduling, allowing firefighters to schedule their own hours.

Many of the departments are looking at hiring more full-time and fewer part-time employees to ensure proper staffing and reduce overtime.

Some departments are even considering having a pool of part-time firefighters to share when faced with a shortage, Hutton said.

"I believe Lake County fire departments are riding out the storm well," Searles said. "I think most of my fellow fire chiefs will tell you that our greatest need is more good part-time personnel as we are finding ourselves competing and hiring from a small pool of part-time applicants."