



AGENDA ITEM #: 23-48
COUNCIL MTG OF: May 2, 2023
FROM: Dave Caron, Town Administrator
OFFERED BY: James Richardson, Fire Chief
PREPARED BY: William Gillis, Battalion Chief
SUBJECT: Forestry Tanker Chassis Replacement

STAFF REPORT
Public Hearing 5-16-23

PURPOSE:

Request supplemental appropriation to replace forestry tanker chassis following engine failure in the existing chassis.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR COMMENTS:

The fire department is requesting a supplemental appropriation to replace the chassis of their forestry tanker following the sudden failure of the motor in the existing chassis which is 37 years old. The forestry tank and pump on this truck was replaced in 2017 and would be installed on the new chassis. Using the existing forestry skid (pump and tank) offers the Town significant cost savings. The cost of replacing the entire vehicle would be between \$250,000-\$300,000. In 2017 the intent was to use the existing chassis until it was no longer functional. The amount requested in the supplemental appropriation is \$110,000 for the lease purchase of a new chassis.

BACKGROUND:

The forestry tanker is a heavy-duty forestry response vehicle. It is located at the Island Pond fire station. It is designed to travel off-road to bring equipment, water and pumping capability to extinguish forest fires. It carries 1000 gallons of water as compared to a standard forestry vehicle which carries 250 gallons of water. This vehicle is critical to providing water in remote locations, greatly enhancing forest fire suppression capability.

The current chassis is a 1986 Chevrolet C70, the original steel tank and pump were replaced in 2017 following severe corrosion of the steel water tank. The decision was made to replace the tank and pump with a new skid and use the existing chassis until it was no longer operational. The fire department mechanic has recently determined the motor has failed. Finding replacement parts is extremely challenging due to its age. The cost to replace the motor significantly exceeds the overall value of the chassis itself.

DISCUSSION:

The forestry tanker is a key piece in our forest fire response, it goes off-road supporting our lighter forestry units by bringing water to the woods where there is often none. Replacing the chassis and using the existing forestry skid offers the most cost-effective way to maintain this capability.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The impact will be \$110,000 in the form of a 7-year lease from the capital reserve fund. It should be noted that it has been difficult to obtain accurate pricing due to low existing inventory and potential new federal emission regulations which will increase production costs.

RECOMMENDED ACTION BY COUNCIL:

Approve a supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$110,000 for the fire department to purchase a replacement chassis for their forestry tanker.

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

Please see Resolution #2023-031 for consideration after the May 16 public hearing.

Vote required: 2/3 majority of the Council.



RESOLUTION

Number 2023-031

To Approve a Supplemental Appropriation for a Forestry Tanker

WHEREAS, the Town Charter establishes the Town Council as the appropriating authority of the Town and as such it is empowered by Section 9.6 of the Charter to make supplemental appropriations after the annual budget is adopted; and

WHEREAS, the Fire Department's 1986 Forestry Tanker recently experienced malfunctions which would require significant repairs; and

WHEREAS, after an evaluation it has been determined that the replacement of the chassis is the most cost-effective option to return the apparatus into service; and

WHEREAS, adequate funds are available in the Fire Department Capital Reserve Fund through a lease purchase arrangement to fund this acquisition.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED IN COUNCIL that the sum of One Hundred Ten Thousand Dollars (\$110,000) shall be appropriated to rehabilitate the Forestry Tanker;

FURTHER, as Agents to Expend, the Council hereby authorizes the use of Fire Department Capital Reserve Funds to fund the lease-purchase agreement.

This Resolution has been adopted by two-thirds majority of the entire Council as required by Charter and shall take effect immediately upon its passage.

Adopted: May 16, 2023.

Attest:

X _____
Charles Foote, Council Chair
Date: _____

X _____
Cristina Guilford, Town Clerk
Date: _____