



**OELWEIN FIRE DEPARTMENT
CITY OF OELWEIN, IOWA
MEMORANDUM**

FROM: Jeremy P. Logan, Public Safety Chief

DATE: September 28, 2023

TO: City Administrator Dylan ulfinger

SUBJECT: Budget Offset Plan - Fire Department

Consideration and research has been conducted in reference to the September 12, 2023 memo from you. That memo "Budget Cut Time", indicates that each department is to provide options to phase in budget cuts/revenue streams over a three year period. The number provided for the fire department is \$20,000 over three years.

Approximately two and one-half years ago, the City of Oelwein contracted with a consultant to provide an in-depth review of the fire department. This review covered all operations and areas of operation involving the Oelwein Fire Department. An area of the final report to note in correlation to the task of budgetary areas for the fire department is where the report provides comparisons to the fire budget.

Two years ago, the Oelwein Fire Department had the lowest operating budget of the seven communities that responded to the survey. The difference between Oelwein, which had the lowest budget and the next lowest budget was significant as the next lowest community had a budget of \$34,000 more than Oelwein. While \$34,000 may not appear to be a significant number when cities are passing multi-million dollar budgets, when you observe that the fire department budget at that time was less than one-percent of the city's overall budget, that difference is concerning. The third lowest community had an operating budget that was nearly 60% greater than the Oelwein Fire Department with the average budget of the seven responding communities being 450% greater than the Oelwein Fire Department budget. In the subsequent year to the findings in this report, the fire department budget was decreased 3.6%.

The Oelwein Fire Department was underfunded for decades. The building infrastructure, equipment, and apparatus repair were all at issue. For the past two years, through creative funding, grant applications, and a significant amount of volunteer member hours, many of the repairs, updates, and replacements have been made. However, there is still more work to be done and failure to continually refresh, repair, and replace items will cause future issues. Further budget reductions will have an impact on operations and staffing for this department.

Should the City of Oelwein be persistent in reducing the fire department budget by \$20,000 over a three year period, I would respectfully request that the proposal on page 2 be considered. With a department that is already working with minimal funds, these reductions will have a negative impact on operations and morale, while pushing critical funding issues down the road for others to have to address.



**OELWEIN FIRE DEPARTMENT
CITY OF OELWEIN, IOWA
MEMORANDUM**

Page 2

SUBJECT: Budget Offset Plan - Fire Department

FY2025 = \$7,000 reduction

Uniform line	-\$ 1,000
Building line	-\$ 1,000
Communications	-\$ 2,000
Equipment line	-\$ 3,000

FY2026 = \$7,000 reduction

Uniform line	-\$ 2,000
Personnel line	-\$ 1,000
Vehicle line	-\$ 2,000
Equipment line	-\$ 2,000

FY2027 = \$6,000 reduction

Uniform line	-\$ 1,000
Personnel line	-\$ 2,000
Equipment line	-\$ 3,000

Total proposed, as requested: -\$20,000

Or;

- 2) The utilization of \$20,000 from the \$500,000+ revenue from existing local ATE system will cover the desired increase in revenue, or;
- 3) The City of Oelwein currently has a Franchise Fee that by Iowa law can be utilized for non-salary public safety operational expenses. Shifting the costs of 50% of the fire department equipment line item for FY2025 would immediately address the request to reduce the fire department budget by \$20,000 from the General Fund.