

# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



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# CHIEF'S MESSAGE

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February 28, 2023

Citizens of Fitchburg  
Mayor Richardson  
City Council Members  
Police and Fire Commission Members  
Public Safety and Human Services Committee Members

We had a solemn start to 2022 with the loss of two Mineral Point Fire Fighters – who died in the line of duty. Although Mineral Point is not in a neighboring jurisdiction, we were directly involved in the planning and coordination of the activities associated with both firefighters' visitation and services. Further, as members of the Mineral Point Fire Department waited to escort their fallen brothers to and from UW University Hospital, we staged their equipment at Fitchburg Fire Station #1 (due to cold, winter temperatures). This tragedy highlighted the personal and professional networks that are developed through our industry... In this line of work, you do what you can when assistance is requested.

With continued community development, demands on service delivery increase. The Fire Department's organizational structure and staffing must evolve with a changing workforce; further, we need to be able to address the growth of net, new construction and population. While the City's Comprehensive Plan provides some perspective for service demand predictions, this annual report will share an actual, retrospective analysis of response data and service impact.

As we move forward, transitioning to a career firefighter-based (and part-time firefighter supported) delivery model will require a gradual, ongoing effort to address organizational progression. Some steps have been taken to reduce our over-reliance on firefighter overtime for daily staffing. To this end, staffing and funding evaluations have been proposed to help us determine the speed in which change can happen. We must prioritize this effort so that we don't fall too far behind municipal needs.

In addition to emergency response, logistics and support are required for operational readiness. The following (significant) projects were advanced and/or completed in:

- Water Tender Refurb (x2)
- Mobile and Portable Radio Upgrade
- Command Car Specification
- Deputy Chief Promotion
- Training Tower/Ladder Prop
- Records Management – EPR Implementation
- Drone Task Force Equipment Activation
- Lieutenant Promotion

As Chief, I am proud to share some of our accomplishments from the past year. Although this report is intended to provide as much information as possible, the entirety of effort could not be depicted in this format. Please reach out if more information is needed.

Your fire department is working diligently to address the needs of community risk reduction and emergency response – I am continually impressed by the dedication of our firefighters. Operational goals are accomplished through their determination and ability. For our firefighters and our community, I will continue to advocate for an effective, efficient, well-staffed, professional, and service-focused organization.

Thank you for your support. Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Pulvermacher".

**Joe Pulvermacher**  
Fire Chief

# OUR MISSION

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## CORE VALUES

Honesty & Integrity  
Pride & Ownership  
Passion & Professionalism

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Fitchburg Fire Department strives:

### To Serve

*by providing care through a dedicated and dependable response*

### To Learn

*by exercising readiness through repetition and vigilance. We will train to our limits... (not afraid of failure in a training environment) as we work toward competence and confidence*

### To Respect

*by exhibiting teamwork, honor, and accountability at all levels – continually treating others in a way that we would want to be treated*

### To Lead

*through initiative and service excellence, we are committed to be an example in our profession and in our community*

## VISION

For those we are sworn to protect... For those with whom we serve...

For all who live in, work in, or visit the City of Fitchburg,

***We envision our optimal future:***

***We know our "Why,"***

*Regardless of our forward momentum, we will never forget why we do what we do... compassion, respect, professionalism.*

***We value our "What,"***

*Our accomplishments provide a significant amount of pride for active members and those who identify with our history*

***We will constantly strive to improve our "How,"***

*Through research, planning, training, and a progressive mindset.*

***While working toward our "WOW!"***

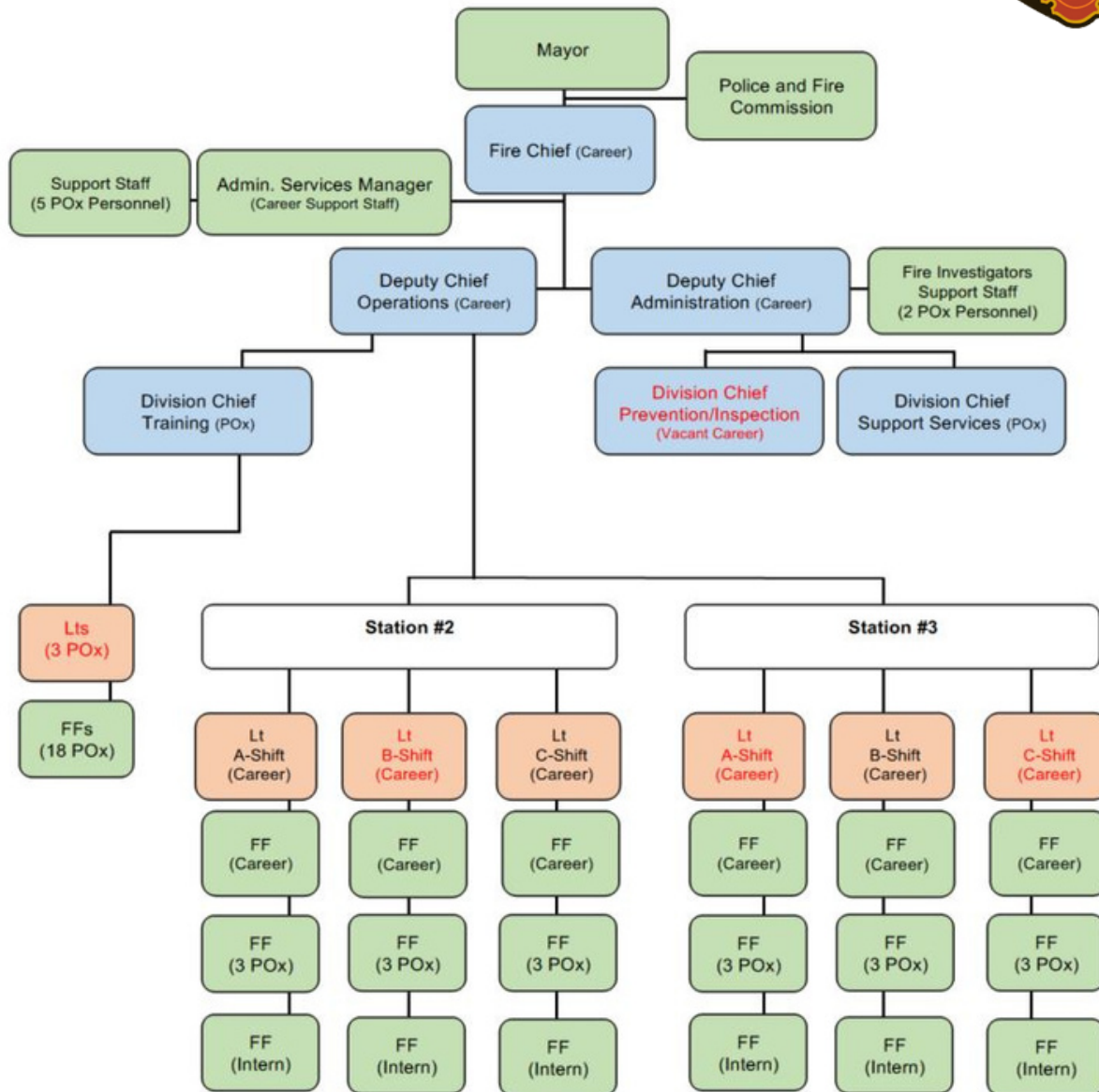
*We are standard bearers in our profession... an example for others to follow.*

2022

# YEAR IN REVIEW



# ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



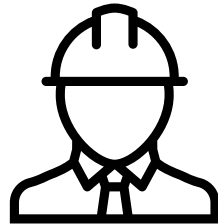
# AT A GLANCE

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**16**  
CAREER  
FIREFIGHTERS

**30**  
PAID ON CALL  
FIREFIGHTERS



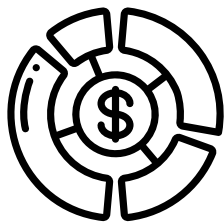
**11**  
SUPPORT  
STAFF

**# 2,155**  
CALLS FOR  
SERVICE

**2,149**  
INSPECTIONS



**557**  
CORRECTED  
VIOLATIONS



**\$3.4M**  
OPERATING  
BUDGET



**4,882**  
TRAINING  
HOURS

AT A GLANCE

# CHIEF PULVERMACHER - 2022 BUDGET

## -5220- Fire Department

	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	2022 Estimate
Personnel Costs	\$2,287,532	\$2,379,396	\$2,527,468	\$2,342,147	\$2,453,201	\$2,596,127
Contractual Services	24,572	26,036	23,712	33,465	29,155	33,241
Operating Expenses	287,219	231,600	251,973	229,732	252,308	286,080
Allocated Benefits	101,280	188,885	202,400	233,855	242,405	285,646
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,700,603</b>	<b>\$2,825,917</b>	<b>\$2,883,550</b>	<b>\$2,839,190</b>	<b>\$2,977,069</b>	<b>\$3,201,094</b>

The following spreadsheet breaks down personnel costs. Providing a 5-year trend of actual investment and the estimate for 2022 expenses. 2017 – 2021 information was retrieved from adopted budgets. The 2022 estimate was retrieved from the Mayor's 2023 proposed budget.

	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	2022 Estimate
Career	\$1,011,695	\$1,069,221	\$1,108,501	\$1,134,414	\$1,159,231	\$1,211,647
POC Service	\$536,648	\$516,656	\$557,608	\$523,957	\$531,447	\$533,156
Overtime	\$146,076	\$192,135	\$141,488	\$65,886	\$96,520	\$107,918
PT/LTE Wages	\$26,925	\$21,075	\$18,885	\$20,250	\$30,879	\$23,400
Benefits	\$566,189	\$580,309	\$578,984	\$597,640	\$635,124	\$720,006
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,287,533</b>	<b>\$2,379,396</b>	<b>\$2,405,466</b>	<b>\$2,342,147</b>	<b>\$2,453,201</b>	<b>\$2,596,127</b>

## -5290- Other Public Safety

	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	2022 Estimate
Personnel Costs	\$1,157	\$791	\$1066	\$727	\$1,679	\$1,500
Contractual Services	631,489	682,861	672,285	880,130	912,056	1,157,721
Operating Expenses	115	-	-	75	-	50
Allocated Benefits	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$632,761</b>	<b>\$683,652</b>	<b>\$673,351</b>	<b>\$880,932</b>	<b>\$913,735</b>	<b>\$1,159,271</b>

"Other Public Safety" is a portion of the budget that the Emergency Management Director monitors. It is the placeholder in the budget for two significant expenses:

- Fitchburg's contributions to Fitch-Rona EMS
- Radio Communications Contracts (DaneCom)



# CHIEF PULVERMACHER - 2022 PEER SUPPORT

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Peer support is one facet of our psychological health and wellness campaign. The intent behind peer support is to provide emergency responders with skills that assist in the recognition of critical incident, post traumatic, and cumulative stress. Further, this team provides assistance to other public safety agencies who have experienced a significant, critical incident.

## 2022 DEPLOYMENTS

The Fitchburg Public Safety Wellness Team is comprised of Firefighters, Police Officers, and Paramedics. Fitchburg Police, Fitch-Rona EMS, and Fitchburg Fire share the responsibility associated with peer support. This team provided assistance on two occurrences with Fitchburg emergency responders and twice to the McFarland Fire and EMS department.

## CHAPLAINCY

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Fitchburg Chaplains provide non-denominational support to our emergency first responders. Their primary focus is to be a constant, gentle presence in (and around) the firehouse and police station. They provide assistance and support at the level in which the effected emergency responder requests (respecting a secular and non-secular approach). They volunteer their time and have been a valuable resource in Fitchburg's health and wellness initiative.



Genin

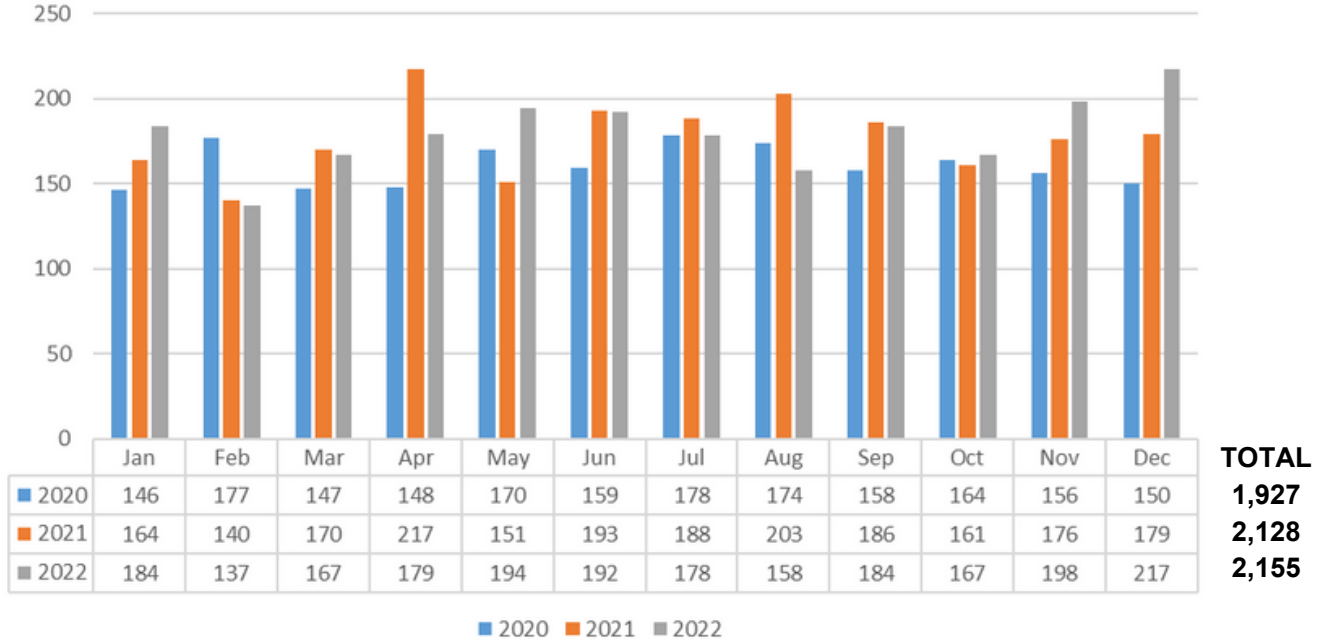


Jacobson



# DEPUTY CHIEF GROSSEN - OPERATIONS

## CALLS FOR SERVICE, BY MONTH:

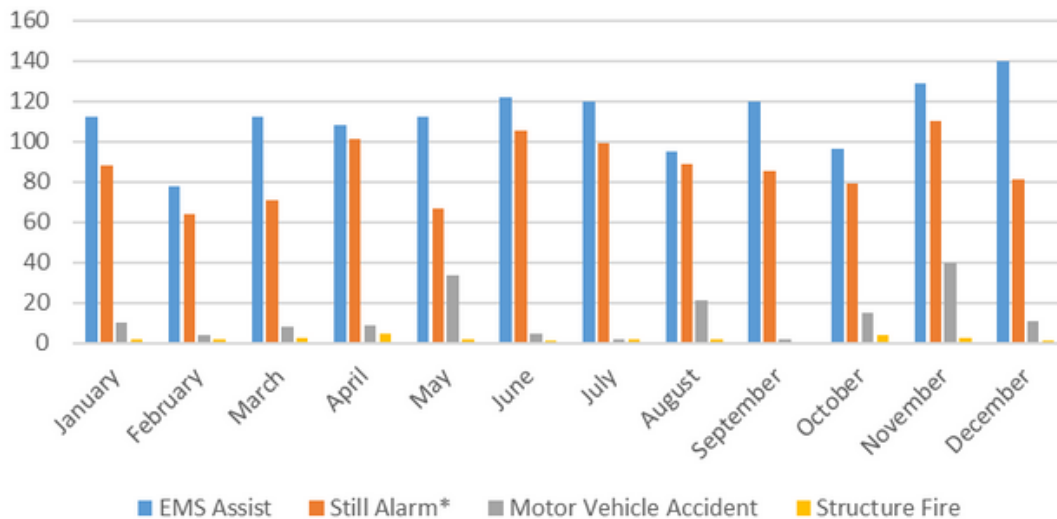


FFD responded to 2155 total calls for service in 2022, which is an average of 5.9 calls per day. This is also an increase in service of 27 more calls than 2021, a 1% increase. Our busiest month was December with 217 calls.

Over the last year we responded to the following on average per month:

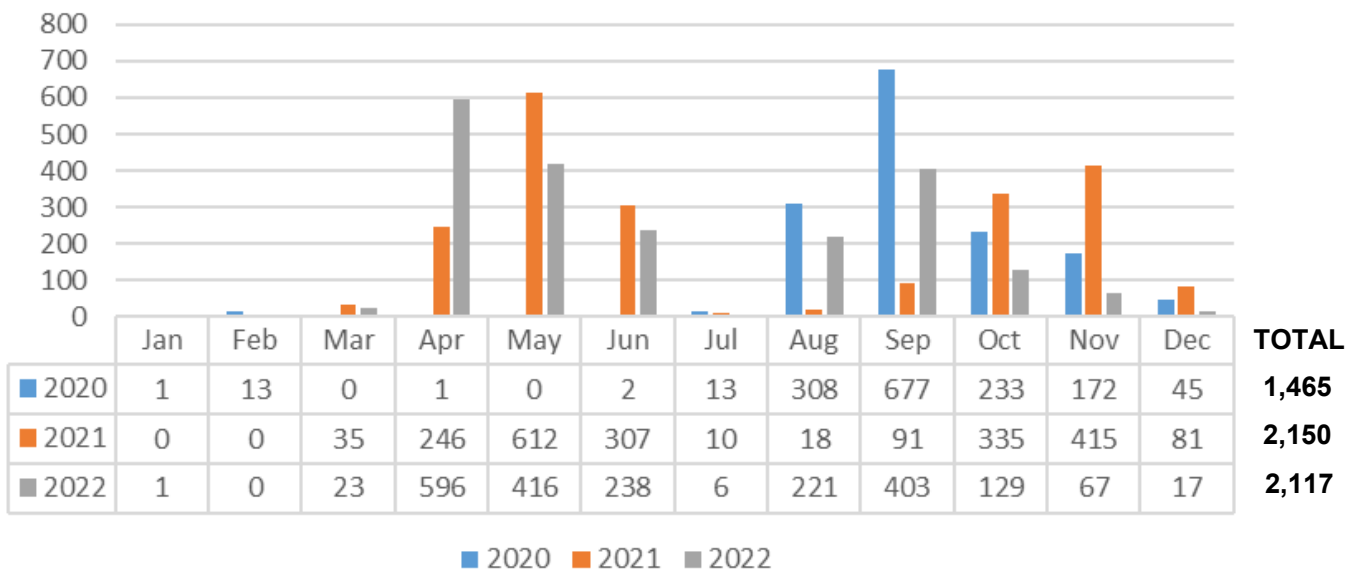
- 112 EMS Assists – December Highest Number of Responses of 140
- 87 Still Alarms – November Highest Number of Responses of 110
- 13 Motor Vehicle Crashes – November Highest Number of Responses of 40
- 2.2 Structure Fires – April Highest Number of Responses of 5

## MOST COMMON CALL TYPE:



# DEPUTY CHIEF GROSSEN - PREVENTION & INSPECTION

## INSPECTIONS COMPLETED BY MONTH:



## REVENUE FROM STATE (DSPS 2% DUES):

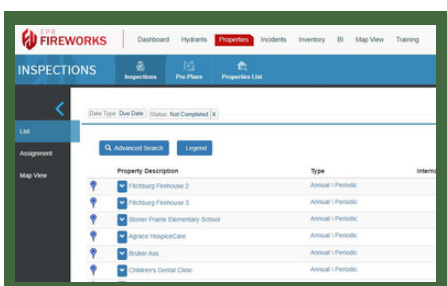
There are three key factors to consider in understanding the computation of fire dues payments and why the amounts may change for a municipality from year to year:

1. The Fire Dues fund amount is subject to change based upon the amount of fire insurance underwritten in Wisconsin in the year.
2. The percentage each municipality receives changes due to the relationship between the growth of the local community and the overall growth within the state.
3. The amount of disbursement is subject to change due to the hold-harmless provisions.

Fire Insurance Tax (2% Dues)	
2020	\$133,050
2021	\$145,284
2022 Estimate	\$157,258

## UPDATED RECORDS MANAGEMENT:

In 2022, The Fitchburg Fire Department evaluated a variety of records management software products to better document emergency response and fire prevention activities. EPR Solutions (FireWorks) was selected based on its ease-of-use and customer support. Implementation is scheduled for Q1 2023.



# RECRUITMENT & RETENTION PERSONNEL



## HIRED IN 2022

Derek Ruck, POx Firefighter  
Jacob Stewart, POx Firefighter  
Calvin Wetmore, POx Firefighter

Nicholas Arps, Intern Firefighter  
Lucas Hildebrand, Intern Firefighter  
Ethan Jennings, Intern Firefighter

## LENGTH OF SERVICE MILESTONES

### 2 YEARS

Firefighter Garrett Christian  
Nabeel Qureshi, Support Services  
Firefighter Jacob Roche  
Firefighter Peter Gander

David Jacobson, Chaplain  
Firefighter Austin Doberstein  
Firefighter Dana Collins

### 5 YEARS



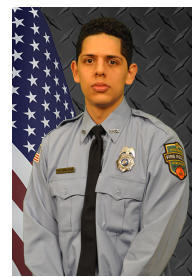
Firefighter  
Andrew Ott



Firefighter  
Camden Parman



Firefighter  
Jon Schnelle



Firefighter  
Jesus Villagomez



Firefighter  
Alex Wichmann

# RECRUITMENT & RETENTION PERSONNEL



## LENGTH OF SERVICE MILESTONES

### 15 YEARS



**Jeff Baumgartner,  
Support Services**



**Firefighter  
Doug Clemens**



**Firefighter  
Matt Sutter**



**Kevin Wernet,  
Support Services**



**Division Chief  
Steven Wunsch**

### 20 YEARS



**Deputy Chief  
Rob Kunze**



**Firefighter  
Scott Westphal**

### 30 YEARS



**Deputy Chief  
Chad Grossen**



# FIRE CAUSE & ORIGIN INVESTIGATION

## WISCONSIN DOJ 165.55 ARSON INVESTIGATION:

"(1) The chief of the fire department [or designee]... shall investigate... the cause, origin and circumstances of every fire occurring in his or her city, village or town by which property has been destroyed or damaged when the damage exceeds \$500, and on fires of unknown origin he or she shall especially investigate whether the fire was the result of negligence, accident or design. Where any investigation discloses that the fire may be of incendiary origin, he or she shall report the same to the state fire marshal."

## FITCHBURG JOINT FIRE INVESTIGATION TASK FORCE:

Members of the City of Fitchburg Joint Police and Fire Investigation Team work to determine the cause of a fire: accidental, intentional, or undetermined. Once the investigation is completed, insurance companies may choose to investigate further; when we list the cause as intentional, an additional criminal investigation may begin. When we list the cause of a fire as "undetermined," the investigators were unable to find definitive evidence pointing to any one specific cause.

## INCIDENTS INVESTIGATED:

Of the 84 incidents that were listed as "fire, overpressure/rupture, explosion, and overheating" related incidents, 23 required fire investigation. 2022's estimated damages are listed in the comparative chart below:

Fire Damage (Loss) Estimates	
2022	\$1,434,150
2021	\$630,000
2020	\$1,530,000



Gardens Way

## SPRINKLER PROTECTION:

Preliminary discussions were conducted with the Housing Advisory Committee to identify if incentives could be provided to multi-family residential building owners to retrofit their buildings with fire protection sprinklers. The idea behind this concept was intended to reduce the loss associated with fires.

By controlling fire growth, there is strong potential that tenants residing outside of the unit of origin will not be displaced. It is also proven that life and property losses are reduced when sprinklers are activated due to fire.



Greenway Cross

# PUBLIC OUTREACH & EDUCATION



The past few years limited the Fire Department in terms of community outreach due to pandemic restrictions. 2022 allowed us to go out into the community once again. Events like Fitchburg Community Night out, Fun in the park as well as school visits and station tours allowed us to be able to reconnect with the Fitchburg community.



## LARGE ANIMAL RESCUE:

We had the opportunity to be a part of a joint training with UW Veterinary program for large animal rescue. As a suburban/rural community, we respond to a wide variety of emergency incidents, some of them include working with large animals and we have put forth a lot of effort toward our technical rescue response. This training aided in making sure we had the knowledge and skills to successfully and safely handle a large animal emergency.



# CHIEF PULVERMACHER - EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



## READINESS AND TRAINING:

The role of emergency management is best summarized through readiness, response, and recovery. Community preparedness requires the development of skills and professional networks. The intent is to have a working knowledge of agencies and assets available during disaster and crisis. The following emergency management objectives were accomplished in 2022:

- Dane County Emergency Management partnership reinforced
- Dane County Clerk partnership developed for election day contingencies



## The following classes were hosted in Fitchburg:

- Incident Management Teams
- All Hazards Supply Unit Leader
- Air Support Group/ Air Tactical Group
- Communication Unit Leader
- Municipal/ County Interface

## EVENT COORDINATION AND INCIDENT ACTION PLANNING::

The purpose of event coordination is to provide the Incident Commander (and the Command and General Staffs assuming command of the incident) with basic incident response information. It provides a certain degree of predictability during the initial chaos of an emergency. Incident action plans (IAP) address resource identification, notification, and allocation- specific to the identified incident. It also serves as a permanent record of the initial response to the incident.

Whenever we have large groups of people congregated in one area, we initiate an IAP and share it with our mutual-aid partners.



Berbee Derby



Festival of Speed

# DIVISION CHIEF WUNSCH - SUPPORT SERVICES



The Fire Department's Support Services Division is responsible for prioritizing equipment purchases and maintenance. Our command staff officers are generally responsible for the oversight of various projects; however, recommendations and input are received from all department members. The primary focus of Support Services involves:

- New vehicle design and procurement
- Specification and purchasing of fire equipment and protective clothing
- Maintenance, repair, and disposal of existing vehicles and equipment
- Minor maintenance and repairs of the Firehouses and their ground



## **TENDER(S) REFURBISHMENT/RECHASSIS:**

In an effort to maximize the value of investment, both tenders in Fitchburg's fleet are scheduled to be refurbished at Pierce Manufacturing. Tender 2 was scheduled for Q4 2022 and Tender 1 will be scheduled when Tender 2 returns from Pierce. This project uses the existing cab and chassis.



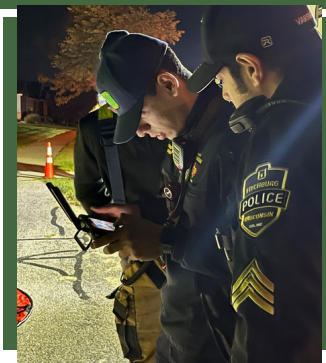
## **PORTABLE/ MOBILE RADIO UPGRADE:**

In 2022, Fitchburg Fire and Police Departments received their replacement mobile and portable radios. A partial equipment order was received in late 2022. This project is anticipated to be complete Q1 2023.



## **COMMAND CAR SPECIFICATION:**

Due to supply chain issues, the Command Staff Car (that was intended for the 2021 budget) was not available. Although the specification was finalized and the order was placed in 2021, delivery took place in late 2022. The vehicle is projected to be in-service after it receives lights, radios, and decals in Q1 2023.



## **DRONE- DONATION- SHARED RESOURCE:**

Thanks to a generous donation from a private donor, the City of Fitchburg has multiple drone assets available for a variety of municipal services. Although Police and Fire will utilize this equipment for life safety, City Engineering and Public Works will use the drones for pre-planning and mapping. While FACTv will use the drones in conjunction with economic development and community outreach.

# DEPUTY CHIEF KUNZE - TRAINING



Training in the fire service is essential - the environment in which we work is continuously evolving. In order to establish knowledge, skills, and ability (and maintain competency), we must train. Although the State of Wisconsin identifies a minimum number of hours a firefighter must train, the Fitchburg Fire Department surpasses that amount due to the demands of a growing community.

Every day we train on topics that range from fire suppression, prevention, investigation, technical/special events and EMS skills just to name a few, for approximately 1 hour.

In 2022 members of the department completed roughly 4800 hours of training. Below is how these hours break down.

#### On Duty Training - 1 hour of training per day:

- 360 days of the year
- 8 people per shift
- 2880 hours of training on shift

#### Classes offered through colleges and other training avenues:

- 20 Different Classes (Topics)
- 80 Training Sessions
- 2350 Hours of Training

**4882 TOTAL HOURS OF TRAINING**





# TECHNICAL RESCUE & SPECIAL OPERATIONS



As Fitchburg continues to develop, we anticipate that construction sites and industrial occupancies will provide an increased risk for technical rescue response. Since this project started, technical rescue skills have already been used and proven effective. With the increased potential, we identified the following order of training priority:

- Rope Rescue
- Confined Space Rescue
- Trench Rescue
- Collapse Rescue

It is our intent to work in conjunction with (not independent of) other technical rescue providers. These incidents are labor intensive and require specialized skills. Fitchburg's closest technical rescue asset is at least 30 minutes away. FFD needs to be able to address the initial stages of the incident and ensure that techniques applied in these incidents reflect the skills of those coming in to support the rescue effort.

## **DRONE TASK FORCE:**

A team of skilled pilots have been assembled to provide incident support through video, thermal imaging, and mapping. Drone equipment was acquired through a generous, private donation. In an effort to maximize the capabilities of this technology, multiple City departments are trained in its appropriate and ethical use.

In 2022, drone equipment was deployed for multiple large area searches.

The following departments are trained to operate this equipment:

- City Engineering/ GIS
- Dept. of Public Works
- FACTv
- Police Department
- Fire Department



# FIRE SERVICE INTERNSHIP

Under the general management of the Fire Science Internship Program Mentor, this position is responsible for station/department activities, emergency response, and learning the profession by completing a course of study that culminates in an Associate Degree in Fire Science from Madison College. The position generally functions at the task level during emergency incident stabilization.

## FIRST YEAR INTERNS:

All interns are expected to fully be embedded in our department in areas such as training, familiarization with equipment and preparing for their first year of college in the Fire Science Degree program. The first year is critical to a successful internship as it sets the foundation of the fire service before learning advanced skills in both fire and EMS.

## SECOND YEAR INTERNS:

The second year of the internship is intended to add on to each intern's skill set and prepare them to be marketable for full time employment. If granted, interns will be allowed to attend trainings outside the department and even the state. Second year interns will be held to a higher standard and expected to assist the first year interns with any possible hardships.

## THIRD YEAR OPTION:

Once successfully completing the two year internship and graduating, each intern will have an option to transition into a paid on premise member with FFD and continue to be a valuable asset to our department. Attending Paramedic school will be highly recommended but NOT offered by FFD. Interns that decide to attend Paramedic school are offered room and board during that time span.



# HONOR GUARD



Established in September of 2011, the Fitchburg Fire Department's Honor Guard formed to honor and remember firefighters and other public servants. The Honor Guard is affiliated with the Fitchburg Fire & Rescue Association and is not an official element of the department or the City. Regardless of affiliation, the Honor Guard represents the department and our City at funerals, memorial services and any other function authorized/requested by the chief of the department.

Members provide assistance through vigilance and support - all in an effort to honor and remember first responders who have answered their final alarm.

The Fitchburg Honor Guard assisted in over 20 events in 2022.





**FITCHBURG FIRE DEPARTMENT**

5791 LACY ROAD FITCHBURG, WI 53711

[www.fitchburgwi.gov/fire](http://www.fitchburgwi.gov/fire)



@Fitchburg Fire Rescue