



Mike Mackey, Fire Chief

CITY OF LANSING  
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS  
120 E. SHIAWASSEE ST., LANSING MI 48933  
(517) 483-4200 | [LANSINGMI.GOV](http://LANSINGMI.GOV)



Andy Schor, Mayor

**SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**  
MONDAY, APRIL 20, 2020 | 4:30 PM | DIGITAL / REMOTE MEETING

1. Call to Order – Establish Quorum and Communications Test

\*All can hear and be heard.

✓	David Keeney
✓	Kathleen Tobe
✓	Gina Nelson, Vice Chair
X	Lucianna Solis - Excused
✓	Steve Purchase, Chair
✓	Rodney Singleton
✓	Wyatt Ludman

<u><b>FIRE COMMISSIONERS</b></u>	
1 <sup>ST</sup> WARD VACANT	
2 <sup>ND</sup> WARD	DAVID KEENEY
3 <sup>RD</sup> WARD	KATHLEEN TOBE
4 <sup>TH</sup> WARD	GINA NELSON – VICE CHAIR
AT-LARGE LUCIANNA SOLIS	
AT-LARGE STEVE PURCHASE - CHAIR	
AT-LARGE RODNEY SINGLETON	
AT-LARGE WYATT LUDMAN	

2. Additions to Agenda: None

3. Public Comment – Agenda Items (Time Limit: 3 Minutes)

4. Old Business:

4.1. Tabled Motion to Approve the FY2021 Fire Departmental Budget with Transmittal letter

4.1.1. Discussion followed regarding the budget as presented and the transmittal letter as read.

4.2. A Motion was made by Commissioner Nelson and supported by Commissioner Keeney to separate the Transmittal letter from the Motion to approve the FY2021 Fire Departmental Budget

4.2.1.1. Vote: Motion carried with a unanimous vote.

4.3. Tabled Motion made by Commissioner Ludman and supported by supported by Commissioner Keeney on 4-15-2020 to Approve FY2021 Fire Departmental Budget with Transmittal letter removed for a separate vote.

4.3.1. Discussion followed regarding the proposed budget presented.

4.3.1.1. Vote: A roll call vote was taken which resulted in 1 yay and 5 nay votes. Motion to approve the FY2021 Fire Departmental Budget did not pass. Motion did not carry.

4.4. A Motion was made by Commissioner Ludman and supported by Commission Singleton to transmit the Transmittal letter.

4.4.1. Discussion





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Andy Schor, Mayor

April 20, 2020

Mayor Andy Schor  
Council President Peter Spadafore  
124 W. Michigan Ave.  
Lansing, MI 48933

Mayor Schor and Council President Spadafore,

The Lansing City Charter requires the Fire Department budget to be reviewed and approved by the Board of Fire Commissioners (Chapter 4.5). At its April 20, 2020 meeting, the Fire Board reviewed the Fire Department Budget proposed for FY2020/2021. With an understanding that the Board's approval is not required for the budget to advance to Council, The Board voted against approval of the budget because of our significant concerns centered on reductions to line items that are critical to the delivery of life and property saving Fire Department services.

Generally speaking, while the Fire Department's proposed budget provides a 3.8% year-over-year increase, that increase is entirely absorbed by non-controllable expenses (Personnel, IT, Fleet/Garage, and Insurance/Bonds). The remaining controllable budget (responsible for supplies, equipment, utilities, contractual services, training, fuel, personal protection equipment, and ambulance supplies) sustains a concerning 7.8% year-over-year reduction; from \$1,900,000 to \$1,751,400. What does this mean practically? Simply put, that there is a real probability that the Department will not be able to deliver services for the entirety of the year. To meet the Department's minimum needs, the Board recommends adjustments to the line items outlined below. Should funding be allocated to meet these recommendations, LFD's controllable budget would still decline by 4.6% compared to last year and present some manageable concerns.

1. **101.343510.741000.00000 – Maintenance Alarm Misc. Operating.** This line item funds most of the Fire Department's general equipment spending; everything from replacement parts for extrication tools, to microwaves, to rope and fire hose. The board strongly recommends funding at \$165,000 to ensure our first responders have the equipment they need to carry out their duties safely and effectively in service to the people of Lansing.
2. **101.343540.741000.00000 – Training Misc. Operating.** This line item funds operations for the Department's training facility. The board recommends restoring the 33% reduction in order to fund the training of 16 new Firefighters and fulfill mandatory training requirements department wide.
3. **101.343550.741000.00000 – Radio Lab Operating.** While the Department is preparing to move to a new radio system during 3Q or 4Q2021, it must continue to service its aging communications equipment until that time. Communications represents critical infrastructure that this funding is required to maintain.
4. **101.343570.742000.00000 – Ambulance Service Supplies.** This line item represents perhaps the most concerning cut, and one that carries a direct impact on service delivery. The line-item funds supplies for ambulances and engines that allow the Department to provide EMS service to the people of Lansing. These supplies include personal protection equipment that keep our first responders safe, and other medical equipment/supplies required to treat and safely transport patients.

Despite prior year budget levels, actual spending has trended to north of \$200,000 and is projected to only increase as demand for ambulance services continues to grow. FY2018 saw \$193,614 in actual spending; FY2019 saw \$220,418; and FY2020 through March 31<sup>st</sup> saw \$189,556 (which does not include any money for COVID19 responses). The board strongly recommends allocating \$220,000 to cover anticipated ambulance service supply requirements based on historical costs.

5. **101.343580 – Emergency Services Operating (741000), Supplies (742000), and Equipment (977000).** The Emergency Services Division is responsible for city-wide coordination and control during times of community-wide emergency or disaster. The division has relied extensively on grant funding that has become more scarce year-over-year just to function. Reductions to these line items will push the division nearly to the breaking point. The board recommends at a minimum that the city continue to fund these operations at the same level as last year. **Emergency Management**

The Board notes that the programmed increase for IT services provided by the City to the Department is 5%, or \$59,349 increase year-over-year. That increase is sufficient to cover all but \$7,651 of funding required to satisfy all of the above recommendations, and the Board would encourage review of the necessity of this increase in view of the essential functions that could otherwise be funded. The board does not have a full understanding of how LFD IT funds are utilized.

Aside from the line items discussed above, the Board would like to call attention to the following:

1. **Heart Monitors.** The Board commends the inclusion of funding in the City-Wide Capital Improvement Program to replace the Department's heart monitors. The Department's current monitors are no longer supported by their manufacturers and are beyond the end of their useful life. Acquiring new monitors will allow the Department to remain in compliance with regulatory requirements for continued EMS operations, improve communication of patient vitals to hospitals, and ultimately improve patient safety/outcomes. It is critical that this funding be approved as proposed.
2. **Turnout Gear, PPE, SCBA Bottles and Packs.** Following the Board's recommendation last year, the Department has split-out from the Uniform line-item separate line-items for Turnout Gear, PPE, SCBA Bottles and Packs. Maintaining dedicated funding for these separated line-items improves transparency, the funding itself is crucial to ensure the timely turn-over of regulated safety gear as required.
3. **Fire Apparatus Replacement.** The Board again would like to express its appreciation for the allocation of a portion of ramp sale proceeds last year to fund replacement of aging engines and ambulances. These rigs have been ordered, are nearing their delivery dates, and we look forward to seeing them placed in service. The board further appreciates the efforts of the Mayor and Council to advocate for State assistance for the acquisition of a new Ladder Truck. As the funds for the Ladder Truck were ultimately vetoed as part of the State's COVID-19 response, please know that the Board stands ready to provide our full support to efforts that would see the funding restored once COVID-19 has subsided. These efforts aside, the Board encourages the City to continue to identify and pursue funding for the replacement of aging apparatus and critical infrastructure, and we will continue to work with Fire Administration in support of that work.

The Board recognizes the significant unanticipated fiscal challenges facing the City this year, not the least of which will be the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on revenues and expenses moving forward. We know City Staff works diligently to propose budgets reflecting these fiscal realities, and we have not made our recommendations for additional funding lightly. Likewise, it must be recognized that the Lansing Fire Department has been operating an incredibly lean budget for years. Funding levels that have allowed equipment and facilities to deteriorate beyond repair, and that relies on one-time cash infusions to meet minimum service levels. The truth is that the Department requires substantially more funding than discussed here, and operations have only been able to continue because of the survive-and-adapt mentality held by its employees. We cannot overstate our view that additional funding is sorely needed for the Fire Department, nor can we understate our concern for the impact that mid-year cuts made likely by the coronavirus outbreak would have on the essential operations of the Department.

In closing, the Board would like to take this opportunity to extend our sincere appreciation and thanks for the men and women of the Lansing Fire Department who put themselves at risk each time they respond to a call for service. They represent the very best values of our community, and we are indebted to them for the tireless, essential work they do on the frontlines every day to protect the life and property of Lansing's residents and visitors.

Sincerely,



Stephen Purchase

Chair, Lansing Board of Fire Commissioners

cc: Chief Mackey

Lansing Board of Fire Commissioners