

To: Petersburg Borough Assembly Members  
CC: Stephen Giesbrecht  
Subject: PVFD Supplemental Request – SCBA Replacement

February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2026

From: Aaron Hankins  
Emergency Services Director

Assembly Members,

I am writing to request an additional \$76,327.54 in supplemental funding to fill the funding gap for replacing our Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus equipment due to an approaching end of service life (Feb 2027). SCBA's are regulated by NFPA code 1970 (formerly 1981 and 1982) which dictates a 15-year service life for SCBA equipment.

PVFD's current fleet was purchased in 2012 when Station 1 was built and was included in the funding for the building. Since being put in service, the SCBA's and packs have been serviced annually by certified technicians and reauthorized for continued use. Despite this, the packs and tanks are showing their age. The packs have electronic boards for their P.A.S.S. Alarm systems that have been degraded from repeated exposure to heat and moisture, and the composite tanks are showing signs of cracking around the valve stems of the tanks. Some of our tanks and packs have already been removed from service due to degradation.

For replacement, we have already received \$225,000 in Congressionally Directed Spending from Senator Murkowski, unfortunately, these funds do not cover the full cost of replacement. We have received a price break from the supplier for 30 SCBA packs (our current fleet size) to match the amount provided through the CDS (\$225,000), however, this does not include the SCBA tanks and masks that are needed to work with the new packs (\$76,327.54). Any additional overage will not be covered by the CDS appropriation.

For reference, PVFD does not stock SCBA's per person, but rather by the seats available in fire apparatus, for a total of 30. Currently, we have 60 total tanks, one for immediate deployment and one to immediately replace the first bottle when it is depleted, based on the total number of SCBA packs. The masks, however, are individually issued to each firefighter. The reason we provide an SCBA pack per seat on a truck is to make sure any firefighter riding with that apparatus has the proper personnel protective equipment to protect them from on-scene hazards, both indoors and outdoors. Without being able to provide proper PPE to responding firefighters, the Borough is exposed to potential workman's comp claims related to on scene exposure or worse, the responder is unable to enter a hazardous scene to affect a rescue. Replacement of our SCBA fleet is critical, and our current packs only have one year left.

The replacement SCBAs we have chosen are an updated version of the current packs that we have, that have been stripped down to their bare function. We have reduced the amount of padding in the pack straps, removed the quick connect cylinder connection, and removed the "Buddy Breather" function, reducing per pack cost. For the tanks, we have decreased the size of the tanks from "45 min" bottle to "30 min" bottle, mainly for weight savings, and we added 10 bottles to account for the difference in suppliable air. The resulting changes have helped reduce the funding difference but have not totally closed the gap. Please see the attached information for more details on pack specifics.

The danger present in not replacing these packs prior to 2027 is that our current packs will expire. To reduce this risk and to prevent injury to PVFD members, we will be forced to reduce the apparatus available to respond to emergencies to apparatus outfitted with up to code

SCBA's only. Such a decision would not be made lightly and would reduce tactical options for fighting fires. Not having a full complement of SCBAs means that we not only cannot deploy more firefighters for attack and rescue operations, but that we have to hold some of the available packs in reserve in case of something going wrong on scene such as a structure collapse or downed firefighters needing rescue. Thankfully, we have some time before this hard decision will have to be made.

In discussions I have had trying to figure out how to source other funds to help with capitol projects like this, one of the thoughts discussed was to transfer the funds from the sale of land adjacent to Station 1 to either cover the cost or reimburse the general fund for this expenditure. I offer that suggestion to you as a means to potentially reduce the hit on the general fund. I have not yet submitted my application for the CDS application and will need to make a decision soon on how much of what to purchase before these funds expire. I hope to pair this supplemental request with the CDS funding to take advantage of the current break our vendor is offering us, to allow for manufacture and delivery time for our full complement of equipment, and to hopefully get this purchase in before the next increase in price.

Respectfully and for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Hankins', written over a light blue rectangular background.

Aaron Hankins  
Emergency Services Director