



**PIERCE CITY FIRE PROTECTION
DISTRICT**

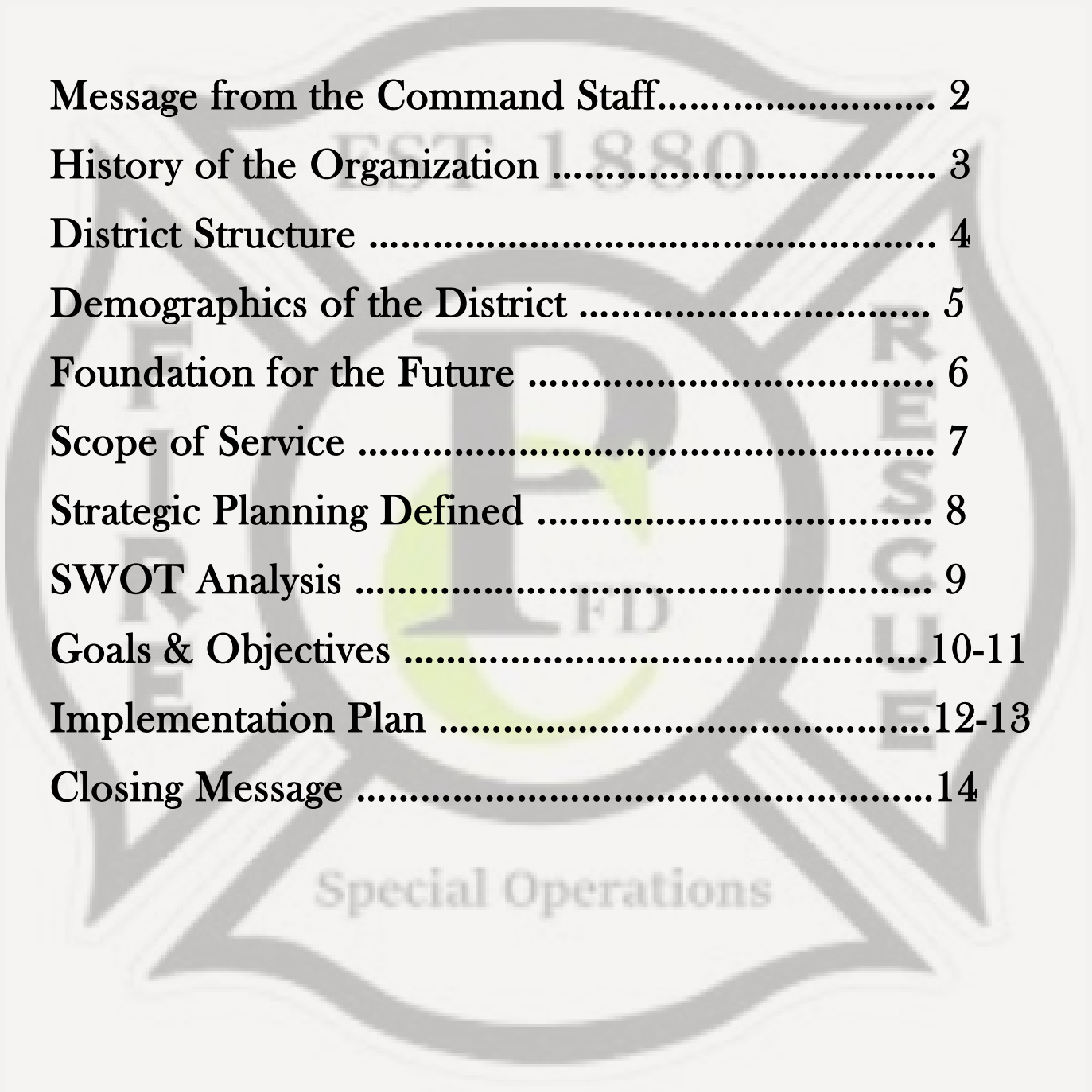
STRATEGIC PLAN

FISCAL YEAR 2023

THROUGH

FISCAL YEAR 2028

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A Message from the Command Staff

David Jones, Fire Chief

In my 27 years with the Pierce City Fire Department, I have witnessed a lot of change. We have gone from two separate departments in the same station, sharing the same personnel, to two separate departments operating out of two separate stations and divided personnel to the Fire District as we know it today operating out of 4 stations but as one department. In the early years, developing and implementing annual budgets was not a high priority simply because there was no money or surplus to be budgeted! Though we are doing better today than we did “back then,” we still do not operate with a surplus and therefore must be calculated with every dime we spend. If not for our greatest resource – our volunteers, we would not be in the distinguished position we are in today. As the fire service changes and costs continue to rise, staying current with our PPE, apparatus, and technologies will be a continuous challenge. I believe this 5-year strategic plan will provide a clear and shared vision for our future as we welcome whatever changes lie ahead for this great District.

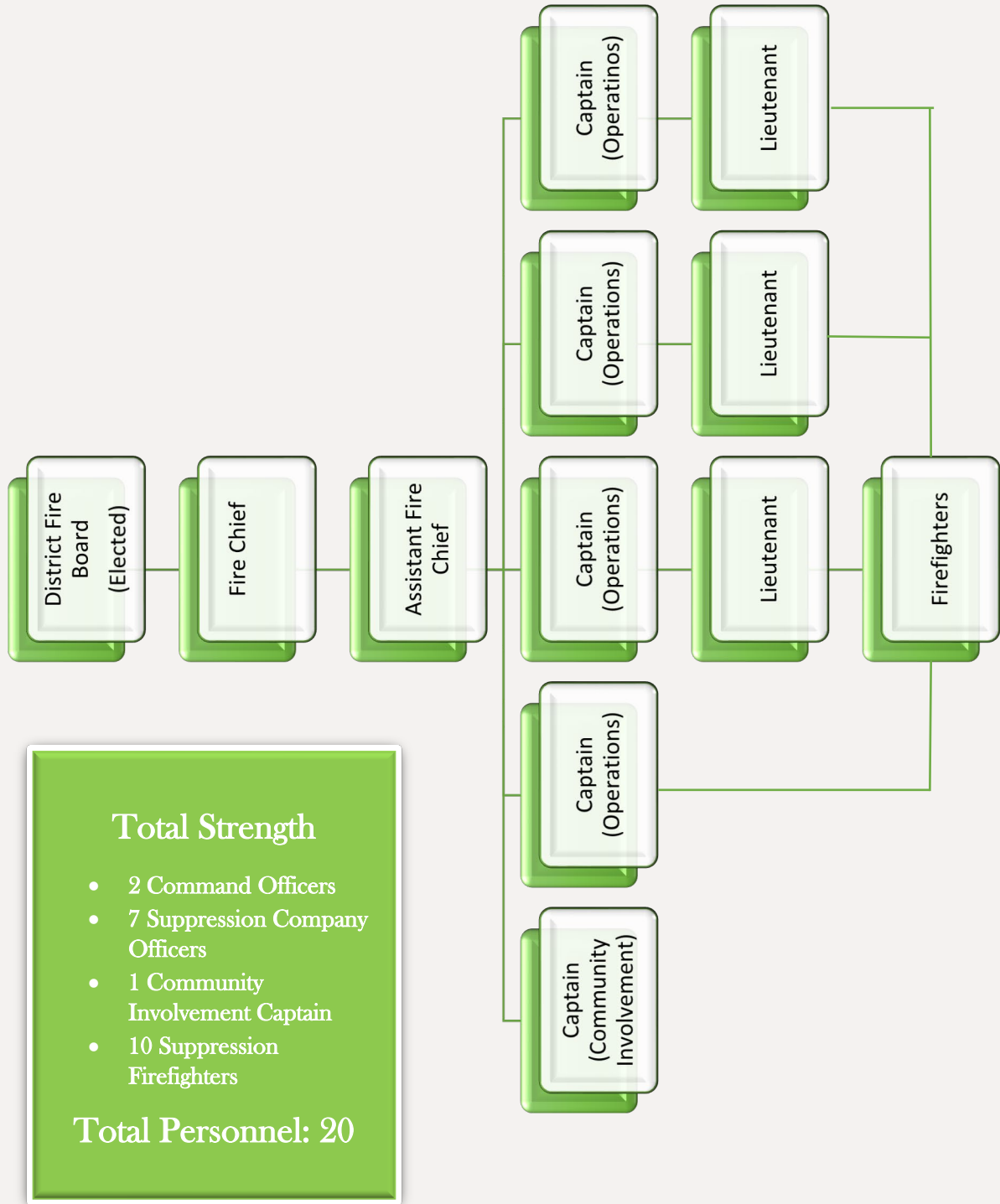
Daniel Alber, Assistant Chief

We are at an exciting crossroads for our area. As growth approaches us from the east and west, we have a unique opportunity to plan for it so that it does not catch us by surprise, but rather embrace and control it. I have witnessed firsthand what happens to a department when growth surpasses preparation. Unfortunately, we are not immune to problems. On one hand, we have some of the hardest working and most committed folks in the volunteer fire service right here in PC. On the other hand, just like most of the nation, we are experiencing a recruitment and retention problem for which there seems to be no solution. I have faith that this Strategic Plan lays out goal oriented and data driven approaches for our Fire District to follow. Adhering to the goals and strategies of this five-year plan will allow us to be successful in navigating the ever-changing waters of today’s fire service. I am proud to say that not only am I a member of the Pierce City Fire Protection District, but that my family and I are proud members of the Pierce City area, and we look forward to being a driving force for positive change. I pray that we will never forget why we are here: to serve our neighbors. As long as we stay true to our guiding values the future is bright and I am humbled and honored to serve beside the wonderful men and women of the Pierce City Fire Protection District.

History of Pierce City Fire Protection District

The history of the fire department in Pierce City can be traced back as early as 1880 when records show the first mention of a Fire Brigade. As the booming railroad town began to grow, municipal services were needed and in 1886 a building housing City Hall, the Fire Department, and Police Department was constructed at 107 Walnut St. This building is still standing today and is a registered State of Missouri Historical building. In 1891 the town of Monett had a large hotel fire and having no organized fire department at the time, requested resources from Pierce City. A special train was dispatched from Monett to PC which shuttled a hook and ladder cart, a hose cart, and the entire Pierce City FD to assist with the blaze. By 1902 the fire department was listed as having two hose carts, a hook and ladder cart, and 1000' of 2 ½ hose. In the same decade Pierce City FD, along with “departments from all over the word” participated in the 1908 “World Famous Joplin Fireman’s Tournament” where, in addition to the traditional muster games of the day, some of the first horse vs. motorized fire engine races took place. The winter of 1918 saw the Pierce City High School burn down as temperatures plummeted to -15 degrees, freezing all the fire hydrants in town, and transforming the fire department from responders into spectators. Years following, another tragedy struck. After having fire department funding significantly slashed, in 1953 the Frisco Depot was destroyed by fire. In 1964 the department purchased an International Fire Engine for \$14,000. One that it still owns and can be seen on parade. During the 1980’s the department split into a town fire department and a rural fire department operating out of one fire station in town and sharing personnel. In late 2001 the two departments split, and the Pierce City Rural Fire Association was formed. On May 4th, 2003, the course of Pierce City would be altered forever. After the near destruction of the entire town from a tornado, including the fire station, a new downtown fire station was built in partnership with FEMA. Today it houses four apparatus and a tornado shelter. Shortly after the tornado in 2003, the Rural Fire Association finished building its Station 1 located at Hwy 37 & Lawrence 2225. The years 2005 - 2011 saw many significant events for the Pierce City Rural Fire Association including the building of what today is Station 2 on Wallaby Rd, the purchase of now Engine 31 on an AFG grant, the building of Fire Station 3 in the town of Wentworth (the first since their department dissolved in the 1970’s), the purchase of Tanker 13 on another AFG grant, and the call for assistance for the Pierce City Fire Department from Joplin after the tornado on May 22nd, 2011. Then in 2013, after a taxpayer vote, the Town of Pierce City Fire Department and the Pierce City Rural Fire Association merged into what today we know as the Pierce City Fire Protection District. Since 2013 many firsts have been achieved including the purchase of some of the first thermal imaging cameras in Lawrence County, adding a boat and water rescue capabilities, and in 2017 purchasing the first Ladder Truck in Pierce City since the Ladder Wagon in the early 1900’s. The history of our Fire Department is long and runs deep with tradition & pride. As we move forward, we intend to honor the past and write new history that generations to come can look back on and smile upon with pride.

PCFPD Organizational Structure



Demographics of the PCFPD Area

The Pierce City Fire Protection District serves a diverse area of the Ozark Plateau in SW Missouri. It is one unified Fire Protection District governed by an elected Fire District Board comprised of 7 voting members. One Fire Chief & one Assistant Chief oversee approximately 18 front line personnel. The District serves approximately 90 square miles spanning 3 different counties. These counties include Lawrence County (largest percentage of district), Newton County, and Barry County. Volunteer emergency personnel respond out of 4 stations. The locations include a station in the town of Pierce City, another in the town of Wentworth, a third station just outside of the Pierce City town limits, and the fourth station just off Hwy 60 near the Ozark Stave wood mill.

The Fire District serves an estimated 3,400 residents (1,250 living in Pierce City town limits) within the district boundaries and another 12,500 residents as their first due automatic aid department. The estimated assessed property value that the PCFPD protects is around \$56,371,700 using 2023 assessed property values per Lawrence, Newton, and Barry Counties Assessor records. The average median household income is \$44,060 in the Fire District's primary service area, with a poverty rate of 17% according to the 2020 census.

A vast majority of the District's area consists of single family dwellings in a rural/farm setting without a continuous water supply system. Within the town limits, which has a hydrant system, buildings are mainly single family one and two-story houses. The town of Pierce City has a small amount of 2 story mixed use structures, light industry, a grocery store, and a couple of small strip mall type buildings. There are 4 multi dwelling complexes in town, all being single story except for one that is two story. Widespan truss type construction is limited to two structures. The Pierce City School District also operates an elementary school and an adjoined high school/middle school. There are also a couple of large churches within the town limits.

PCFPD's response area, both primary and mutual aid, consists of a unique mix including the Historic Jolly Mill Park, which attracts thousands of visitors annually, and the Monett Regional Airport. Pierce City serves the City of Monett as an automatic aid partner on all residential, commercial, and industrial structure fires. All typical big box construction, including Lowes and Walmart, can be found in Monett. Many large industrial facilities and multifamily complexes are also a part of PCFPD's responsibility as an automatic aid partner to Monett. Much of downtown Monett consists of first floor commercial/retail with second story residential type construction also.

Our Foundation for the Future

Our Mission

It is the mission of the Pierce City Fire Protection District (PCFPD) to protect lives, property, and the environment by providing the highest level of fire protection, emergency medical services, and public education to the visitors and residents of Pierce City.

Our Core Values

1. Safety - Prioritize the safety of our firefighters, community members, & property.
2. Professionalism - Maintain high standards of training, ethics, and conduct.
3. Service - Provide exceptional service to the community, being responsive & compassionate.
4. Teamwork - Foster a culture of collaboration, respect, and effective communication.
5. Continuous Improvement - Strive for ongoing learning, innovation, and the adoption of best practices.

Our Vision

PCFPD members will strive to be role models in the community and in our profession. We will be accountable to those we serve and each other. We will continue to work towards being a leading fire district that is known for its exceptional service, professionalism, dedicated leadership, and commitment to the safety and wellbeing of the community we serve.

Our Motto

Be Safe. Be Professional. Train Hard.

Scope of Service

Pierce City Fire District is an All-Hazards, aggressive, high-energy, well-trained fire department operating with seven programs under one umbrella.

| PROGRAM | DETAILS |
|--|--|
| Fire Suppression | Protecting the community from the destruction of uncontrolled fire. Firefighters are well-trained and well-equipped to search for and remove victims, strategically & aggressively attack, and rapidly control fires to hold these events to the areas of origin and minimize loss of life and property. |
| Special Operations | Prevent and resolve hazardous materials from escaping and/or causing larger issues to residents & businesses. Preventing loss of life during water emergencies that require specialized rescue training and equipment. |
| Emergency Medical Services | Respond to medical emergencies and render basic life support treatment and care in a life-threatening emergency. Support our ALS ambulance providers when extra manpower is needed. |
| Community Involvement & Education | Empower our community with the tools and knowledge to prevent and respond when faced with fires or EMS related emergencies. Participation in community and city-sponsored events and charity programs. Outreach through social media channels. |
| Domestic Threat Planning, Response, and Communication | Prepare and respond to situations of natural disasters. Inform the community of emergency situations using various methods of communication. Examples: terrorism, active threat, flooding, and tornados. |
| Fire Prevention & Building Inspection | Reduce the frequency, probability and severity of fire resulting in loss of life and property. Conduct frequent quality inspections in all commercial buildings and build pre-plans that assist us in fire suppression situations and building owners in prevention measures. |
| Firefighter Education, Certification, and Leadership Development | Professional training focusing on continued education in Fire, EMS and Rescue with emphasis on maintaining the highest quality emergency services. Ongoing leadership growth and development programs. |

STRATEGIC PLAN DEFINED

Strategic planning is an organization's process of defining its strategy, or direction, and making decisions on how to set priorities to pursue this strategy. It may also extend to control mechanisms for guiding the implementation of the strategy. Strategic planning became prominent during the 1960s and remains an important aspect of strategic management. It is executed by strategic planners who involve many parties and research sources in their analysis of the organization and its relationship to the environment. Strategic planning is a process that involves inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes. It may be formal or informal and is typically frequent, with feedback loops throughout the process. Some elements of the process may be continuous, and others may be executed as discrete projects with a definitive start and end during a period. Strategic planning provides inputs for strategic thinking, which guides the actual strategy formation. Typical strategic planning efforts include the evaluation of the organization's mission and strategic issues to strengthen current practices and determine the need for new programming. The result is the organization's strategy, including a diagnosis of the environment and competitive situation, a guiding policy on what the organization intends to accomplish, and key initiatives or action plans for achieving the guiding policy.



Summary of Internal SWOT Analysis

Below are areas identified in the 4 categories by the membership during the internal SWOT survey of PCFPD personnel and Fire Board members.

Strengths

- Supportive Fire Board
- Experience of Leadership
- Good Equipment
- Strong Customer Service
- The district is debt free
- The members that are involved are extremely dedicated.

Weaknesses

- Lack of volunteer participation
- No clear standards/organization
- Community Involvement
- Funding/Budget
- Communication (radios/dispatch)
- No shared vision for the future
- Lack of accountability

Opportunities

- Securing Funding Through Grants & Tax Levies
- More Training
- Community Involvement
- Fostering and Improving Mutual Aid Agreements
- Attract Young Members Through Hiring/Moving to Paid Staffing
- Improve Processes (administrative, tracking, and training)
- Merging/Annexing/Absorption of other Fire District areas

Threats

- Lack of Participation/Recruitment of dedicated personnel
- Inflation continues increasing costs of equipment/apparatus while budget is stagnant
- Lack of growth in the Pierce City area will lead to stagnant funding
- Personnel nearing retirement will not be able to be replaced by equally dedicated younger members

Goals & Objectives

A. Goal 1: Strengthen Volunteer Recruitment & Retention

- a. *Objective 1: Develop a comprehensive recruitment plan targeting community members, local businesses, and schools to increase volunteer numbers.*
- b. *Objective 2: Implement a retention program that recognizes & rewards volunteer efforts, provides ongoing training & development, and promotes a sense of belonging.*
- c. *Objective 3: Develop and Implement an Explorer Program*

B. Goal 2: Enhance Emergency Response Capabilities

- a. *Objective 1: Increase training opportunities for volunteers, focusing on mastery of basic firefighting techniques, training on advanced firefighting skills, medical response, and special operations.*
- b. *Objective 2: Improve equipment and technology resources to ensure efficient response times & effective incident management.*
- c. *Objective 3: Strengthen mutual aid agreements & partnerships with neighboring districts, dispatch centers, and EMS providers for enhanced emergency response capabilities.*

C. Goal 3: Upgrade Equipment & Facilities

- a. *Objective 1: Conduct a comprehensive assessment of existing equipment & facilities to identify outdated or inadequate resources.*
- b. *Objective 2: Develop a long-term equipment replacement plan to ensure that apparatus, PPE, and medical equipment are up to date and meet industry standards.*
- c. *Objective 3: Explore grant opportunities and partnerships with local businesses and organizations to secure funding for equipment upgrades and facility improvements.*

Goals & Objectives

D. Goal 4: Enhance Community Engagement & Education

- a. *Objective 1: Develop Community Outreach Programs to educate residents on fire safety, disaster preparedness, and the importance of volunteerism.*
- b. *Objective 2: Establish partnerships with schools, community organizations, and businesses to deliver educational programs including Community CPR, Close The Door, Safe Sitter, and Smoke Detector installation campaigns.*

E. Goal 5: Strengthen Organizational Sustainability

- a. *Objective 1: Enhance administrative processes and systems, including record keeping, volunteer scheduling, and communication channels among members.*
- b. *Objective 2: Seek opportunities for professional development and collaboration through participation in regional and national fire service associations.*

F. Goal 6: Shift from Volunteer to Paid On Call/Part Time Staffing

- a. *Objective 1: Develop & track key metrics and established benchmarks regarding call volume and response numbers to measure volunteer model success.*
- b. *Objective 2: Apply for SAFER grants to fund the transition to a paid-on call model/part time staffing model once key metrics have been met.*
- c. *Objective 3: Establish an agreed upon staffing procedure and personnel management system for implementation once a grant has been secured.*

Implementation Plan

A. Strengthen Volunteer Recruitment & Retention

- a. Train publicly more often so that we are seen by the taxpayers.*
- b. In partnership with the Pierce City Firefighters Association (PCFFA), bring back department gatherings such as the Appreciation Banquet, Summer Cookout's, Family Fun Day's, etc...*
- c. Commit to a higher level of community involvement and public interaction through participation in Howdy Neighbor Days, FFA Tractor Pull, Food Truck Fridays, department sponsored events, etc...*
- d. Implement Explorer Program for school year 2023-2024; Begin their training immediately to generate interest amongst their peers and possible adult family members.*
- e. Design and launch PCFPD website & increase our online presence in an organized & targeted manner.*

B. Enhance Emergency Response Capabilities

- a. Plan high quality training taught by experienced instructors on an annual basis so that scheduling will not be an issue for members to attend.*
- b. Bring state sponsored training to the area by offering to host.*
- c. Train on a regular basis with all partners so that we can function as "one department."*
- d. Host/Instruct a FF I&II class in house for our members and area members.*
- e. If remodeling of Station 1 happens, begin offering a Residency Program.*

C. Upgrade Equipment & Facilities

- a. Develop an all-encompassing Apparatus Replacement Plan (ARP) based on NFPA recommendations and local contributing factors.*
- b. Apply for AFG grant in 2024 grant cycle for Pumper/Tanker replacement; follow all other ARP recommendations.*
- c. Finish concrete work at Station 1.*
- d. Explore the cost and construction options to expand Station 1 to make it livable. Includes kitchen area, dining/dayroom area, fitness room, dorms, expansion of conference/training room, full bathrooms, and 1-2 offices.*
- e. Design a training area behind/next to Station 1.*

Implementation Plan

D. Enhance Community Engagement & Education

- a. In partnership with the PCFFA, apply for grants and community donations from companies such as Casey's & Wal-Mart to fund community-based programs.*
- b. Institute a Community Risk Reduction program*
- c. Partner with the city emergency manager and put on natural disaster PSA's prior to "tornado season."*
- d. Host community events i.e. cookouts, water war days, etc...*

E. Strengthen Organizational Sustainability

- a. Clean up organizational structure by assigning officers specific tasks or topics to oversee to reduce confusion amongst members and duplication of efforts.*
- b. Institute programs such as Fire Recovery USA to recoup response costs when specific services are provided to non-residents of Pierce City FPD service area.*
- c. Begin instituting cancer prevention practices in our procedures, apparatus, and facilities.*
- d. Develop and institute mental health programs for members such as Peer Support teams and/or CISD teams. Supporting our members will contribute to organizational sustainability. When members feel supported, they will contribute more.*

F. Shift from Volunteer to Paid on Call/Part Time Staffing

- a. Institute a data tracking system so that we can identify not only call volume, but when the highest percentage of calls are dispatched.*
- b. Track member response so we can identify how many members are responding to unique call identifiers and how many calls are going unanswered by members.*
- c. Decide which model, POC or Part Time, will serve the residents and visitors of PCFPD the best and be most efficient with staffing procedures.*
- d. Apply for SAFER grant so we can begin the transition process.*
- e. Explore a tax levy once we have won a SAFER grant so that we can sustain the agreed upon staffing model past the expiration of grant funds.*

Closing Message

It is with great pride and hope that this 5 Year Strategic Plan is presented. All the ideas and proposals included have come from a comprehensive analysis internally from member participation in the SWOT survey and externally with feedback from community members and input from our neighboring partners. We believe this plan will drive Pierce City Fire Protection District's overall vision and goals in a direction that all members, both community and department, can buy into and share. It is our sincere hope that this plan is only the start of what can and will be achieved by the leadership, membership, and fire board for years to come and will serve as a framework for future leaders to build from. When we are all done and gone, this organization will live on, and that sole reason is why this plan was put together. We would like to thank all the people that contributed to this and recognize all the sources that we received our data from. Thank you all!

Best Regards,

Daniel Alber
Assistant Chief
Pierce City Fire Protection District

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