



Memorandum

To: Kingsport Board of Mayor and Aldermen

From: Scott Boyd, Fire Chief

Date: February 2, 2023

RE: Fire Department Purchases

Funds were transferred to the Kingsport Fire Department account by Budget Ordinance No. 7056 after its second reading on November 1, 2022, for equipment for firetrucks (new apparatus). These funds were appropriated to project number NC2216.

A list of equipment needed was sent to five different vendors by Fire Department staff. Once the vendors responded with quotes, Fire Department staff reviewed the quotes and selected equipment item by item based on the lowest cost per piece of equipment. Purchases were made from vendors EVS, MES, Safe Industries, NAFECO, and EVAC Systems based on the lowest quoted cost per item.

Not realizing the implication of the \$50,000.00 purchasing threshold for competitive bids, as purchases were viewed as being on an individual basis, the equipment was purchased, and some items delivered to be installed on the new trucks. Staff operated under the good faith, but mistaken, belief that passage of the budget ordinance effectively authorized the purchases in question.

Upon learning of the mistake Fire Department staff did cancel orders for some equipment. However, not all orders could be cancelled based on the nature of the equipment purchased.

Fire Department staff have since received additional instruction on the proper purchasing procedures and will consult with the procurement department for direction before making future purchases.