

Incorporated in 1845
SOUTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP
Burlington County, New Jersey

Fire Department Study
Final Report: January 2019



Prepared by:
The Public Safety Institute Group
PUBLIC SAFETY INSTITUTE

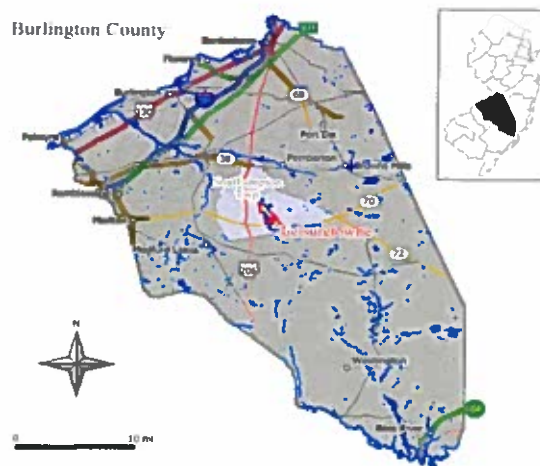


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"The best way to predict the future is to invent it"

SOUTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP FIRE STUDY FINAL REPORT

JANUARY 2019



**Map of Burlington County showing Southampton highlighted in light blue
Inset on upper right: State of New Jersey with Burlington County highlighted in black
Mapping Source: Wikipedia**

THIS REPORT is the product of a study conducted by the PSI Group on behalf of Southampton Township to evaluate the current level of Fire Department operations in the Township's two serving volunteer fire companies for the purpose of issuing findings and recommendations to the governing body with respect to current membership levels, number and location of fire stations, a practical needs-based fire apparatus replacement schedule and other matters related to fire operations.

**DEDICATED TO THE FIREFIGHTERS AND FAMILY MEMBERS
OF THE HAMPTON LAKES AND VINCENT VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANIES**

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INTRODUCTION

On July 19, 2018, the Public Safety Institute (PSI) Group, a fire-police-emergency medical service consulting firm based in New Jersey, was given an opportunity to visit Southampton Township to discuss matters relative to the Hampton Lakes and Vincent Volunteer Fire Companies. In attendance for the Township was Kathleen Hoffman, Township Administrator and Municipal Clerk. In attendance for the PSI Group was Don Huber, a retired chief fire officer, fire director and former State Fiscal Monitor. Huber is the founder and chief operating officer of the PSI Group.

Subsequent to that meeting, the PSI Group submitted a proposal to conduct a study of the two serving fire companies and to produce findings and recommendations to the local governing body at the conclusion of its research.

On or about July 21, 2018 the parties reached an agreement and a contract for services was authorized by the local governing body. Work on the study began in late July 2018.

This report is the product of the events described above.

While there is typically no solitary way to establish, staff, organize, operate and fund a fire department, the recommendations made in this report are fashioned to serve as a meaningful guide for the Township in planning to provide adequate and cost-efficient fire protection services to the community in the Township of Southampton now and in the future.

In the final analysis, whatever findings are shared and recommendations offered in this report, they should under no circumstances diminish in any capacity, the noble, dedicated and esteemed service of the volunteer firefighting personnel from each of the two serving fire companies.

While the local governing officials have an intrinsic duty to be good stewards of every tax dollar collected, it is no less the duty of all residents of Southampton to understand and appreciate the life-and-property-saving value of its fire protection services. With these principles in mind, it would be in the best interest of all parties concerned to commit to the following key tenets in considering the merits of any recommendations made as a result of this study:

- 1) **Acknowledge** that the township, like many other NJ municipalities, is facing budgetary challenges and limitations that are not likely to improve dramatically in the short term
- 2) **Commit** to developing unilateral collaborations between the two fire companies designed to provide a functionally enhanced and unified fire department organizational structure
- 3) **Seek** to identify the short and long term fire protection needs of the community and develop a strategic vision designed to meet those needs in a prudent and fiscally sustainable manner
- 4) **Anticipate and prepare** for the logistical obstacles and political resistance that will accompany the pursuit of any progressive changes in the status quo

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A band of individuals shared their time, interest, knowledge, and perceptions in the process of this study. Their collective contributions to this body of work functioned as the framework for the conclusions reached herein and in so doing they have provided a valued service to the residents of Southampton and their governing body and the researchers-authors of this report.

Acknowledged with genuine appreciation and a debt of gratitude for their assistance, insights and perspectives:

Kathleen Hoffman, Township Administrator & Municipal Clerk
Christy Andres, Deputy Municipal Clerk
Thomas Rathjen, Chief, Hampton Lakes Volunteer Fire Company
Barry T. Pratt, Chief, Vincent Volunteer Fire Company
Burlington County Fire Chiefs Association
Craig Augustoni, State Division of Fire Safety
Richard Braslow, Esq.
Jim Lepore, Defender Emergency Products
Vincent Granese, Project Coordinator, PSI Group

And all officers, firefighters and support staff
Serving in the Hampton Lakes and Vincent Volunteer Fire Companies
without whose participation and input this initiative would have been absent valuable
viewpoints and discernments vital to the methodology utilized in this study

WITH SPECIAL RECOGNITION TO THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY

In seeing fit to authorize this study & for their many acts of service for the residents of Southampton

Mayor James Young

Deputy Mayor Bill Raftery

Committeeman Ronald Heston

Committeeman Michael Mikulski

Committeewoman Elizabeth Rossell

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Southampton Township Committee should consider the adoption of an ordinance to be codified as **CHAPTER 13. FIRE DEPARTMENT** (*note: Chapter 13 is currently reserved in the Code Book*) establishing the Township of Southampton Fire Department. A sample model of such a chapter has been provided in Chapter 2. **AUTHORITY AND GOVERNANCE** of this report. It includes the following:

CHAPTER 13. FIRE DEPARTMENT

13-1. CREATION AND ACCEPTANCE

13-2. COMPOSITION AND ADMITTANCE

13-3. CONTROL, ORGANIZATION AND ELECTIONS

13-4. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

13-5. SUSPENSION AND REMOVAL

13-6. MINIMUM AGE OF MEMBERS AND JUNIOR FIREFIGHTER PROGRAM

13-7. ATTENDANCE OF MEETINGS, TRAINING AND CALLS FOR SERVICE

13-8. RECORD KEEPING AND FINANCIAL REPORTS

13-9. APPLICABLE STATE LAWS AND SEPERATION CLAUSE

The Southampton Township Committee should consider the adoption of an ordinance revising **CHAPTER 16. FIRE PREVENTION** of the Municipal Code, which was found to be largely outdated and in need of revisions. A sample model of a revised of Chapter 16 has been provided in Chapter 2.

AUTHORITY AND GOVERNANCE of this report. It includes the following:

CHAPTER 16. FIRE PREVENTION

16-1. LOCAL ENFORCEMENT

16-2. DEFINITIONS

16-3. LOCAL ENFORCEMENT

16-4. LOCAL ENFORCEMENT AGENCY

16-5. FIRE OFFICIAL

16-6. FIRE INSPECTORS

16-7. LIFE HAZARD USES

16-8. NON-LIFE HAZARD USES

16-9. FEES

16-10. TIME FOR COMPLIANCE

16-11. PENALTIES

16-12. PREEMPTION BY THE STATE UNIFROM CONSTRUCTION CODE

16-13. APPEALS

All recommendations for revisions of the Municipal Code should be subject to attorney review and modifications by the Township Committee.

Continue to staff, equip and utilize both fire stations for the effective deployment capability of fire units to all points within the Township. Necessary capital planning for building maintenance and/or upgrades along with replacement of major in-house equipment supported by resourceful grant applications for the same should be utilized to maintain the infrastructure and operating systems essential to the preparedness and safety of firefighters.

A complete and thorough annual inventory of all motorized equipment should be performed to include a bona fide mechanical assessment with regard to overall safety and operating condition/maintenance/repair needs/regulatory compliance/service history, and expected service life remaining on each unit. Findings should be documented in an annual fire apparatus and motorized fleet report and provided to the authority having jurisdiction.

Motorized equipment deemed unsafe, unserviceable, obsolete or otherwise unneeded should be removed from the department inventory and disposed of in accordance to law (i.e. auction, trade-in, hold-harmless donation, etc.).

Based on the annual fire apparatus and motorized fleet report, an apparatus replacement schedule should be developed and adopted by Southampton Township based on the discernable needs of the fire department to replace old units and add to the motorized fleet as necessary for the safe and effective operation of fire apparatus and support vehicles.

The study team has assembled the four-phase fire apparatus replacement schedule that follows to serve as a guide in the development of a working capital plan for fire apparatus:

FIRE APPARATUS REPLACEMENT SCHEDULE

REPLACEMENT YEAR	APPARATUS BEING REPLACED	APPARATUS TO BE ACQUIRED
2019-2020	1986 FORD TANKER TRUCK HAMPTON LAKES VFC	NEW 6-PERSON CREW CAB TANKER/PUMPER HAMPTON LAKES VFC
2026-2027	1994 SPARTAN TANKER TRUCK VINCENT VFC	NEW 6-PERSON CREW CAB TANKER/PUMPER VINCENT VFC
2033-2034	1995 FREIGHTLINER PUMPER/ENGINE HAMPTON LAKES VFC	NEW PUMPER/ENGINE HAMPTON LAKES VFC
2040-2041	2001 KME PUMPER/ENGINE VINCENT VFC	NEW RESCUE/PUMPER VINCENT VFC

This schedule is intended to serve a guide in the development of a working capital plan

Based on the fire apparatus replacement schedule provided above, the Hampton Lakes Fire Company would be consigned with one 6-person crew cab tanker/pumper and one pumper/engine; the Vincent Fire Company would be consigned with one 6-person crew cab tanker/pumper and one rescue/pumper. This strategy will eliminate the need going forward to replace two existing units; one Hampton Lakes pumper/engine and one Vincent pumper/engine; reducing the overall number of Township frontline fire apparatus from six units to four units.

At least one of the decommissioned pumper/engines (ostensibly the most reliable such apparatus with the likelihood of having the longest remaining service life) should be kept as a reserve unit in lieu of being traded in or otherwise removed from the department inventory. The reserve engine should be equipped and maintained in serviceable condition at all times and made available for the use by either of the serving fire companies when required on an as-needed basis for emergencies or when frontline units are out of service for repairs or are otherwise deemed unfit/unsafe for use.

*1 tanker
2 engines must*

*2 tenders to be
eliminate
discount
2*

In consultation with the serving fire companies, the Township should move aggressively toward the standardization of any new purchases of fire apparatus and equipment. Standardization of apparatus and equipment provides the potential for significant cost savings and the ability to simplify/minimize inventory of parts. More importantly, standardizing resources (as well as operational guidelines and procedures) will have the added benefit of having all members of multiple fire companies trained and familiar with the operation of apparatus and equipment used in other fire companies (as well as their own). This best-practice approach will make available the mutual capacity of the fire companies to share or interchange resources as needed off or on the fireground; which in the case of the latter, such interoperability of resources would lend itself to making emergency operations safer, more efficient and more effective.

The Township may wish to consider lease-purchasing over the option of capital bonding. Further, in lieu of acquisition by solicitation of bid specifications, the authority having jurisdiction may wish to utilize the services and products of vendors under state contract and/or approved cooperative purchasing entities such as but not limited to the Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC).

The annual Township appropriation in combination with the proceeds received through the fire company fund drives and other sources of revenue appear to be adequate to cover anticipated expenses for Fire Operations (i.e. apparatus and equipment repairs, service and certain replacements/new acquisitions) and General Operations (i.e. fire station and certain fire company expenses). Proper financial oversight should be in place to include review and pre-approval of all non-emergent purchases as well as an annual audit of all purchases for goods and services.

Maintain the current level of membership in both fire companies subject to proposed CHAPTER 13. FIRE DEPARTMENT Section 13-2A (1) and (2) limiting the active volunteer firefighter membership to no more than 30 active members per fire company not to include Explorers, Juniors, Probationary Firefighters, Life Members and other non-firefighting contributory/support members.

In *addition* to the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) record keeping that documents calls for service by category for both fire companies separate and apart from one another, a data base of calls for service should be maintained to include:

- How calls are received and the response times to all incidents
- Number and identify of all apparatus or units that respond to a call
- The time of day each unit is placed out of service and the time of day each unit is returned into service
- The number and identity of members on each apparatus or unit that responds to a call or is otherwise taken out on the road for an activity or event
- Tracking and documenting the number of *department* calls for service, which should be the equivalent to the sum of company calls for service solely answered by Hampton Lakes PLUS the sum of company calls for service solely answered by Vincent PLUS the sum of calls for service answered by both Hampton Lakes and Vincent

The Township should continue to fund both fire companies at the present appropriation level to maintain all Township-owned fire apparatus in safe and effective operating condition and for other legitimate expenses of the fire department. All non-emergent purchases should be pre-approved by the Township and both fire companies should be required to certify that all mandated testing and/or certification of equipment is performed annually (or as otherwise required) to include but not be

limited to SCBA Fit Test, hose testing, non-destructive ground ladder testing, SCBA air cylinder hydrostatic testing, personal protective gear and all apparatus maintenance services as outlined in Chapter 4 (page 32) of this report.

Proper fiscal auditing should continue regarding municipal and non-municipal appropriations and expenditures simply as a best practice for the provision of accountability at all levels and compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

In recognition of the volunteer membership "life-cycle" and in a manner consistent with the present and future needs of the fire companies, appropriate measures should be taken to anticipate membership needs and to develop a township wide recruitment and retention program. One excellent resource in this regard is the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) website www.nfvc.org link to "Make Me A Firefighter". Supplemental volunteer recruitment and retention material is provided at the conclusion of this report.

All recommendations offered in this report are subject to modification as seen fit by the authority having jurisdiction.

All recommendations offered in this report are subject to attorney review and all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements and guidelines.

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1. TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHAMPTON

THE TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHAMPTON was originally incorporated Coaxen Township by an act of the New Jersey Legislature on March 10, 1845 from portions of the former Northampton Township presently known as Mount Holly Township. Three weeks later on April 1, 1845, it took the name Southampton. Portions of Southampton have since been acquired to form the Townships of Pemberton (March 10, 1846); Shamong (February 19, 1852); Lumberton (March 14, 1860); Woodland (March 7, 1866) and Tabernacle (March 22, 1901).

Southampton is situated in the central region of Burlington County, New Jersey, where it occupies 44.224 square miles; of which 43.668 square miles are land and 0.556 square miles are water.

The Township is located within the New Jersey Pine Barrens and supports a population of 10,464 (2010 Census) made up of approximately 4,746 households and an estimated 236.61 people per square mile.

The Township is comprised of several unincorporated sections including Vincentown and Hampton Lakes, both of which mark the locations of the two local serving fire companies; the Vincent Volunteer Fire Company and the Hampton Lakes Volunteer Fire Company, respectively. Still other sub-divisions of the township located partially or wholly within Southampton are Beaverville, Buddtown, Burrs Mill, Chairville, Crescent Heights, Ewansville, Ewingville, Leisuretowne, Medford Park, Oak Shade, Red Lion, Retreat and Sandtown.



MAP OF SOUTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP IN BURLINGTON COUNTY

Source of map: www.southamptonnj.org

Southampton is bordered by the municipalities of Easthampton Township, Lumberton Township, Medford Township, Pemberton Township, Tabernacle Township and Woodland Township.

Southampton is governed under the Township Committee form of government consisting of five Township Committee members who are elected at-large directly by the public to serve staggered three-year terms in Office. The mayor and deputy mayor are selected by the Township Committee at the annual reorganization meeting to serve one-year terms in those positions.

The Township's Total Taxable Valuation as of Oct. 1, 2017 was \$997,053,600. The 2015 municipal purpose tax was \$3,726,122.34; the average residential assessment in 2015 was \$192,034; the municipal purpose tax on the average assessed residence was \$716.29 at a municipal tax rate of \$0.394. The total municipal purpose tax in 2017 was \$4,080,007; in 2018 it was \$4,085,721, an increase of \$5,714 or .0014%. The municipal purpose tax rate in 2017 and 2018 was \$0.409 per \$100 value (no change from 2017 to 2018). Township "Aid to Fire Companies" in 2018 was \$60,000 with an additional \$20,000 for Fire Department O/E; resulting per capita cost for fire protection services in 2018 was calculated at \$16.86 per household or \$7.65 per resident.

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2. AUTHORITY AND GOVERNANCE

THE TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHAMPTON currently receives primary fire protection from two local volunteer fire companies - the Hampton Lakes Volunteer Fire Company and the Vincent Volunteer Fire Company - principally funded by the Township and operating under the authority of the local governing body. Local Municipal Codes relative to the fire companies include Chapter 16 Fire Prevention Code and Chapter 22 Emergency Rescue Services. Chapter 16 mainly addresses the authority and enforcement of the Township's fire prevention program and activities; Chapter 22 mainly addresses the mechanism by which the local volunteer fire and rescue squads may bill responsible parties for certain services as prescribed in that Chapter. Beyond Chapters 16 and 22, little or no references were found in the Municipal Code Book relative to the serving fire companies or detailing the establishment, authority and governance of the fire protection forces in service to the Township. It is the recommendation of the study team that the Township give serious consideration to the inclusion of such a chapter in its Municipal Codes. While there are many variations of such provisions, a sample of a good working model (subject to revision as the local governing body may see fit) is provided below:

SAMPLE MODEL FOR CREATION OF CHAPTER 13. FIRE DEPARTMENT

CHAPTER 13. FIRE DEPARTMENT (*note: Chapter 13 is currently reserved in the Code Book*)

13-1. CREATION AND ACCEPTANCE

13-2. COMPOSITION AND ADMITTANCE

13-3. CONTROL, ORGANIZATION AND ELECTIONS

13-4. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

13-5. SUSPENSION AND REMOVAL

13-6. MINIMUM AGE OF MEMBERS AND JUNIOR FIREFIGHTER PROGRAM

13-7. ATTENDANCE OF MEETINGS, TRAINING AND CALLS FOR SERVICE

13-8. RECORD KEEPING AND FINANCIAL REPORTS

13-9. APPLICABLE STATE LAWS AND SEPERATION CLAUSE

13-1. CREATION AND ACCEPTANCE

In the common public interests of the preservation of life and protection of property against fire and other perils, the Southampton Fire Department is hereby created and established in the Township of Southampton to consist of such incorporated volunteer fire companies that now exist or may hereafter exist within or of the Township, provided that all such existing and/or future fire companies shall accept the conditions and provisions of this Chapter, which acceptance shall be in writing under corporate seal or otherwise witnessed and notarized in the State of New Jersey, signed by the Fire Company President and attested by its Secretary, and which acceptance shall be binding in perpetuity and filed in the Office of the Township Clerk. By virtue of this section and hereinafter the serving volunteer fire companies, while maintaining their rightful capacity to preserve their company identities, shall collectively be known as the Southampton Fire Department.

13-2. COMPOSITION AND ADMITTANCE

A. The Fire Department shall consist of two fire companies as stated herein:

- (1) One fire station in Hampton Lakes known as the Hampton Lakes Volunteer Fire Company with an active firefighter membership not to exceed 30 members**
- (2) One fire station in Vincenttown known as the Vincent Volunteer Fire Company with an active firefighter membership not to exceed 30 members**

- B. Any new volunteer fire company or companies that may hereafter be organized or otherwise become available for active service may be admitted to the Fire Department subject to the consent and authorization of the Township Committee in lieu of or in addition to the serving fire companies in existence.**
- C. The Township may choose to appoint an overall Fire Department Chief and Assistant Chief. In this regard , the Fire Chiefs from the serving fire companies will fill these positions on a cyclical basis of not less than one year terms of office at the discretion of the Township Committee.**
- D. In consultation with all chief officers, company presidents and administrative staff, the department fire chief shall develop and monitor for progress, a long term strategic vision for the fire department that shall to every extent possible, provide for coordinated and consistent response protocols, unilateral standardization of equipment, procedures, practices and guidelines; and a fire department organizational structure operating under a single command in a setting that shall require the serving fire companies to recognize and function under the established fire department hierarchy while still having the capacity to maintain their individual fire company identities.**

13-3. CONTROL, ORGANIZATION AND ELECTIONS

- A. The Fire Department shall be under the general direction and control of the Chairperson and Assistance Chairperson of the Township Committee Fire Board which shall in consultation with the serving fire chiefs have the authority to issue written administrative policy and regulations.**
- B. The Township may choose to appoint an overall Fire Department Chief and Assistant Chief. In this regard , the fire chiefs from the serving fire companies will fill these positions on a cyclical basis consisting of not less than one-year terms of office at the discretion of the Township Committee.**
- C. In consultation with all chief officers, company presidents and administrative staff, the department fire chief shall develop and monitor for progress, a long term strategic vision for the fire department that shall to every extent possible, provide for coordinated and consistent response protocols, unilateral standardization of equipment, procedures, practices and guidelines; and a fire department organizational structure operating under a single command in a setting that shall require the serving fire companies to recognize and function under the established fire department hierarchy while still having the capacity to maintain their individual fire company identities.**
- D. Each serving volunteer fire company shall have one fire chief elected by members in good standing or otherwise in accordance to the Company By-Laws and chosen from a list of candidates possessing pre-established qualifications as reviewed and approved by the Township Committee.**
- E. Each serving volunteer fire company may have as many assistant fire chiefs, i.e. Assistant Chiefs, Deputy Chiefs, Battalion Chiefs, and company officers, i.e. Fire Captains, Fire Lieutenants, as deemed necessary by the fire company subject to the review and approval of the Township Committee.**
- F. The results of all fire company elections shall first be certified by the fire company secretary and in turn shall be certified by the Township Clerk and reported to the Township Committee at the first meeting in January or as otherwise practical for confirmation. Prior to officially assuming the duties of their new office, all newly elected officers shall subscribe to an Oath of Office before the Mayor and/or Township Clerk. The Oath of Office will be memorialized in writing and copies filed in the Office of the Township Clerk.**
- G. Unanticipated vacancies in officer positions may be filled in accordance to Company By-Laws pending regular elections of officers and subject to the review and approval of the Township Committee.**

13-4. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

- A. It shall be the duty of the fire chief to report to the appropriate authority having jurisdiction and to assume full command of all fire company forces during emergencies and all day-to-day non-emergency functions and operations. The fire chief shall also be ultimately responsible for the care, maintenance and use of all resources provided to the fire company by the Township. The fire chief may delegate authority for the execution of functions and facilitation of operations to members under his/her command and shall hold such members suitably accountable for same, but cannot and shall not delegate responsibility at the fire chief level to subordinates.**
- B. It shall be the duty of all chief officers under the fire chief to report directly to the fire chief or other appropriate chief officer pursuant to the established chain-of-command. Chief officers will be accountable to execute all assigned duties to the best of their ability and further, to be reasonably responsible for the behavior, conduct and work performance of all members assigned under their span of control and supervision. The chief officers may delegate authority for the execution of functions and facilitation of operations to members under their command and shall hold such members suitably accountable for same, but cannot and shall not delegate responsibility at the chief officer level to subordinates.**
- C. It shall be the duty of all fire company officers to report directly to a higher ranking company officer or chief officer pursuant to the established chain-of-command. Company officers will be accountable to execute all assigned duties to the best of their ability and further, to be reasonably responsible for the behavior, conduct and work performance of all members assigned under their span of control and supervision. The company officers may delegate authority for the execution of functions and facilitation of operations to members under their command and shall hold such members suitably accountable for same, but cannot and shall not delegate responsibility at the company officer level to subordinates.**

13-5. SUSPENSION AND REMOVAL

- A. The serving fire companies in the Township shall have the authority to take appropriate disciplinary measures and other suitable administrative actions upon members for the purpose of maintaining compliance with organizational dictates and to preserve order and efficiency of the department.**
- B. The Township Committee shall have the right to suspend, remove from office or otherwise take administrative action upon any volunteer member subsequent to written charges being drawn and submitted against such member/s. Any complaints or charges must be in writing and shall be filed in the Office of the Township Clerk who will present the same in its entirety to the Township Committee to be addressed at the next regular meeting of the Township Committee.**
- C. A hearing date shall be scheduled by the Township Committee to hear the complaint/charges within 15 days of said complaint/charges and notice thereof; Alleged offenders shall be provided with a copy of the complaint notice/charges to be served by the Township Clerk, a local law enforcement officer or other authorized party at least five days prior to the scheduled hearing.**
- D. Sworn witnesses may be heard at the hearing for or against the alleged offender/s. The charged party/parties may exercise their right to be represented by legal counsel.**
- E. Pending and throughout the hearing but not before the complaint/charges are filed with the Township Clerk, the Chairman of the Township Committee Fire Board or his/her designee may temporarily suspend a member with pending charges; provided however, that should the accused party/parties be found not guilty at the outcome of the hearing, he/she/they shall be reinstated without prejudice and back to the date the temporary suspension commenced.**

13-6. MINIMUM AGE OF MEMBERS AND JUNIOR FIREFIGHTERS PROGRAM

- A. No person shall be appointed and approved for full membership in any volunteer fire company serving in the Township of Southampton who has not reached the age of 18 years as of the date of appointment.**
- B. The serving fire companies shall have the option to establish and maintain a Junior Firefighter Program.**
- C. In order for a minor to become a member of the Junior Firefighters Program, he or she must meet the following requirements:**
 - (1) Be at least 14 years old but not more than 18 years old**
 - (2) Provide a certificate of examination by a physician licensed to practice in the State of New Jersey indicating that the proposed member is physically fit and suffering from no illness or disability that would prevent him/her from being a junior firefighter**
 - (3) Be a resident of the Township of Southampton or other allowable municipality if applicable**
 - (4) Be approved by the Township Committee upon recommendation of the Fire Chief.**
- D. Class I Junior Firefighters' Auxiliary: Individuals aged 16 and 17 shall be permitted to participate as a member of the Junior Firefighters' Auxiliary, conditioned upon compliance with the following rules:**
 - (1) The serving fire company shall provide adequate supervision and training to Class I members**
 - (2) While the Class I members of the Junior Firefighters' Auxiliary shall be permitted to be present at a fire or other emergency scene, they shall be limited in their duties to providing controlled support for the others fighting the fire and in providing services of a non-hazardous nature.**
 - (3) At the scene of a fire or other emergency, the Class I junior firefighters shall be properly supervised by a qualified member of the fire company**
 - (4) No Class I junior firefighter may oil, wipe or clean machinery in motion or perform any tasks of a dangerous nature**
 - (5) Prior to commencement of any Class I junior firefighter's activities, a written authorization, on a form to be prepared by the Clerk's Office, shall clearly indicate that the parent and/or guardian consents to his or her child's participation in the prescribed activities**
 - (6) The Township shall provide insurance coverage to the Junior Firefighters' Auxiliary in the same method and manner as it provides insurance coverage to adult volunteer members.**
- E. Class II Junior Firefighters' Auxiliary: Individuals aged 14 and 15 shall be permitted to participate as a member of the Junior Fire fighters' Auxiliary, conditioned upon compliance with the following rules:**
 - (1) They shall be permitted to attend meetings**
 - (2) They shall be permitted to receive instruction**
 - (3) They shall be permitted to participate in training that does not involve fire, smoke, toxic or noxious gas or hazardous materials or substances.**
 - (4) No Class II junior firefighter may oil, wipe or clean machinery in motion or perform any tasks of a dangerous nature**
 - (5) While they are performing their observational activities, Class II junior firefighters shall remain under the supervision of a qualified member of the fire company**
 - (6) Prior to commencement of any Class II junior firefighter's activities, a written authorization, on a form to be prepared by the Clerk's Office, shall clearly indicate that the parent and/or guardian consents to his or her child's participation in the prescribed activities**

- F. The respective fire companies are hereby authorized to add such additional requirements, subject to review and approval by the Township Committee, as each deems necessary for the protection, training, retention and general well-being of its Junior Firefighters' Auxiliary members

13-7. ATTENDANCE OF MEETINGS, TRAINING AND CALLS FOR SERVICE

- A. The serving fire companies shall establish reasonable standards to compel members to attend meetings, training sessions, live drills, calls for service and other events
- B. Rules may be promulgated subjecting members to administrative actions for unexcused failure to make a minimum number of meetings, training sessions, live drills, calls for service and other events
- C. The fire chiefs of the serving fire companies shall be responsible to provide an adequate number of training sessions and live drills each year to maintain the proficiency of members

13-8. RECORD KEEPING AND FINANCIAL REPORTS

- A. The Recording Secretaries of each fire company shall keep complete and accurate company records for all relevant matters of official business including but not limited to response by members to fires and other incidents, training sessions and live drills, meetings and other events; the minutes of all company meetings, and the results of all company elections and referendums.
- B. Within 45 days of December 31 of each year, the fire chief of each company shall submit to the Township Administrator via the Department Fire Chief if applicable, a complete financial report of the fire company including but not limited to information detailing the income received and expenditures made by the fire company during the course of the reporting period (budget cycle).

13-9. APPLICABLE STATE LAWS AND SEPARATION CLAUSE

- A. The fire department, the serving fire companies and all volunteer members therein shall be subject to all relevant laws of the State of New Jersey pertaining to fire departments in towns or townships and may receive any benefits resulting therefrom.
- B. In the event any portion of this Chapter is determined to be unlawful by an appropriate legal authority having jurisdiction, that provision shall either be removed or made legally compliant. In any such case, the remaining legally compliant portions of the Chapter will remain in force and unaffected by a finding of this nature.

NOTE REGARDING SOUTHAMPTON MUNICIPAL CODE, CHAPTER 16. FIRE PREVENTION CODE

Chapter 16. Fire Prevention Code was made part of the Municipal Code for the purpose of prescribing rules and regulations for the governing of conditions hazardous to life and property from fire and explosion. At the time of adoption it certainly would have provided valuable guidance and instruction for those individuals charged with the administration and enforcement of the local fire prevention program. Much has changed since that time and a complete revision of Chapter 16 is recommended to include but not be limited to the removal of any references to the BOCA BASIC FIRE PREVENTION CODE/1978 to be replaced by NEW JERSEY UNIFORM FIRE CODE (N.J.A.C. 5:70). A sample model of a revised Chapter 16 Fire Prevention Code is provided on the following page. *All recommendations for revisions of the Municipal Code should be subject to attorney review and modifications by the Township Committee.*

SAMPLE MODEL FOR REVISION OF CHAPTER 16. FIRE PREVENTION CODE

- 16-1. LOCAL ENFORCEMENT**
- 16-2. DEFINITIONS**
- 16-3. LOCAL ENFORCEMENT**
- 16-4. LOCAL ENFORCEMENT AGENCY**
- 16-5. FIRE OFFICIAL**
- 16-6. FIRE INSPECTORS**
- 16-7. LIFE HAZARD USES**
- 16-8. NON-LIFE HAZARD USES**
- 16-9. FEES**
- 16-10. TIME FOR COMPLIANCE**
- 16-11. PENALTIES**
- 16-12. PREEMPTION BY THE STATE UNIFORM CONSTRUCTION CODE**
- 16-13. APPEALS**

- 16-1. ***General Provisions.*** The purpose of this Chapter shall be to prescribe rules and regulations for the governing of conditions hazardous or potentially hazardous to life and property from fire, explosions, releases, spills and other circumstances or environments.

- 16-2. ***Definitions.*** As used in this chapter:

Act shall mean the Uniform Fire Safety Act. (N.J.S.A. 52:27D-202, et seq.).

Code shall mean the Uniform Fire Code adopted as N.J.A.C. 5:70.

Local Enforcing Agency shall mean the recognized authority responsible for the local administration and enforcement of the Uniform Fire Code.

Bureau of Fire Prevention shall mean the Office of out of which the Local Enforcing Agency will operate.

Fire Official shall mean the person certified by the Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs and appointed or designated by the local appointing authority to head the Local Enforcing Agency.

Fire Inspector shall mean the person working under the direction of the Fire Official who is certified by the Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs and appointed or designated by the appointing authority to serve in such capacity.

Life hazard use shall mean any life hazard use designated by the Code as defined in N.J.A.C. 5:70-1.5.

Owner shall mean a person who owns, purports to own, manages, rents, leases, or exercises control over a building, structure, premises or use or any portion thereof.

- 16-3. ***Local Enforcement.***

Pursuant to Section 11 of the Uniform Fire Safety Act (N.J.S.A. 52:27D-202), the New Jersey Uniform Fire Code (N.J.A.C. 5:70) shall be locally enforced in the Township.

16-4. Local Enforcing Agency.

The responsible authority for the administration and enforcement of the Uniform Fire Code that shall be headed by the Local Fire Official in charge of the Bureau of Fire Prevention.

16-5. Fire Official.

- (a) *Appointment.* At its annual reorganizational meeting, the Township Committee shall appoint a certified Fire Official to serve as the chief administrator of the Bureau of Fire Prevention.
- (b) *Certification.* No person shall be appointed as Fire Official unless that person is certified pursuant to the provisions of N.J.A.C. 5:71-4.3.
- (c) *Salary.* The salary of the Fire Official shall be set by the Township Committee by ordinance.
- (d) *Term.* The Fire Official shall serve for a term of one (1) year or until the appointment of a successor.
- (e) *Duties.* The Fire Official shall serve as the chief administrator of the agency and shall coordinate the activities of any inspectors or other staff. The Fire Official shall perform those duties set forth in N.J.A.C. 5:71-3.3(a) and (b).

16-6. Fire Inspectors.

- (a) *Appointment.* At its annual reorganizational meeting, the Township Committee shall appoint a certified person or persons to serve as Fire Inspector/s.
- (b) *Certification.* No person shall be appointed as Fire Inspector unless that person is certified pursuant to the provisions of N.J.A.C. 5:71-4.
- (c) *Salary.* The salary of the Fire Inspector shall be set by the Township Committee by ordinance.
- (d) *Term.* The Fire Inspector shall serve for a term of one (1) year or until the appointment of his/her successor.
- (e) *Duties.* The Fire Inspector shall enforce the Code and the regulations under the direction of the Fire Official.

16-7. Life Hazard Uses.

The local enforcing agency shall carry out the periodic inspections of life hazard uses required by the Code on behalf of the Commissioner of Community Affairs.

16-8. Non-Life Hazard Uses.

In addition to the registrations required by the Uniform Fire Code, the following non-life hazard uses shall register with the Bureau of Fire Prevention. These uses shall be inspected once per year and pay an annual fee. The fee is not to be used for life hazard uses as defined in the Uniform Fire Code.

(a) *Assembly.*

A-1	Eating establishment under 50	\$50.00
A-2	Take-out food service (no seating)	\$50.00
A-3	Church or synagogue	\$25.00
A-4	Recreation centers, multi-purpose rooms, etc. fewer than	\$50.00

	50	
A-5	Courtrooms, libraries, fraternal organizations, condominium centers fewer than 50	\$50.00
A-6	Senior citizen centers fewer than 50	\$50.00

(b) *Business/Professional.*

B-1	Professional use 1 & 2 story less than 5,000 sq. ft. per floor	\$50.00
B-2	1 & 2 story more than 5,000 sq. ft. less than 10,000 sq. ft. per floor	\$50.00
B-3	1 & 2 story more than 10,000 sq. ft.	\$75.00
B-4	3 to 5 story less than 5,000 sq. ft. per floor	\$100.00
B-5	3 to 5 story more than 5,000 sq. ft. less than 10,000 sq. ft. per floor	\$150.00
B-6	3 to 5 story over 10,000 sq. ft. per floor	\$200.00

(c) *Retail (mercantile).*

M-1	1 & 2 story less than 5,000 sq. ft. per floor	\$125.00
M-2	1 & 2 story more than 5,000 sq. ft. less than 10,000 sq. ft.	\$150.00
M-3	1 & 2 story more than 10,000 sq. ft. per floor	\$175.00
M-4	3 to 5 story less than 5,000 sq. ft. per floor	\$200.00
M-5	3 to 5 story more than 5,000 sq. ft. less than 10,000 sq. ft.	\$225.00
M-6	3 to 5 story over 10,000 sq. ft.	\$250.00
M with the exception of hardware store 3,000 sq. ft., retail store over 12,000 sq. ft. are life hazard uses.		

(d) *Manufacturing (factory)*

F-1	1 & 2 story less than 5,000 sq. ft. per floor	\$75.00
F-2	1 & 2 story more than 5,000 sq. ft. less than 10,000 sq. ft. per floor	\$100.00
F-3	1 & 2 story more than 10,000 sq. ft.	\$150.00
F-4	3 to 5 story less than 5,000 sq. ft. per floor	\$175.00
F-5	3 to 5 story more than 5,000 sq. ft. less than 10,000 sq. ft.	\$200.00
F-6	3 to 5 story over 10,000 sq. ft.	\$250.00
F exception life hazard uses.		

(e) *Storage S-1 (moderate hazard S-1, low hazard S-2)*

S-1	1 & 2 story less than 5,000 sq. ft. per floor	\$50.00
S-2	1 & 2 story more than 5,000 sq. ft. less than 10,000 sq. ft. per floor	\$100.00
S-3	1 & 2 story more than 10,000 sq. ft.	\$150.00
S-4	3 to 5 story less than 5,000 sq. ft. per floor	\$175.00
S-5	3 to 5 story more than 5,000 sq. ft. less than 10,000 sq. ft.	\$200.00
S-6	3 to 5 story over 10,000 sq. ft.	\$250.00
S exception life hazard uses.		

(f) *Residential (LEA listed with multi-family) BHI*

Fee is for each building

Res-1	1 to 6 units	\$25.00
Res-2	7 to 12 units	\$50.00
Res-3	13 to 20 units	\$75.00
Res-4	21 to 50 units	\$100.00
Res-5	for each additional unit	\$2.00

16-9. Fees.

(a) *Uniform Fire Code Fees.* The permit fees as established by the Uniform Fire Code shall be:

Type 1	\$54.00
Type 2	\$214.00
Type 3	\$427.00
Type 4	\$641.00

(b) *Fees for Inspection and Certificate of Smoke Detector and Carbon Monoxide Alarm Compliance.* The application fee for a certificate of smoke detector and carbon monoxide alarm compliance (CSDCMAC), as required by N.J.A.C. 5:70-2.3, shall be based upon the amount of time remaining before the change of occupant is expected, as follows:

1. Requests for a CSDCMAC
Received more than 10 business days prior to the change of occupant: \$ 45.00
Re-inspection fee \$25.00 each
2. Requests for a CSDCMAC
Received 4 to 10 business days prior to the change of occupant: \$ 90.00
Re-inspection fee \$50.00 each
3. Requests for a CSDCMAC
Received fewer than 4 business days prior to the change of occupant: \$161.00
Re-inspection fee \$100.00 each

(c) *Fees for Carnival Registration.* The annual application fee for a carnival registration fee shall be:

1. For 10 or fewer locations: \$77.00
2. For 11 to 25 locations: \$116.00
3. For 26 or more locations: \$155.00

(d) *Additional Fees for Weekend and Holiday Inspections.* In addition to the fees set forth above, there shall be an additional fee of forty (\$40.00) dollars per hour or any part thereof for any inspections conducted outside of normal business hours or on any Saturday, Sunday or Township holiday.

16-10. Time for Compliance.

All existing buildings shall comply with this section within six (6) months from its effective date. All newly constructed buildings, not yet occupied or buildings currently under construction and all buildings or businesses applying for a certificate of occupancy, shall comply immediately.

16-11. Penalties.

Any persons or entities in violation of the terms of this Chapter may be subject to fines and penalties in accordance with the penalties set forth in the Uniform Fire Code and the regulations promulgated by the Department of Community Affairs. In addition, any individual, corporation or other entity that violates the terms of this Chapter shall upon conviction be liable to the penalties established pursuant to the Southampton Township Municipal Code.

16-12. Preemption by the State Uniform Construction Code.

To the extent that any terms or provision of the within Fire Prevention Code conflicts with or otherwise affects the terms and enforcement of the State Uniform Construction Code (N.J.S.A.

52:27D-119 et seq.), the terms and enforcement of the State Uniform Construction Code shall be deemed controlling.

16-13. Appeals.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 52:27D-206 and 208 and N.J.A.C. 5:70-2.19, any person aggrieved by any order of the local enforcement agency shall have the right to appeal to the Construction Board of Appeals or as otherwise provided by law.

FINDINGS: The Township of Southampton Municipal Code does not include a chapter specifically establishing or otherwise addressing the composition, control, duties or other functions of the Township Fire Department. In addition, **Chapter 16. Fire Prevention** which addresses the authority and enforcement of the Township's fire prevention program and activities, is largely outdated and in need of major revisions.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

A chapter titled "Fire Department" establishing the Township of Southampton Fire Department should be made part of the Municipal Code. A sample model of such a chapter has been provided in this section of the report.

Chapter 16. Fire Prevention of the Municipal Code was found to be largely outdated and in need of revisions. A sample model of a revised of Chapter 16 has been provided in this section of the report.

All recommendations for revisions of the Municipal Code should be subject to attorney review and modifications by the Township Committee.

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3. FIRE STATIONS

THE TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHAMPTON FIRE DEPARTMENT operates out of two fire stations, one held in public trust by the Vincent Volunteer Fire Company No. 1 located at 22 Race Street in the Vincentown section of the Township and the other held in public trust by the Hampton Lakes Volunteer Fire Company No. 1 located at 77 Holly Boulevard in the Hampton Lakes section of the Township.

The two fire companies collectively maintain an estimated force of 51 members operating six major pieces of fire apparatus including two tankers, a rescue pumper, 2 pumper-engines and a lighting truck along with two command vehicles and two utility trucks; all of which is to serve 10,464 residents occupying 4,746 households in a 44.224 square mile area (approximately 236.61 people per square mile) not including the provision of mutual aid to neighboring communities.



HAMPTON LAKES VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY

Established 1957

72 HOLLY BOULEVARD, HAMPTON LAKES, SOUTHAMPTON, NEW JERSEY

YEAR BUILT: 1972

STATION HOUSE APPARATUS CAPACITY: 5

GENERAL CONDITION: VERY GOOD

BUILDING: MAIN 3,600 SQ. FT; 2ND BUILDING 1,500 SQ. FT.

Fire Chief Thomas Rathjen

HAMPTON LAKES FIRE COMPANY FACILITY EQUIPMENT



HAMPTON LAKES FIRE COMPANY
TURNOUT GEAR WASHER



HAMPTON LAKES FIRE COMPANY
TURNOUT GEAR DRYER



HAMPTON LAKES FIRE COMPANY
SCBA AIR COMPRESSOR FOR CASCADE SYSTEM



VINCENT VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY

Established 1855

16 RACE STREET VINCENTOWN, SOUTHAMPTON, NEW JERSEY

YEAR BUILT: 1974

STATION HOUSE APPARATUS CAPACITY: 5

GENERAL CONDITION: GOOD

BUILDING: 5,000 SQ. FT.

Fire Chief Barry T. Pratt

Both the Hampton Lakes and Vincent Fire Station facilities were found to be functional, clean, orderly and well maintained by the company members. Both facilities are equipped with working emergency electrical power generators. The Vincent Fire Station roof is in need of replacement.

VINCENT FIRE COMPANY FACILITY EQUIPMENT



VINCENT FIRE COMPANY
TURNOUT GEAR WASHER

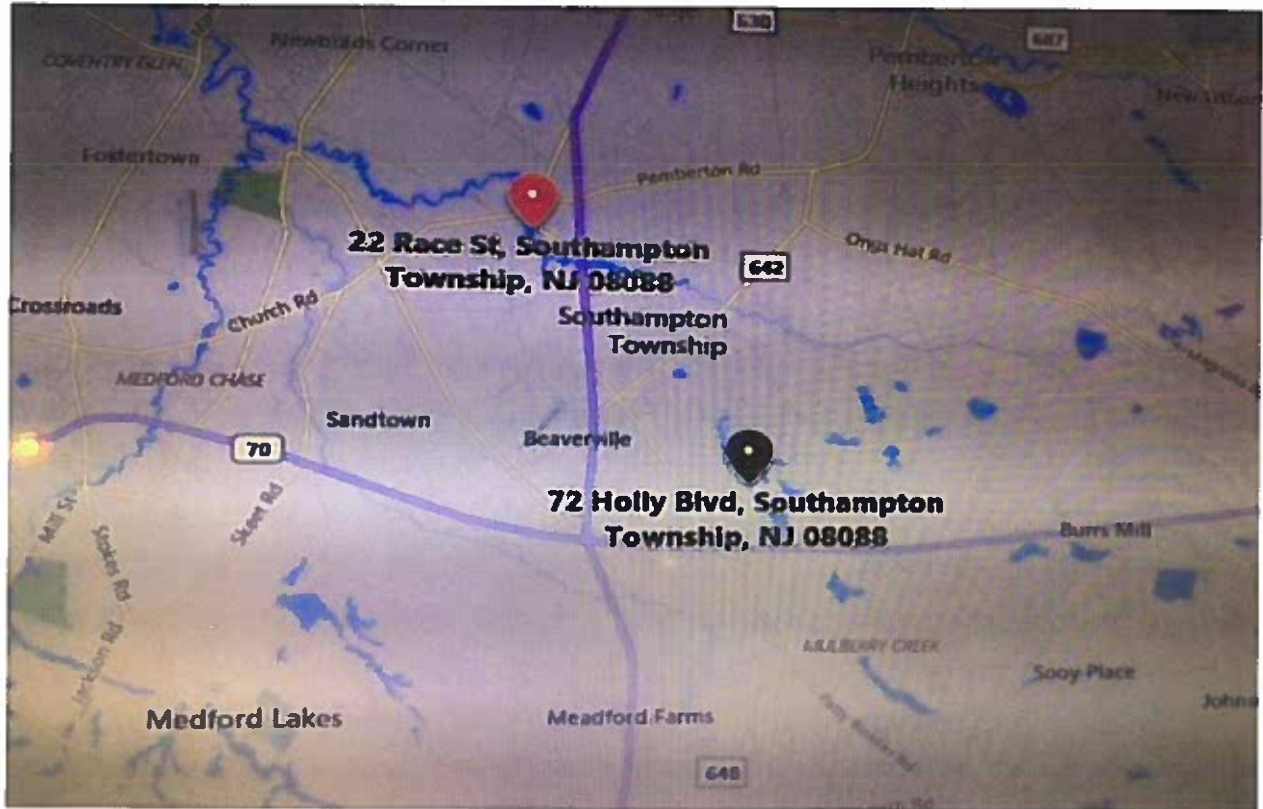


VINCENT FIRE COMPANY
SCBA AIR CYLINDER FILL STATION



VINCENT FIRE COMPANY

FIRE STATION LOCATIONS



Google Maps

The Vincent Fire Station is located to the Northwest at 22 Race Street
The Hampton Lakes Fire Station is located to the Southeast at 72 Holly Boulevard

Three main routes exist between the two fire stations; separating them by 5.3 to 6.1 miles of roadway. Actual travel time between the two points under normal conditions is estimated at 10 to 12 minutes.

FINDINGS: The two fire stations collectively maintain an estimated force of 51 members operating six major pieces of fire apparatus including two tankers, a rescue pumper, 2 pumper-engines and a lighting truck along with two command vehicles and two utility trucks; all of which is to serve 10,464 residents occupying 4,746 households in a 44.224 square mile area (approximately 236.61 people per square mile) not including the provision of mutual aid to neighboring communities. Both fire stations were found to be functional, clean, orderly and well maintained by the company members. Both facilities have working emergency generators, equipment to clean personal protective "turnout" gear and service SCBA air cylinders. Some equipment is aging and the Vincent Fire Station roof is in need of replacement.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Continue to staff, equip and utilize both fire stations for the effective deployment capability of fire units to all points within the Township. Necessary capital planning for building maintenance and/or upgrades along with replacement of major in-house equipment supported by resourceful grant applications for the same should be utilized to maintain the infrastructure and operating systems essential to the preparedness and safety of firefighters.

4. FIRE APPARATUS AND SUPPORT VEHICLES

THE TWO FIRE COMPANIES in the Southampton Township Fire Department collectively operate six (6) pieces of fire apparatus along with a variety of command and support vehicles, each possessing specific design functions and varying capabilities to carry out assigned tasks. To better understand the Southampton fire fleet, a brief description of the major types of fire apparatus & motorized equipment used and the main purpose of such units is provided below:

PUMPER ENGINE: *The basic unit of the fire service. Main purpose is the control and extinguishment of fire by delivery of adequate water flows, typically measured in gallons per minute or simply, GPM. These units can also be utilized to assist with motor vehicle accidents as well as search and rescue operations and a variety of non-fire related incidents and calls for service.*

RESCUE/PUMPER: *This unit functions in a similar capacity as the pumper engine but carries additional equipment to perform various rescue operations, i.e. interior search and rescue, rapid intervention, confined space, motor vehicle extrications and other incidents involving people in harm's way.*

TANKER TRUCK: *Main purpose is to provide a large mobile water supply to pumper/engines particularly in but not limited to areas that lack a fixed water supply system such as fire hydrants, cisterns, ponds, lakes or other accessible sources of water.*

UTILITY VEHICLE: *General-purpose vehicle used for a range of support services including but not limited to transport of personnel and equipment, Cascade system (for refilling SCBA air cylinders), emergency lighting, snow plowing/salting, traffic control at the emergency incidents, motor pool functions, and general day-to-day support of operations of both emergent and non-emergent natures.*

COMMAND VEHICLE: *Main purpose is to provide transportation for the fire chief and shift commanders to the scene of emergencies or other locations. Command vehicles may also be used to establish a command post (stationary point of incident management) at an emergency or other event.*

APPARATUS AND SUPPORT VEHICLES

The chart below provides an inventory of the Southampton Fire Department motorized fleet along with the mileage and the overall condition of the existing front line units in service:

COMPANY	UNIT ID	TYPE UNIT	MAKE/MODEL	YEAR	MILEAGE	CONDITION
Vincent	1710	Command	Chevrolet	2017	4,200	EXCELLENT
Vincent	1711	Rescue/Pumper	Seagraves	2014	11,378	EXCELLENT
Vincent	1712	Pumper/Engine	KME	2001	40,548	VERY GOOD
Vincent	1716	Tanker Truck	Spartan	1994	20,967	GOOD
Vincent	1718	Utility	FORD	2001	113,132	FAIR
Hampton Lakes	1720	Command	FORD	1999	137,000	FAIR
Hampton Lakes	1722	Pumper/Engine	KME	1995	26,000	GOOD
Hampton Lakes	1723	Pumper/Engine	KME	2003	30,911	GOOD
Hampton Lakes	1726	Tanker Truck	FORD	1986	69,496	OBSOLETE
Hampton Lakes	1728	Utility	Freightliner	1995	123,571	FAIR
Hampton Lakes	1729	Utility	Dodge	2002	164,329	FAIR

PHOTOS OF APPARATUS AND SUPPORT VEHICLES

The photos on the next 6 pages provide a visual representation of current apparatus and support vehicles consigned to the Vincent and Hampton Lakes Volunteer Fire Companies. Findings and recommendations are also provided along with a proposed apparatus replacement schedule intended to serve as a guide for the purpose of capital planning for the Township Fire Department.

APPARATUS AND SUPPORT VEHICLES



2017 CHEVROLET TAHOE COMMAND VEHICLE: VINCENT FIRE COMPANY UNIT 1710



2014 SEAGRAVES RESCUE/PUMPER: VINCENT FIRE COMPANY UNIT 1711



2001 KME PUMPER/ENGINE: VINCENT FIRE COMPANY UNIT 1712



1994 SPARTAN TANKER TRUCK: VINCENT FIRE COMPANY UNIT 1716



2001 FORD F-250 UTILITY VEHICLE: VINCENT FIRE COMPANY UNIT 1718



1999 FORD COMMAND VEHICLE: HAMPTON LAKES FIRE COMPANY UNIT 1720



1995 KME PUMPER/ENGINE: HAMPTON LAKES FIRE COMPANY UNIT 1722



2003 KME PUMPER/ENGINE: HAMPTON LAKES FIRE COMPANY UNIT 1723



1986 FORD TANKER TRUCK: HAMPTON LAKES FIRE COMPANY 1726



1995 FREIGHTLINER UTILITY VEHICLE: HAMPTON LAKES FIRE COMPANY UNIT 1728



2002 DODGE UTILITY VEHICLE: HAMPTON LAKES FIRE COMPANY UNIT 1729

FINDINGS: The two serving fire companies in Southampton Township collectively operate and maintain a total inventory of six (6) fire apparatus and five (5) support vehicles. All motorized vehicles are currently in service and appear to be well maintained by the fire companies. In total, 2 units were in excellent condition; 1 - very good; 3 - good; 4 - fair; 1 - obsolete. Typically the fire apparatus are owned and provided by the Township; the command units and other support vehicles have been acquired by fire company funds or donations. Estimated costs for basic apparatus maintenance are shown below:

ESTIMATED COST FOR ANNUAL PRIMARY APPARATUS MAINTENANCE			
ENGINE		LADDER	
CHASSIS		CHASSIS	
PUMP		PUMP	
DIFFERENTIAL & TRANS		GENERATOR	
GENERATOR		2-DIFFERENTIAL & TRANS	
\$3,000		AERIAL DEVICE	
		\$4,800	
RESCUE/PUMPER		TANKER TRUCK	
CHASSIS		CHASSIS	
PUMP		PUMP	
DIFFERENTIAL & TRANS		2-DIFFERENTIAL & TRANS	
GENERATOR		\$3,000	
\$3,000			

Annual pump tests were performed on all apparatus equipped with a pump in November 2017. The non-destructive ground ladder testing and hose testing were performed in December 2017. It was reported that the annual pump tests, ground ladder tests and hose tests for 2018 were either

performed or scheduled to be performed before year's end, but the data was not available at the time of the study. All pump tests were performed in accordance to NFPA 1911-Chapter 18 and ISO Standards. Ground ladder tests met the rigorous requirements of NFPA 1930-2010 and hose tests were performed using NFPA 1962 Standards.

Township funding for the fire companies has remained fixed for a number of years. Non-inclusive of any capital bond/structural debt payments attributed to the fire department, the 2018 municipal budget shows at least three appropriations for local fire protection services as indicated below:

AID TO FIRE COMPANIES O/E.....	\$60,000
FIRE DEPARTMENT O/E.....	\$20,000
LOSAP.....	\$38,000*

*LOSAP (Length of Service Awards Program) funds were divided up between the eligible members of the two serving fire companies and the local volunteer rescue/ambulance squad pursuant to **Chapter 2-24 Length of Service Awards Program (LOSAP)**.

As reported to the PSI study team, not including the annual portion of LOSAP that is awarded to eligible fire company members, the township typically provides a total of \$38,500 annually to the Hampton Lakes Volunteer Fire Company and a total of \$38,500 annually to the Vincent Volunteer Fire Company. The primary purpose of this funding is to cover fire company costs associated with the maintenance and repair of apparatus and other equipment as well as to replace or acquire new equipment as warranted.

From a review of the Hampton Lakes and Vincent Fire Company expenses, it is abundantly clear that both fire companies are generating annual operating expenses that far exceed the municipal appropriation of \$38,500 per company.

To illustrate, provided below are the Vincent Fire Company projected budget numbers for 2018:

Category	Revenue
Township	\$28,500.00
Twp. Voucher	\$10,000.00
Fund Drive	\$27,000.00
Misc. Donation	\$2,000.00
D&Q	\$3,000.00
Twp Fit Test	\$1,000.00
Bingo	\$11,000.00
Billing	\$0.00
Interest	\$15.00
TOTAL	\$82,515.00

Apparatus & Equipment Expenses (Fire Operations)\$47,016

Station House & Fire Company Expenses (General Operations)\$31,860

TOTAL 2018 EXPENSES**\$78,876**

Projected Delta: \$82,515 Revenue - \$78,876 Expenses = \$3,639 balance forward

In summary, the budget projections shown on the previous page represent that in 2018 the Vincent Fire Company would receive \$38,500 from the Township and an additional \$44,015 by way of company fund raising and other sources for a total amount of \$82,515 in revenue. Apparatus and Equipment "Fire Operations" expenses were projected at \$47,016; Station House and Fire Company "General Operations" were projected at \$31,860, both totaling \$78,876 and resulting in a surplus or reserve of \$3,639. While the budget projections in any given year are subject to modification resulting from several different variables, these figures seem to be consistent with the actual revenue and expenses realized over recent years by the fire companies.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. A complete and thorough annual inventory of all motorized equipment should be performed to include a bona fide mechanical assessment with regard to overall safety and operating condition/maintenance/repair needs/service history, and expected service life remaining on each unit. Findings should be documented in an annual fire apparatus and motorized fleet report and provided to the authority having jurisdiction.**
- 2. Motorized equipment deemed unsafe, unserviceable, obsolete or otherwise unneeded should be removed from the department inventory and disposed of in accordance to law (i.e., auction, trade-in, hold-harmless donation, etc.).**
- 3. In consultation with the serving fire companies, the Township should move aggressively toward the standardization of any new purchases of fire apparatus and equipment. Standardization of apparatus and equipment provides the potential for significant cost savings and the ability to simplify/minimize inventory of parts. More importantly, standardizing resources (as well as operational guidelines and procedures) will have the added benefit of having all members of multiple fire companies trained and familiar with the operation of apparatus and equipment used in other fire companies (as well as their own). This best-practice approach will make available the mutual capacity of the fire companies to share or interchange resources as needed off or on the fireground; which in the case of the latter, such interoperability of resources would lend itself to making emergency operations safer, more efficient and more effective.**
- 4. The Township may wish to consider lease-purchasing over the option of capital bonding. Further, in lieu of acquisition by solicitation of bid specifications, the authority having jurisdiction may wish to utilize the services and products of vendors under state contract and/or approved cooperative purchasing entities such as but not limited to the Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC).**
- 5. Based on the annual fire apparatus and motorized fleet report, an apparatus replacement schedule should be developed and adopted by Southampton Township based on the discernable needs of the fire department to replace old units and add to the motorized fleet as necessary for the safe and effective operation of fire apparatus and support vehicles.**

6. The study team has assembled the four-phase fire apparatus replacement schedule that follows to serve as a guide in the development of a working capital plan for fire apparatus:

FIRE APPARATUS REPLACEMENT SCHEDULE

REPLACEMENT YEAR	APPARATUS BEING REPLACED	APPARATUS TO BE ACQUIRED
2019-2020	1986 FORD TANKER TRUCK HAMPTON LAKES VFC	NEW 6-PERSON CREW CAB TANKER/PUMPER HAMPTON LAKES VFC
2026-2027	1994 SPARTAN TANKER TRUCK VINCENT VFC	NEW 6-PERSON CREW CAB TANKER/PUMPER VINCENT VFC
2033-2034	1995 FREIGHTLINER PUMPER/ENGINE HAMPTON LAKES VFC	NEW PUMPER/ENGINE HAMPTON LAKES VFC
2040-2041	2001 KME PUMPER/ENGINE VINCENT VFC	NEW RESCUE/PUMPER VINCENT VFC

This schedule is intended to serve a guide in the development of a working capital plan

6. Based on the fire apparatus replacement schedule provided above, the Hampton Lakes Fire Company would be consigned with one 6-person crew cab tanker/pumper and one pumper/engine; the Vincent Fire Company would be consigned with one 6-person crew cab tanker/pumper and one rescue/pumper. This strategy will eliminate the need going forward to replace two existing units; one Hampton Lakes pumper/engine and one Vincent pumper/engine, reducing the overall number of Township frontline fire apparatus from six units to four units.
7. At least one of the decommissioned pumper/engines (ostensibly the most reliable such apparatus with the likelihood of having the longest remaining service life) should be kept as a reserve unit in lieu of being traded in or otherwise removed from the department inventory. The reserve engine should be equipped and maintained in serviceable condition at all times and made available for the use by either of the serving fire companies when required on an as-needed basis for emergencies or when frontline units are out of service for repairs or are otherwise deemed unfit/unsafe for use.
8. The annual Township appropriation in combination with the proceeds received through the fire company fund drives and other sources of revenue appear to be adequate to cover anticipated expenses for Fire Operations (i.e. apparatus and equipment repairs, service and certain replacements/new acquisitions)" and General Operations (i.e. fire station and fire certain company expenses). Proper financial oversight should be in place to include review and pre-approval of all non-emergent purchases as well as an annual audit of all purchases for goods and services.

5. VOLUNTEER RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

EACH YEAR THE HAMPTON LAKES AND VINCENT FIRE COMPANIES respond to numerous calls for service of various types and natures. Following is a summary of calls answered by the two fire companies over the period of time between 2015 through 2017 (source: NFIRS)

<u>HAMPTON LAKES VOLUNTEER FIRE CO.</u>				<u>VINCENT VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY</u>			
CATEGORY	2015	2016	2017	CATEGORY	2015	2016	2017
Building Fires	8	12	15	Building Fires	21	13	25
All Other Fires	17	38	33	All Other Fires	28	35	29
Overpressure, Rupture, Explosion, No Fire	1	1	0	Overpressure, Rupture, Explosion, No Fire	0	2	0
Rescue/EMS Calls	136	162	177	Rescue/EMS Calls	139	145	201
Hazardous Conditions, No Fire	31	70	34	Hazardous Conditions, No Fire	40	55	40
Other Service Calls	30	44	29	Other Service Calls	38	29	26
Good Intent, No Action Taken	56	5	17	Good Intent, No Action Taken	88	88	5
False Alarms	112	60	52	False Alarms	38	51	48
Severe Weather	0	3	3	Severe Weather	24	2	0
Special Incidents	16	0	3	Special Incidents	1	4	1
TOTALS	407	395	363	TOTALS	417	424	375

Note: The figures shown above reflect the number of calls answered by each fire company; it is recognized that some of these incidents may have received mutual responses by both fire companies. In that regard, the total combined number of fire company calls (i.e. 738 in 2017) would differ from the total number of department calls answered in the same period.

RESPONSE ACTIVITY AND COST ANALYSIS

For the most part, the number and types of calls for service answered by the two fire companies were found to be similar in nature. To illustrate, over the period of 2015 through 2017, Hampton Lakes responded to 1,165 calls for service; in that same period of time, Vincent responded to 1,216 calls for service, representing 51 (an average of 17 per year) or 4.38% more calls than Hampton Lakes. Taking a closer look at 2017, Hampton Lakes responded to 15 building fires; Vincent responded to 25 building fires in that same period of time. It is likely that some number of these response activities were to the same fire incident. The top five types of calls answered in 2017 by both companies combined were:

1. Rescue/EMS combined total of 378 calls (51.22% of total calls)
 2. False Alarms combined total of 100 calls (13.55% of total calls)
 3. Hazardous Conditions, No Fire combined total of 74 calls (10.03% of total calls)
 4. Fires other than Building Fires combined total of 62 calls (8.40% of total calls)
 5. Other Service Calls, No Fire combined total of 55 calls (7.45% of total calls)
- All other calls combined totaled of 69 calls (9.35% of total calls)

The following chart reveals the average municipal cost per call for each fire company in 2017:

FIRE COMPANY	2017 TOTAL CALLS	MUNICIPAL APPROPRIATION	MUNICIPAL COST PER CALL*
Hampton Lakes	363	\$38,500	\$106.06
Vincent	375	\$38,500	\$102.67

*Does not include LOSAP appropriation, capital bond liabilities, or revenue/expenses paid from fire company fund raising

The average municipal cost per call in 2017 across the Township was \$104.37, not including the annual municipal LOSAP appropriation, any fire department-related capital bond liabilities, and/or any revenue taken in and expenses paid from fire company fund raising (not a tax revenue but still represents funding largely provided by local residents/taxpayers) or other fire company sources of revenue. The municipal cost per call figures were found to be on the lower end of the spectrum but somewhat typical in comparison to other volunteer fire companies similar in size and function; but considerably lower in comparison to combination (career and volunteer staffed) and fully career departments, as demonstrated by the chart of similar and not-so similar departments provided below:

Municipality	FD Budget % of Total Tax. Value	FD Budget % of Munic. Levy	Firefighters per 1,000 Pop.*	Firefighters per Sq. Mi.*	FD Cost per Resident	Aver. Cost of Service Call
Pleasantville	0.54%	19.38%	2.42 CFF	6.7 CFF	\$208.50	\$3,693.79
Linwood	0.04%	4.99%	0.42 CFF/2.82 VFF	0.71 CFF/4.8 VFF	62.04	2,353.85
Northfield	0.06%	6.56%	0.58 CFF/3.36 VFF	1.8 CFF/8.5 VFF	66.24	1,344.06
Egg Harbor Twp.	0.01%	2.09%	3.76 VFF	2.2 VFF	11.20	549.43
Somers Point	0.01%	1.30%	5.56 VFF	11.5 VFF	12.87	405.23
Mullica	0.02%	1.58%	11.88 VFF	1.29 VFF	9.60	262.22
Southampton	0.0077%	1.88%	4.87 VFF	1.15 VFF	7.39	104.37

*VFF = Volunteer Firefighters CFF = Career Firefighters

In review of the chart above, contrasts and similarities in fire service composition and operating costs are revealed in seven relatively nearby communities inclusive of Southampton. Several variables impact the statistical data in this chart but ultimately it can be seen that the overall operating costs of the Southampton fire protection program are comparatively low-end, efficient, and manageable.

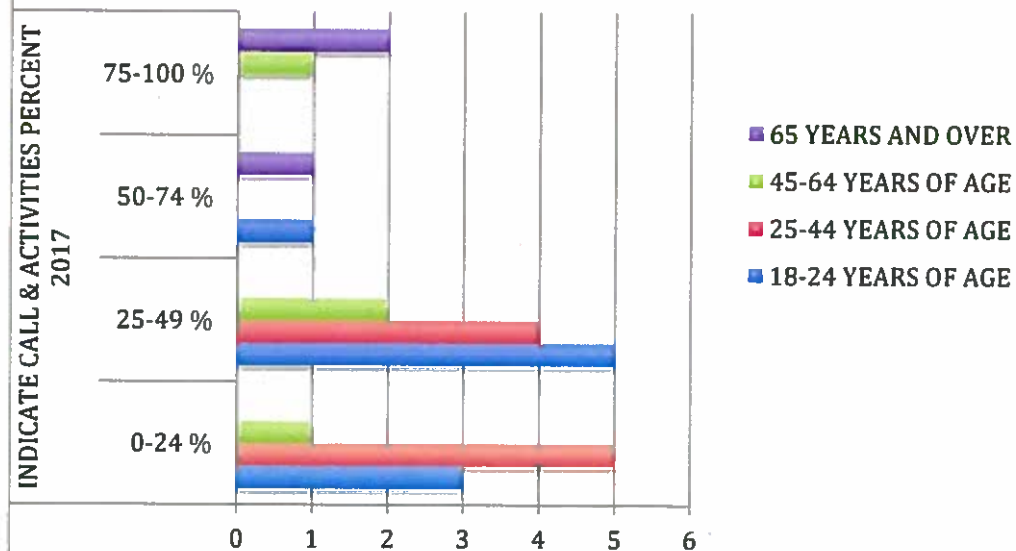
RESPONSE ACTIVITIES BY AGE GROUP

At the time of the study there were fifty-one total active volunteers across both fire companies. The Vincent Fire Company reported having 26 active members in addition to a number of Juniors, life members and other support members; the Hampton Lakes Fire Company reported having 25 active members in addition to a number of Explorers, probationary firefighters and other contributory members.

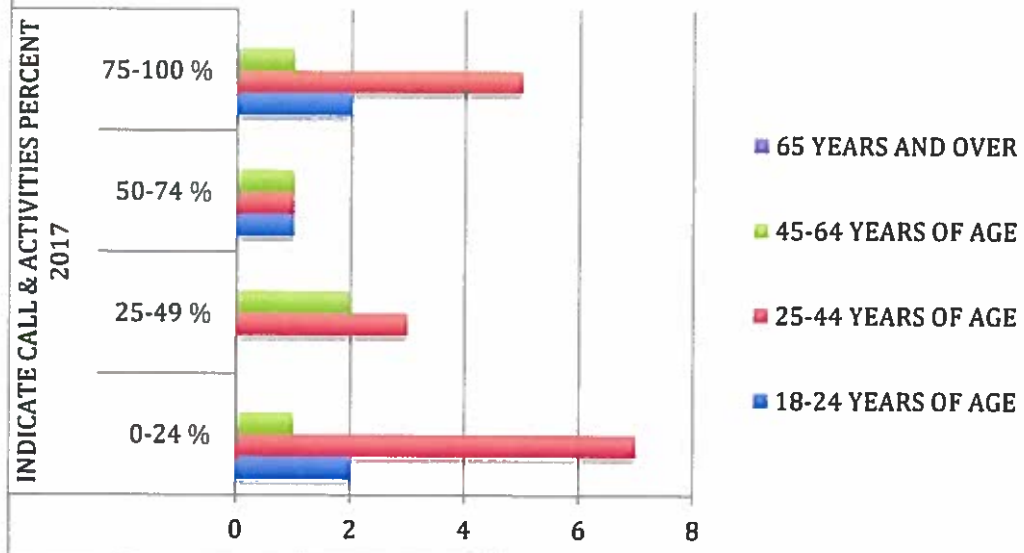
For the purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of the work force, in addition to identifying the *number* of serving volunteers it is essential to quantify the overall volunteer *life-cycle* of the membership and the experience of response activity in both fire companies.

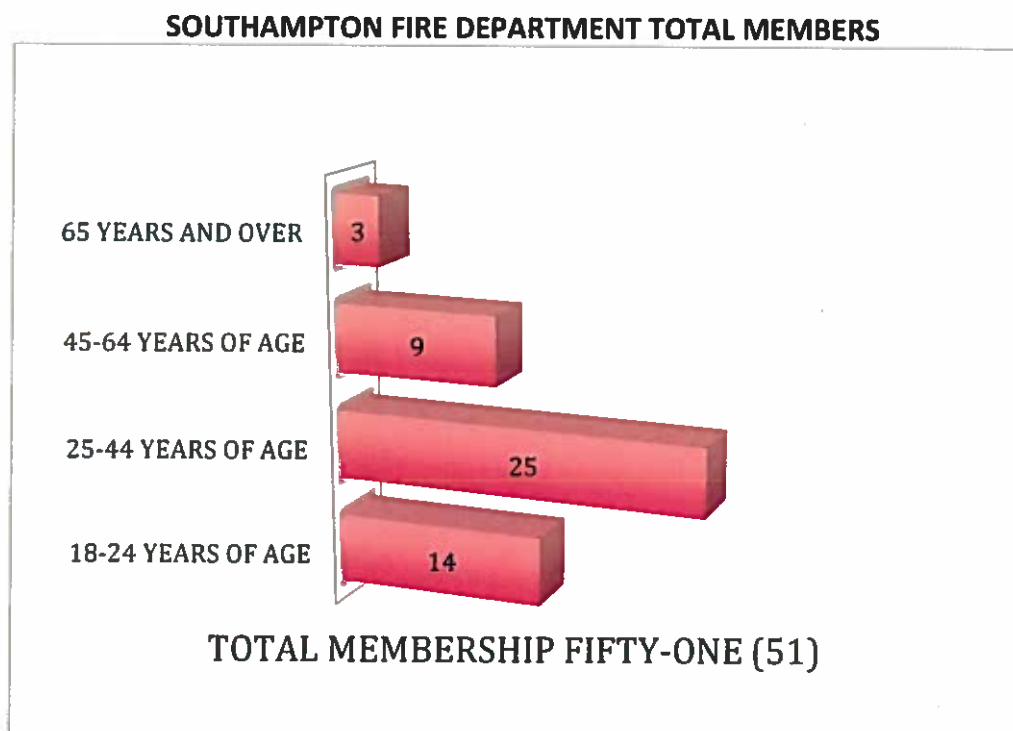
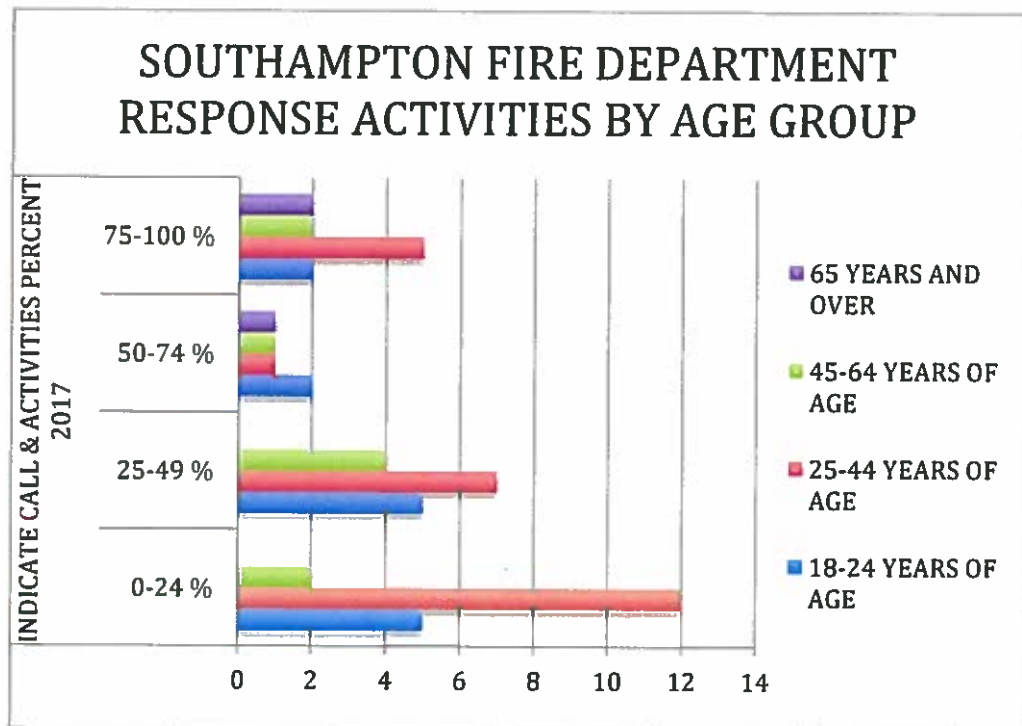
The charts on the next two pages will illustrate the total number of volunteers in both companies and the age groups in which they can be classified as well as the percentage of calls for service that were answered by members representing each of the four volunteer "life-cycle" age group classifications.

HAMPTON LAKES VOLUNTEER FIRE CO. RESPONSE ACTIVITIES BY AGE GROUP



VINCENT VOLUNTEER FIRE CO. RESPONSE ACTIVITIES BY AGE GROUP





The following chart further captures the volunteer life-cycle in the Hampton Lakes and Vincent Volunteer Fire Companies. Ideally there should be a healthy balance among the four age groups:

COMPANY	AGE 18-24	AGE 25-44	AGE 45-64	65 & ABOVE	TOTAL
Hampton Lakes	9	9	4	3	25
Vincent	5	16	5	0	26
TOTALS	14	25	9	3	51

LIFE CYCLE OBSERVATIONS

The Hampton Lakes and Vincent Fire Companies were found to have significant similarities in their respective volunteer life-cycles. The majority of members in both companies were in the 18-24 and 25-44 age groups; 18 in Hampton Lakes (72% of its own membership) and 21 in Vincent (81% of its own membership). Hampton Lakes' remaining 7 members were split; 4 (16% of its own membership) in the 45-64 age group and 3 (12% of its own membership) in the 65 & Above age group; Vincent's remaining 5 members (19% of its own membership) were all in the 45-64 age group. Senior level membership in both companies was notably low with only 3 members from Hampton Lakes in the 65 & Above age group and no members from Vincent. At a time when the average national age of a volunteer firefighter is 57 years old and large gaps typically exist in the lower to mid-range age groups, the volunteer life cycle in Southampton is a very good state of affairs. The overall ratio of both fire companies combined, in terms of members in the age groups 18-24 and 25-44 compared to members of the age groups 45-64 and 65 and Above is 39:12. This ratio is not only an indicator of very effective recruitment and retention outcomes in both fire companies, it also provides a favorable proportion of senior members (more seasoned, potentially officers) to the less experienced members (valuable emergency responders and the future of the department, yet potentially in need of some level of supervision). In terms of fire service span of control (the number of personnel a supervisor can be expected to effectively manage; at the fire company level, generally estimated to be 1 supervisor for every 5 to 7 subordinates), the overall span of control in Southampton could potentially be estimated at 1 supervisor for every 3.25 subordinates. Even with some of the younger members serving as officers, the span of control is good.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Despite the favorable numbers of volunteer members in the younger age groups of both fire companies, it is prudent to maintain an on-going recruitment and retention program or even the most vigorous fire company will ultimately face the danger of losing a valuable segment of its work force, or worse, altogether aging out of existence. In consideration of this matter, a supplemental statement is provided after the conclusion of this report entitled "Volunteer Incentive Programs". It is hoped the information contained in the statement will be of some value to the Township and the Fire Companies in pursuing the objective of recruiting and maintaining a viable force of volunteers now and in the future.

MUTUAL AID

Local area fire mutual aid assistance is provided to and received from several area municipalities including the neighboring Townships of Easthampton, Lumberton, Medford, Pemberton, Tabernacle and Woodland. In addition, the Burlington County mutual aid system provides a robust fleet of pumper engines, ladder trucks, rescue units, tankers, brush trucks, and other emergency response units staffed by career and volunteer firefighters from fire departments/fire districts/ fire companies throughout the county.

FINDINGS: The Southampton Fire Department presently maintains a combined membership across both serving fire companies of 51 members not including a number of Explorers, Juniors, probationary, support, contributory, support and life members; 25 from Hampton Lakes; 26 from Vincent. Fourteen members range in age from 18-24; twenty-five members range in age from 25-44; nine members range in age from 45-64; three members range in age from 65 and above.

Response activity data by age groups revealed the largest percentage of calls (75-100%) answered by Hampton Lakes were by members in the 45-64 and 65 & Above age groups. By contrast, the largest percentage of calls (75-100%) answered by Vincent were by members in the 18-24 and 25-44 age groups. With some exception, the data also suggested a combined low percentage of calls (0-24%) answered by members in the 18-24 and 25-44 age groups.

The Hampton Lakes Fire Company responded to 363 calls for service in 2017 the Vincent Fire Company responded to 375 calls for service in the same period. The annual municipal appropriation for each fire company was \$38,500 for a total of \$77,000 not including LOSAP contributions and any capital bond liabilities. The average municipal cost per call by Hampton Lakes was \$106.06; the average municipal cost per call by Vincent was \$102.67. The combined average municipal cost per call was \$104.37.

Beyond municipally-funded expenditures for such items as protective gear, fire apparatus/equipment maintenance and service, capital bonding and LOSAP, the fire companies are required to underwrite certain costs such as maintaining the fire stations, paying utility bills, and covering expenses for miscellaneous goods and services. Fund raising revenue in both fire companies typically covers well-over half of the fire companies' annual total budgets. Most fund raising activities have been met with general success, much to the thanks of the considerable time and efforts of the volunteers as well as the generosity of the supporting public.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Maintain the current level of membership in both fire companies subject to proposed Chapter 13. Fire Department Section 13-2A (1) and (2) limiting the active volunteer firefighter membership to no more than 30 active members per fire company not to include Explorers, Juniors, Probationary Firefighters, Life Members and other non-firefighting contributory/support members.

2. In addition to the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) record keeping that documents calls for service by category for each fire company separate and apart from one another, a data base of calls for service should be maintained to include:

- **How calls are received and the response times to all incidents**
- **Number and identify of all apparatus or units that respond to a call**
- **The time of day each unit is placed out of service and the time of day each unit is returned into service**
- **The number and identity of members on each apparatus or unit that responds to a call or is otherwise taken out on the road for an activity or event**
- **Tracking and documenting the number of *department* calls for service, which should be the equivalent to the sum of company calls for service solely answered by Hampton Lakes PLUS the sum of company calls for service solely answered by Vincent PLUS the sum of calls for service answered by both Hampton Lakes and Vincent**

3. The Township should continue to fund both fire companies at the present appropriation level to maintain all Township-owned fire apparatus in safe and effective operating condition and for other legitimate expenses of the fire department. All non-emergent purchases should be pre-approved by the Township and both fire companies should be required to certify that all mandated testing and/or certification of equipment is performed annually (or as otherwise required) to include but not be limited to SCBA Fit Test, hose testing, non-destructive ground ladder testing, SCBA air cylinder hydrostatic testing, personal protective gear and all apparatus maintenance services as outlined in Chapter 4 (page 31) of this report.

4. Proper fiscal auditing should continue regarding municipal and non-municipal appropriations and expenditures simply as a best practice for the provision of accountability at all levels and compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

5. In recognition of the volunteer membership “life-cycle” and in a manner consistent with the present and future needs of the fire companies, appropriate measures should be taken to anticipate membership needs and to develop a township wide recruitment and retention program. One excellent resource in this regard is the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) website www.nfvc.org link to “Make Me A Firefighter”.

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CLOSING COMMENTS

THIS REPORT CONTAINS the findings and recommendations of a study conducted by the PSI Group on behalf of the Township of Southampton to review the existing structure and operations of the Hampton Lakes Volunteer Fire Company and the Vincent Volunteer Fire Company, and to issue findings and recommendations relative to the establishment and composition of the Southampton Fire Department, the number of existing fire stations, the number of serving volunteers, the number and type of needed fire apparatus, a sound fire apparatus and equipment maintenance guide and a practical, needs-based fire apparatus replacement schedule.

The two serving fire companies were found to be staffed by a diverse and talented group of community members who have made a considerable commitment to serve the Township as volunteer firefighters. During the course of this study all such members from the fire chiefs, company presidents and all officers and members of the rank and file were extremely cooperative and helpful to the study team. Their collective hospitality is held in high regard as is their selfless commitment to providing fire protection to their community.

While each separate fire company enjoys its own unique history and traditions as well as its individual sense of organizational pride and distinction, the overall membership of both companies conveyed a spirit of willingness to work cooperatively with each other on and off the fire ground. To that end, increased cooperative planning, joint training and social engagement by the two fire companies are highly recommended.

As well-organized and spirited as the Hampton and Vincent Fire Companies appeared to be, there are significant opportunities for growth and improvements to be pursued in the best interests of all parties concerned. In that regard the study team would encourage the Township officials and the Fire Company leadership to develop a strategic vision (long-term plan) that will at some appropriate pace, lead toward the establishment of a single command structure under the banner of the Southampton Fire Department that will be firm enough to standardize many fire department functions and practices while remaining flexible enough to give the volunteer fire companies the capacity to retain their individual identity at the company level.

Understandably, as with any endeavor to make improvements through change, some amount of discomfort and risk are involved. Conversely, nothing can be expected to advance or improve if it remains exactly as it is for fear of the unknown or the desire to simply maintain the status quo. Ultimately the local leadership must inspire the necessary cooperation and collaboration needed to motivate all parties to go beyond their comfort zones to better serve the mission.

It is hoped this report will be helpful in some meaningful way to the Township of Southampton and its serving Fire Companies in determining the wisest planning strategies, managing the inherent risks and forging courses of action that shall best serve the public safety interests of the community at-large now and in the future.

SUPPLEMENTAL

Volunteer Recruitment and Retention

The challenges of managing a modern-day fire protection agency range from the seemingly mundane to the literal life-and-death decisions that impact the service providers and recipients alike. On both sides of the scale and considered by many to be the most difficult challenge is the matter of managing personnel. For the volunteer fire service this would include recruitment, retention, training and otherwise handling its most valuable resource: the volunteers themselves. Some authorities may contend the process of managing volunteer personnel begins with recruitment; more accurately, the process begins with the mission statement, leadership and the culture of the organization.

Volunteer firefighter recruitment programs vary in size and nature, but the hard truth is that most fire companies lack comprehensive, on-going and leadership-driven recruitment programs. Even in well-staffed volunteer organizations, the failure to maintain an active recruitment program is a recipe for eventual failure.

With these facts in mind and with the added knowledge that according to the United States Fire Administrative 2004 report "Retention and Recruitment for the Volunteer Emergency Services" the national average for retention of younger (18-24) volunteer firefighters is only three years, a well-defined strategy for volunteer recruitment and retention in most departments is strongly recommended.

A SIMPLE BUT EFFECTIVE TEN-POINT PLAN

The most effective volunteer recruitment and retention programs begin well before any direct contact is made with potential applicants. The process must of course be geared toward the needs and limitations of each respective jurisdiction, but the following ten steps contain organizational principles necessary to maximize the chances for success in identifying, attracting, signing and maintaining a viable volunteer work force even in an environment wherein the current work force is gradually "aging-out" and younger recruits have become more difficult to attract, secure and sustain.

1. **Leadership must set the tone.** The organizational leadership, beginning but not ending with the fire chief, must lead by example, consistently advocating for meaningful recruitment and retention goals built upon on an organizational culture defined by mutual respect, competence, integrity, and team work. These characteristics should be reflected in the organizational mission statement and of no less importance, in the actions of each member of the fire company. Any diversions from this standard must not be condoned.
2. **Establish a welcoming environment.** Physical state of affairs in the fire station will resonant a undeniable message to potential membership applicants, public officials, guests, visitors and even folks just passing by. The station house should be well-lit, clean, orderly, free of any potentially offensive materials and absent any unsanitary or unsafe conditions; apparatus and equipment kept in a well-maintained state of readiness and members dressed appropriately. Beyond physical appearances, the members should conduct themselves in a pleasant, professional and welcoming manner void of any inappropriate behavior and always mindful of everyone in quarters as well as the ever-present possibility for unannounced visitations.
3. **Develop year-round community relations.** Despite the valuable service performed by the volunteer firefighters in responding to fires and other calls for service year-round, most citizens may have little if any real interaction with the fire company and may not even be aware of its

volunteer status. It is imperative to educate the public regarding the services provided by the volunteer fire company. This can best be accomplished in a number of ways including but not limited to:

- Educate citizens on fire and general safety before, during & after emergencies
 - Offer Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training programs
 - Sponsor local youth mentoring programs and recreational activities
 - Develop relevant safety and quality-of-life programs designed for target groups
 - Attend functions of local civic groups, senior centers, schools, houses of worship etc.
 - Conduct periodic fire station open-house programs and events for the general public
 - Collaborate with local schools to provide appropriate grade-level presentations
 - Utilize social, public and private media outlets to inform, notice and alert the public
 - Provide seasonal safety tips, i.e. spring clean-up; summer barbecues; autumn smoke alarms and CO detector battery replacements; winter holiday use of candles, etc.
 - Submission of a detailed fire company annual report to the authority having jurisdiction for its review and release to the public; maintain a presence at Town Council meetings
4. **Assemble a Recruitment and Retention Committee (RRC).** Regardless of how well the fire company is staffed, trained and prepared to respond to fires and other calls for service, active recruitment and retention measures must be a high priority in the short and long term planning of the organization. At the core of this function must be a well-selected and highly-motivated Recruitment and Retention Committee (RRC). The prime purpose of this committee should be to set goals and develop plans for annual recruitment of eligible candidates based on the identified staffing needs of the organization. Whether led directly by the fire chief or other qualified member, the RRC should possess good people skills and have the full support of the fire company leadership, general membership and the authority having jurisdiction. In addition to any annual or semi-annual recruitment drives, the committee should utilize the year-round public relations programs enumerated in Step 3 (above and on the previous page) as a means to inform the public about the opportunities and benefits in becoming a member of the volunteer fire company.
5. **Prepare a brief informational package about becoming a member of the fire company.** It is a wise practice to have prepared material with relevant, illustrated information on becoming a volunteer member for distribution at pre-scheduled events, to post on the fire company and/or township website, and to have handy for unsolicited requests by citizens expressing an interest in membership for themselves or someone they know. Such a package might begin with an eye-catching cover page leading on to include a letter of introduction by the fire chief, the organizational mission statement, a brief history of the fire company, the types of services performed, a description of the duties and responsibilities of members, the benefits of being a member, the impact volunteer service has upon the community, a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) accompanied by appropriate responses, the requirements and process to make application, current fire company contact information and how to get started.
6. **Work with other local, regional, state and federal agencies to coordinate efforts and seek resources.** The most effective recruitment and retention programs are typically those that include open lines of communication and a favorable rapport with other local and regional emergency response agencies as well as with the state and federal governments. While the development of a recruitment and retention program should be based on the specific needs and designs of the jurisdiction being served, there is much that can be learned from other nearby and/or similar fire companies that can be extremely helpful in maximizing efforts and avoiding serious mistakes. Consideration should also be given to joint or area-wide recruitment

programs in which two or more fire companies join forces to participate in a coordinated recruitment drive (i.e. advertising, marketing, presentations, grant applications, etc.). Additional information and guidance may be available from the NJ State Division of Fire Safety www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/dfs and the Division of Local Government Services www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/dlgs as well as the United States Fire Administration (under FEMA) www.usfa.fema.gov including important grant updates regarding FIRE (equipment and training) and SAFER (career staffing and volunteer recruitment/retention) grant program opportunities.

7. **Remain attentive to the personal interests of members and help them manage time.** Beyond the realm of the fire service, volunteers have lives filled with other interests, responsibilities and aspirations. Leadership should make the time to demonstrate a keen awareness and genuine empathy for each member's personal interests and to every extent possible, inspire the general membership to do the same for each other. It is also imperative for the fire company to remain malleable in the process of helping the members satisfy their organizational duties and obligations. The proper balance between volunteer service and the other legitimate life interests of members will support favorable fire company moral, higher rates of membership retention and greater participation from members in responding to calls, training and other fire company activities.
8. **Deal with internal conflicts and disputes or strife; be fair, consistent and reasonable.** No matter how well an organization is staffed, managed and funded, internal conflicts and disputes are bound to occur. Reluctance or ineffectiveness in taking such matters to task and providing a judicious forum to resolve conflicts and restore harmony will have catastrophic effects on the command, control and operations of the unit in relevant parts and/or in the whole. To assist in resolving conflicts and disputes, company leadership must remain vigilant (without being too obvious or intrusive) of the general interaction among the membership. When appropriate, pre-established methods of conflict resolution and reconciliation should be implemented (from just talking things out to possible disciplinary measures) to mitigate internal friction, settle disputes or maintain order. Disciplinary policies and procedures should be well-defined and a formal grievance process should be memorialized in the Fire Company By-Laws. In the process of resolving internal conflicts and disputes, perhaps the single-most critical factor is the need to base all management decisions on a legally-sound, fair, consistent and reasonable standard of action. Serious personnel matters should be referred to legal counsel for review.
9. **Monitor and assess recruitment and retention efforts; give serious consideration to diversity**
Measuring success of a recruitment and retention program must naturally begin with defining the goals and objectives of the program. Goals might include such things as assembling a highly-motivated and capable recruitment committee, securing funding for a recruitment and retention campaign, planning/organizing an open-house or other events, and connecting with certain local establishments (i.e. schools, youth organizations, houses of worship, business, civic and social groups, etc.) to get the word out about the local volunteer fire company and opportunities to become a member. Objectives might typically include succeeding in the recruitment of some specific number of new applicants or perhaps not so typically, seeking to improve membership diversity by encouraging women and members of other minority groups to consider joining up. While reaching a specific recruitment number as well as improving diversity are both noble objectives, it is wise to consider that according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), of the 1.16 million firefighters in the

United States, only about 81,000 or 7%, are females. Presently the Northfield Fire Company does not have any female members. Given this significant gender gap compounded by the falling numbers in overall volunteer membership nationwide (a decrease by 12% over the last three decades during which career firefighter numbers have increased by 43 %) it seems axiomatic to embrace a recruitment and retention strategy inclusive of a quest for diversity. Guidelines for conduct and training should be provided to firefighters to better prepare them to include and interact with women and minorities as equals deserving of the same acceptance, respect and support as afforded to all other company members. Ultimately the shift to a more diverse unit will benefit everyone.

10. Identify the existing membership motivational factors and explore supportive incentives.

Different individuals seek membership in a volunteer fire company for many different (and sometimes similar) reasons. Among the major motivational factors include the following:

1. **ALTRUISM:** A genuine desire to serve others and give back to one's community
2. **SOCIALIZATION:** Sense of belonging to a group of people sharing similar interests
3. **TRADITION:** Carrying on a family tradition of volunteerism and service in a fire company
4. **EXHILARATION:** The excitement of fighting fires and responding to other high risk incidents
5. **CAREER-ORIENTED:** Seeking experience and opportunity to become a career firefighter

Awareness and understanding of these and other motivational factors that entice (or repel) potential as well as current members, will allow the fire company to strive for and develop a recruitment and retention program far more likely to successfully attract and retain members. Beyond the documented research, anecdotal tales and plain guesswork, a simple but effective way to learn more about what motivates the members of the fire company is to ask them.

VOLUNTEER INCENTIVE PROGRAMS (VIPS)

Volunteer Incentive Programs (VIPS) also play an important role in attracting and retaining members. While VIPS should not be expected to single-handedly lead to the complete realization of a fire company's staffing goals, properly structured and managed incentive programs can significantly enhance applicant interest, organizational morale and retention, professional development and membership participation in response to calls for service, reporting for stand-by shifts and other fire company activities such as training, general meetings and special events. More about VIPS is provided in the following section of the report.

Section 3(e)(4) of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) describes a "volunteer" as one who volunteers for a public agency without employment compensation but may be remunerated for certain expenses or may otherwise receive a nominal fee or reasonable benefits. Recognizably, such arrangements for recompense form the basis of volunteer incentive programs (VIPS) designed to support volunteer recruitment and retention across the nation. Individuals who are actually employed by a public agency may still serve as volunteers in that same agency (and be eligible to receive non-employment compensation in the form of direct payment of expenses, nominal fee or reasonable benefits) however, the FLSA prohibits such employees from providing the same type of services in their capacities as volunteers as in the performance of their paid jobs with that agency.

Simply stated, career (paid) firefighters cannot simultaneously serve as volunteer firefighters in the public agency in which they are employed as career firefighters and conversely, volunteer firefighters cannot simultaneously serve as career (paid) firefighters in the public agency in which they serve as volunteer firefighters.

Three prominent examples of VIPs in New Jersey include the Length of Service Awards Program or "LOSAP"; a provision of a "Nominal Fee" for specified duties or services; and "Direct Payment of Volunteer Expenses". A closer look at these programs is provided below.

LOSAP: Established by P.L. 1997, c. 388 as amended by P.L. 2001, c. 272, the Emergency Services Volunteer Length of Services Awards Program (LOSAP) Act is a volunteer incentive program designed to provide tax deferred income benefits to active members of volunteer fire companies and ambulance squads. The tenets of LOSAP are prescribed under N.J.S.A. 40A:14-183 through 194.1 and among other things, provide for a well-defined point system to be outlined by the sponsoring agencies (municipalities, fire districts or county governments) in which vested members earn points for such things as responding to calls, participating in training, attending general meetings and holding certain offices. Eligible members must accumulate some specified number of points to have the annual LOSAP contribution placed into their individual deferred annuity accounts. Annual LOSAP contributions can range from \$100 to \$1,150 plus an additional sum (if provided by the enabling municipal ordinance or fire district resolution establishing or otherwise amending the annual LOSAP contribution) derived from an annual calculation prescribed by the NJ Division of Local Government Services and based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

NOMINAL FEE: Provision of a nominal fee or "stipend" may be permissible for such things as volunteers holding certain fire company leadership and/or supervisory positions, covering stand-by shifts (a.k.a. duty shifts or roster staffing) making individual calls for service (activation bonus) or making an established percentage of calls over a specified period of time. Federal and state guidelines are not particularly well-defined in regard to what precise amount constitutes a "nominal fee". In a 2006 advisory letter issued to the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), the United States Department of Labor (DOL) cited in part, "No guidelines on specific amounts applicable to all (or even most) possible situations can be provided". The DOL has however, provided some guidance as to what is NOT to be considered a nominal fee in its stated opinion that the fee must not be "analogous to a payment for services or recompense" or in other words, not consistent to what it would cost to pay an employee to perform similar work.

A safe rule of measure that has come to be recognized as the "bright line test" sets the bar for the nominal fee standard as an amount "not to exceed 20% of what the public agency would otherwise pay". Another compatible rule of thumb is to consider nominal fees in the context of any other benefits provided or expenses covered and setting such fees "well below" the minimum wage.

While these are widely-recognized standards in the determination of a nominal fee, setting the level of nominal fees in any jurisdiction should be based on careful inventory of the economic realities and judicious review by certified public accountants and appropriate legal counsel.

DIRECT PAYMENT OF VOLUNTEER EXPENSES: This is a method of reimbursing volunteers for out-of-pocket job-related expenditures such as training course registration fees, tuition and educational expenses, protective gear and equipment acquisition and maintenance, uniforms and station wear acquisition and maintenance, transportation and meals. A Direct Payment of Expenses program should contain several key components to include:

- A fixed annual (not-to exceed) appropriation or line account for volunteer expenses
- A well-defined, job-related and reasonable list of covered expenses
- A procedure for submitting requests to the fire company appropriate authority for pre-approval to secure a covered expense item or items
- A requirement for written and endorsed receipts on proper invoices or other forms of acceptable documentation to validate expenditures
- A fair and consistent system of expense approvals/denials requiring an annual accountability report to the authority having jurisdiction (City of Northfield)

OTHER FORMS OF VOLUNTEER INCENTIVE PROGRAMS (VIPS)

Still other forms of volunteer incentives could include such measures as township sponsored annual award banquets, free or subsidized housing, eligibility for local tax relief, discounted or no-cost licensing and permits, and free passes to a variety of local activities, functions and programs. Municipalities and fire companies could also collaborate with local businesses in sponsoring special offers to volunteer members for discounted commercial products and services within the jurisdiction and wider service area of the fire company or companies.

While there is no one-size-fits-all approach to volunteer incentives, it is wise to research what other fire companies, fire districts and municipalities are doing, examine the options and determine what is working well, where and why. Much can be learned from the success and failures of incentive programs initiated in other agencies large and small, near and far.

All things considered, whenever specific volunteer incentive programs are being contemplated for adoption, questions to ask prior to implementation should include:

1. What type/s of programs will provide the greatest benefit to the payees & payers
2. What amount of funding needs to be appropriated to sustain the incentive offered
3. Does the cost vs. benefits analysis of the planned incentive favor adoption
4. How will the program be managed and who will be accountable to oversee it
5. What method/s of measuring results (effectiveness) of the program will be utilized

VIPs should be chosen with great care, for once they are instituted it can be difficult and even damaging to eliminate or reduce program benefits at some subsequent point in time.

REFERENCES AND SOURCE MATERIALS

- Official Website, Township of Southampton, NJ www.southamptonnj.org
- Chapter 16. "Fire Prevention Code" of the Southampton Municipal Code
- Hampton Lakes Volunteer Fire Company www.hamptonlakesfire.com and www.facebook.com/HLVFC172
- Vincent Volunteer Fire Company info@vincentfire.org and www.facebook.com/Vincentfirecompany
- Wikipedia
- United States Census Report 2010
- Burlington County Fire Chiefs Association www.bcfirechiefs.org
- NJ Department of Community Affairs, Division of Fire Safety
- NJ Department of Community Affairs, Division of Local Government Services
- National Fire Incident Reporting System
- NFPA 1911 Standard for the Inspection, Maintenance, Testing and Retirement of In-Service Emergency Vehicles
- NFPA 1962 Standard for the Care, Use, Inspection, Service Testing, and Replacement of Fire Hose, Couplings, Nozzles, and Fire Hose Appliances.
- NFPA 1930 Standard for Manufacturer's Design of Fire Department Ground Ladders.
- United States Fire Administration FEMA Report: "Retention and Recruitment for the Volunteer Emergency Services ---Challenges and Solutions" May 2007 www.usfa.fema.gov
- National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) "Make Me a Firefighter" National Volunteer Firefighter Recruitment and Retention Campaign www.nvfc.org
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"THE BEST WAY TO PREDICT THE FUTURE IS TO INVENT IT"

