

Fire Department-Related Items

Safety and Licensing Committee

Wed, Apr 09, 2025 5:30PM

Aldersonperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 21:21

Okay. Moving on to 25-0337, fire department requests to apply for 2025 Elevate Communities grant.

Aldersonperson Denise Fenton (District 6) 21:30

Move to approve.

Aldersonperson William Siebers (District 1) 21:31

Second.

Aldersonperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 21:32

All right. Motion and a second to approve. Chief Hansen, you are district one. There you go.

Fire Chief Jeremy Hansen 21:39

Thank you, Chair. We're looking to purchase a digital fire extinguisher prop. This is a prop that's been around for about a decade or so, and it's a virtual prop. It's like, a lack of a better way to explain it, like a TV screen that stands on the ground. And then you can use fire extinguishers, both water extinguishers or fire extinguishers that shoot a laser, and they have audible sounds that sound like a fire extinguisher is being used. I will say that I've used something like this about a decade ago with my daughter's Girl Scout troop and taught them all how to use fire extinguishers with—extinguishers with this and they thought it was amazing. So, this would be a great addition to the Appleton Fire Department. We'd use it for public safety events. We could use it for even training city employees. We could have it out at Oktoberfest and have kids learn how to use a fire extinguisher right there. And to reset it, you hit a button and you're good to go again. So, it's pretty—it's a pretty neat product.

Aldersonperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 22:42

Okay. And if, if you haven't looked at the application, it's nearly \$20,000, correct?

Fire Chief Jeremy Hansen 22:47

Correct.

Aldersonperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 22:47

There's no matching—

Fire Chief Jeremy Hansen 22:49

Correct.

Aldersonperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 22:49

—funds. Okay. All right, questions, comments? Motion and a second to approve. All those in favor of applying for the grant, signify by saying aye. Aye Opposed? Four zero.

Aldersonperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 23:01

Okay, all right. That takes us to the rest of the agenda, which is a number of license applications. We want to take them up individually, or move to take them all—?

Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 23:12

Move to approve the balance.

Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14) 23:13

Okay? Motion a second. We'll give it to Alder Schultz for the second. It is four. I'll list the numbers, 25-0336, 25-0333, 25-0334, and 25-0335. All of them are—there's a motion and a second to approve. Any discussion? Any comments from staff? Seeing none, all those in favor of approving those license applications signify by saying aye. Aye. All opposed? Any abstentions? Four zero.

Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14) 23:45

Okay, that takes care of our action items today. Moving on to information items. We do have the annual—the 2024 annual Fire Department report. Chief Hansen, you want to summarize, please, and then take some questions?

Fire Chief Jeremy Hansen 23:59

Yes, thank you, Chair. Happy to present our 2024 annual report. Just hit some brief highlights. We had a total of 7365 incidents last year in the City of Appleton. That's nearly an increase of 400 from the year before. Over the last five years it's about a 20% increase. Within that 7365, 5434 of them, or 74%, are EMS calls. Again, that's about a 21% increase over the last five years. So, we've been holding fairly steady and constant with our increased run volume.

Fire Chief Jeremy Hansen 24:39

We had a 101 confirmed fires in the city last year. So that's quite a few. That can be anything from a trash can to a car fire to a, you know, a major house fire or something. 693 false alarms. So that that's about—up about 100 from the year before. So, we're hopeful that that new fee schedule that we approved where we have those higher fees for businesses that continuously and habitually have false alarms. And there was one business on the north side, if we get a complaint I'll understand why. They had \$28,000 in false alarm fees in 2024 that they didn't—refused to pay and went on their taxes.

Fire Chief Jeremy Hansen 25:26

We also completed 444—uh 4,449 inspections, and wrote up 2299 violations. Most of those violations were corrected within 30 days.

Fire Chief Jeremy Hansen 25:40

One item I like to point out is we are a young department. You know, when we hire here in May, we'll have 37 of our 96 people with less than five years on the job. So that that's a challenge for us, but it's also a good thing, because we get some turnover, and as we move towards that paramedic initiative here this July, we've really been able to hire a lot of paramedics. So, when we go live in July, we'll have 32 paramedics. So that's a big number for us.

Fire Chief Jeremy Hansen 26:12

Mutual aid and automatic aid was a big initiative of ours last year. So, we signed new automatic aid with our surrounding fire departments so that the entire city is covered with auto aid. So, if we have a confirmed structure fire, we will get an engine from either Neenah, Menasha, Fox Crossing, Grand Chute, Little Chute, or Kimberly, to our structure fires, and then we respond with one engine into theirs. Now, historically, the last two years, for every one mutual aid that we receive, we give two, but I feel that's being a good neighbor. We are a

bigger city. So, I think last year, we gave it 63 times and got it about half of that. But it's a good partnership with our neighbors.

Fire Chief Jeremy Hansen 27:05

The last thing I wanted to just to touch on is the amount of training we do. You know, we are a highly technical profession with a lot of disciplines. We did 13,794 hours of training which averages out to 147 hours per person per year, and—or almost two hours a day, when you consider how many days they work in a year. So that's quite a bit of training, but we need to do that in order to keep proficient in all the skills that we're expected to perform. So that's my brief overview. If you have some questions, I'd be happy to answer.

Aldersonperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 27:39

Okay, we'll take questions. But I think I said this probably a year ago, excellent report, well put together. Whoever's doing the work on this, kudos to them. Just really informative, really well laid out. Questions from anyone? I'm glad you touched on that the fee structure change thing, because I was wondering how that impacted non—um false alarm calls.

Fire Chief Jeremy Hansen 28:02

We hope that persuades them to get their systems fixed. Yes.

Aldersonperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 28:06

Okay, yeah. Alder Fenton, go ahead.

Aldersonperson Denise Fenton (District 6) 28:07

Thank you, Chair. Can you just give us a little update on the progress towards the ALS ranking?

Fire Chief Jeremy Hansen 28:14

Yeah, absolutely. So last fall and this this spring, we have had a huge initiative towards getting our paramedics refreshed in all the paramedic stuff. So, there's a lot of items that went into it, not only what, you know, yourselves and council as a whole has approved for finite financial commitments. We have purchased all of our equipment that we needed. We've installed all of our narcotics safes on all of our fire trucks. We've taken delivery of some narcotics. We were having the vendor come and train us on our new cardiac monitors in two weeks. Those will immediately then go on to the fire trucks to be used. We are putting the final touches on our State Operations Plan, which we hope to submit here in two weeks, and then it'll be up to the state to review it for 60 days. If they give us a thumbs up, early July—I'd like to say July 1—is a goal, but I think we're on pace to hit that. So sometime in early July, we will have paramedics on every one of our fire trucks.

Aldersonperson Denise Fenton (District 6) 29:17

Excellent. Thank you.

Aldersonperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 29:19

Good question. Any other? Alder Schultz, go ahead.

Aldersonperson Alex Schultz (District 9) 29:22

Thanks, chair. You mentioned that 20% increases in incidences and calls to respond. Do you—is that number commensurate with, like, state average, national average? Is there something that troubles you by that number? Is it—do you feel like that's essentially where you'd expect to be?

Fire Chief Jeremy Hansen 29:42

I think that's a normal increase in call volume. Back in I think it was to 2019 or it was 2000—yeah, I think it was 2019 we had a substantial increase, like an increase of over, like, around 1000 calls in in one year. That was a big leap for us, but having that four or 500 call increase has been historically what we what we see. Yeah,

Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 30:12

Okay. Any other comments, questions?

Aldersperson Denise Fenton (District 6) 30:15

Well done. Thank you.

Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 30:16

Yeah, again, great report. Thank you, Chief.