



RYE FIRE RESCUE  
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[www.town.rye.nh.us](http://www.town.rye.nh.us)



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Thank you for the opportunity to submit Rye Fire Rescue's 2019 CIP plan. An important initial goal during my first year here in Rye is to assess the state / condition of our apparatus fleet; develop a solid, long-term, sustainable capital plan we can be proud of That address's our needs while being economically mindful and a good value for the town. I believe we have done that. I would like to thank our apparatus committee for their dedication, and thoughtful input. Their hours of hard work are evident in the quality product we present to you today! Big thanks also go to Cyndi Gillespie for her advice and support as we developed this plan.

#### Process:

Several months ago, we formed an Apparatus committee. This committee was charged with the draft development of a realistic, sustainable Capital plan that would stabilize our apparatus needs for years to come.

- The condition of our fleet was assessed by 2 independent certified emergency vehicle technicians representing 2 different firms.
- Apparatus funding trends in Rye were researched going back to 2003.
- The current apparatus funding trends in Rye were researched.
- Trends in the fire service were researched. We also looked at how our area departments and comparable communities operate (at this writing comparable communities are still being assessed but enough information was gained to move forward).
- Each item on the CIP plan was studied for its suitability for service in Rye. Questions included: Do we have the correct numbers and types of apparatus for adequate duty here in Rye? How does each item serve our mission and vision? Finally, are we putting forth a good value for the community?
- Several draft plans were developed with various replacement arrangements and funding mechanisms. The best plan for Rye was chosen.
- The plan before you today is a value-driven approach to provide the most realistic, sustainable Capital plan that will stabilize our apparatus needs for years to come.

#### Terminology:

- Public safety apparatus funding: This is the projected annual funding into our apparatus/major equipment funding plan. It consists of an annual \$100,000 warrant article identical to what has been allocated the last 3 years. Added to this is the Special Revenue Fund (cell tower) which is allocated for ambulance and fire capital purchases. We figured in a contractual 3% annual increase in the Special Revenue Fund only.
- Critical Service Gap: This is not a term I use casually or often. This indicates a gap in a service model that threatens a systems ability to perform its mission.



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- Mini-Pumper: This emerging trend in the fire service refers to a much smaller fire engine which carries the minimum equipment to respond to a building fire but certainly not the capability that the full-size trucks have. The idea is to use this truck to respond to service calls, MVA's and other smaller more frequent emergencies thus reducing the time we need to operate the larger trucks. This reduces operating costs, wear and tear on the more expensive apparatus while keeping the needed pumping capability should a large fire call come in while this truck is out about town. Other towns moving to having a mini-pumper among their fleet is Salisbury, MA and Manchester-by-the-Sea, MA, a close comparable to Rye.
- Pumper/Ladder (sometimes referred to as a quint): This describes a truck that functions as both a pumper and/or a ladder truck. This is often used in smaller (and some larger) departments where staffing more than 1 or 2 fire trucks *quickly* is not practical.

#### Findings:

- Funding Highlights: Internally Rye Fire Rescue will use a 20-year capital plan. This long-range vision will help us to provide the town with a consistent, predictable and reasonable 6 year plan each year. For 11 years (between 2003 and 2014) the town did not invest appreciably in its apparatus replacement fund. This has set us back significantly in terms of adequate funding for apparatus. Due to this situation the 6 year CIP we are submitting is designed to remedy this imbalance by the end of year 6.
  - Public safety apparatus funding remains constant throughout the 6 year CIP (\$100,000 warrant, Special Revenue Fund-adjusted 3% per year).
  - There are 2 concurrent 5 year lease purchases. One in 2019 for a portion of the pumper/ladder and the second in 2023 for a portion of Engine 3 replacement. Both leases would be for \$500,000. The first payment for the second lease purchase would commence in 2024. After these 2 lease purchases are closed out we foresee no further lease purchases.
  - At the end of this 6 year CIP, provided the annual public safety apparatus fund investment is continued, the plan would be balanced for the foreseeable future.
- Efficiencies: By embracing the mini-pumper model (Engine 1 replacement) we will utilize our larger apparatus for targeted responses and training. This will extend the life of our larger, more expensive apparatus and save money on operating cost (fuel/tires/brakes etc.) and general wear and tear. It is important to note that while the mini-pumper is much less expensive than the larger suppression apparatus there is only room for 1 mini-pumper in our fleet. The larger apparatus continue to provide a critically important function to our mission.
- Fleet make up: We find the current number/type of apparatus to be appropriate for Rye Fire Rescue with some qualification. A couple of comments:



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- We find that 3 structural pumpers are appropriate for at least two reasons. First, to adequately maintain water flow at a fire you typically need both a pumper truck at the scene pumping attach lines and a pumper truck at the hydrant boosting flow. The third pumper truck ensures this capability even when there is a truck out for repair or maintenance. Secondly, the third pumper becomes invaluable during large regional events or situations causing multiple responses such as hurricanes, severe thunderstorms, coastal events and the like. These threats are an increasing concern for the emergency management community.
- We recommend staying with the pumper/ladder (quint) model. The ladder capability on this apparatus is indeed a force multiplier for fire departments with staffing issues like Rye. An Aerial Ladder is most critical VERY early in an emergency response. Financially speaking, this apparatus counts as one of our 3 required pumpers so the cost of the aerial ladder portion of the truck is the difference between the cost of a pumper/ladder and the cost of a structural engine. To be clear:
  - \$992,000 Estimated cost of new Pumper/Ladder (aka Quint)
  - \$692,000 Estimated cost of new pumper we need either way
  - \$300,000 Estimated net cost for the aerial capability
- We recommend replacing Engine 1 (1993) with the mini-pumper already discussed. This will save us substantial money and provide efficiencies in our operation.
- The additional utility truck currently on the CIP is not currently included in our plan.
- We recommend keeping the second ambulance. This allows continuity of operations even when the front-line ambulance is out of service or occupied. The types of service this vehicle provides includes: coverage when the front-line ambulance is occupied (a value whether or not a call is received), standing by at events such as race details etc., water rescue responses (it now holds the majority of our water rescue equipment and is dispatched to all water rescue events).
- Water Rescue Critical Service Gap: Rye is home to miles of seacoast of various types (beach, rocky, harbor). As your fire chief I am very concerned about our ability to conduct and coordinate operations in this area. We have a gaping hole in our ability to provide rescue services along our immediate coastal shore. By way of example here are a few emergencies that have occurred since I arrived in Rye that worry me:
  - We responded to Sagamore Creek for an unattended boat. The caller was worried there may be a medical emergency on board or other type of emergency. The boat was not to



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far from shore but we were left helpless to respond and needed to wait sometime for a mutual aid boat.

- Earlier this summer one of our capable lifeguards responded to 3 teenagers on a paddleboard several hundred yards off shore. She paddled out to them and found 3 tired teenagers unable to help the group paddle in. She was unable to bring them in herself. Were it not for a couple of nearby surfers she could have been in trouble. Water temperature was still in the 50's. To attempt this rescue without support on the way is not fair to the victims or the lifeguard.
- A few weeks ago, we took a fisherman off Rye ledge as the tide had trapped him on the outer ledge.
- Early June we received a report of a person fallen off the jetty at Frost Point. Without a method to quickly search for him, we merely coordinated agency response from shore. Luckily the caller was mistaken.

Also of note is that our lifeguards, while dedicated and competent:

- Do not cover our entire coast.
- Are limited as to how far from shore they can effectively cover.
- Are not always on duty.
- Most go to college for the school year
- Need timely support on many rescues

Rye Fire Rescue has been busy addressing this critical service gap. We have recently:

- Increased our inventory of water rescue suits
- Purchased an inflatable military grade water rescue device to help us access victims near shore
- Certified one of our folks as a Water Rescue Technician Instructor.
- Increased our water rescue training
- We are working with our mutual aid neighbors and agencies to develop a group approach, a regional plan to water emergencies

Even though we are hard at work on this issue, are doing the research, talking to the experts and are ready to close this critical service gap. We need your support on an essential component of the plan. At a modest cost (\$35,000), A Seadoo designed specifically for search and rescue would have been able to quickly access these scenes and rescue any occupants whether off a paddleboard or rock ledge. This piece of equipment will close the gap that is left uncovered, even by a regional approach. I am respectfully asking your help by supporting the purchase of the Seadoo SAR in 2019. Here is a link to help familiarize you with this important purchase. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=otOQR150pbA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=otOQR150pbA)



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