

**CITY OF ABERDEEN**

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**FIRE/EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES  
OPERATIONS & FUNDING**

***UTILITY RATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE***

***MARCH 19, 2025***





## MISSION

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To prevent harm to the public, and to protect property and the environment through fire suppression, fire prevention and emergency medical services 24 hours a day.

## VALUES

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Teamwork

Customer Service

Technical Ability

# FIRE & EMS OPERATIONS

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## AGENDA

- History/Background
- Service Demands
- Revenue
- Expenses
- Common Statements/Questions
- Pressing Issues



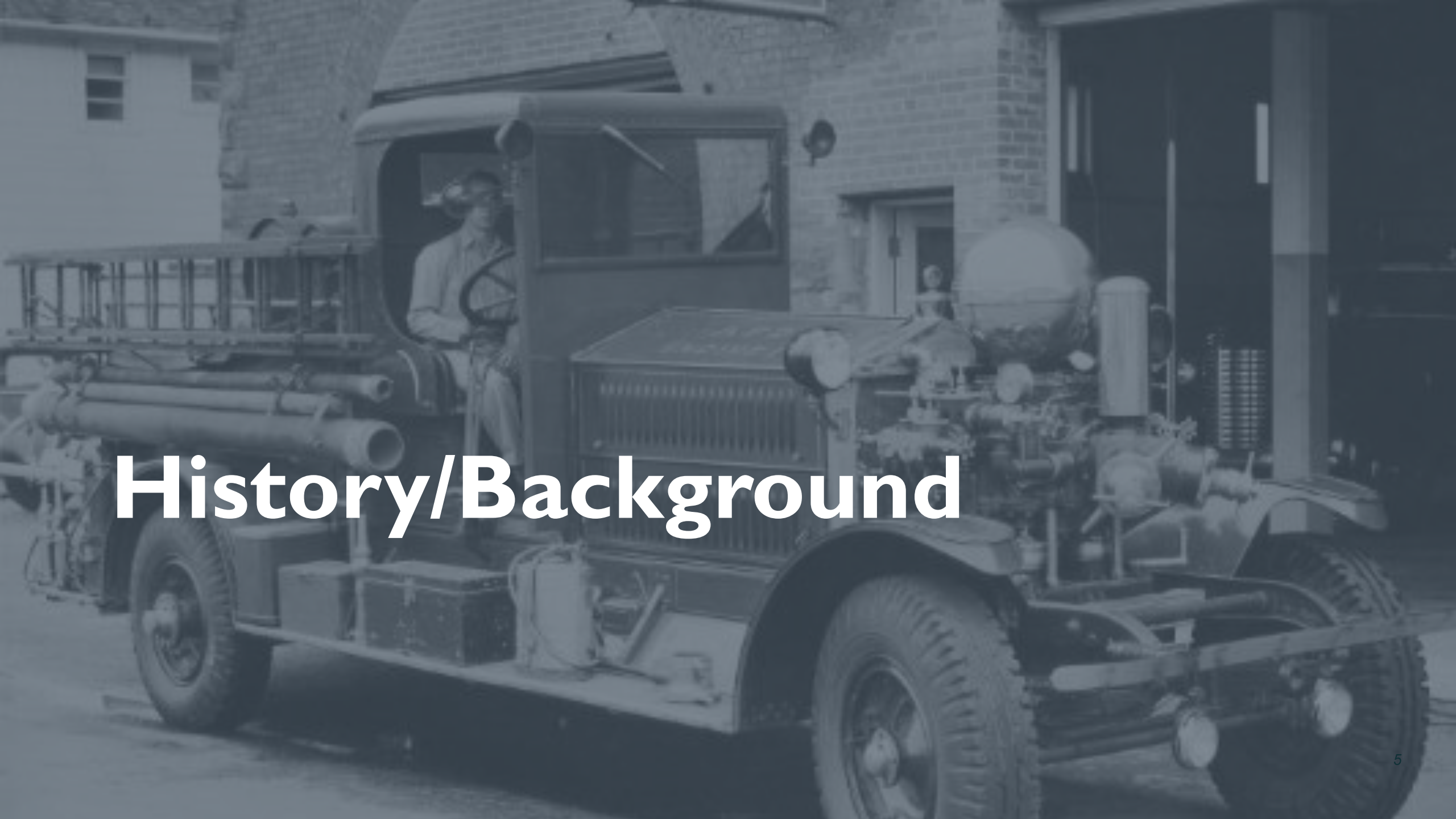


# FIRE & EMS OPERATIONS

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## TOPICS & DISCUSSION

- Utility Rate Advisory Committee: **Recommendations for EMS Utility rates**
- Fire Department Operations: **Fire & EMS operations are deeply intertwined with each other.**
- Budget Considerations: **How Aberdeen's EMS Utility Rates and the City's General Fund Fire Budget work together**
- Cost of Service Study: **Introduction to the most recent EMS Cost of Service Study**



# History/Background



# HISTORY/BACKGROUND

**1907**

*Aberdeen Fire  
Department  
formed*

**1973**

*Aberdeen Fire  
Department takes  
over ambulance  
services*

**1980**

*First Aberdeen Fire  
Department  
Paramedic*

**Pre 2002**

*Monthly fee of  
\$6.00 per month  
for EMS services  
established*

**2006**

*EMS Utility  
established by the  
City of Aberdeen*

**ABERDEEN FIRE DEPARTMENT OF TODAY**

# SERVICES PROVIDED



ADVENTURE PHOTOGRAPHY 2022



## Fire Suppression

First response to provide suppression and mitigation of fire related incidents.



## Emergency Medical Services

Advanced Life Support/Paramedic level response, care and transport.



## Fire Prevention

Code enforcement and plan review from a fire code perspective.

- Annual Business Inspections
- Plan Review
- Fire Alarm/Suppression Systems
- Code Compliance



## Fire Investigation

Fire origin and cause determination.

# SERVICES PROVIDED

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## Public Education & Outreach

Programs to promote fire and life safety

- Fire Prevention Education
- Smoke Detector Installation
- Career Fairs
- Youth Fire Programs
- Preparedness Activities



## Public Assistance

Non-emergency response to assist the public.

- Lift Assists/Non-Injury Falls
- Referrals for proper care
- Access to various programs and assistance



## Emergency Management

Planning, response and mitigation of major incidents & natural disasters for the City of Aberdeen



# FIRE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

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## NFPA

*National Fire Protection Association*

- *Fire Service Standards*



## IFC

*International Fire Code*

- *Life Safety Fire Codes*



## RCWs/WACs

*Washington State Laws and Codes*

- *Various Fire Department Requirements*



## WSRB

*Washington Surveying & Rating Bureau*

- *Homeowner's Insurance Rating*



## DOH

*Washington State Department of Health*

- *State EMS Training & Equipment*



## GHEMS

*Grays Harbor Emergency Medical Services*

- *Local EMS Training, Equipment & Protocols*



## FEMA

*Federal Emergency Management Agency*

- *Incident Management Framework*
- *Emergency Management Requirements*



## FLSA

*Fair Labor Standards Act*

- *Fire Service Labor Requirements*



## IAFF

*International Association of Firefighters*

- *Collective Bargaining Agreement*

# PARTNERSHIPS



## Automatic Response Agreement

- Structure Fire Response Agreement – AFD, HFD, CFD, GHFD 2



## Mutual Aid Agreement

- County-wide Emergency Assistance Agreement



## Contracts for Service

### Fire Agreements

- Grays Harbor Fire District 10 (Junction City/East Wishkah Rd. areas)
- Stafford Creek Correctional Center
- Bigelow Drive Homeowners Association

### EMS Agreements

- City of Cosmopolis
- Grays Harbor Fire District 10 (Wishkah)
- Grays Harbor Fire District 15 (Artic)
- Stafford Creek Correctional Center
- Bigelow Drive Homeowners Association

# YOUR ABERDEEN FIRE DEPARTMENT



## Administrative Staff

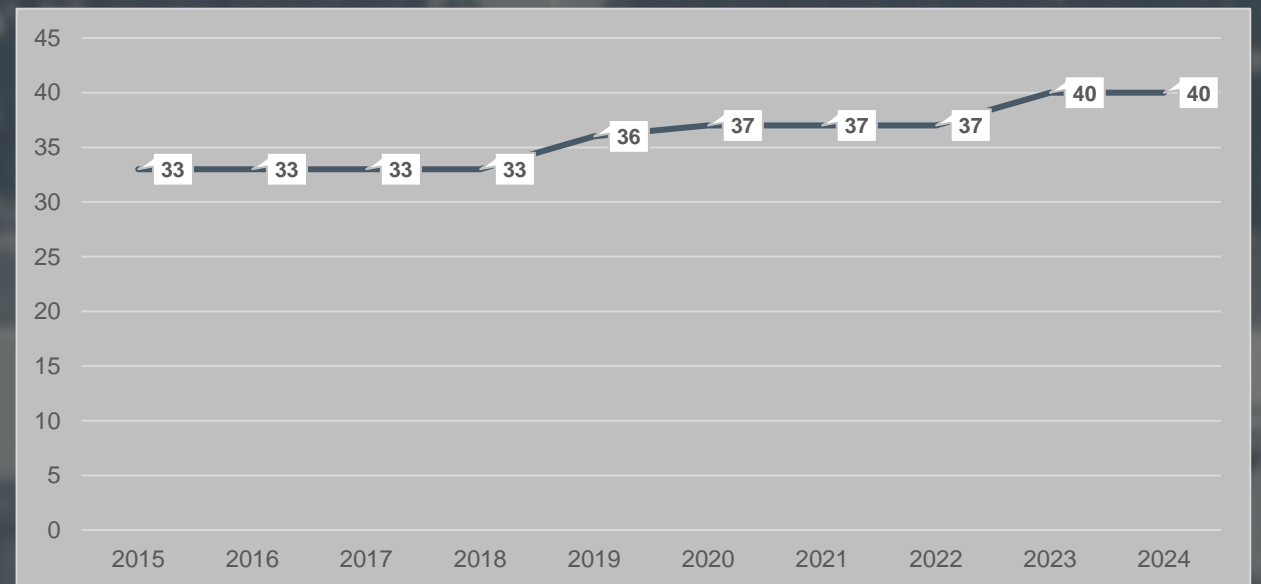
- 1 Fire Chief
- 1 Assistant Fire Chief/Fire Marshal
- 1 Administrative Assistant
- 1 EMS Billing Specialist



## Operations Staff

- 42 FTE's
- 18 Certified Paramedics (21 preferred)
- 3 Platoons – 13 per shift
- 1 Daytime Fire Service Specialist
- 24 Hour Shifts – 24-on, 48-off
- 9 minimum personnel on-duty per shift
- Fire Department Staffing Factor: 1.3

## Operations Staffing, 2015-2024



- 2019: 3 positions added (previously laid off in 2001)
- 2020: Creation of the Fire Service Specialist position.
- 2023: 3 positions added as per the collective bargaining agreement



# YOUR ABERDEEN FIRE DEPARTMENT



## Facilities

- 2 Fire Stations
- 1 Administrative Annex

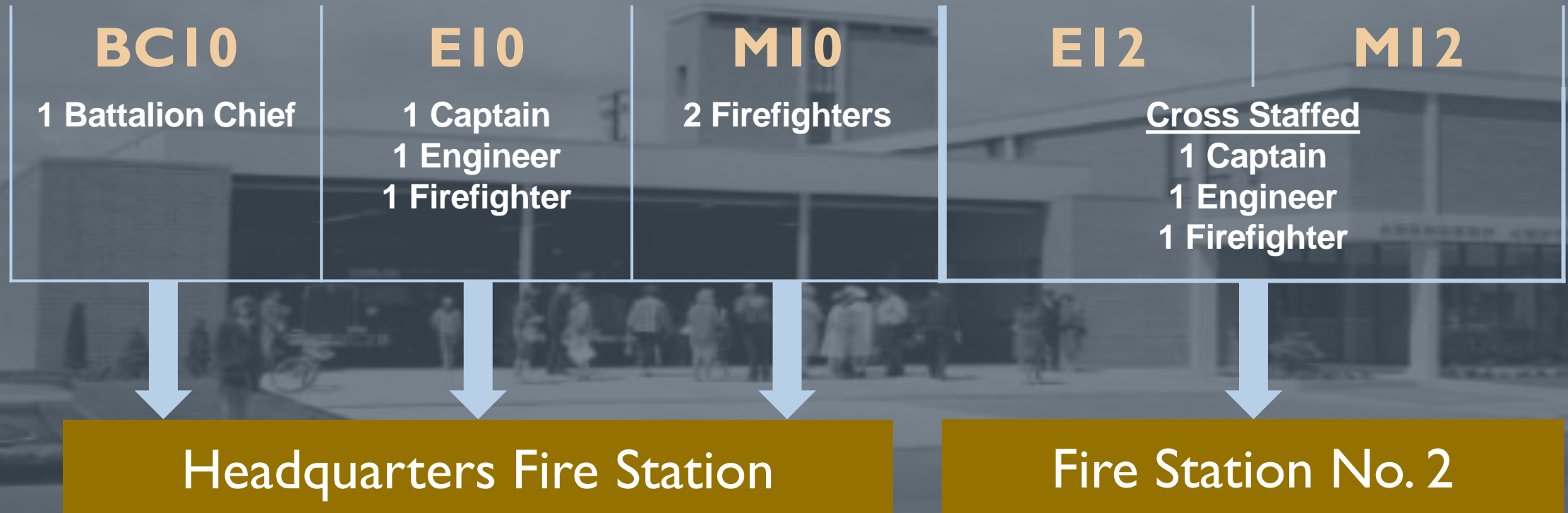


## Apparatus

- 2 First Out Fire Engines
- 1 Reserve Fire Engine
- 1 Aerial Ladder Truck
- 1 First Out Ambulance
- 1 Cross-staffed Ambulance
- 2 Reserve Ambulances
- 3 Staff Vehicles
- 1 Utility Vehicle



# ABERDEEN FIRE DEPARTMENT STAFFING



- Minimum staffing of 1 paramedic on M10 and at Fire Station No. 2
- Staffing above minimum levels creates the ability to staff additional medic units.

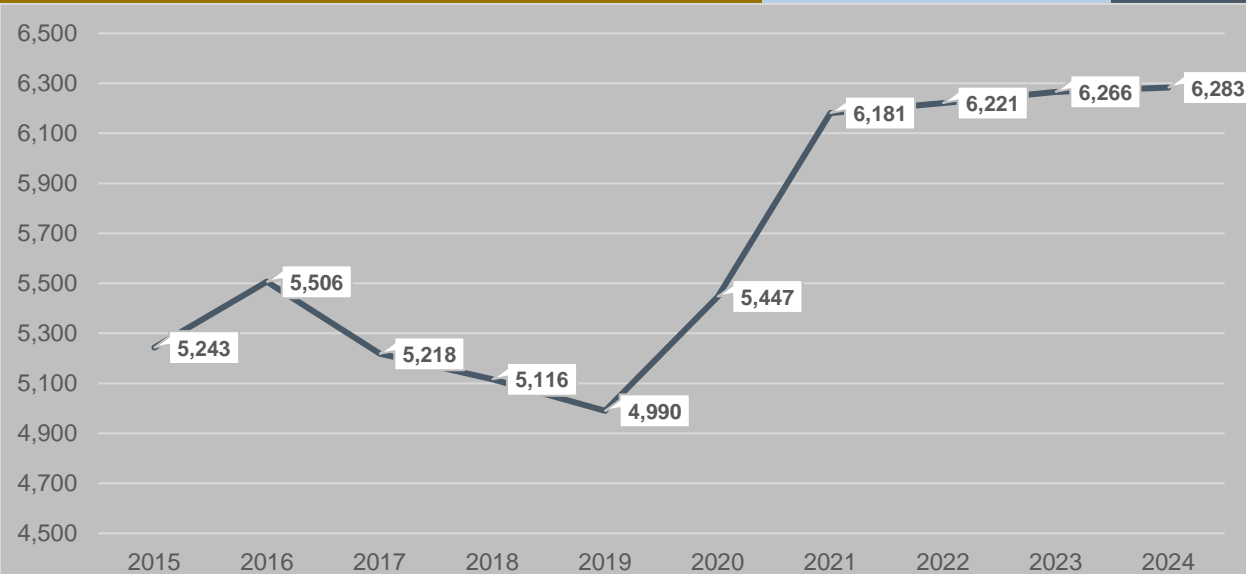


# Service Demands





# SERVICE DEMANDS



## 2015-2024

- Request for fire department services over past 10 years.



## Overall Increase

- 20% increase over past 10 years.



## Record Setting Pace

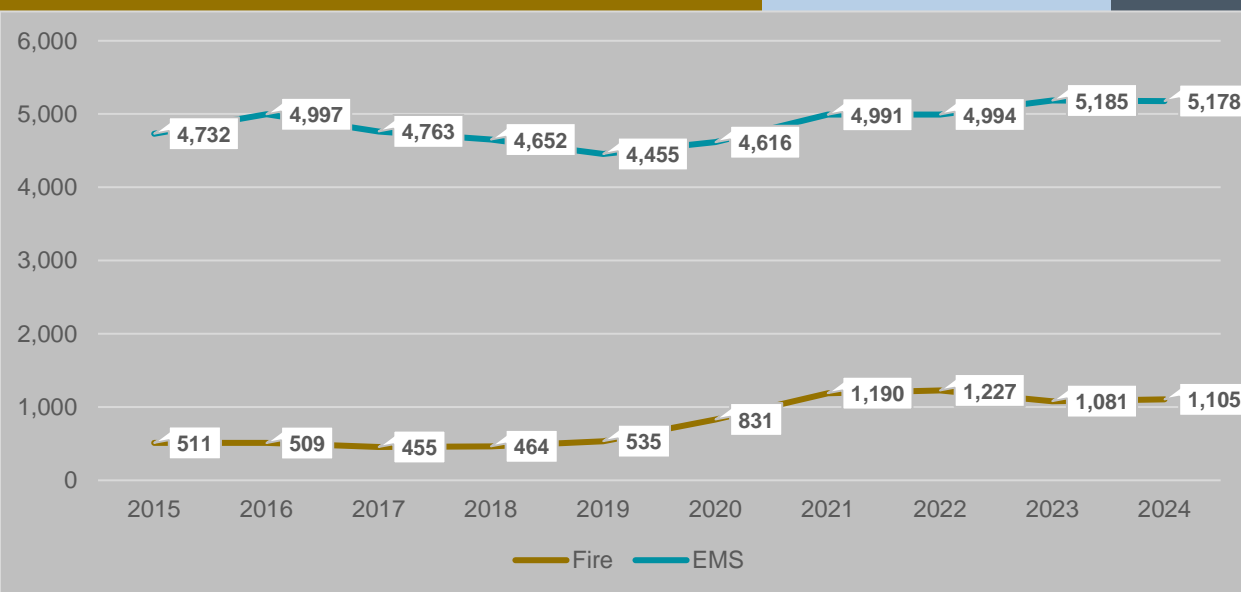
- Record number of calls for service each of the past 4 years.
- 2025 on pace with 2024 levels



## Call Load Factor

- 2024: 157
- One of the highest in the state

# SERVICE DEMANDS



## Breakdown: Fire vs. EMS

- 2015 – 2024 Average: 14% Fire/86% EMS
- 2024: 18% Fire/82% EMS



## Fire Responses

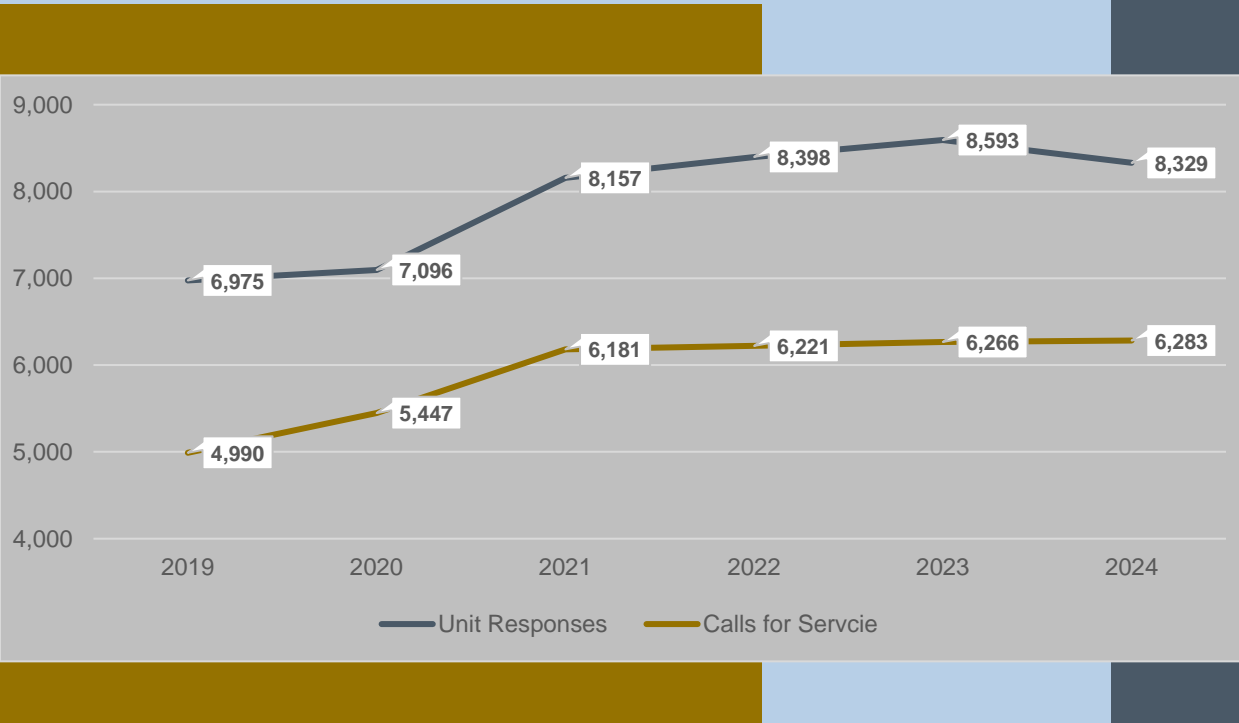
- Structure Fires
- Vehicle Fires
- Grass/Brush Fires
- Alarm/Suppression System Activations
- Illegal/Unauthorized Burning



## EMS Responses

- Basic & Advanced Life Support EMS Response and Transport
- Interfacility Transports

# SERVICE DEMANDS



## Call Volume vs. Unit Responses

Not all calls can be safely handled by just a single unit response. Examples include, but are not limited to:

### Fire

- Structure Fires
- Vehicle/RV Fires
- Wildland/Urban Interface Incidents

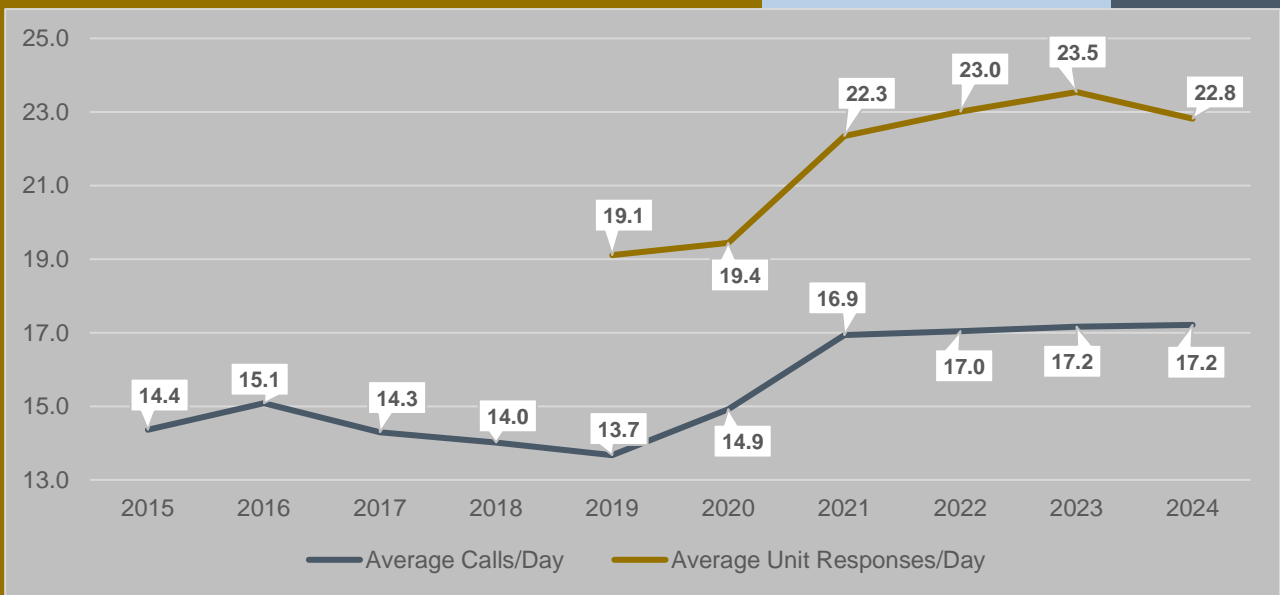
### EMS

- Cardiac Arrests
- Heart Attacks
- Respiratory Distress
- Unresponsive Patients
- Strokes
- Motor Vehicle Accidents
- Significant Trauma

*Average 30% increase above stand-alone Call Volume*



# SERVICE DEMANDS



## Calls/Responses per Day

Average calls for service and unit responses per day.

- 20% increase in calls per day.
- 19% increase in unit responses per day.
- 20+ per day no longer unusual.
- Increases situations where the department has overlapping calls

March 9, 2025 – March 15, 2025	CALLS	UNIT RESP.
Sunday March 9, 2025	11	17
Monday March 10, 2025	23	35
Tuesday March 11, 2025	30	39
Wednesday March 12, 2025	21	24
Thursday March 13, 2025	15	23
Friday March 14, 2025	15	27
Saturday March 15, 2025	21	32
AVERAGE	19.4	28.1

# SERVICE DEMANDS: Overlapping calls

Aberdeen Fire Department: Incident List 3/11/2025 8:00 - 3/12/2025 8:00					
Incident Date Time	Incident Clear Date Time	Incident Number	Unit	CD Call Type	Dispatch Reason
3/11/2025 8:35	3/11/2025 9:25	25AF01229	M10	AIDRSP	Epistaxis (Nosebleed)
3/11/2025 10:43	3/11/2025 10:53	25AF01230	M10	AIDRSP	Unknown Medical Problem
3/11/2025 10:46	3/11/2025 11:29	25AF01231	M14	AIDRSP	Abdominal/Groin Pain
3/11/2025 10:51	3/11/2025 11:35	25AF01232	M12	AIDRSP	GI Bleed - GI/Urinary Problem
3/11/2025 11:07	3/11/2025 12:06	25AF01233	M10	AIDRSP	Stroke/CVA/TIA
3/11/2025 11:24	3/11/2025 12:03	25AF01234	M14	AIDRSP	Syncopal/Near Syncopal/Dizziness
3/11/2025 11:24	3/11/2025 11:43	25AF01234	E10	AIDRSP	
3/11/2025 11:26	3/11/2025 11:41	25AF01235	M12	SUCIDE	Behavioral Health
3/11/2025 11:46	3/11/2025 12:04	25AF01236	M12	OD	Overdose
	3/11/2025 11:55	25AF01236	E10		
	3/11/2025 11:55	25AF01236	BC10		
3/11/2025 13:28	3/11/2025 13:40	25AF01237	E10	AIDRSP	Unknown Medical Problem
3/11/2025 15:07	3/11/2025 15:15	25AF01238	M10	AIDRSP	Unresponsive
3/11/2025 15:54	3/11/2025 16:25	25AF01239	M12	AIDRSP	Syncopal/Near Syncopal/Dizziness
3/11/2025 16:15	3/11/2025 17:29	25AF01240	M10	AIDRSP	Weakness/Lethargic/Dehydration
3/11/2025 16:27	3/11/2025 17:29	25AF01241	M16	AIDRSP	Breathing Problem/Shortness of Breath
	3/11/2025 17:06	25AF01241	E10		
3/11/2025 18:24	3/11/2025 19:21	25AF01242	M10	AIDRSP	Breathing Problem/Shortness of Breath
	3/11/2025 18:50	25AF01242	E10		
3/11/2025 18:29	3/11/2025 19:14	25AF01243	M12	AIDRSP	Breathing Problem/Shortness of Breath
3/11/2025 19:14	3/11/2025 19:33	25AF01244	M12	MEDTRA	Transfer/Interfacility
3/11/2025 19:14	3/11/2025 19:25	25AF01245	M16	AIDRSP	Abdominal/Groin Pain
3/11/2025 21:39	3/11/2025 22:45	25AF01246	M12	AIDRSP	Head Injury
3/11/2025 22:11	3/11/2025 22:24	25AF01247	M10	MEDRSP	Breathing Problem/Shortness of Breath
	3/11/2025 22:43		E10		
3/12/2025 1:26	3/12/2025 2:22	25AF01248	M12	MEDRSP	Chest Pain/Chest Discomfort/Heart Problem
3/12/2025 1:35	3/12/2025 2:20	25AF01249	M10	MEDRSP	Chest Pain/Chest Discomfort/Heart Problem
	3/12/2025 2:04	25AF01249	E10		
3/12/2025 2:21	3/12/2025 3:01	25AF01250	M12	AIDRSP	Fall
3/12/2025 2:52	3/12/2025 3:19	25AF01251	E10	LIFT	Lift Assist
3/12/2025 4:46	3/12/2025 4:59	25AF01252	M12	MEDRSP	Unresponsive
3/12/2025 4:48	3/12/2025 4:54	25AF01253	E10	FIRE	Illegal Burning
3/12/2025 4:54	3/12/2025 5:46	25AF01254	M10	MEDRSP	Breathing Problem/Shortness of Breath
	3/12/2025 5:19		E10		
3/12/2025 4:58	3/12/2025 5:17	25AF01255	M12	AIDRSP	Pain
3/12/2025 6:35	3/12/2025 7:34	25AF01256	M12	MEDRSP	Chest Pain/Chest Discomfort/Heart Problem
		25AF01256	E12		
3/12/2025 6:59	3/12/2025 7:41	25AF01257	M10	AIDRSP	Abdominal/Groin Pain
3/12/2025 7:04	3/12/2025 7:46	25AF01258	A16	AIDRSP	Unknown Medical Problem

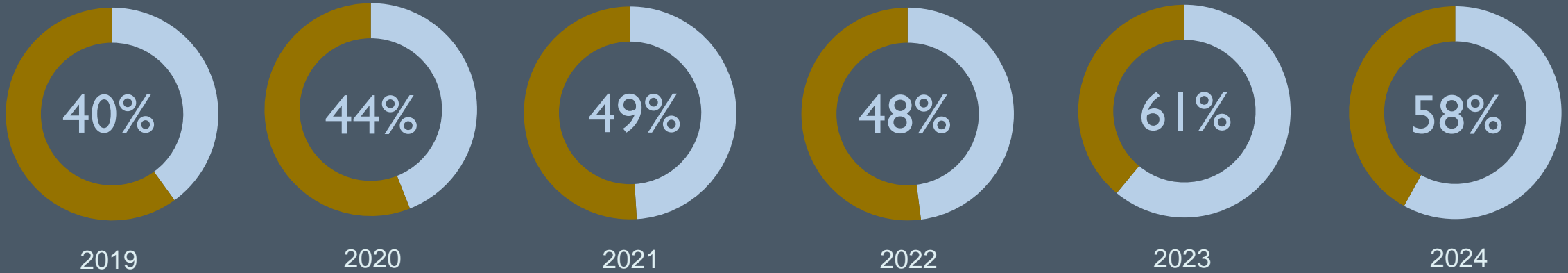


## OVERLAPPING CALLS

Tuesday, March 11, 2025, 08:00 –  
Wednesday, March 12, 2025, 08:00

Calls for Service	30
EMS Incidents	29
Fire Incidents	1
Unit Responses	7
Calls after 0:00	11
Overpalling Incidents	87%
Staffing Level	9
Mutual Aid Utilized	0
Mutal Aid Given	0

# SERVICE DEMANDS: Overlapping Calls



- Data available since 2019
- Incidents where multiple incidents is taking place at same time.
- These incidents can include more than a single unit response.
- Becomes more frequent as over all call volume increases

**50%**

*Average, 2019 - 2024*



# RIT Revenue



[illegible]

Fire Budget  
General Fund  
001.48



# Fire Department Operations

[illegible]

# Emergency Services Budget

*EMS Utility*  
*120.00*

# REVENUE SOURCES: ABERDEEN FIRE DEPARTMENT



**General Fund Fire**

**Emergency Services**

**Fire Department Revenue**



		120 - Emergency Services					
Account Number	Description	2020	2021	2022	2023 Budget	2023 thru 7/18/23 YTD	2024 REQUESTED
<div>REVENUE SOURCES: Fire</div>							
0-00-314-520-00-00	Reallocate Costs FY Migrant	-	-	0.00	-	0.00	-
0-00-331-930-00-19	HHS CARES Covid-19	43,379.12	-	0.00	-	0.00	-
0-00-331-930-19-00	HHS CARES Covid-19	-	-	0.00	-	0.00	-
0-00-331-970-44-01	Homeland Security FF Grant	-	-	0.00	-	0.00	-
0-00-332-930-40-00	Ground Emergency Medical Trans	1,036,710.91	636,471.41	885,683.87	750,000.00	824,713.50	650,000.00
0-00-333-210-00-20	CARES Act 2020	12,835.09	42,481.49	0.00	-	0.00	-
0-00-333-210-00-21	ARPA GRANT	-	845,844.75	457,246.00	-	0.00	-
0-00-333-250-99-00	US Health & SVCS Grant	-	-	0.00	-	0.00	-
0-00-334-040-90-00	Dept of Health Grant	1,260.00	1,260.00	1,125.00	1,200.00	554.00	-
0-00-337-500-00-00	GH Transit Grant (Amb Svc)	-	-	0.00	-	0.00	-
0-00-337-600-00-00	GH Co EMS Council	30,405.24	-	0.00	-	0.00	-
0-00-341-810-00-00	Photocopies & Xeroxing	15.00	-	60.00	-	30.00	-
0-00-342-210-00-00	Ambulance Charges	-	-	288,520.50	202,434.00	177,589.28	187,877.00
0-00-342-500-00-00	EMS Service Fees-private Sourc	884.00	884.00	884.00	884.00	0.00	884.00
0-00-342-600-00-00	Ambulance & Emergency Aid Fees	1,064,272.20	960,796.78	849,824.96	925,000.00	557,124.99	950,000.00
0-00-342-610-00-00	Other Ambulance Charges	-	-	-	-	0.00	-
0-00-342-620-00-00	Ems Availability Fee	2,018,461.05	2,049,318.23	2,447,441.11	2,480,739.00	1,319,269.25	3,026,102.76
0-00-361-100-00-00	Investment Interest	16,630.30	5,091.86	28,103.11	7,000.00	48,417.16	-
0-00-367-100-00-00	Donations	30.00	100.00	400.00	100.00	0.00	-
0-00-369-900-00-00	Other Misc Revenue	-	-	0.00	-	0.00	-
0-00-369-910-00-00	Other Misc Revenue	5,009.57	925.57	1,355.10	500.00	10,263.96	3,000.00
0-00-387-120-00-00	Transfer In - Ems	-	-	0.00	-	0.00	-
0-00-397-001-00-00	OPG Transfer - Current Exp	-	-	0.00	-	0.00	-
Total Revenues					7,877	2,937,962	4,817,864
<div>001.48 Fire</div>							
<div>Expenditures</div>							
<div>Administration (100)</div>							
0-00-522-100-04-04	Reallocate Costs FY Migrant	158,869.00	172,312.00	153,522.96	187,916.00	99,960.00	345,266.00
0-00-522-100-10-01	Regular Pay	221,763.94	239,173.28	233,717.19	243,460.00	127,823.86	200,701.00
0-00-522-100-10-02	Overtime Pay	-	-	890.58	750.00	0.00	2,500.00
0-00-522-100-10-04	Accrued Compensated Absences	-	-	-	-	0.00	-
0-00-522-100-20-10	Pension	16,799.84	17,257.40	13,983.71	15,636.00	9,029.87	14,510.00
0-00-522-100-20-11	FICA/Medicare	8,476.84	9,185.15	10,562.75	10,575.00	5,142.92	9,181.00
0-00-522-100-20-12	Medical/Dental Insurance	13,448.59	14,659.62	16,521.70	42,054.00	17,216.37	38,675.00
0-00-522-100-20-15	Workers' Compensation	3,449.56	4,365.74	3,190.36	7,401.00	2,768.47	3,862.00
0-00-522-100-20-16	Uniforms & Clothing	-	-	-	-	-	75.00
0-00-522-100-20-17	Paid Family Medical Leave Act	291.51	322.84	362.79	531.00	263.95	1,000.00
0-00-522-100-30-10	Supplies	2,413.99	2,490.92	2,454.69	4,000.00	1,060.09	2,900.00
0-00-522-100-30-50	Small Tools/minor Equipment	5,276.83	-	2,050.89	2,000.00	0.00	1,160.00
0-00-522-100-40-10	Professional Services	68,437.60	77,102.36	64,773.00	80,000.00	75,578.38	125,000.00

# GENERAL FUND FIRE REVENUE

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## GENERAL FUND FIRE

- From City's general fund revenues.
- Based on approved general fund fire budget as approved.
- Revenue from fire specific fee/charges goes into the general fund
  - Fire Service Contracts
    - Grays Harbor Fire District 10
    - Stafford Creek Correctional Center
    - Bigelow Drive Homeowners
  - Permit & Inspection Fees
    - New 2025

		120 - Emergency Services					
Account Number	Description	2020	2021	2022	2023 Budget	2023 thru 7/18/23 YTD	2024 REQUESTED
REVENUE SOURCES: EMS							
0-00-314-520-00	Emergency Services	-	-	0.00	-	0.00	-
0-00-331-930-00-19	HHS CARES Covid-19	43,379.12	-	0.00	-	0.00	-
0-00-331-930-19-00	HHS CARES Covid-19	-	-	0.00	-	0.00	-
0-00-331-970-44-01	Homeland Security FF Grant	-	-	0.00	-	0.00	-
0-00-332-930-40-00	Ground Emergency Medical Trans	1,036,710.91	636,471.41	885,683.87	750,000.00	824,713.50	650,000.00
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0-00-333-210-00-21	ARPA GRANT	-	845,844.75	457,246.00	-	0.00	-
0-00-333-250-99-00	US Health & SVCS Grant	-	-	0.00	-	0.00	-
0-00-334-040-90-00	Dept of Health Grant	1,260.00	1,260.00	1,125.00	1,200.00	554.00	-
0-00-337-500-00-00	GH Transit Grant (Amb Svc)	-	-	0.00	-	0.00	-
0-00-337-600-00-00	GH Co EMS Council	30,405.24	-	0.00	-	0.00	-
0-00-341-810-00-00	Endoscopy & Xeroxing	-	-	50.00	-	30.00	-
0-00-342-210-00-00	EMS Service Fee-private Sourc	884.00	884.00	884.00	884.00	884.00	884.00
0-00-342-500-00-00	Ambulance & Emergency Aid Fee	1,284,277.22	260,796.78	849,824.86	825,000.00	557,124.99	950,000.00
0-00-342-610-00-00	EMS Utility Fee	2,018,457.05	2,049,318.23	2,344,741.11	2,380,759.00	1,319,269.25	3,026,102.76
0-00-361-100-00-00	Donations	16,600.00	5,091.86	100.00	100.00	48,417.16	-
0-00-367-100-00-00	Other Misc Revenue	-	-	400.00	100.00	0.00	-
0-00-369-900-00-00	Other Misc Revenue	-	-	0.00	-	0.00	-
0-00-369-910-00-00	Other Misc Revenue	5,009.57	925.57	1,355.10	500.00	10,263.96	3,000.00
0-00-387-120-00-00	Transfer In - Ems	-	-	0.00	-	0.00	-
0-00-397-001-00-00	OPG Transfer - Current Expense	-	-	0.00	-	0.00	-
Total Revenues					17,877	2,937,962	4,817,864
I 20.00 Emergency Services							
0-00-522-100-04-04	Reallocate Costs PY Mngmt	-	-	-	9,916.00	99,960.00	345,266.00
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0-00-522-100-10-04	Accrued Compensated Absences	-	-	-	-	0.00	-
0-00-522-100-20-10	Pension	16,799.84	17,257.40	13,983.71	15,636.00	9,029.87	14,510.00
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0-00-522-100-30-10	Supplies	2,413.99	2,490.92	2,454.69	4,000.00	1,060.09	2,900.00
0-00-522-100-30-50	Small Tool/Minor Equipment	5,276.83	-	2,050.89	2,000.00	0.00	1,160.00
0-00-522-100-40-10	Professional Services	68,437.60	77,102.36	64,773.00	80,000.00	75,578.38	125,000.00

Utility Fee

Billing

GEMT

Contracts

Misc.

Monthly resident  
EMS utility fee

Patient billing

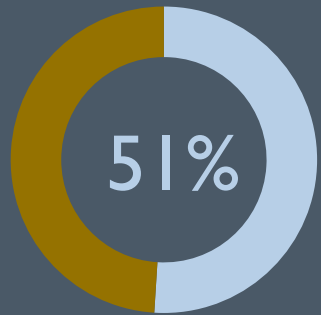
Medicaid patient  
transport  
supplement

Services provided  
to outside agencies

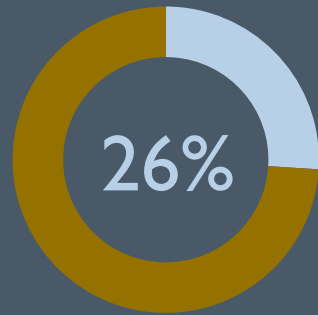
Other revenue



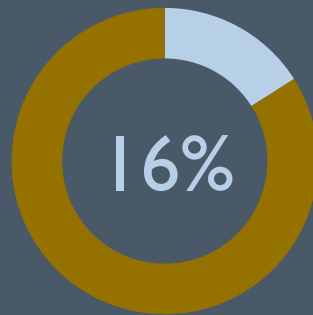
# EMS REVENUE: 2015-2025



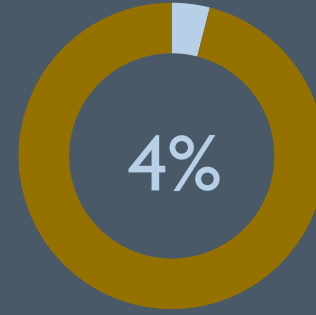
EMS Utility Fee



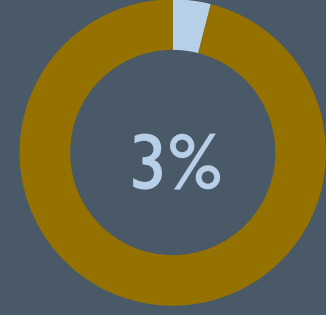
Billing



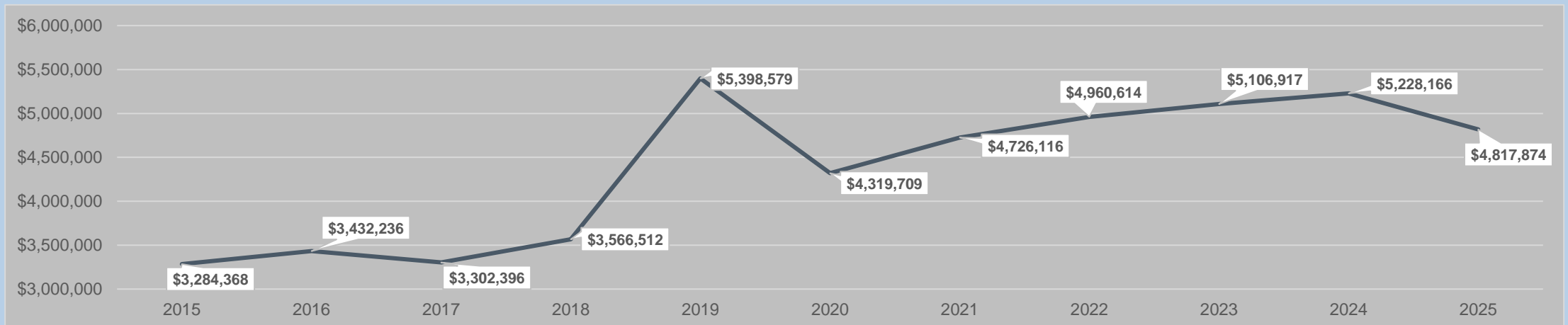
GEMT



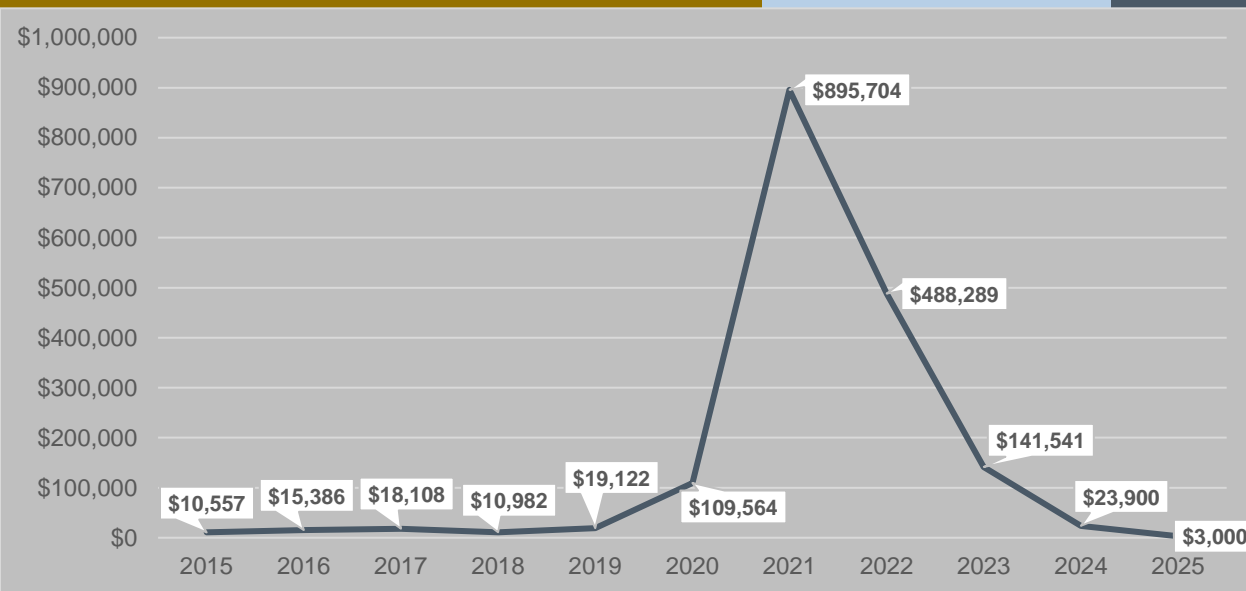
Contracts



Miscellaneous



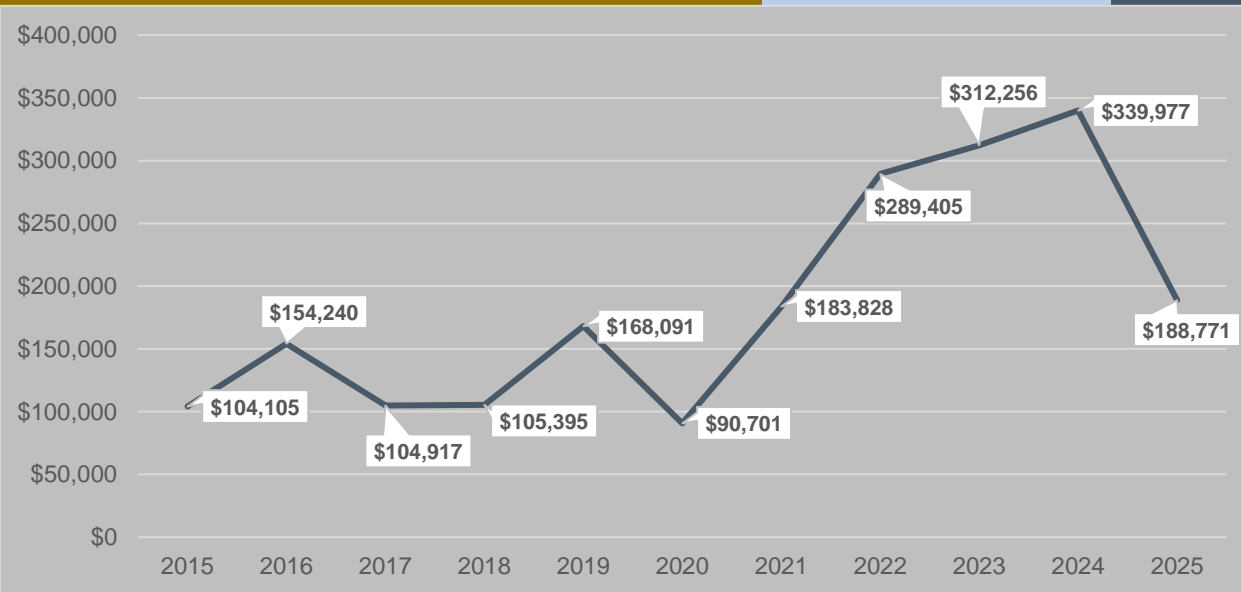
# EMS REVENUE 2015 - 2025



## MISCELLANEOUS REVENUE

- Revenue not otherwise categorized
  - Photocopy Fees
  - Grant Funding
  - Interest Revenue
  - Donations
  - Other Miscellaneous Revenue
- 2023: Interest Revenue Spiked
  - \$128K vs. \$11K average prior
  - 2024: All interest revenue into general fund
- 2020-2022: \$1.4M of COVID funding received.
- 3% of EMS Revenue

# EMS REVENUE 2015 - 2025

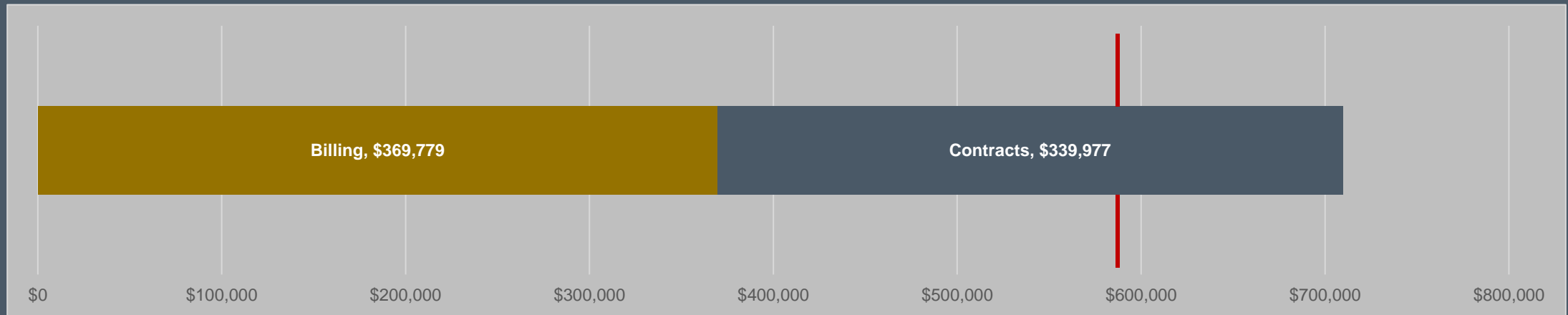


## CONTRACTS FOR SERVICE

- Contracted EMS services provided by the Aberdeen Fire Department to neighboring jurisdictions.
  - City of Cosmopolis
  - Grays Harbor Fire Districts 10 & 15
  - Stafford Creek Correctional Center
  - Bigelow Drive Homeowners Association
- Fee charged on an annual basis
  - Unknown criteria for past contracts.
  - EMS Cost of Service Study Considered – Contract revenue goals
  - City of Cosmopolis: Currently a percentage of the utility rate per household (2022)
  - SCCC: Per Call Billing – Included in ambulance billing revenue
- 4% of EMS Revenue

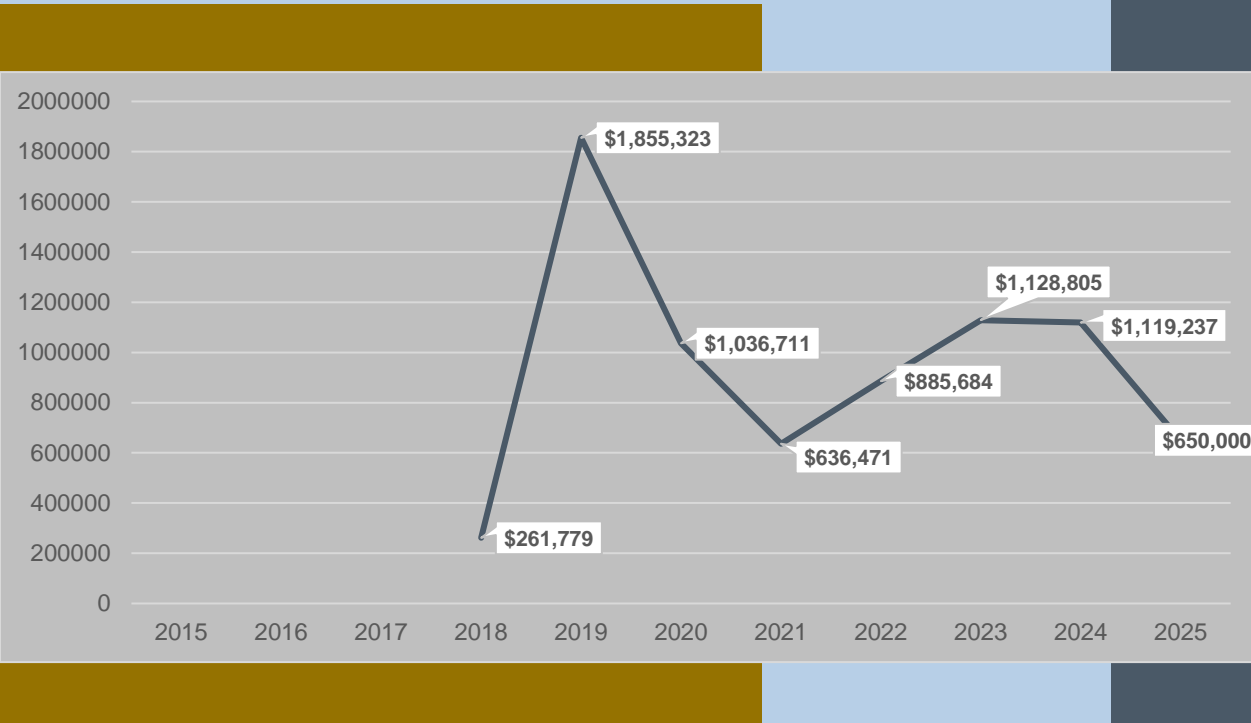


# EMS REVENUE: Contracted Service Areas



- 2023/2024 EMS Cost of Service Study: Goal of \$587,000 (11% of revenue requirement)
- 2024 Contracted area billing revenue: \$368,779
- 2024 Contracted area contract revenue: \$339,997
- **\$709,756**
- Stafford Creek Correctional Center: Increased revenue due to increase in call volume.
- City of Cosmopolis: EMS contract could reduce drastically as CFD rebuilds.
- Future contracts developed with revenue goals in mind.
- Even though revenue was above Cost-of-Service Study recommendations, potential of significant decreases.

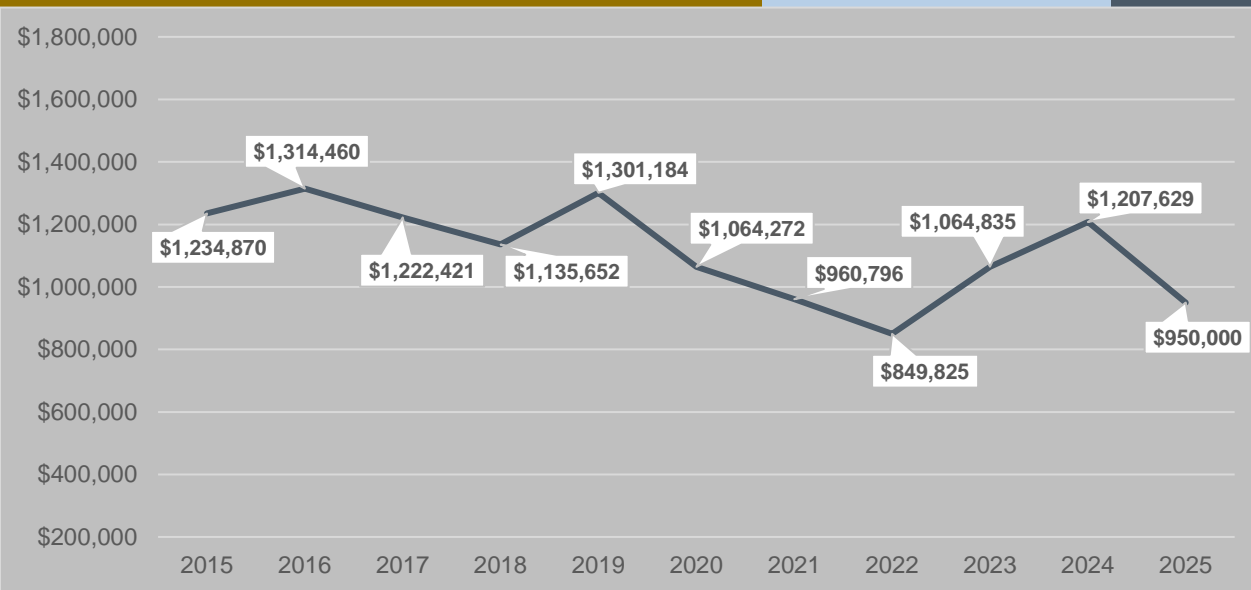
# EMS REVENUE 2015 - 2025



## GROUND EMERGENCY MEDICAL TRANSPORT (GEMT) PROGRAM

- Supplemental payment for Medicaid transports.
- Started in 2018.
- Revenue based on actual Medicaid billing throughout the year.
- Required extensive reporting and data analysis.
- Spiked in 2019
- Was to sunset in 2024, extended to 2028.
- 16% of EMS Revenue.

# EMS REVENUE 2015 - 2025

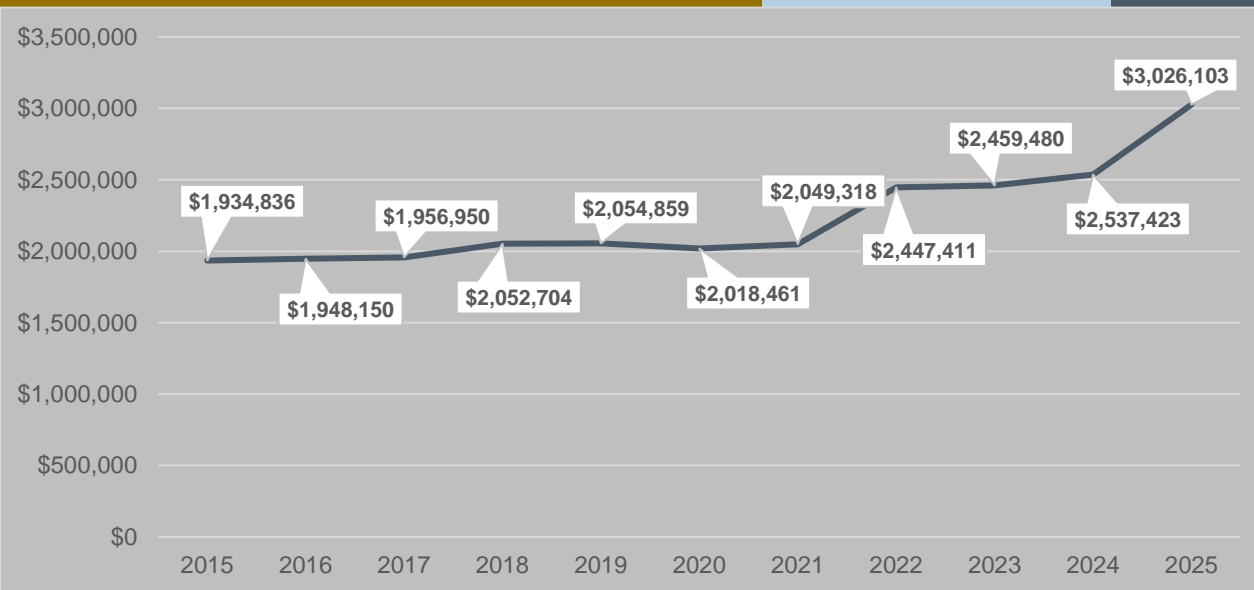


## AMBULANCE BILLING

- Billing for ambulance transports provided
  - Based on rates as established by Aberdeen City Council.
  - Comparison of local and comparable agencies.
  - Updated on an infrequent basis.
  - Last update in 2024 – considering annual review.
- Includes insurance and patient billing
  - Medicare/Medicaid: 80% +/- of payor mix, lowest reimbursement levels.
  - Balance billing of patients after insurance payment – illegal to balance bill Medicaid.
- 2024 Rate reporting – could lead to changes in private insurance reimbursement rates (2026).
- Not all EMS calls for service result in ambulance billing
- 26% of EMS Revenue.



# EMS REVENUE 2015 - 2025



## EMS Utility Fee

- Monthly EMS Utility rate collected on water bill.
  - Established in 2006.
  - Requires Cost of Service Study.
  - Current Rate: \$34.11 per month.
- Low Income Senior Citizen discount available.
- Set by resolution of the Aberdeen City Council.
  - Usually done as part of the budget process.
  - 2024: Updated mid-year, after completion of the Cost-of-Service Study
  - Resolution set rates through 2028.
- Residents: No bill after insurance payment
- 51% of EMS Revenue.

# EMS UTILITY RATE



## Pre-2001

- EMS Fund established by the City of Aberdeen.



## 2004

- State Supreme Court invalidated City of Kennewick's utility based rate structure.
- Aberdeen's was similar – Aberdeen discontinued program and refunded fund balance.



## 2005

- State legislation re-authorized cities to establish an EMS utility in RCW 35.21
- Cost of service study required to determine EMS utility rates.



## 2006

- EMS cost of service study completed.
- Initial rate of \$12.88 per month.

# EMS UTILITY RATE

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## ✓ 2010

- Updated EMS cost of service study completed.

## ✓ 2022

- Need identified for an updated EMS cost of service study.
- Study deferred until after Regional Fire Authority vote.

## ✓ 2023/2024

- EMS Cost of service study commissioned by the Aberdeen City Council
- RCW 35.21: Cost of service study required to determine EMS utility rates
- Presented to City Council: in March 2024.
- Provided rate options.



# City of Aberdeen **EMS UTILITY RATE: Cost of Service Study**

## **Fire Funding/Operations**

## **EMS Funding/Operations**

*Comprehensive analysis completed by a third-party reviewing Fire and EMS funding and operations to determine the demand and availability costs of providing Emergency Medical Services following the requirements of RCW 35.21.766.*

**EMS Utility Rate Structure**

**Allocation Rate**

# EMS UTILITY RATE: Rate History



- **Rate History: 2006 - 2023**
- **Past Increases: 2008, 2012, 2014, 2017, 2021 (2024, 2025)**
- **Lack of annual increases have not addressed increased cost of operations.**
- **Relied on general fund subsidy.**
- **Infrequent true Cost of Service Studies.**
  - **2006: In-line with Study Findings.**
  - **2010: Called for a rate increase to \$20.51.**

## RCW 35.21

EMS Utility Rates must be in accordance with Cost-of-Service Studies.

*\* Past Cost-of-Service Studies: 2006 & 2010.*

*\*\* Most current study: 2023/2024*

# EMS UTILITY RATE: Cost of Service Study

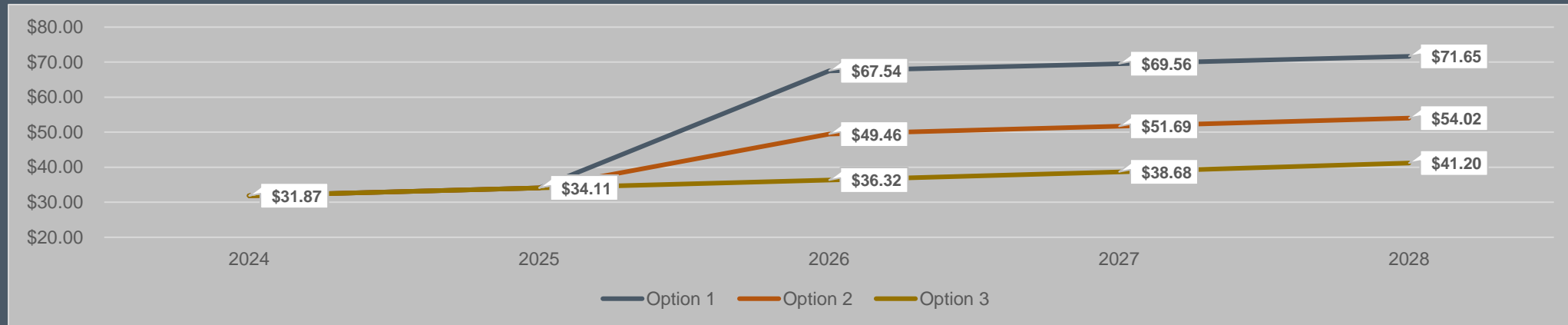
## ✓ Induced Financial and Operational Assumptions

- General Inflation
- Labor Cost Increases
- Population Growth
- Increases in call volumes

## ✓ 3 Options provided

OPTION	GENERAL FUND FIRE/EMS COST ALLOCATION	GENERAL FUND FIRE	EMS FUND	GENERAL FUND EMS SUBSIDY
1: Full Cost Recovery	18%/82%	\$1.57M	\$7.24M	\$0
2: Partial Cost Recovery	31%/69%	\$2.76M	\$6.05M	\$0.92M
3: Status Quo	42%/58%	\$3.68M	\$5.13M	\$2.11M

# EMS UTILITY RATE: Cost of Service Study

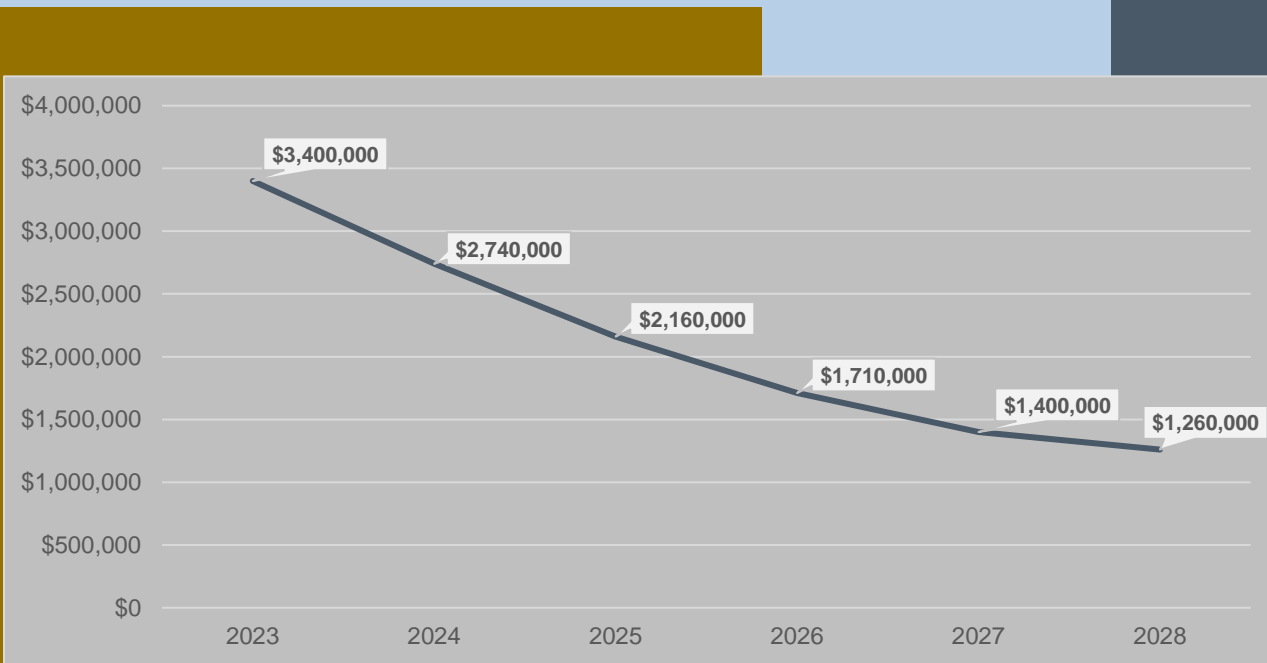


- June 12, 2024: City Council resolution approved for “Option 3”
- Rate increase effective August 1, 2024
- Subsequent increases effective January 1 of each year.
- Directive to revisit in 2025



# EMS RESERVES

## 2023 - 2028



### EMS Reserves

- Have Built up over time, when revenue has outpaced projections.
  - COVID funds helped to create current balance
  - 2023: 274 Days of O&M
  - Acceptable level should be around 90 days
- Used to “Balance” the EMS budget when needed.
- Cost-of-Service Study calls for systematic use of reserves to help keep rates down within established rate structures.
  - 2024: \$660,000
  - 2025: \$580,000
  - 2026: \$450,000
  - 2027: \$310,000
  - 2028: \$140,000
- If revenue outpaces expenses, those reserves can be utilized in a similar fashion for the next cycle of rates.



# Expenses



		2020	2021	2022	2023	2024 BUDGET	2024 YTD (to 3/31/24)	2025 BUDGET
Operating Costs		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Depreciation		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Repairs		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Utilities		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Insurance		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Professional Fees		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Travel		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Operating Costs		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revenue		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ticket Sales		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sponsorships		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Merchandise Sales		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fundraising Events		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Donations		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Revenue		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net Income		-	-	-	-	-	-	-

[illegible]

## 120 - Emergency Services

# EXPENSE BUDGET: ABERDEEN FIRE DEPARTMENT

## General Fund Fire

*Fire Department allocated revenue from general fund sources.*

## Emergency Services

*EMS related revenue*

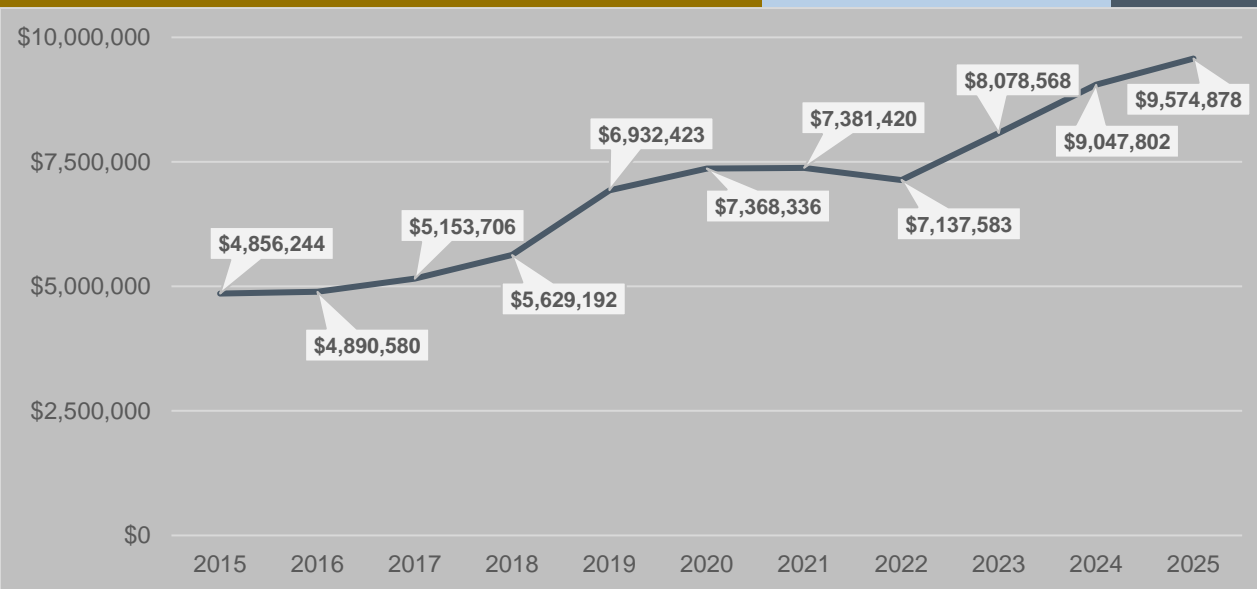
Fire Department Budget

EMS Budget

- General Fund monies can support EMS expenses
- EMS Funds cannot be utilized for general fund expenses
- Expenses split allocated where possible (42% Fire/58% EMS)
- 2024: General Fund subsidized EMS by approximately \$800,000



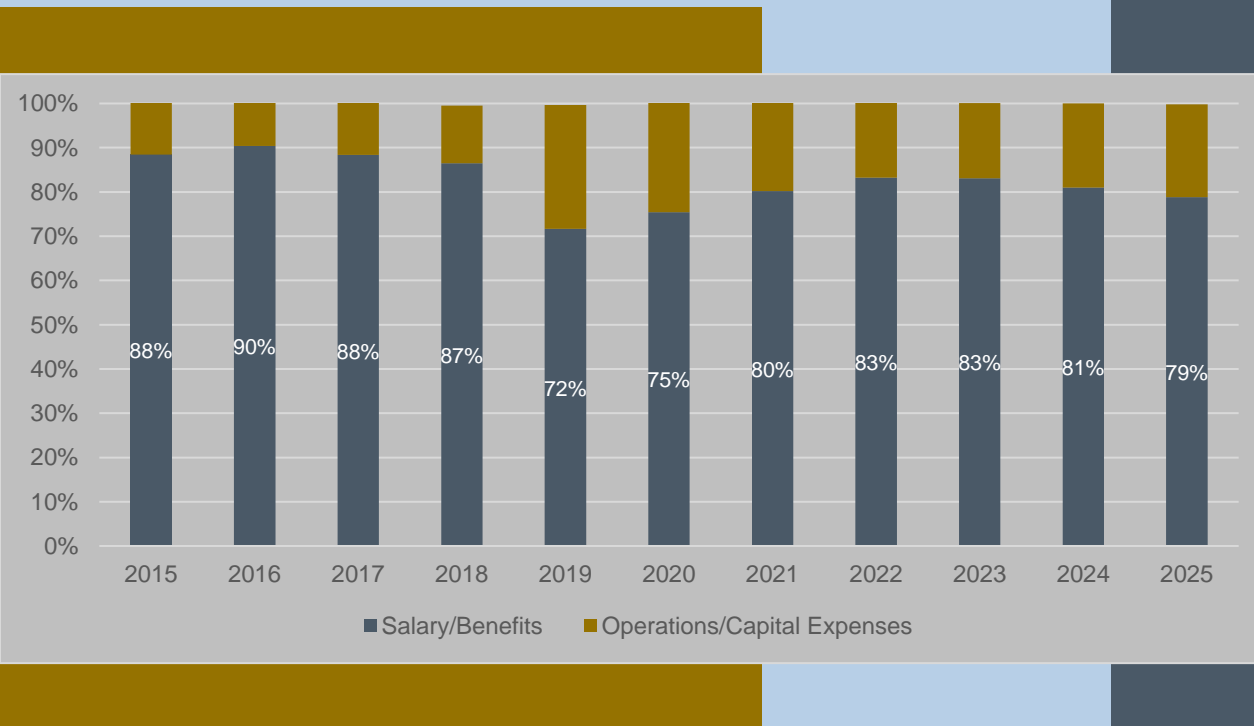
# OVERALL EXPENSES



## FIRE & EMS

- Expense Classifications
  - Salary & Benefits
  - Supplies
  - Services
  - Capital Outlays
  - Debt Service
  - Allocated Costs (EMS only)
- Significant increases over the years
  - Staffing increases: 2019, 2020, 2023
  - Labor Costs
  - Fuel & Vehicle Maintenance Costs
  - Cost of Supplies
  - Reporting Mandates (GEMT/Medicare)
  - Allocated Costs – Finance & Insurance

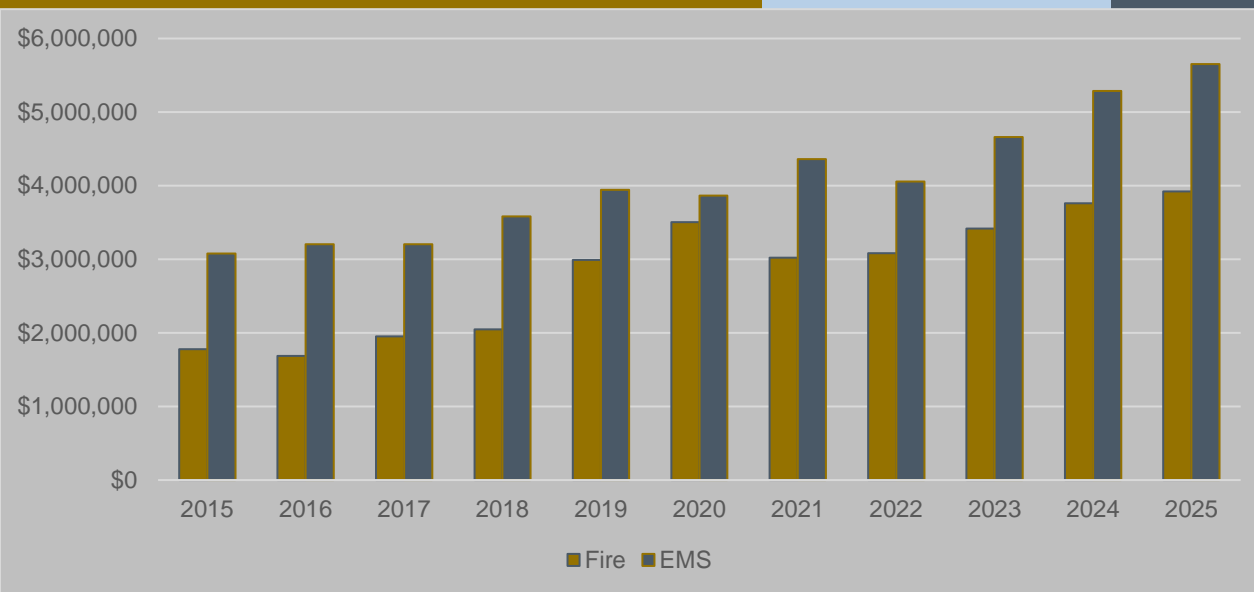
# OVERALL EXPENSES



## SALARY & BENEFITS

- Split allocated between Fire (42%) & EMS (58%) budgets.
- Salary & Overtime costs for fire department staffing.
  - CBA: Minimum staffing requirements, daily & overall
  - Operational requirements should also be considered: response requirements, call volume
- Employer portion of fringe benefits:
  - Pension, FICA/Medicare, Medical Insurance, Worker's Comp. & PFMLA
- 2019-2021: No Salary/Benefit liability increased - Fire engine purchase & payments
- 2015-2026: Average 82% of overall fire department expenses.

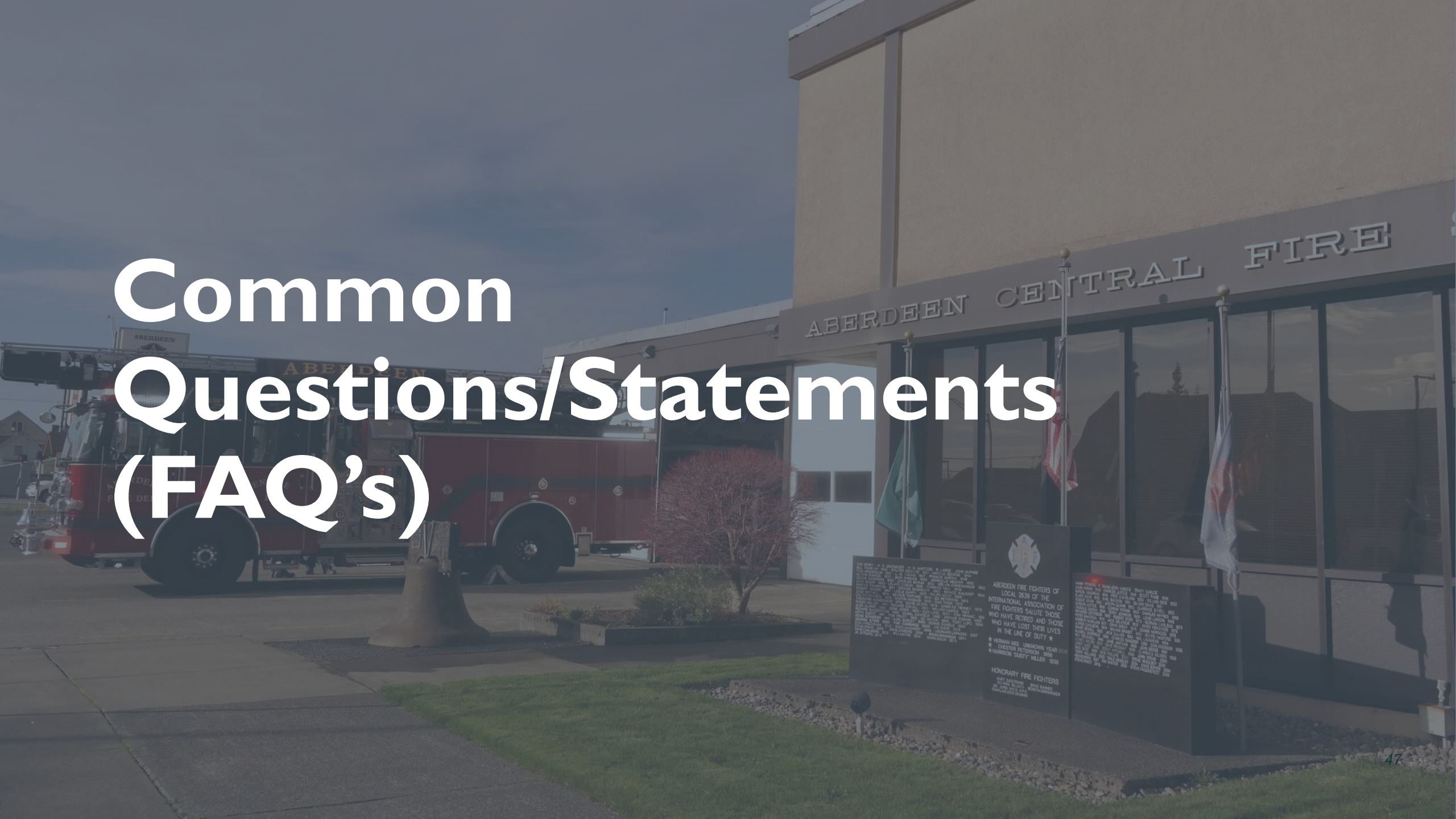
# OVERALL EXPENSES



## FIRE vs. EMS

- Fire Expenses: General Fund
- EMS Expenses: Emergency Services Fund
- Split allocation where available
- Budgets adjust from year to year based on needs.
- General Fund can pay for EMS
- Emergency Services Fund cannot pay for Fire/General Fund expenses.
- Adjustments to allocation rates will shift expense allocation.

# Common Questions/Statements (FAQ's)





# EMS UTILITY RATE: FAQ's

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**Instead of raising the monthly charge for EMS services (EMS Utility Rate), why can't the final bill for service be raised if used?**

- Ambulance billing rates were increases in 2024.
- Slight increase to Ambulance Billing revenue anticipated.
- EMS Utility program provides for only billing a patient's insurance, no "balance billing" of residents – Residents do not see an ambulance bill.
- Would only apply to non-residents – approximately 17% of call volume
- 2023: 79% of patients transported covered by Medicaid or Medicare that have set low reimbursement rates.
- Doing away with the write off program would only generate approximately \$100,000 in revenue.

# EMS UTILITY RATE: FAQ's

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**Can we create different rates for different user classifications that put more burden on the system?**

- Utility rates must be applied equally to all rate payers.
- Exceptions:
  - Approved rate discount programs.
  - Vacant Buildings
  - Medicaid patients in skilled nursing/care facilities

# EMS UTILITY RATE: FAQ's

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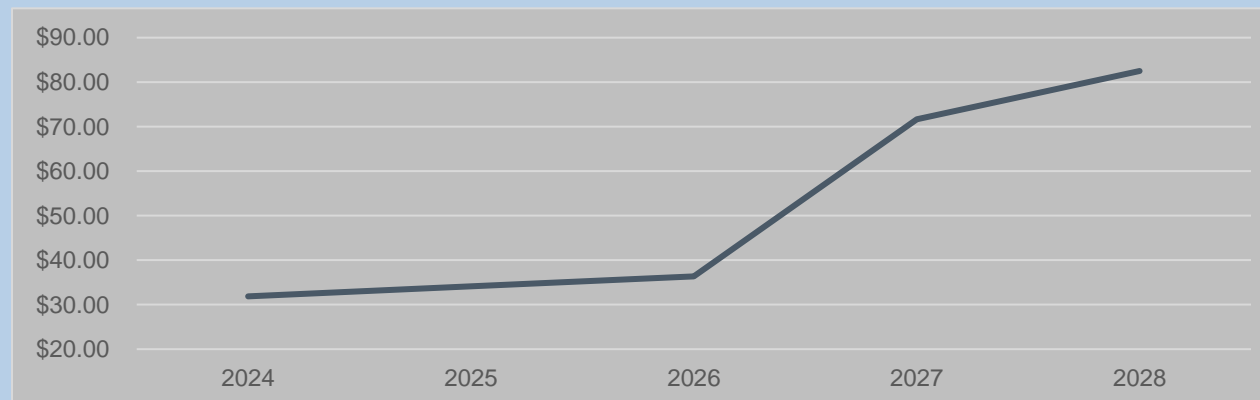
**Are there discounts available to citizen for the EMS Utility rate charged by the City?**

- Yes, Low-income Senior Citizen discount (20%) is available.
- Charity Policy (AMC 13.80).
- Utility Rate Advisory Committee will be tasked with further discussion on utility rate discounts.

# EMS UTILITY RATE: FAQ's

**Can we use the Emergency Medical Services reserve balance to keep rates down, then increase rates when the reserves are used up?**

- Yes, but.....
- Rate options determined by the Cost of Service Study systematically uses these reserves. An update to the study would be required to address this option (additional expense).
- This would create a situation where a more drastic increase would like be needed in the future.





# EMS UTILITY RATE: FAQ's

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**If EMS revenues come in higher than expected, can we use those funds to not raise the utility rate?**

- Rate options determined by the Cost of Service Study systematically uses these reserves. Any change in the amounts planned would disrupt the current rate structure.
  - 2024: \$660,000
  - 2025: \$580,000
  - 2026: \$450,000
  - 2027: \$310,000
  - 2028: \$140,000
- If revenues are above the planned \$1.3M in at the end of 2028, they can be used as part of the next rate study.

# EMS UTILITY RATE: FAQ's

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**You are just wanting to raise rates because the vote for the RFA failed, and you're trying to get your money one way or another.**

- Not the case.
- During the RFA process I was very clear that an EMS Cost of Service Study was going to be needed no matter the outcome of the vote.
- It was identified in 2022 that a Cost of Service study was needed for the City of Aberdeen.
- Study was deferred until the outcome of the RFA process was known.

# EMS UTILITY RATE: FAQ's

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**People need to understand that the fire department is funded through property taxes for the service already.**

- Fire operations are paid through property taxes and other revenue received by the City's general fund.
- EMS operations are not fully funded through the general fund. The City needs to determine the level of, if any, subsidy it pays out of the general fund to operate EMS.
- The EMS Cost of Service Study determines the level of funding required to maintain EMS services.

# Pressing Issues

A photograph of a residential fire scene. In the background, a single-story house with a brown tiled roof and light-colored siding has a dark arched doorway. Several firefighters in full gear are positioned around the house. One firefighter in the foreground wears a yellow vest with 'COMMAND' and 'CLINE' on it. Another firefighter's gear has 'HOUSTON' visible. A fire truck with red and yellow reflective stripes is on the right side of the frame. A long yellow hose runs from the truck across the foreground. The scene is overcast and appears to be in the early morning or late afternoon.



# PRESSING ISSUES

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## ✓ FACILITIES

- Both fire stations are in desperate need of replacement.
- Structural Analysis in progress to determine their status.

## ✓ RETENTION & RECRUITMENT

- Loosing employees to other agencies.
- Can leave for better pay and less workload.
- 35% turnover (14 employees) last 3 years (no retirements).
- Competitive employment market.

# PRESSING ISSUES

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## APPARATUS REPLACEMENT

- Aging fire apparatus are ending their life expectancy.
- New fire engine design in process (\$850,000+)
- New aerial ladder truck within the next few years (\$1.2M+)
- Ambulance replacements are on schedule.



## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

- Building new program from the ground up.
- Will create an increase in costs city-wide.
- Increased workload and responsibility on City staff.



# PRESSING ISSUES

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## ✓ FEDERAL FUNDING

- Currently a level of uncertainty surrounding the future of various types of federal funding.
- Federal portion of Medicaid.
- Federal grant programs – FEMA (city-wide)
- Training programs provided by FEMA

## ✓ GEMT PROGRAM

- Currently extended to 2028.
- Will it be extended out further? If so, at what levels?
- If not extended – Average 16% of revenue (21% in 2024).

# PRESSING ISSUES

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## COMMERCIAL INSURANCE CARRIERS

- 2024: Mandate to report rates to the State Office of the Insurance Commissioner
- All Ambulance Services are considered “out of network” for commercial insurance carriers
- 2026: Potential review of rate reporting program.
- Potential that commercial insurance carriers could attempt to “set rates” based on reported data.



## RISING COSTS TO CONTINUE OPERATIONS

- Supplies
- Equipment
- Utilities
- Labor



# PRESSING ISSUES

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## EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT

- Several significant pieces of equipment are due to be replaced within the next couple of years.
- Historically these have been replaced using grant funding.
- No replacement plan has been in place in the past.
  - Personal Protective Equipment Washer/Extractor
  - Self Contained Breathing Apparatus
  - Rescue Tools
  - Communications Equipment
  - Cardiac Monitors
  - Newly mandated fire & EMS equipment needs

# THANK YOU!

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*Dave Golding, Fire Chief*



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