

TOWN OF MILFORD

TOWN ADMINISTRATION



Date: April 30, 2024
To: Board of Selectmen
From: Lincoln Daley, Town Administrator
RE: Select Board Work Session
Emergency Services – Fire and Ambulance Operations

The purpose of the work session will be to (1) discuss the intermediate/long-term planned operations, personnel requirements, and associated costs for the Fire and Ambulance Departments and (2) explore opportunities/alternatives for emergency and ambulatory services to the Town. This introductory meeting will allow the Departments to summarize their strategic 5-10 year operational plans and associated recommendations for review and consideration. The information presented will provide the foundation for the in-depth discussions to further evaluate the identified options and opportunities.

Below and attached, please find the Work Session general agenda and related materials.

Work Session Agenda:

- 1) Defining Goals & Objectives
- 2) Fire Department Presentation – Strategic Plan Summary
- 3) Ambulance Presentation – Strategic Plan Summary
- 4) Opportunities/Options:
 - a. Maintain Department Organizational Structure
 - b. Combining Departments – Personnel, Facilities, Equipment
 - c. Privatization of Department(s)
 - d. Other
- 5) Next Steps:
 - a. Board requested information to be provided by staff/consultant.
 - b. Next scheduled work session(s)

Milford Fire Department

Executive Summary - Staffing



May 1, 2024

The Milford Fire Department is currently limited in staffing which is impacting our ability to effectively respond to emergencies and serve the community in the fashion the community has been served in the past and below a level of service that we strive for.

The reasons are multi-fold and complex but from a high-level, there are 3 main elements impactful to this statement:

1. There are less people that desire to give time to their community and those that do want to give time have less free time to give. This impacts the MFD in two ways.
 - a. The past 5 years have resulted in less than 20% of new members improving competency and staying committed the department beyond 2 years.
 - b. Current firefighters are not fully committing to expanding their roles into vacant apparatus operators, leadership positions and officer roles, nor have the time commitment to learn, train, and practice for those roles.
2. Training standards have increased in both commitment and complexity and heavily rely on 'self-study' process vs in-class time. Only the most driven students can accomplish a minimum level of competency within 6 months, most now exceed a year.
3. Over the last 10 years, more than half the force of 45 call members have exited service without any consistent back-fill of capable experience. The top 4 most tenured employees will likely exit within the scope of our 5-year planning cycle, without ready succession. This exit will exceed 100 years of service to the Town.

The Town should be proud of what the MFD has accomplished in its history; Milford is the last top-20 community in the State that isn't entirely career staffed. The reality is that the days of having a waiting list of willing volunteers to join the ranks is long gone and the historical succession models do not exist today.

The initial process of creating the first crew of career employees started in 2016, and in 2022 we staffed 2 crews of 3 for minimum 12x7x365 coverage. We are at the phase today where we need to add 2 crews of 3 firefighters to meet the 24x7x365 minimum needs of the community and establish a 5-year plan.

The 5-year plan includes:

- Hiring these 2 new crews in early 2025, with expected readiness mid-summer 2025.
- Continued recruitment and support of a combination department.

- Expansion of our in-house training with additional certified Fire Instructors and aligning of our MFD minimum (aka Probie) competency training with the State's new 'On My Time' learning programs to maximize hours committed and achieving both local and national certified learning objectives.
- Continued investment into tools to enhance training, such as our Commercial Driver's License learning tools, engaging external instructors and partnering with our mutual aid peers for same.
- Enabling all members to attend and attain leading training and vocational experiences to avoid potential recruitment away from MFD.
- No part of this planning is without additional hiring in these 5 years.
 - o Likely replacement of Fire Chief.
 - o Likely replacement of Assistant Chief and/or Deputy Chief with a career senior officer.
 - o Expansion of Fire Inspection staff based upon existing Town growth.
 - o Expansion of career firefighters to get to a 4-person crew 24x7x365 to achieve minimum first-due standards towards appropriate NFPA objectives.

The MFD's key threats to these planning stages:

- a) Personnel: Today the department is so lean that any 1 person could make a difference. If we are simultaneously hit by multiple changes at once (including illness or injury), this would likely cost us in both overtime and call payroll.
- b) Training: We have no firefighters that are current apparatus operators and only 1 working for his commercial drivers licenses (CDL), the first step in becoming an operator. We have 1 that has his CDL and needs competency on apparatus operation.

Not everyone passes their first attempts at attaining CDL, nor emergency vehicle operator requirements. This is critical and has no ready solution if the current training flow falls apart.

We look forward to the start of our collaboration this evening.

Years 2014 thru 2023

Total Incident Counts per year

Incident Type

		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
1 - Fire											
100	Fire, Other	2	1	1	0	6	0	0	1	0	0
111	Building Fire	15	17	22	11	23	17	17	17	18	13
113	Cooking Fire, confined to container	7	5	6	2	6	2	5	5	10	8
114	Chimney or flue fire	3	2	0	2	2	2	1	2	3	1
116	Fuel Burner/boiler malfunction	6	4	6	5	2	1	0	0	4	3
118	Trash or Rubbish fire in a structure	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	6
130	Vehicle Fire, other	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
131	Passenger Vehicle Fire	2	6	7	3	5	4	6	2	2	6
132	Road Freight or transport vehicle fire	0	0	1	2	0	0	2	0	0	0
137	Camper or RV Fire	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
138	Offroad or heavy equipment fire	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
140	Natural Vegetation fire, other	1	5	4	0	1	1	2	2	1	0
141	Forest, Woods or wildland fire	0	5	3	2	3	0	2	4	4	3
142	Brush fire	7	5	11	7	4	3	14	7	8	2
143	Grass Fire	2	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
150	Outside rubbish fire, other	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	1
151	Outside rubbish, trash, waste fire	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	2
153	Construction or demo landfill fire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
154	Dumpster Fire	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	2
160	Special outside fire, other	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	2	1	2
161	Outside storage fire	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	0	0	0
162	Outside equipment fire	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
		48	52	64	38	55	36	56	45	55	52
2 - Overpressure Rupture, Explosion, Overheat (no fire)											
200	Overpressure rupture, explosion, overheat other	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0
210	Overpressure rupture from steam, other	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0
211	Overpressure rupture of steam pipe or pipeline	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
243	Fireworks explosion (no fire)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
251	Excessive heat, overheat scorch burns with no ignition	0	2	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	3
		2	3	0	1	2	4	3	1	1	4

3 - Rescue & EMS

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
300 Rescue and EMS incident, other.	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0
311 Medical assist, assist EMS crew	83	100	92	138	161	141	111	135	118	58
320 Emergency medical service, other	1	2	2	5	15	9	6	7	8	1
321 EMS call, excluding vehicle accident with injury	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	17	93
322 Motor vehicle accident with injuries	21	29	43	35	34	29	32	27	43	37
323 Motor vehicle/pedestrian accident	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	6
324 Motor vehicle accident with no injuries	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	2	37	77
331 Lock-in (if lock out , use 511)	1	1	2	4	0	1	1	2	0	2
340 Search for lost person, other	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
341 Search for person on land.	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0
342 Search for person in water.	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
350 Extrication, rescue, other.	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	3
352 Extrication of victim(s) from vehicle	2	3	6	3	1	7	4	4	3	4
353 Removal of victim(s) from stalled elevator.	0	1	1	2	4	2	1	1	4	5
357 Extrication of victim(s) from machinery	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
360 Water and ice-related rescue, other.	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
362 Ice rescue.	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
363 Swift water rescue	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
371 Electrocutation or potential electrocutation	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
381 Rescue or EMS standby for hazardous conditions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
	112	138	152	189	217	191	158	185	236	294

4 - Hazardous Conditions (No Fire)

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
400 Hazardous condition (no fire), other.	0	0	4	5	2	1	1	5	3	3
410 Combustible/flammable gas/liquid condition, other	1	1	4	2	2	1	0	3	3	0
411 Gasoline or other flammable liquid spill	7	8	6	5	6	9	4	4	2	6
412 Gas leak (natural gas or LPG)	9	15	12	8	14	9	10	9	13	19
413 Oil or other combustible liquid spill	6	5	5	6	4	3	7	2	1	2
420 Toxic chemical condition, other.	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
421 Chemical hazard (no spill or leak).	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
422 Chemical spill or leak.	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	3	1
424 Carbon monoxide incident	7	9	5	7	14	9	13	14	11	9
440 Electrical wiring/equipment problem, Other	6	2	2	2	1	4	7	2	2	6
441 Heat from short circuit (wiring), defective/worn	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	0	2
442 Overheated motor or wiring.	0	3	2	1	1	1	0	1	0	5
443 Breakdown of light ballast.	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
444 Power line down	18	15	12	24	18	12	13	11	10	9
445 Arcing, shorted electrical equipment	5	4	8	3	8	4	5	6	5	2
451 Biological hazard, confirmed or suspected.	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
460 Accident, potential accident, Other	1	2	1	3	2	0	2	2	0	2
461 Building or structure weakened or collapsed	2	2	3	3	1	2	2	0	2	2
462 Aircraft standby	3	3	5	0	1	2	1	1	1	0
463 Vehicle accident, general cleanup	76	74	79	73	67	66	51	51	21	10
480 Attempted burning, illegal action, Other	1	0	0	1	0	4	8	0	7	2
481 Attempt to burn.	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	143	151	151	146	147	129	126	113	84	81

5 - Service Calls

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
500 Service Call, other	361	398	401	302	324	414	333	460	160	5
510 Person in distress, other.	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
511 Lock-out.	0	9	7	5	5	5	5	10	9	10
520 Water problem, Other	2	2	3	3	3	3	1	0	0	3
521 Water (not people) evacuation.	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
522 Water or steam leak	1	6	4	4	9	1	0	2	5	10
531 Smoke or odor removal	40	46	46	39	45	27	16	7	5	7
541 Animal problem.	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
542 Animal rescue.	0	1	3	1	0	0	0	2	2	3
550 Public service assistance, Other	1	0	0	0	0	3	1	2	0	5
551 Assist police or other governmental agency.	0	2	7	1	2	3	3	9	6	6
552 Police matter.	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
553 Public service	1	1	0	1	4	0	0	2	505	104
554 Assist invalid.	0	0	0	12	3	4	1	3	15	13
555 Defective elevator, no occupants	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	1	5
561 Unauthorized burning	21	30	44	23	20	14	26	16	15	19
571 Cover assignment, standby, moveup	6	17	18	3	15	10	9	9	11	5
	433	513	534	396	431	487	396	522	734	199

6 - Good Intent

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
600 Good intent call, Other	25	57	46	55	45	36	34	24	16	2
611 Dispatched & cancelled en route	29	32	32	42	58	59	49	55	69	65
621 Wrong location	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0
622 No Incident found on arrival at dispatch address	3	2	2	7	4	1	3	1	5	21
631 Authorized controlled burning	12	13	5	10	4	11	4	2	7	1
641 Vicinity alarm (incident in other location)	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
650 Steam, Other gas mistaken for smoke, Other	2	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
651 Smoke scare, odor of smoke	7	8	3	6	7	2	8	4	14	14
652 Steam, vapor, fog or dust thought to be smoke	3	1	1	1	1	2	0	0	1	3
653 Smoke from barbecue	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0
671 HazMat release investigation w/no HazMat	2	0	0	1	4	0	1	2	3	5
	84	114	91	123	123	114	100	90	117	112

7 - False Alarm & False Call		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
700	False alarm or false call, Other	5	2	5	4	6	3	2	2	5	4
710	Malicious, mischievous false alarm, other	0	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
711	Municipal alarm system, malicious false alarm	2	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
712	Direct tie to FD, malicious false alarm	1	3	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	1
713	Telephone, malicious false alarm.	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
714	Central station, malicious false alarm	4	2	3	0	0	1	0	0	2	0
715	Local alarm system, malicious false alarm	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
721	Bomb scare (no bomb).	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
730	System malfunction, Other	4	5	3	5	4	4	3	6	6	1
731	Sprinkler activation due to malfunction	3	7	2	3	4	1	0	0	2	2
732	Extinguishing system activation due to malfunction.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
733	Smoke detector activation due to malfunction	12	22	24	21	29	37	24	29	17	29
734	Heat detector activation due to malfunction	2	0	2	0	1	0	0	2	3	2
735	Alarm system sounded due to malfunction	3	4	7	7	7	7	5	11	13	31
736	CO detector activation due to malfunction	2	3	0	4	2	10	8	2	3	2
740	Unintentional transmission of alarm, Other	6	9	3	2	6	3	5	6	3	16
741	Sprinkler activation, no fire - unintentional	19	10	4	4	4	2	2	3	5	5
742	Extinguishing system activation.	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0
743	Smoke detector activation, no fire - unintentional	69	39	53	57	57	50	62	77	60	50
744	Detector activation, no fire - unintentional	23	8	20	20	18	9	12	10	17	14
745	Alarm system activation, no fire - unintentional	28	34	22	19	39	26	20	34	48	34
746	Carbon monoxide detector activation, no CO	25	17	12	10	12	19	11	12	23	8
		209	172	168	156	193	175	156	195	212	205
8 - Severe Weather & Natural Disaster		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
800	Severe weather or natural disaster, other.	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
812	Flood assessment	0	1	0	1	3	0	1	0	2	0
813	Wind storm assessment	0	0	1	0	4	0	5	5	12	35
814	Lightning strike (no fire)	2	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
		2	3	4	1	8	0	6	5	14	36
9 - Special Incident Type		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
900	Special type of incident, other.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
911	Citizen complaint	1	2	1	2	3	0	0	0	1	0
		1	2	1	2	3	0	0	0	2	0
		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total Calls =		1034	1148	1165	1052	1179	1136	1001	1156	1455	983
Total Calls excluding Service Calls =		673	750	764	750	855	722	668	696	790	874

Ambulance department responsibility: Provide emergency and non-emergency pre-hospital health care and transport. Paramedic level service. Rapid Sequence Intubation certified. PIFT credentialed.

Future evolution of MAS

3 to 5 Years

- Staff second ambulance during 23:00 – 07:00 (call volume dependent), 112 hours total requiring two full-time employees with per-diem/part-time employees filling in remaining 16 hours.
- Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) care
- Point Of Care Ultra Sound (POCUS)

6 to 10 Years

- Regional EMS – community ability to support individual EMS services will become financially challenging going forward – personnel and infrastructure.

Ambulance Department Information

- Facility: Four (4) ambulance bays with dormitory space, occupied in December 2013
- Vehicles: Ambulances - three (3) ALS (Paramedic) equipped: 2013 model year x2 and 2020 model year; Paramedic Response Vehicle (PRV) model year 2022 - 1; Director vehicle model year 2013 – 1
- Ambulance replacement cycle: 5-years with each ambulance serving 15-years. Next scheduled replacement 2028.
- Personnel
 - Full-time - Director - 1; Captain/Paramedic (scheduled field providers) - 2; Paramedic Field providers - 2; AEMT - 7
 - Part-time - AEMT - 3
 - Per-Diem – 15: Paramedic - 7 and AEMT – 8
 - Volunteer - 2
- Staffing: Two (2) staffed ambulances - minimum of two (2) licensed EMS providers per ambulance
 - 1 at 24-hours/7-days per week with Paramedic
 - 1 at 16-hours/7-days per week with AEMT
- 2,000-plus annual call volume
- \$1.1 M annual revenue (2023)

History

- Began operations on January 1, 1974 at the BLS level with two ambulances and all volunteer staffing.
- Two full-time EMT employees added in 1988 to cover 40-hours per week of daytime coverage.

- Full-time Director/Paramedic added in June 1993.
- 1995-1998 added additional full-time Paramedic providers for 24/7 coverage
- 2003 Police station building passes at Town Vote, ambulance facility discussed leading to ambulance privatization discussion.
- 2004 – 2006: 2004 Privatization reviewed – Rockingham Ambulance proposal: zero cost for five years with three five-year extensions at zero cost; 2005 town votes to maintain department (62%); 2005: Merger with Fire department discussed and eventually dropped; 2006 new T.A. Guy Scaife tasked with reviewing privatization and obtaining quotes from previous submitters – Rockingham Ambulance submitted \$697,000 annually, BOS decided to maintain municipal department. Rockingham Ambulance goes out of business in 2011 with a two to three month notice to employees and the City of Nashua.
- 2016 transitioned to paid staffing from volunteer for one ambulance 24/7 and second ambulance 16-hours/7, due to a lack of reliable volunteer availability. Annual second ambulance need during 23:00 -07:00 predicted at 42 calls, decision made not to staff second ambulance during this time at a savings of \$135,000 annually.
- 2020 – 2023 transitioned to twelve full-time staff and 32-hours/week covered with part-time/per-diem staffing.

Call Volume - Type of Call

- 2023: ALS - 927; BLS – 586 TOTAL: 1,513 transports / 2,120 EMS requests (inc. m/aid)
- 2022: ALS - 946; BLS – 538 TOTAL: 1,484 transports / 2,059 EMS requests (inc. m/aid)
- 2021: ALS - 963; BLS – 571 TOTAL: 1,528 transports / 2,103 EMS requests (inc. m/aid)

Second Ambulance Calls (07:00 – 23:00)

- 2023: 431 (20.9%)
- 2022: 371 (18.4%)
- 2021: 428 (27.8%)

Third Ambulance Calls

- 2023: 3
- 2022: 5
- 2021: 15 (Billing Clerk licensed EMS provider)

Mutual Aid – Received (07:00-23:00 and 23:00-07:00) and Provided

- 2023: 80 - 59/21 // 67
- 2022: 76 – 48/28 // 67
- 2021: 77 – 51/26 // 65

Revenue from second ambulance (average)

- 2023: \$236,602
- 2022: \$182,020
- 2021: \$209,985

Length of Call Time – Transport (2023): 1 hour and 28 minutes