



## CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION DEPARTMENT REPORT

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**TO:** Matthew R. Schmitz, MPA - City Manager

**FROM:** Blake Hayward – Fire Chief

**DATE OF MEETING:** September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024

**ITEM TITLE:** Department Report – Fire Department

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Independence Fire has been very busy with calls and training since the last update. I have attached a report sent to us by the State of Iowa. This report shows call volumes for all fire departments across the state that report using the State Funded ELITE reporting system. There are a few departments that either use other reporting systems or, unfortunately, do not report to the state level as required by law. You will see highlighted that Independence Fire is the 64<sup>th</sup> busiest department in the state (at the time of this report and of those reporting). We, as a department, feel like our call volume has gone up, but it's interesting to see the numbers that show that evidence as well. We are currently on track for another record call volume year this year as well. As we continue to get numbers and data from the State level, we will be sure to keep you all updated with that data as well.

Since the last update, we have made a few changes with our department. We had a member step down as a Lieutenant. We have since promoted Jacob Wolf to be our newest Lieutenant. He has been with our department for five years and has been a great asset and inspiration to many newer firefighters. We are excited to bring him up the ranks! We also made some changes in the area of our Training Officer. We promoted FF Christian Blad & Lt. Wolf to Training Officers. These members will work together to coordinate trainings, schedule drills for the year, and assign training nights to members to help teach. Both members are very excited about their new roles, and I think they will be a great addition to helping us grow as a department.

We have been working with Buchanan County Emergency Management on updating our radio system. Our current system is running out of space, and we have found some issues with our interoperability between departments and other agencies in our area. Over the last few months, we have been working with Fire Departments, EMS, Law Enforcement, and other agencies to come up with better solutions to work emergency incidents. As a group, we have come up with a plan to add/change some radio channels around to help with interoperability. Racom, our service vendor for the County has the plans and will be going around the entire County to reprogram each radio as well as update all the radios, per our user agreement. This update should help increase the ability to communicate with more agencies during an event and open more opportunities for departments and/or groups to operate on our radio system.

Our MDA Boot drive was another HUGE success again this year! We raised over \$5,800+ for MDA of Iowa. This partnership has been a great success for both us and MDA for over 20 years. MDA of Iowa will provide information on money raised later this year. In the past, we have been top 15 STATEWIDE for numerous years! We can only attribute our great achievements to the amazing support of our community. We honestly couldn't do it without the generous donations of everyone who stops by or donates driving through town. To raise \$5,800+ in a matter of 4 hours seems impossible, and yet, our department and community are doing it year after year. We really want the community to know how much we appreciate all their support!