

**TOWNSHIP *of* HANOVER**  
**Morris County, New Jersey**  
**Fire District Dissolution Plan**



**HANOVER TOWNSHIP**  
**FIRE DISTRICT No. 2**



**HANOVER TOWNSHIP**  
**FIRE DISTRICT No. 3**

**An Analysis of the Operational Efficiencies of and the Feasibility of Consolidation or Merger, of Hanover Township Fire District's No. 2 & 3's Fire Protection, Fire Prevention and Emergency Medical Services**

**June 2025**

**DISCLAIMER: While information contained in this presentation is believed to be accurate and truthful, many different sources were relied upon for certain data and statistics. No explicit guarantees can be made by the report writers with regard to the same. This is a working document and no formal action will be taken without the approval of each Board of Fire Commissioners. For informationally purpose only.**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The concept of consolidating the two Fire District's in Hanover Township together in one form or another has been the subject of discussion and exploration for at least the last three decades, conceivably much longer.

In 2004, Hanover Township Fire District No. 2 (District 2) contracted the services of Dr. Harry Carter, of Carter and Associates (also former Deputy Chief with the City of Newark) to conduct a feasibility study on the operations of District No. 2 with some consideration of one "Fire Department" in Hanover Township.

Later in 2005 the Commissioners of Fire District's 2 & 3, along with Hanover Township Committee representatives explored the options of creating a special tax district/entity termed, "The Hanover Township Emergency Medical Services" (T.H.E.M.S.) to explore one Emergency Medical Services shared by both Districts in Hanover Township.

More recently in 2011, another feasibility study was conducted by Kramer and Associates. The Kramer group performed an in-depth study of both Fire District's and Fire Companies and in the end reported ***"In the end this report shows that a complete merger will work and is recommended by this consulting team"***. Kramer and Associates also commented in the report ***"Nothing really will happen with this report, however, unless there is follow-up action to initiate the key components deemed advisable"***. Mr. Kramer also noted in his study his comment; ***THE ULTIMATE REASON FOR THE EXISTENCE OF A FIRE COMPANY IS SUPPOSED TO BE "SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY" ABOVE "SERVICE TO ITS MEMBERSHIP."***

While some of the recommendations of the Carter and Kramer reports may have been achieved wholly or partially over time, any visions for a combined or merged District never solidified.

In late 2021, the State of New Jersey through its Division of Local Government Services, issued Local Finances Notices with grant and funding opportunities in the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 and The Local Efficiency Achievement Program (LEAP) grants, which provide direct support to advance the efforts of Shared Services in all local governments. With the recent grant opportunities presented to both Board of Fire Commissioners, a committee was formed to explore the feasibility of a consolidated or merged Fire District.

The newly formed Committee consulted with District Counsel for both Districts, Mr. Richard Braslow and Township of Hanover Counsel Fred Semrau of Dorsey & Semrau, to consult on the necessary steps to consolidate or merge the two Fire Districts.

Having reviewed and analyzed both the Carter and Kramer report along with conducting research and study, it should be noted that the data gathered, findings enumerated and recommendations submitted were largely valid, sound and reasonable.

The four central factors upon which this report focuses its attention are:

- **Degree and quality of the delivery of fire protection and prevention services**
- **Cost effectiveness and efficiency of administrative, operational and support services**
- **Addressing the disparity of the divergent tax rates in the existing fire districts**
- **Delivery of Emergency Medical Service**

This report focuses on the dissolution of two fire districts and creation of a new single fire district, which would provide a single fire tax throughout the Township of Hanover. As further detailed in this report, this reorganization can provide numerous benefits to the Township residents including:

- **Single command structure for fire services**
- **A potential short and long term annual cost savings**
- **Improved accountability**
- **Standardization and uniformity of fire operations**
- **Standardization and uniformity of emergency medical services**
- **Standardization and uniformity of fire prevention services**
- **Improved deployment of forces**

Challenges of this type of reorganization include the transition period necessary for personnel to adjust to compounded changes in administrative and command structures, operational standards and organizational culture. These challenges, however, are not insurmountable and can be mitigated with good planning and leadership. Further, even more important is the positive attitude and political will of the stakeholders, including the existing Township administration, Committee Members, Fire Commissioners, rank and file career members, volunteer members and union representation. These stakeholders will need to be supportive of the concept.

Pursuant to **N.J.S.A. 40A:14-90.2**, titled 'Consolidating two or more fire districts within one municipality,' the necessary steps are as follows:

1. In order to consider the consolidation of fire districts within the Township, the Township Committee will need to receive resolutions adopted by the commissioners of each of the fire districts to be included in the consolidation, expressing consent to the development of a consolidation plan.

2. If, upon receiving the above resolutions, the Township Committee approves the development of a consolidation plan, then the Committee shall work with the fire district commissioners to prepare the plan, which plan may be prepared in consultation also with the Division of Local Government Services.

3. Upon completion of the consolidation plan, the Township Committee must hold a public hearing to discuss the proposed consolidation.

4. Following the hearing, the Township Committee must vote on a resolution to consolidate the fire districts pursuant to the consolidation plan.

5. If a resolution is adopted by the Township Committee to consolidate the fire districts, the Township Committee must then apply to the Local Finance Board for approval to consolidate the fire districts pursuant to the consolidation plan. Notice of the impending consolidation, the governing body resolutions authorizing consolidation, and a copy of the proposed consolidation plan, must be sent to the Local Finance Board, which will schedule a hearing on the application within 60 days of receiving the Township Committee's application.

6. The Local Finance Board in deciding on the Township Committee's application, will consider whether the consolidation is an "efficient and feasible means of providing and financing the service."

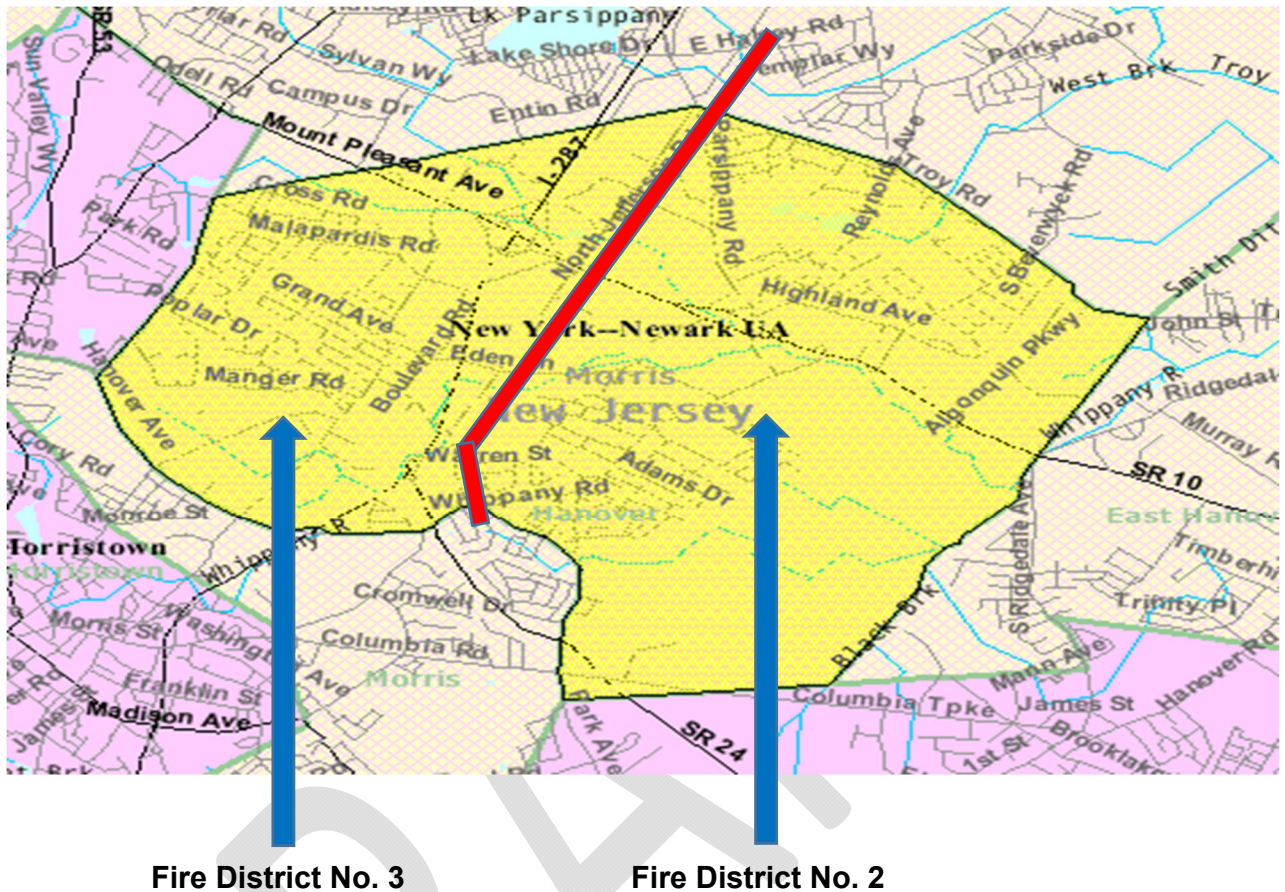
7. Upon approval of the consolidation plan by the Local Finance Board, or upon the Township Committee's adoption of the Local Finance Board's conditions to approving, the consolidation plan shall be considered finally adopted by the Township Committee, and the assets and debts of the fire districts to be consolidated shall be reapportioned pursuant to the consolidation plan.

8. Once all of the above steps have taken place, the consolidation becomes operative after the next fire district election (presuming the election follows the final adoption of the consolidation plan by at least 29 days), during which new commissioners for the consolidated district are elected

The two fire districts in the Township are detailed below:

<b>DISTRICT#</b>	<b>YEAR ESTABLISHED</b>	<b>COMPANY</b>	<b>FIRE STATION</b>
2	1921	Whippany Fire Company	10 Troy Hills Road
3	1923	Cedar Knolls Fire Dept.	82 Ridgedale Ave.

## MAP OF HANOVER TOWNSHIP SHOWING TWO FIRE DISTRICTS



FIRE DISTRICT CONSOLIDATION has been a subject of discussion in Hanover Township for well over two decades. In late 2021, Fire District No. 3, Chief Chad DiGiorgio provided a presentation and grant opportunities on the merits of fire district consolidation to the joint Bureau of Fire Prevention. That same evening Hanover Township Committeeman, Brian Cahill presented the two Districts with a verbal and written letter of support of the Township and the Township Committee. The presentation was generally well-received and the stage was set to breathe new life into the push for consolidating fire districts.

In January 2022 a Committee was formed with two Commissioners of each of the perspective Fire Districts, both Fire District Chief's and Hanover Township Committeeman Cahill. In March 2022 both Fire District's adopted a resolution in support of the exploration and feasibility of consolidation.

A sub-committee was also formed in February of 2022 and Chief James C. Davidson, (ret.) was identified as a project manager to lead a stakeholders group. The purpose of the sub-committee was to meet with and interview with the stakeholders of the Fire District and Fire Companies. With their cooperation and assistance, several key Work Groups were identified (subjects that required further study) and apportioned as follows:

## **Sub-Committee**

The participating stakeholders were encouraged to assist and collaborate with the subcommittee project manager assigned by the Committee. Arrangements were made to share this sub-committee list with the Commissioner Committee for the purpose of inviting them to participate, provide input and otherwise assist the Committee with this undertaking. Responses from the stakeholder groups are included in **Appendix B**.

### **Identified stakeholder groups invited to share their input:**

1. Cedar Knolls Fire Department – Volunteer membership
2. Whippany Fire Company – Volunteer membership
3. FMBA 109
4. Cedar Knolls Fire Department Exempt Assoc.
5. Whippany Fire Department Exempt Assoc.
6. Hanover Twp Fireman's Relief Assoc.
7. Administrative Staff – Conducted by Chief DiGiorgio and Chief Perrello
8. Line Officers – CKFD
9. Line Officers – WFD

## **FIRE STATIONS AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

A total of two active fire stations located in Hanover Township are currently in service to the residents of Hanover. The fire stations are somewhat strategically located based largely on the original fire district boundaries and population centers as they existed in the early 1900's. Chart below provides the station designations, locations and key construction/renovation dates of the fire stations:

<b>Fire District</b>	2	3
<b>Year Built/ Renovated</b>	2021	1936/1952/1974
<b>Apparatus Capacity</b>	7	5
<b>Personnel Overnight Capacity</b>	5	4
<b>Held in Public Trust</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Outstanding Mortgage</b>	Yes	No
<b>Other Debt</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>SCBA Compressor</b>	Yes	No
<b>Emergency Generator</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Turnout Gear Washer</b>	No (Shared)	Yes
<b>Hall Rental</b>	No	No
<b>Other</b>	*	**/**

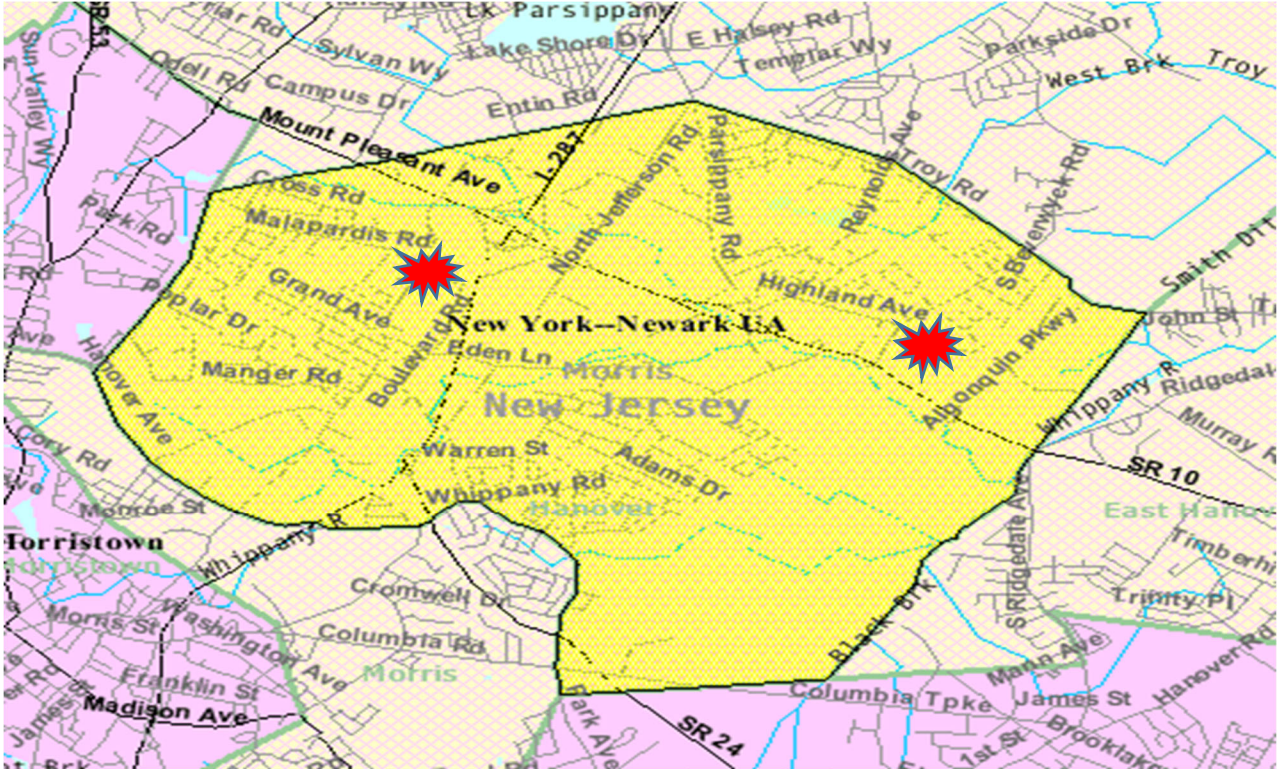
*\*Radio tower rental to cell phone providers (Whippany Fire Company)*

*\*\* Parking lot rental to the United States Post Office (Fire District 3)*

*\*\*\* Rental of parking lot/spaces from the Cedar Knolls Fire Department Exempt Association (District No. 3)*



## MAP OF HANOVER TOWNSHIP SHOWING FIRE STATION LOCATIONS



The current overall inventory breakdown shows the following units available for service:

- 4 Pumper engines
- 2 Utility vehicles
- 1 Aerial
- 5 Command Units
- 3 BLS Ambulances

### ANALYSIS OF MOTORIZED FLEET AND EQUIPMENT

#### FIRE APPARATUS AND MOTORIZED EQUIPMENT:

#### FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A complete and thorough annual inventory of all motorized equipment should be performed to include a bona fide mechanical assessment with regard to overall safety and operating condition, maintenance/repair needs/ service history, and expected service life remaining on each unit.



2. Based on the annual fire apparatus and motorized fleet report, an apparatus replacement schedule should be developed and adopted based on the discernable needs of the fire district to replace old units and add to the motorized fleet as necessary for the safe and effective operation of fire apparatus, BLS units and support vehicles.

### **LIMITATIONS**

As a result of the foregoing, access to training, levels of training and firefighter proficiencies can vary from district to district. At times, practices in one district are inconsistent with the practices of another.

Both districts presently train and certify members to provide “Basic Life Support” services, and train and certify members to the level of Emergency Medical Technician-B (basic EMT life support services).

Both districts presently maintain cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) defibrillators but on District 3 members are qualified to administer NARCAN and epinephrine.

District No. 3 (Cedar Knolls) as a requirement of the New Jersey Department of Health, Office of Emergency Medical Services (NJOEMS) has retained the services of a Medical Director to assist in emergency medical operational guidelines and monitoring; District no. 2 does not.

District No. 3 (Cedar Knolls) has retained the services of a Health & Safety Officer to assist with occupational health. District No. 3 requires all active responding firefighters and EMT's to forego an annual NFPA compliant physical to remain a responding member.

Both districts utilize web-based training programs such Power DMS to meet education units as well as NJ Learn and VFIS Insurance training programs to assist in compliance training.

Both districts train and certify a number of line firefighters as fire inspectors and in other capacities.

While the districts generally maintain good order and cooperation, the presence of multiple command and training structures can potentially cause confusion or even dissention particularly but not limited to emergency incidents or other stressful events that allow little or no time for discussion or conflict resolution.

Still, both districts have established minimum training standards that ostensibly meet or exceed statutory and regulatory requirements. The missing link is integrating the safety and training practices under a distinct command/training structure and solitary authority having jurisdiction.

### **OFFICE OF THE FIRE OFFICIAL/LOCAL ENFORCEMENT AGENCY**

Pursuant to P.L. 1983, c.383 Uniform Fire Safety Act, N.J.S.A. 52:27D-196 Uniform Fire Safety Act and N.J.A.C. 5:70 Uniform Fire Code, each local or county jurisdiction having authority must establish a Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) to perform fire

inspection/prevention services or relinquish that authority to another LEA by mutual consent or in the alternative, to the State Division of Fire Safety (DFS).

All LEAs (except in locations where the DFS serves as the LEA) are governed by the authority having jurisdiction (i.e. municipality, fire district, county) but are also subject to the statutory authority of the DFS and must be overseen by a state-certified and approved Fire Official, typically appointed by the authority having jurisdiction by ordinance or resolution.

Uniform Fire Code inspections generally involve two types of occupancies; those classified as “life-hazard use occupancies” (LHUs) and those classified as “non-life hazard use occupancies” (Non-LHUs). LHU occupancies must only be inspected by state certified Fire Inspectors. Non-LHU occupancies are not bound by that requirement but only trained and knowledgeable personnel should be utilized to perform such inspections.

LEAs are required to register and inspect both the LHU and Non-LHU occupancies typically on an annual basis (Non-LHUs can sometimes be inspected on a cyclical multiple-year basis).

Annual registration fees are assessed to the LHU business owners through a web-based Registration and Inspection Management System (RIMS) maintained by the State Division of Fire Safety. All LHU registration revenues are paid directly to the State, which subject to satisfactory review of the LEAs performance, rebates 65% of the revenues collected back to the LEAs on a quarterly basis (except in locations where the DFS serves as the LEA, in which case the State keeps 100% of the revenues collected).

LEAs also keep all revenues generated from fines, penalties, permits fees and 100% of all Non-LHU inspections performed and billed. Billing by the LEA for Non-LHU inspections is discretionary.

## **HANOVER’S MULTIPLE FIRE OFFICIALS/LOCAL ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES**

Fire inspection and prevention services are handled independently by both districts by two separate Local Enforcement Agencies collectively consisting of the two Fire Chief’s assigned as the uniform fire officials. The uniformed career firefighter and fire officers are tasked with performing LHU and Non-LHU inspections while on shift/on-duty. District 2 has four (4) certified firefighter/fire inspectors performing inspections and District 3 with seven (7). No civilian office staff is assigned specifically to the LEA. This role is conducted by the fire inspectors in each District.

As part of that contingent, District No. 2 maintains a uniform career firefighter/senior fire inspector performing inspections with District No. 3 a uniform career fire lieutenant/fire inspector who performs “in-service” fire inspections while working on his normal duty shift hours as a shift officer.

The table below illustrates the current LEA staffing levels compared to a proposed model:

**CURRENT LEA STAFFING STRUCTURE**

DISTRICT	FIRE OFFICIAL	FF/FIRE INSPECTORS	OFFICE STAFF
2	1	3	Payment Processing
3	1	6	Payment Processing
TOTAL	2	9	

**PROPOSED LEA STAFFING STRUCTURE SINGLE AHJ**

FIRE OFFICIAL	SENIOR FIRE INSPECTOR	FF/FIRE INSPECTORS	OFFICE STAFF
1	1	12	Payment Processing

***OFFICE OF THE FIRE OFFICIAL/LOCAL ENFORCEMENT AGENCY:***

***EFFICIENCIES OF ONE SINGLE DISTRICT***

1. The two existing Local Enforcement Agencies should be joined into a single agency led by one uniform fire official appointed by the authority having jurisdiction and reporting to the chief of the department.
2. To every extent possible and where positions exist to do so, current personnel from the existing LEAs should be maintained within the LEA staffing structure proposed in this report.
3. The Commissioner in consultation with the fire chief and fire official should assess the available fire station to identify the most favorable location for a centralized and publicly accessible Office of the Fire Official capable of accommodating the operation of same.
4. Under the authority of the fire chief and in coordination with work shift officers, the fire official should be responsible to schedule, support and document appropriate and on-going fire prevention activities of the on-duty fire companies, i.e. fire safety education in schools, participation in civic events, senior citizen programs and other suitable community activities.

**I. CAREER AND VOLUNTEER STAFFING/ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

Perhaps the greatest challenge in transitioning the two fire districts into a single fire district is the conception, design and formation of a new organizational structure. Such a structure must be capable of providing adequate fire protection and emergency medical services coverage in a township with a growing population and expanding economy while doing so in a manner that is cost-efficient and fiscally sustainable.

Presently the exclusive collective bargaining agent across both Hanover fire districts is the New Jersey Firemen's Mutual Benevolent Association (FMBA). Firefighters and Fire

Officers are represented by FMBA Local No. 109. In effect, this structure translates to two separate collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) for firefighters and fire officers. There is also one pending professional service contract for one serving fire chief and a resolution with terms and conditions for the other current Chief.

By virtue of a dissolution of fire districts in favor of the creation of a new district or formation of a new entity under another authority having jurisdiction, the labor/service contracts in place as well as the labor force representation by the FMBA will need further review and consideration. This can be completed prior to or following the dissolution. In their place, initial terms and conditions of employment must be established by the designated committee to precede the anticipated selection by the new work force of labor representation and the eventual adoption of new collective bargaining agreements. To obtain further guidance on the process for the selection of an exclusive collective bargaining agent/union representation by a new workforce.

### **CALLS FOR SERVICE**

Calls for service are tracked by the Morris County Fire Communications Center located in Parsippany. The number and types of incidents are electronically filed with the State Division of Fire Safety (DFS) through the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS). The statistics collected from the Hanover fire districts and statewide by the DFS become part on a nationwide data base of fire department response activities.

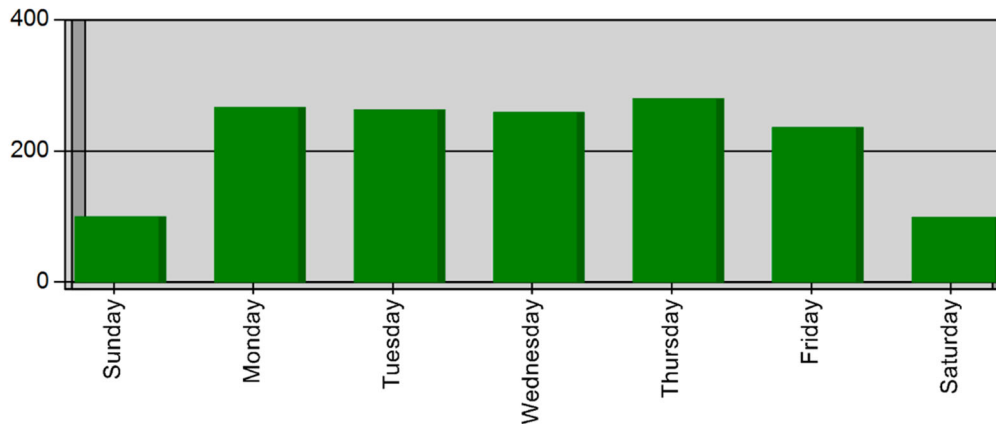
In 2024, the Hanover Township fire districts **collectively responded to 4,598 calls for service**. It is important to note that some of these incidents required a single district response while others required multiple department assistance, meaning that the total number of department responses far exceeded the number of incident responses.

A brief township wide summary of the number and types of incidents in calendar 2024 are shown below:

## Fire District #2 (Whippany)

MAJOR INCIDENT TYPE	# INCIDENTS	% of TOTAL
Fires	71	4.72%
Overpressure rupture, explosion, overheating - no fire	3	0.2%
Rescue & Emergency Medical Service	832	55.32%
Hazardous Condition (No Fire)	109	7.25%
Service Call	43	2.86%
Good Intent Call	70	4.65%
False Alarm & False Call	374	24.87%
Severe Weather & Natural Disaster	1	0.07%
Special Incident Type	1	0.07%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1504</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Incidents by day of the week:

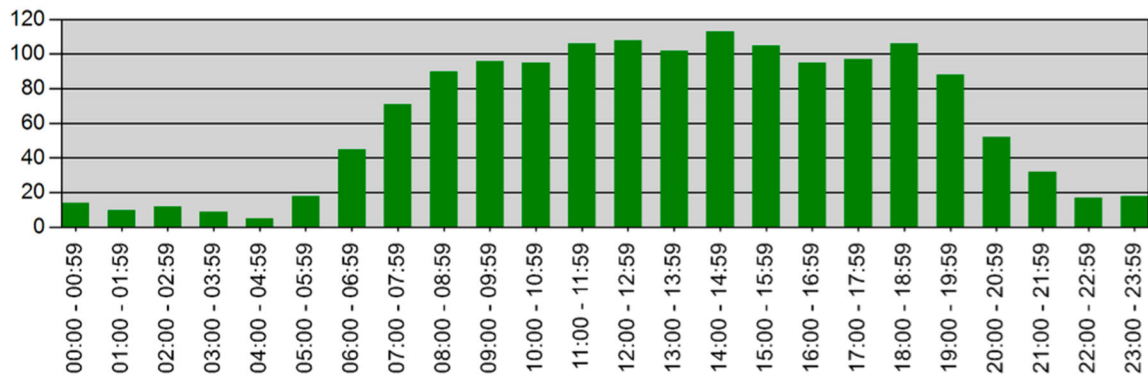


DAY OF THE WEEK	# INCIDENTS
Sunday	100
Monday	267
Tuesday	263
Wednesday	259
Thursday	280
Friday	236
Saturday	99

**TOTAL      1504**



### Incidents by time of day

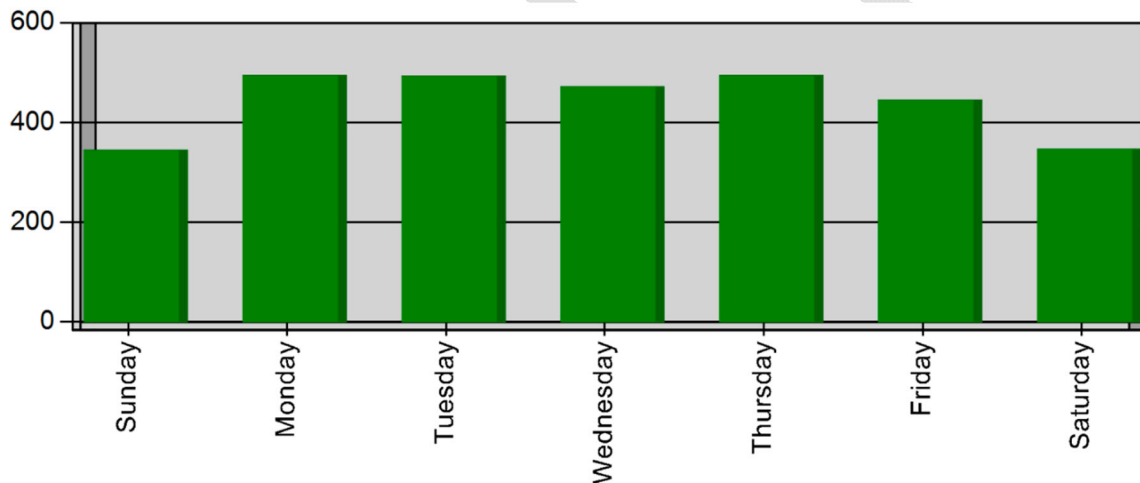


Hour	# of CALLS
00:00 - 00:59	14
01:00 - 01:59	10
02:00 - 02:59	12
03:00 - 03:59	9
04:00 - 04:59	5
05:00 - 05:59	18
06:00 - 06:59	45
07:00 - 07:59	71
08:00 - 08:59	90
09:00 - 09:59	96
10:00 - 10:59	95
11:00 - 11:59	106
12:00 - 12:59	108
13:00 - 13:59	102
14:00 - 14:59	113
15:00 - 15:59	105
16:00 - 16:59	95
17:00 - 17:59	97
18:00 - 18:59	106
19:00 - 19:59	88
20:00 - 20:59	52
21:00 - 21:59	32
22:00 - 22:59	17
23:00 - 23:59	18

### Fire District #3 (Cedar Knolls)

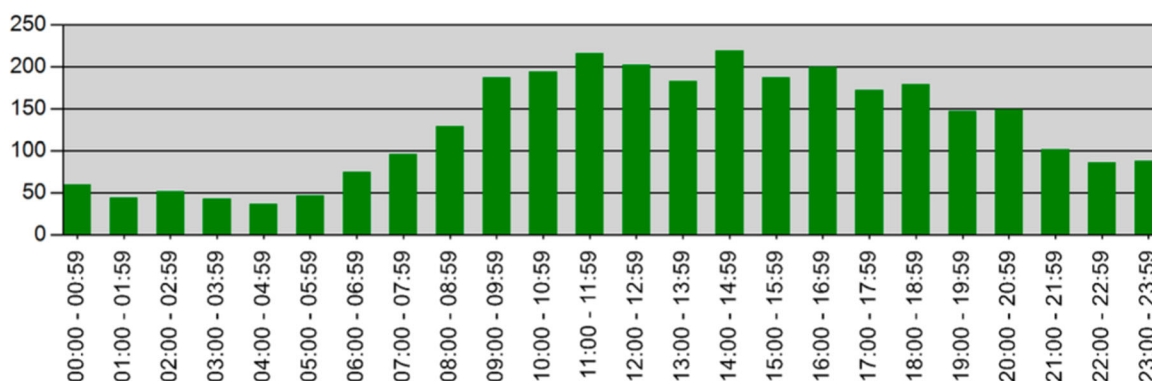
MAJOR INCIDENT TYPE	# INCIDENTS	% of TOTAL
Fires	63	2.04%
Overpressure rupture, explosion, overheat - no fire	4	0.13%
Rescue & Emergency Medical Service	2438	78.8%
Hazardous Condition (No Fire)	140	4.52%
Service Call	40	1.29%
Good Intent Call	70	2.26%
False Alarm & False Call	336	10.86%
Special Incident Type	3	0.1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3094</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Incidents by day of week



DAY OF THE WEEK	# INCIDENTS
Sunday	345
Monday	495
Tuesday	494
Wednesday	472
Thursday	495
Friday	446
Saturday	347
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3094</b>

### **Emergency Medical Services (EMS-BLS) Incidents by time of day**



HOURL	# of CALLS
00:00 - 00:59	60
01:00 - 01:59	44
02:00 - 02:59	52
03:00 - 03:59	43
04:00 - 04:59	37
05:00 - 05:59	47
06:00 - 06:59	75
07:00 - 07:59	96
08:00 - 08:59	129
09:00 - 09:59	187
10:00 - 10:59	194
11:00 - 11:59	216
12:00 - 12:59	202
13:00 - 13:59	183
14:00 - 14:59	219
15:00 - 15:59	187
16:00 - 16:59	200
17:00 - 17:59	172
18:00 - 18:59	179
19:00 - 19:59	147
20:00 - 20:59	149
21:00 - 21:59	102
22:00 - 22:59	86
23:00 - 23:59	88

The data above in association with training requirements, fire prevention activities, apparatus care, fire station duties and other day-to-day functions of personnel, provides a valuable insight for the purpose of quantifying the number of properly staffed apparatus needed to respond to and safely/effectively mitigate fires and other hazardous conditions. This information along with other critical factors was applied in this report to formulate the proposed options for the reorganization of staff.

It is noteworthy to mention that within New Jersey's 566 municipalities---comprised of 52 cities, 15 towns, 245 townships, 250 boroughs and 4 villages---there are 185 fire districts, 18 county fire academies, numerous municipal career fire departments small and large as well as a large volume of volunteer fire companies supported in various ways by the municipalities in which they serve. Together these organizations attest to the fact that there is no one-size-fits-all fire protection model but rather each local authority must assess and decide which model best suits the needs and means of its community. With that said, there are nonetheless several considerable advantages to a fire protection and emergency medical services delivery model that utilizes a combination staffing structure (career and volunteer firefighters working together in the same organization). Among those advantages include:

- Immediate availability of some number of assigned career firefighters to respond to emergencies and other calls for service
- Active force of volunteer firefighters augments the career firefighter and EMS crews and further supports the fire department and EMS mission by being scheduled to cover preordained duty rosters (Crew Night staffing)
- Provision of a career path for volunteer firefighters seeking a career in the fire service (which is one of many incentives that can be offered to recruit and retain volunteer firefighters.
- With successful recruitment and retention of volunteer personnel, the authority having jurisdiction will have greater capacity to budget funds for necessary equipment, repairs and capital expenditures
- The volunteer fire service can be a formidable source of community spirit, devotion and organization; volunteer firefighters may also be a valuable resource in helping to better unite and prepare the public for disaster planning and readiness

Examples of just a few fire service organizations from around the State that serve as good working models for the types of municipalities in which they serve include but are not limited to:

Morris Township, Madison, Morristown, Dover, Hamilton Township, Cherry Hill, Cinnaminson, Florence, Jackson, Mount Laurel and Toms River.

### CURRENT STAFFING LEVELS

The table below provides a brief overview of the existing career and volunteer staffing levels across the two fire districts:

DISTRICT	STATION	CAREER FF's*	CAREER EMT's**	VOLUNTEER FF's***	VOLUNTEER EMT'S
2	Whippany	4	0	25	2
3	Cedar Knolls	9	18	17	7
<b>Total</b>		<b>13</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>9</b>

**\*CAREER:** Does not include 2 Fire Chiefs/Fire Official

**\*\*CAREER EMT'S:** Includes 8 Part Time (24 hours per week), 10 Per Diem (24 hours per month), District 3 maintains volunteer certified EMT's

**\*\*\*VOLUNTEERS FIREFIGHTERS:** Reported as the active number of interior qualified fire volunteer members across the two districts. Also includes junior members between the ages of 16-18 in the capacity of firefighter or emergency medical technician trainee

**The table below provides a further breakdown of existing uniform career personnel by district and rank:**

DISTRICT	CHIEF	CAPTAIN	LIEUTENANT	FIREFIGHTER/EMT's	EMT'S
2	Whippany	0	0	4	0
3	Cedar Knolls	0	3	9	18**
Total		0	3	13	24

\* In District 3, one vacant Lieutenant position currently exists.

\*\*EMT'S: Includes 8 Part Time (24 hours per week), 10 Per Diem (24 hours per month)

## **REORGANIZATION OF THE UNIFORM CAREER MEMBERS**

Starting from the point of the available pool of uniform career members, the possibilities for a new single organizational structure are nearly boundless, though some would arguably be better than others. The organizational model for reorganization of the two existing fire districts provided in this report represents just one viable prospect from among all others. The options shown on the page that follows are based on several critical, or limiting factors, including those that follow:

1. Total existing number of uniform career members
2. Need for a single organizational structure operating under a sufficient, unified command
3. Providing for the proper span of control (supervision) and accountability at all levels
4. Identifying needs for service based on the population served, dimensions and topography of the land and water areas covered, and the magnitude, type and nature of calls for service
5. Of note, the budget analysis included conducted with this report identifies that the newly formed District would retain all current employees of both dissolved Districts.



As illustrated above, the current combined uniform career staff across the two districts provides for:

- 1 Chief of Department
- 1 Assistant Chief
- 3 Lieutenants (First Level Supervisors)
- 13 Firefighter/EMT's
- 24 Emergency medical technicians
- 42 Total**

The proposed organizational structure shown below provides adequate command staff and some number of company officers and firefighters to staff fire apparatus. These structures as shown are based only on the total current career staff and as such would be subject to hiring practices of the authority having jurisdiction and any pending retirements of personnel.

The volunteer factor which will inherently have a major influence on the universal staffing dynamics of the proposed organization will be addressed further on in this section of the report.

#### **FOUR-SHIFT CAREER MEMBER MODEL**

##### **WITH A TWO COMPANY AND EMS ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE:**

4 Lieutenants	From the existing roster of Lieutenants plus 1 promotion
16 Firefighter/EMT's	13 from the Firefighter/EMT rank, plus hire 3 additional Firefighter/EMTs
24 PD/PT/FT	Emergency Medical Technicians

**Note:** This model assigns fire suppression forces to a approx. 42-hour work week, typically requiring two duty shifts with personnel working one 24-hour work shift for every 72 hours off (a.k.a. the "24-72 schedule").

This Model allows for both staffed fire and emergency medical services 24/7/365 out of both fire houses.

Increased staffing on the weekdays during our highest call volumes, and lighter staffed on weekends and evenings when our volunteer staff is available to aid with responses.

## THE TABLE OF ORGANIZATION FOR THIS MODEL

Day	On Duty Tour	Firefighters	Lieutenant	Admin Staff
Monday	A	FF1 FF2 FF3 FF4	Lt. 1	Chief, Asst. Chief
Tuesday	B	FF1 FF2 FF3 FF4	Lt. 1	Chief, Asst. Chief
Wednesday	C	FF1 FF2 FF3 FF4	Lt. 1	Chief, Asst. Chief
Thursday	D	FF1 FF2 FF3 FF4	Lt. 1	Chief, Asst. Chief
Friday	A	FF1 FF2 FF3 FF4	Lt. 1	Chief, Asst. Chief
Saturday	B	FF1 FF2 FF3 FF4	Lt. 1	—
Sunday	C	FF1 FF2 FF3 FF4	Lt. 1	—

		DAY SHIFT M-F		ADMINISTRATION TBD	
		CHIEF ASST CHIEF			
STATION	APPARATUS	A-SHIFT	B-SHIFT	C-SHIFT	D-SHIFT
200	Ladder 22	FF/EMT/Insp.	FF/EMT/Insp.	FF/EMT/Insp.	FF/EMT/Insp.
200	Ladder 22	FF/EMT/Insp.	FF/EMT/Insp.	FF/EMT/Insp.	FF/EMT/Insp.
200	Ambulance 32	EMT	EMT	EMT	EMT
200	Ambulance 32	EMT	EMT	EMT	EMT
300	Engine 34	FF/EMT/Insp.	FF/EMT/Insp.	FF/EMT/Insp.	FF/EMT/Insp.
300	Engine 34	FF/EMT/Insp.	FF/EMT/Insp.	FF/EMT/Insp.	FF/EMT/Insp.
300	Car 30	Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Lieutenant
300	Ambulance 38	EMT	EMT	EMT	EMT
300	Ambulance 38	EMT	EMT	EMT	EMT

NEED	
Lieutenants	4
FF/EMT	16
EMT	24
	44

CURRENT	
Lieutenants	2
FF/EMT	13
EMTs	24
	39

## **FIRE-BASED EMS**

The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) has taken an industry standard approach in its position and support of fire-based emergency medical services (EMS). Fire-based EMS can be delivered through first responders utilizing non-transport fire apparatus and/or by a vehicle licensed as an ambulance to transport the sick and injured to an appropriate receiving facility.

EMS is an essential component of the services provided by the fire service in the United States. The American fire service is strategically and geographically well positioned to deliver time critical response and effective patient care rapidly. As such, the fire service has become the first-line medical responder for critical illnesses and injuries in almost every community in the United States. Many fire departments in many communities strive to achieve response time consensus standards established through the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) of four minutes for basic life support and eight minutes for advanced life support.

Of the 200 most populated communities, 97 percent have the fire service delivering pre-hospital emergency medical service response.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, the fire service provides critical advanced life support (ALS) response and care in 90 percent of the 30 most populated United States cities and counties.<sup>2</sup>

Some of the first paramedics in the United States were firefighters in such places as Los Angeles County, Seattle, Columbus, Jacksonville, and Miami in the late 1960s and 1970s.

Today, virtually every firefighter in the United States receives medical training as a part of their normal training agenda. Many firefighters are classified as Firefighter/EMT or Firefighter/Paramedic.

There are many system models that the United States fire service uses today to deliver emergency medical services. The three primary models include fire departments using cross-trained/multi-role firefighters for EMS first response and ambulance transport; fire departments using firefighters for EMS first response and civilians who are not cross-trained as firefighters for ambulance transport; and fire departments who use firefighters for EMS first response and non-fire department organizations for ambulance transport.

The model where fire departments use cross-trained/multi-role firefighters for EMS first response and ambulance transport has many unique and distinct advantages over other models. These include:

- Continuity of patient care between first responders and ambulance personnel who are part of the same organization
- Continuity of administration
- Continuity of the same medical training

- Continuity of the same medical equipment
- Continuity of Standardized Operating Procedures
- Continuity of Medical Direction
- Unity of Command
- Ability to deliver medical care while performing specialized rescue in such cases as auto extrication, marine rescue, high-angle rescue, collapse rescue environments, and hazardous material events.

There is also economy of scale savings when using firefighters in a cross-trained/multi-role EMS function.

- Because of the 207(k) exemption of the Fair Labor Standard Act, firefighters can work up to a 212 hours in a 28-day work period (53 hours per week) before being paid overtime. Non-firefighters must be paid overtime for any hours worked over 40 hours.

Other economy of scale savings is realized when EMS first response and EMS ambulance transport are combined into one organization through the elimination of duplicate functions such as administration, training, support functions, and in some cases, the communications center.

Another advantage of a fire-based EMS model is that a firefighter is trained in multiple disciplines. Thus, a single person performs multiple functions as opposed to hiring one person to perform a single function. Firefighters, besides being trained to handle fires and medical emergencies, can also mitigate hazardous material events, perform technical and complicated rescues, and perform fire prevention and education services.

**Conclusion:** Fire service EMS is the most efficient and effective model for the rapid delivery of all emergency medical services. When time is critical and effective pre-hospital care is necessary, the fire service is well positioned strategically, geographically, administratively, financially, and operationally.

Therefore, the International Association of Fire Chiefs urges all elected and government appointed officials, professional associations and health care providers to recognize and support the provision of emergency medical care first response and ambulance transport by the fire service.

**Reference:**

<sup>1</sup> *Journal of Emergency Medical Services, February, 2009.*

<sup>2</sup> *IAFC/IAFF Fire Operations Survey, 2005. ADOPTED BY: IAFC Board of Directors on May 7, 2009*

## THE REORGANIZATION OF VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS

Just as it is a prudent strategy in the pursuit of the dissolution initiative to reorganize the current uniform career staff across both fire districts into a sole entity under a single command structure, it is no less obligatory to assess and reorganize the current volunteer forces for the purpose of maximizing the potential service impact that the volunteers can be expected to deliver as an essential component of the new organization.

#### **CURRENT MAKE UP OF THE VOLUNTEER STRUCTURE IN HANOVER TOWNSHIP**

<b>DISTRICT</b>	<b>COMPANY</b>	<b>INTERIOR FIREFIGHTERS*</b>	<b>EXTERIOR FIREFIGHTERS</b>
<b>2</b>	Whippany	15	4
<b>3</b>	Cedar Knolls	7	7
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>22</b>	<b>11</b>

#### **THE CURRENT VOLUNTEER SERVICE MODEL**

Not discounting the philanthropic virtues of the volunteer service, the manner in which the energies of the available volunteer members are presently utilized seems somewhat fragmented and minimalized. Fragmented largely because they are spread out disproportionately and absent a standard method of deployment over both districts and both fire companies throughout the township; minimalized by virtue of how infrequently they are assigned to ride on fire apparatus with career firefighters. The current model in both districts regularly assigns a duty roster to place additional fire apparatus in service (roster staffing), and being legitimized to assume company officer or command positions.

There can be no doubt of the diminished role of the volunteer fire companies in Hanover over the years, which at one time was predominantly served by volunteer firefighters supplemented by a modest number of career firefighters, to the present time in which the districts have increased the career staff supported by a lesser number of volunteer firefighters.

Contributing factors to the diminished ranks of volunteer firefighters in Hanover and elsewhere are said to include:

- Increased training requirements and time required to acquire and maintain eligible volunteer status
- An economy that has required or otherwise influenced household income earners to seek secondary employment (or overtime) in place of joining the local fire company
- Urban sprawl and loss of local job prospects that has resulted in potential volunteer firefighter candidates seeking employment opportunities further away from home
- Loss of younger volunteer firefighters and emergency medical technicians to college and military service and other ventures
- Loss of senior volunteer firefighters and emergency medical technicians to illness, chronic injury, relocation due to retirement or death



- Loss of volunteer firefighters and emergency medical technicians to the concerns and constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- No accountability for volunteer firefighters and emergency medical technicians to respond to crew/duty night calls

## **THE KEY TO REVITALIZING THE VOLUNTEER SERVICE: LEADERSHIP**

Revitalizing the volunteer fire service in places where it has not thrived will likely be no easy task. A good first step might be to take a close look at the places where it is thriving and to learn from the experiences of those folks as well as from others who have come to possess a keen understanding of the forces that oppose volunteerism and a creative sense of what makes it work despite the opposition.

## **EVOLVING THE VOLUNTEER STAFFING MODEL**

### **THE NEW VOLUNTEER STAFFING MODEL**

As outlined in the preceding section on revitalizing volunteer engagement, the future of the fire service lies in a model that honors the proud traditions of volunteerism while evolving to meet the demands of today's communities. The new structure must begin from a place of respect for the legacy of volunteer service, balanced by a mission-driven focus on flexibility, readiness, and integration within a unified department.

Initial participation as a volunteer will continue through a recognized local volunteer fire company, following the criteria set forth by the authority having jurisdiction. Current volunteer firefighters will retain their standing and remain integral members of their respective companies. Training pathways will be established to ensure all volunteers meet operational standards while also creating opportunities for advancement-up to company and chief officer levels.

With more than 30 active volunteer firefighters and EMTs already serving across the two districts, the updated model offers the flexibility for volunteers to serve in ways that suit today's realities. Whether responding from home, reporting to a station for scheduled crew shifts, or taking on additional responsibilities during high-demand periods, volunteers will be empowered to serve when and how they are available-while remaining a key part of the overall staffing strategy.

Crew nights and volunteer duty shifts will continue to offer structured ways to contribute, often in 6 to 12-hour intervals. These shifts may be recognized through non-salaried incentives such as LOSAP points, clothing allowances, fuel stipends, or point-based rewards.

Most importantly, this model emphasizes a culture of inclusion, shared responsibility, and mutual respect. Volunteers will be recognized as essential members of a true combination fire department-not as supplemental responders, but as valued partners in fulfilling the department's mission.

## **CAREER & VOLUNTEER STAFFING/ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE:**

### **FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Additional review and study of the consolidated fire district will require the following to be addressed and adopted by policy:**

1. Define and memorialize the mission statement of the organization.
2. Establish and authorize an official table of organization and a recognized chain-of-command.
3. Develop and adopt a comprehensive written employee manual of rules and regulations.
4. Assemble and adopt practical standard operating procedures (SOPs) and standard operating guidelines (SOGs) to assist personnel in safely and effectively carrying out the tasks and functions of their respective duties with quality outputs and uniformity of performance.
5. Institute supervisory practices to evaluate work performance of subordinates and to measure results of all programs, projects and operations.
6. To every extent possible and subject to the provisions of NJSA 40A: 14-81.2 Qualifications for appointment to paid positions, any applicable **TITLE 40A-Fire Districts** rules and regulations, and pre- employment screening as established and required by the authority having jurisdiction, current uniform career personnel from the existing fire districts should be offered positions to fill commensurate or otherwise available positions identified in the new table of organization.
7. The authority having jurisdiction, the fire chief and the uniform leadership should jointly:
  - Clearly define the organization's vision statement to build, nourish and sustain volunteer membership
  - develop a strategy to maintain, assign and otherwise effectively utilize the current volunteer membership township wide for the needs of the department while establishing benchmarks for recruitment, training and retention of additional volunteer firefighters
  - forge the necessary policies, procedures and programs for recruitment, training, assignment and retention of volunteer personnel which should include some provision for volunteers to be assigned on fire apparatus with career firefighters, assignment of qualified volunteers to company officer positions, and roster staffing of volunteer members to sufficiently accommodate the number of available riding apparatus needed at any given time
  - plan to provide the necessary budgetary line accounts as practicable to support sound volunteer programs and incentives such as recruitment drives, training programs, LOSAP, roster staffing and stipends for protective gear

- provide a pathway for volunteers interested in seeking a position as a career firefighter
- perhaps most importantly, consistently provide the insistent and unabashed leadership instrumental in gaining acceptance by the entire membership (career and volunteer alike) and the general public to embrace and support the premise that properly trained volunteer firefighters in good standing are entitled to the same respect, recognition and treatment as those members serving in the career sector...in this and all things, LEAD BY EXAMPLE

### **Financial Savings**

Some of the many future appropriations that may be reduced through the creation of one district include the following:

- **Fire Commission Salaries & Wages** – reduction of \$11,800 reducing the number of fire districts from 2 to 1 will reduce the number of Fire Commissioners from 10 to 5, thereby reducing Fire Commission salaries and wages accordingly.
- **Single Fire Official** – With the reduction of two fire prevention Bureaus, this will reduce the number of Fire Officials from 2 to 1.
- **Overtime** – Overtime may be reduced with all Career Firefighter/EMT's moving to a 24/72 hour schedule, removing the need for holiday pay/overtime and by transitioning Full time EMTs to Pittman schedules
- **Operation & Maintenance** – With the reduction of vehicles in the motor pool, maintenance costs, pump and hose testing requirements, ladder testing along with insurance premiums for vehicles can be reduced considerably.
- **Technology and Computer Platforms** – With combining fire prevention inspector programs, NFIRS reporting programs, and County radios along with EMS programs the reduction of costs.
- **Insurances** – With the reduction of vehicles in the motor pool maintenance costs, testing requirements considerably.
- **Replacement of vehicle(s)** – With the reduction of vehicles in the motor pool maintenance costs, testing requirements considerably.
- **Legal Fees** – One set of lawyers offsets legal costs of both districts
- **Medical Director** – One Medical Director for the District
- **Replacement of vehicle(s)** – With the reduction of vehicles in the motor pool maintenance costs, testing requirements considerably.