

To the Residents of Newington:

My name is Ann Hyland Hebert. I ask for your vote for reelection to the Board of Fire Engineers, having been first appointed in 2019 followed by election to a 3 year term in 2020. I believe myself to be a conservative steward of taxpayer dollars while directly focusing on the long-term value of every decision – financial and operational.

During my term the Fire Department budget saw three bottom line increases and one decrease, the primary driver being salary and benefits and a total of \$278,390 in unspent budget funds were returned to the Town General Fund. I was a member of the team that successfully negotiated a 5-year contract with our firefighters, largely allowing for predictable personnel costs over the next four years.

The Fire Department raises revenue through ambulance billing, fire permits/inspections, fees, details, and permits of assembly. In the past ten years (2012 to 2022) the total raised is \$1,389,815.84 – an average contribution of \$140,000 annually to the Town General Fund. From an accounting perspective neither annual unspent budget money nor revenue raised, both of which are deposited into the Town General Fund, offset any Fire Department budget expenditures.

2022 presented a total of 1,099 emergency calls, 80% of which involved the industrial, commercial, business and retail side of Town. Firefighters also completed more than 1,000 hours of staff training and certifications in 2022 – our investment in continuing to support best practice emergency outcomes.

The purchase of a new fire engine was voted in 2021. This engine was due in May 2022 and has now been pushed out to September 2023. The cost is \$671,572. A deposit of \$167,893 was paid (saving \$3,214) and the balance due of \$503,679 will be paid from the Fire Department vehicle capital reserve fund.

Command Vehicle 1 replacement for Chief Hoyt was accomplished in 2020.
Command Vehicle 2 replacement for Assistant Chief Moynihan was just completed

by encumbering existing 2022 budget funds and should be in service in a few weeks.

The Fire Department has recently been awarded four grants totaling \$129,393. The Town cost share was \$9,139 and paid from either Fire Department budget funds or existing capital reserve accounts.

Item	Grant	Cost Share	
Gear Dryer	\$ 9,912	\$ 991	needed to dry bunker gear
Fit Tester	\$10,491	\$1,049	needed to properly fit face masks
Power Loader	\$32,990	\$3,299	needed to lift stretcher into ambulance
SCBA Compressor	\$76,000	\$3,800	needed to fill breathing tanks on site

Two more Fire Department grant applications are pending. The first one is for a UTV (utility terrain vehicle) to be used for Emergency Management Response purposes and will be shared with the Police Department. There is no Town cash match required.

The second grant is a SAFER Grant (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response) that will specifically address firefighter staffing shortages by funding 100% of salary, benefits, uniforms, safety gear and anticipated overtime costs for three years for full-time hires. This staffing would replace dependence on a part-time labor pool that is continually shrinking, requiring the Department to utilize full-time members on overtime pay rate to cover ongoing shift vacancies.

The women and men of Newington Fire & Rescue work from a team approach. On behalf of myself and the entire Fire Department, I welcome you to stop in anytime with questions or just to visit. We are YOUR Fire Department.

Thank you and I hope I have earned your vote to continue serving Newington.

Ann Hyland Hebert