

SIMSBURY FIRE DISTRICT

871 HOPMEADOW STREET • SIMSBURY • CONNECTICUT • 06070

Telephone: 860-658-1971 • Facsimile: 860-658-5611

**DRAFT
SIMSBURY FIRE DISTRICT
BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING
SIMSBURY MAIN STATION
871 HOPMEADOW STREET
MARCH 14th, 2024
MINUTES**

Attendees: President Gary Wilcox (via Zoom), Clerk John Solury, Commissioners Geoff Giddings, Hugh Caldwell and Mike Paine, District Administrator James Baldis, and four members of the public.

- 1: Call to order: Commissioner Geoff Giddings called the workshop to order at 7:01pm**
- 2: Public Audience: None**
- 3: Workshop to Develop the 2024/2025 Simsbury**

Areas comprising the 2024/2025 budget development are as follows:

**Current Budget Year review
24/25 Budget Assumptions
24/25 Capital Review
24/25 Operation/CNR Budget Review
Anticipated Mill Rate**

The review of the current budget indicated no significant issues that would put the current proposed budget in jeopardy.

The funds for the training building that were in the current budget will remain on hold as long-term training needs are reassessed and long-term usage plans reestablished.

Fire District Annual Budget:

The following assumptions were presented:

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Goal to maintain ZERO debt service cost for upcoming year(s). “Pay as you go philosophy”

- 1) 4.0% overall payroll increase – Cola + Merit increases.**
- 2) Significant savings in energy costs due to long-term contracts for reduced rates for electricity. Favorable contract pricing for fuel will also yield savings.**
- 3) Continue funding frozen LOSAP program (no new members added)**
- 4) Next payment into the Volunteer Benefit Program increased to \$1084 per qualified member.**
- 5) Third of four payments into Volunteer Benefit Program for members not in LOSAP with less than 5 years of service when LOSAP was frozen.**
- 6) Workmen’s Comp. and Insurance will see increases.**
- 7) Health insurance increase (1.7%) expected for 2024/2025.**
- 8) Fire Protection (water) rate increases are minimal due to budgeted increase last year that did not materialize due to litigation.**
- 9) Grand List flat at .06% due to value loss of used motor vehicles which offset gains in real estate values. This will result in an increase in our mill rate.**
- 10) Interest on cash remains budgeted for improvement.**
- 11) The collection rate remains unchanged at 98.5%.**
- 12) Funding to support technical improvements including software upgrades, equipment, and TOS IT paid support.**

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CAPITAL

- 1) Hose Replacement - Saving for future replacement.**
- 2) Engine replacement (Facing MAJOR price increases and long build times)
Next Purchases – Engine 3 (Bid to be awarded 2024), Rescue 14 (26/27), Purchase new S-10 for Maintenance (Keeping Existing for Fire Utility Use).**
- 3) Upgrade of the Fob System which is obsolete. To be completed in 2 years. (Main station this year, Firetown, Weatoque, West Simsbury next year, Bushy Hill & Tariffville completed).**
- 4) Breathing Apparatus – Funding for Hydro Testing (Spring 2025 and future mandated updates.**
- 5) Upgrades to existing Computer equipment and Communications Equipment.**
- 6) Thermal Imaging Camera for New Engine 3**
- 7) Gear – Replacement of unrepairable, expired, and new Firefighter 1 certified member's gear.**
- 8) Station Improvements
HVAC Replacement – Bushy Hill
Generator Replacement – Bushy Hill & Tariffville
Heating/HVAC at Tariffville**
- 9) Radio & Battery Replacements**
- 10) Electronic Equipment (Meters & EV Equipment)**

2024/2025 OPERATING/CNR BUDGET

Operating and CNR budget number highlights were presented by Geoff Giddings.

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SETTING THE MILL RATE

No significant net revenue growth due to grand list which will not cover forecasted inflation impact plus needed funding for apparatus.

Recommending a change to 1.05 mill rate from 1.0 which is a 5% increase.

The proposed budget if approved will carry an increase in the Mill Rate.

At the Annual Meeting, a transfer of 300,000.00 from cash reserves will be requested and added to the Fire Truck Account to provide ample funding to prepare for upcoming apparatus replacement which includes rescue 14 and begin saving for Tower 12 in 4 years with an estimated replacement value of two million dollars.

Final Budget to the District Executive Committee for vote at the 4/8/2024 meeting.

This year's Annual Meeting will be May 13th, 2024, at Main Station.

- 4: Questions and Answers: A few questions were received and discussed from the public attending.**
- 5: Adjournment: 8:00 pm**

John J Solury Sr., Clerk