



REQUEST FOR COUNCIL ACTION

AGENDA DATE: 7/13/2026

AGENDA ITEM: Consider allowing the Grand Rapids Fire department to obtain quotes for the purchase of a RDC, chainsaws, a skid unit for our side x side and miscellaneous firefighting equipment.

PREPARED BY: Travis Cole-Fire Chief

BACKGROUND:

Members of the Grand Rapids Fire Department took leave from their regular employment or time away from their families to assist with fire suppression and emergency response during two significant incidents in northern Minnesota. The first incident was the Stewart Wildland Fire in Two Harbors, MN which occurred in May 2026. The second was the Flanders Wildland Fire in Crosslake, MN, which also occurred in May 2026.

Through established mutual aid and assistance agreements, jurisdictions are able to request personnel and resources when available. These deployments are reimbursable, and in many cases, the reimbursements exceed the actual expenses incurred by the responding department.

For the Stewart Fire and Flanders Fire, the City of Grand Rapids received reimbursement from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources in the amount of \$30,828.75. The two wildland fire responses resulted in expenses totaling \$8,530.48. These two events generated a combined surplus of \$22,298.27.

The fire department recently responded to a grass fire where access to the fire required the use of our RDC (Rapid Deployment Craft). This is an inflatable rescue craft used for ice water and swift water rescues. Upon inflating the craft, several tears were found which required us to use duct tape to temporally patch the hole to use the craft. We tried patching holes when we returned but found numerous more and it is just not repairable. We have had the RDC for over 20+ years and its needs to be replace.

We also have found several of our chainsaws that we have used throughout the years and on these past wildland responses calls are now needed to be replaced. Our maintenance staff has tried services them and they just don't start or stay running.

We have also found a need to add a wildland Skid unit to our existing side x side to further our availability to fight wildland grass fires. This unit will also allow us to take to future incidents like the Stewart and Flanders fires to help with wildland suppression which we will also be able to get reimbursed for this piece of equipment when used.

Similar to last year when crews assisted with wildland fires and Bemidji storm damage, the surplus funds were deposited into the Fire Department's depreciation fund to help with the replacement and upgrade of essential firefighting equipment.

These purchases will non-budgeted and will be fully funded using surplus reimbursements from the Stewart and Flanders fire response. Utilizing this funding source will result in zero impact to the City of Grand Rapids general fund.

REQUESTED COUNCIL ACTION:

Allow the Grand Rapids Fire Department to solicit quotes for and RDC, chainsaws, skid unit and miscellaneous firefighting equipment for a total amount not to exceed \$22,298.27 plus applicable shipping costs, using surplus reimbursement funds from the Stewart and Flanders Fires.