

## MEMO

TO: Finance Committee  
FROM: Chief Tanya Reynen  
DATE: April 27, 2026  
RE: Dodge County Chiefs Boat

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### Background

In 2018, the Dodge County Fire Chiefs Association (DCFCA) coordinated the purchase of water rescue equipment to support departments across the county, including two water rescue boats. One of those boats has been housed at the Watertown Fire Department (WFD) and has been used for both local water rescue operations and mutual aid responses throughout the region.

Under the original arrangement, DCFCA maintained ownership while host agencies, including WFD, provided storage, staffing, and deployment. Over time, discussions have occurred regarding long-term ownership, maintenance responsibility, and operational control.

DCFCA has expressed a desire to transfer full ownership of the boat to the City of Watertown. This transition aligns operational responsibility with actual use, as WFD has consistently deployed, staffed, and maintained readiness of the asset.

Beyond emergency response, WFD has demonstrated added value in housing the boat by supporting other City operations. Most recently, the department partnered with Engineering to assist with seawall inspections, highlighting the versatility and ongoing utility of the asset to the community.

### Financial Impact

There is no cost to acquire the boat. Ownership will be transferred at no purchase price.

The City will assume responsibility for ongoing costs associated with the boat, including maintenance, insurance, registration, and operational upkeep. These costs are consistent with current practices associated with housing and utilizing the boat.

### Recommendation

Approve the transfer of ownership of the Dodge County water rescue boat from the Dodge County Fire Chiefs Association to the City of Watertown.

This transition formalizes an arrangement that already reflects current operational practice, ensures clear responsibility for maintenance and deployment, and preserves an asset that supports both emergency response and broader community needs.