
INTEROFFICE



MEMORANDUM

To: Melissa Marsh, City Manager

From: Greg Lelito, Fire Chief

Re: Capital Purchase Engine 723

Date: May 24, 2023

CC: Amy Misczak, HR Director/Purchasing Coordinator

Issue

In preparation for the 2023-2024 Fire Department budget, Fire Department staff evaluated the Department's five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The 2022–2027 CIP outlined the replacement of the Department's aerial ladder and fire engine. The City aims to replace a fire engine every 25 years and the aerial ladder truck every 30 years. Phase funding was to begin in the 2024-2025 budget year. At the end of the 2026-2027 fiscal year, funding of 1 million dollars for the fire engine and 1.1 million for the aerial ladder was projected to be available to purchase the two new vehicles.

Skyrocketing costs of new fire apparatus have altered our approach to the department apparatus replacement timeline. The demand for new fire vehicles, inflation affecting steel and aluminum, and supply chain issues have impacted pricing. A fire engine today would cost the City nearly 1 million dollars, and replacing the current aerial truck would cost 2 million. To put the increased price in perspective, our newest fire engine, the City purchased in 2019, costs \$603,382. Today, an identical fire engine costs \$935,343, a 43% increase.

Background

Over the past six months, the apparatus committee evaluated several vehicle options to identify the type of apparatus that would improve the Department's operations while considering the financial impact of the escalating cost of purchasing a new fire apparatus. Staff met with numerous manufacturers, attended trade shows, and visited neighboring departments.

After thoroughly evaluating various options and models, the committee focused on a quint-style fire engine. A quint fire engine combines the functions of a traditional fire engine and a ladder truck. It affords us the necessary resources and equipment to respond quickly and effectively to fire and other

emergencies. The quint approach improves our staffing deployment, streamlines our daily operations, and enhances our community fire protection.

The quint-style fire truck provides a ladder truck at all fires in the City. Eliminates the need for multiple emergency vehicles on a fire scene, extending the life of the current ladder truck. A quint has the flexibility to operate in tight spaces and narrow streets. It is furnished with a 75ft. ladder, allowing access to rooftops and elevated areas, and has a larger water tank than the current ladder. These features are in addition to meeting all the standards we have incorporated into our current advanced life support fire engines.

Recommendation

After careful consideration, staff recommends the City purchase a quint fire engine from the Sutphen corporation before June 15th. Sutphen advised us of a price increase from 5% to 7% after that date.

The committee selected Sutphen from numerous manufacturers because of the success of our two previous fire engine purchases, and a Sutphen quint will standardize our fire suppression vehicles. Standardization is essential for operations, training, maintenance efficiency, access to parts, and service.

The City will utilize its inter-local purchasing contract with Houston Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) as we did in our previous fire engine purchases. The H-GAC expedites and makes the procurement process more efficient. H-GAC is a government-to-government cooperative purchasing program allowing the city access to volume purchasing and discounts. The program eliminates delays in writing bid specs and posting bid packages. Staff agreed that Sutphen would provide the City with the best quint fire engine while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

Staff and I recommend that Council award the purchase of a heavy-duty 75' rear mount ariel ladder (SLR) from Sutphen in the amount not to exceed \$1,480,217.53. If approved, the City should expect delivery within 24-26 months.