

WELCOME TO



AMHERST, *NEW HAMPSHIRE*

September 2013

# AMHERST FIRE DEPARTMENT 2015-19 STRATEGIC PLAN

# INTRODUCTION

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- ✘ Thank you to the Board of Selectmen for requesting this information, providing guidance and facilitating the process.
- ✘ As the Fire Chief it is my duty to possess the knowledge to run a paid-on-call department.
- ✘ It is also my responsibility to evaluate the departments status in comparison to nationally recognized standards and similar size communities.

# DEFINITIONS

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- ✘ *Volunteer*
  - + No compensation
- ✘ *Paid-On-Call Volunteer*
  - + Only paid when they respond to emergency calls
- ✘ *Part-Time (PTE)*
  - + Less than 30 hrs per week, compensated for training and meetings
- ✘ *Full-Time (FTE)*
  - + Greater than 30 hours per week, compensated for training/meetings
- ✘ *24/7 Immediate Response*
  - + Sufficient part-time, full-time or combination of to staff the fire station around the clock

# TOPICS

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- ✖ Historical perspective
- ✖ Environmental scan
- ✖ SWOT analysis
- ✖ Strategic goals
- ✖ Strategic initiatives
- ✖ Vision dashboard
- ✖ Annual operating plans & budgets

# HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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- ✖ AFD history goes back to 1808
- ✖ Over 200 years of volunteer fire protection
- ✖ 1980's first paid employee for fire inspections
- ✖ 1988 new central fire station constructed
- ✖ 2003 first full-time Fire Chief
- ✖ 2005 full-time Deputy Chief of Prevention

# HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE (CONT.)

## ✕ Current Model

- + Primarily paid-on-call volunteers
    - ✕ Consisting of 6 officers and 30 firefighters
  - + Two full-time positions
    - ✕ Fire Chief / Emergency Management Director
      - ★ Responsible for FD operations and overall emergency management for the town
    - ✕ Deputy Fire Chief – Primary function is fire prevention
  - + One permanent part-time position - 20 hours
    - ✕ Administrative Lieutenant - the master of all things!
- \*\*\*We are not staffed 24/7\*\*\***

# HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE (CONT.)

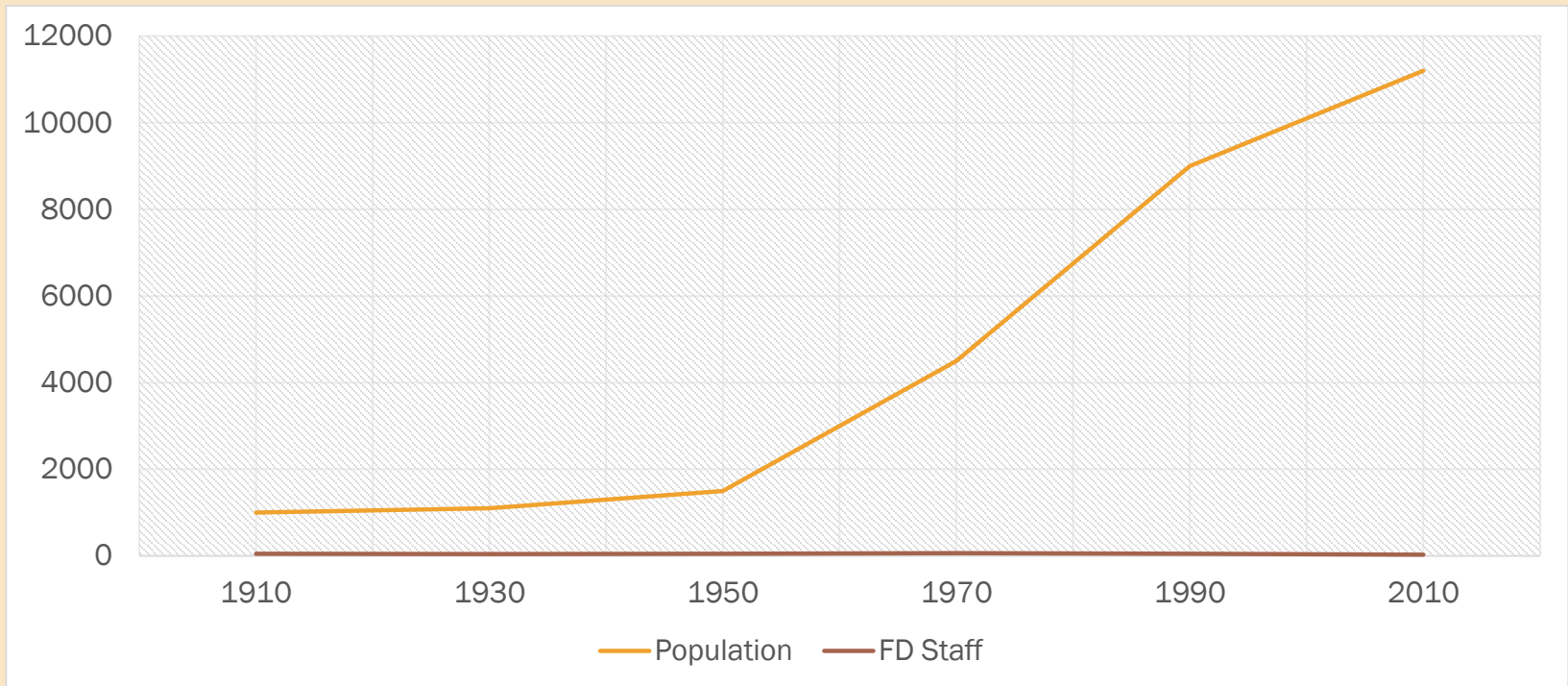
## ✕ Compensation

- + Paid-on-call personnel are only compensated when they respond to an emergency
- + Training, meetings, community events, fire prevention education are volunteered hours
- + Hourly Rate:
  - ✕ \$11.75 for firefighters
  - ✕ \$12.58 for Officers and Drivers
- + Officer on-call \$50 per 24 hour period
- + Annual stipends ranging from \$127 to \$462
- + Average annual pay \$1500    Grand total \$56,800

# HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE (CONT.)

- ✘ Town population growth compared to Fire Department Staffing.

Figure 1 – Population / FD Staffing

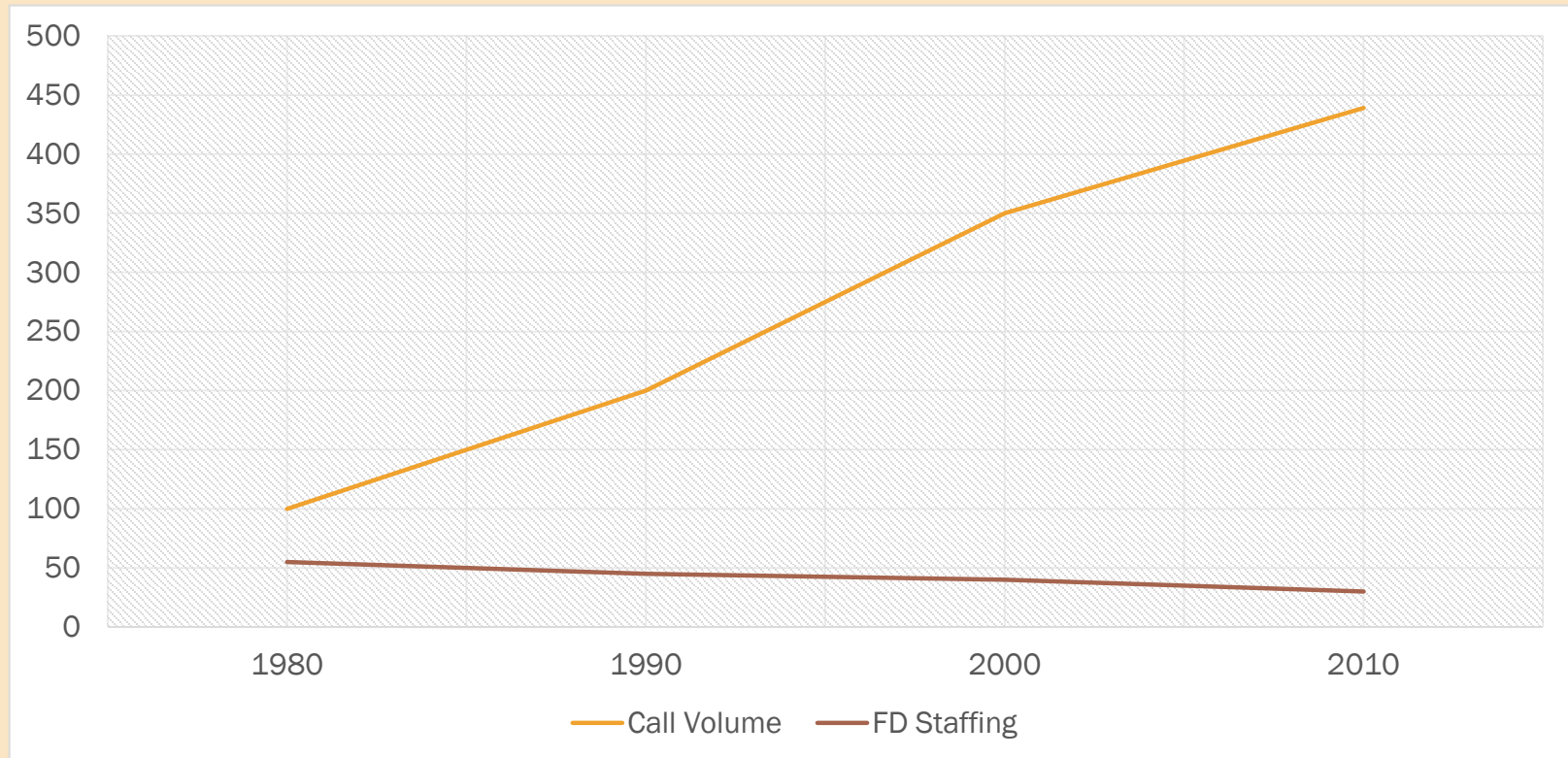




# HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE (CONT.)

## ✕ FD Staffing and Call Volume

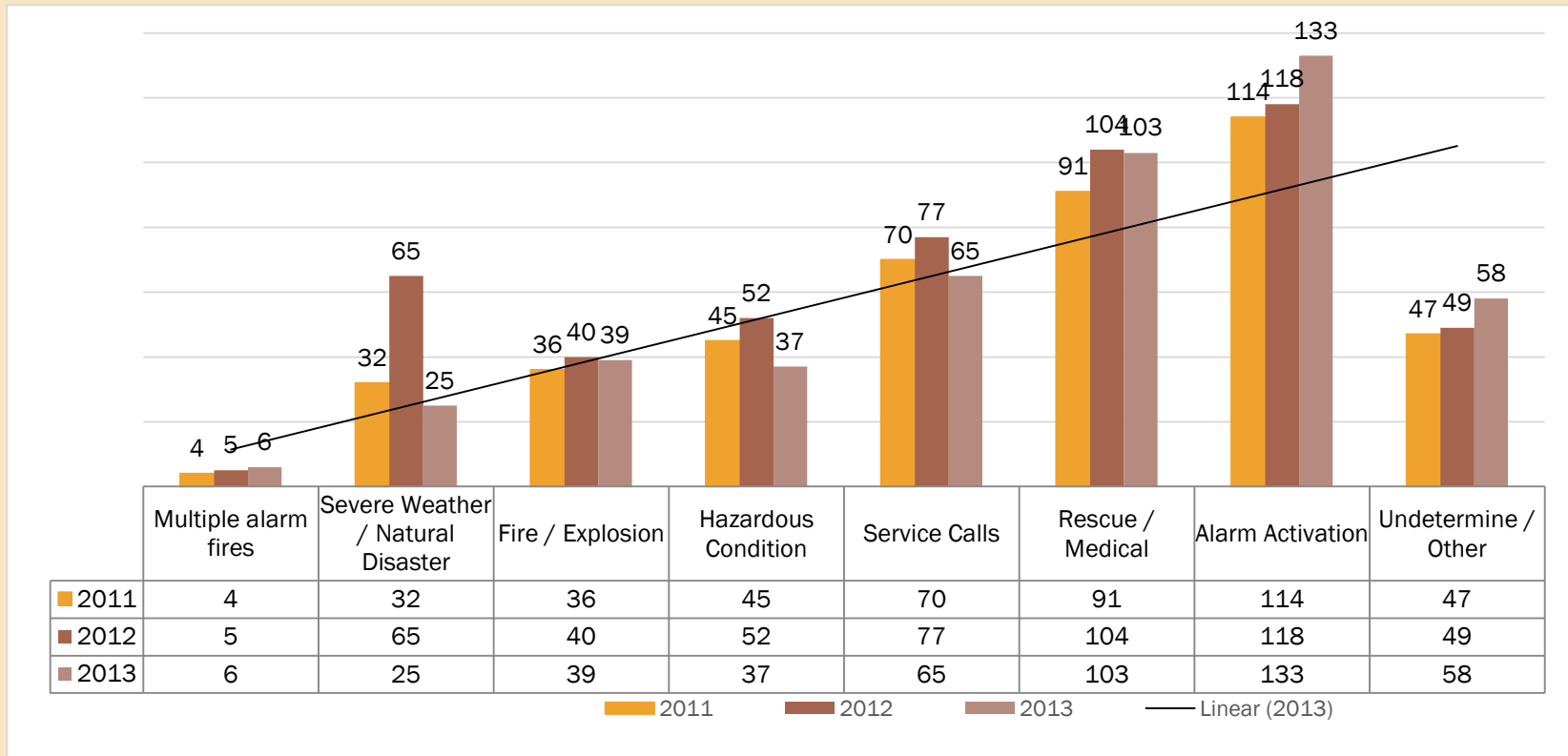
Figure 2 – FD Staffing / Call Volume



# HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE (CONT.)

## ✖ Emergency Call Types and Frequency

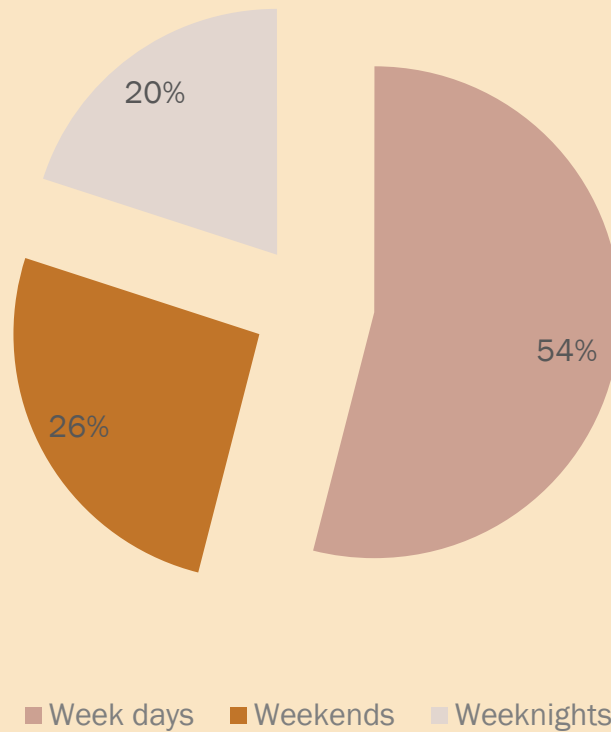
Figure 3 – Emergency Call Types



# HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE (CONT.)

## ✕ Incidents By Time Of Day.

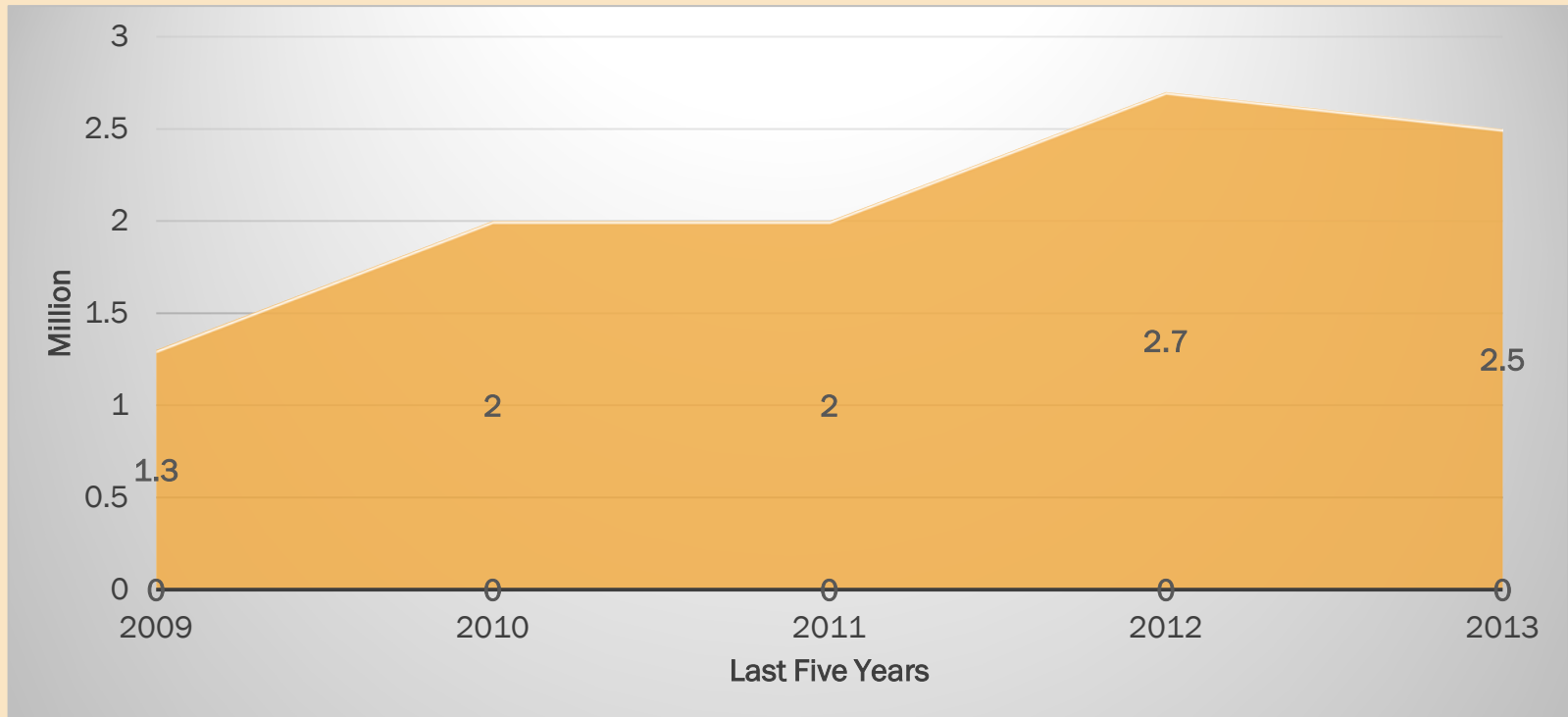
Figure 4 – Incidents By Time of Day



# HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE (CONT.)

## ✕ Property Loss Due to Fire

Figure 5 – Estimated Property Loss Due to Fire



# ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

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- ✗ To examine the fire service environment we looked at several factors:
  - + Similar sized communities based on population and square miles
  - + Communities that only provide week day staff
  - + Similar sized communities budget comparison
  - + Taxable property comparison
  - + Nationally recognized standards

# ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN (CONT.)

**Figure 6 - Similar Size Communities Comparison of Full Time FD Employees**

Fire Department	<i>Demographic Information</i>			<i>Personnel Analysis</i>
	Population	Land Sq Miles	ISO Rating	FTE
Seabrook	8,363	9	5	22
Tilton-Northfield	8,688	40	5	14
Franklin	8,608	27.7	4	16
Berlin	10,170	61.5	5	20
Raymond	10,825	28.8	4	2
Hanover	10,894	49.1	4	23
<b>Amherst</b>	<b>11,928</b>	<b>33.9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>
Somersworth	11,989	9.8	4	17
Pelham	12,454	26.3	4	19
Windham	12,823	26.7	6	22
Claremont	12,837	43.1	4	18
Hooksett	13,483	36.2	4	32
Milford	13,606	35.4	4	4
Lebanon	13,638	40.3	4	29
<b>Average</b>	<b>11,414</b>	<b>33.3</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>18.3</b>

# ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN (CONT.)

- ✘ Three remaining towns in NH with a population over 10,000 that do not provide 24/7 immediate coverage.

Figure 7 – Week day Coverage Only

Towns over 10,000 Population  
without immediate coverage

	Population	Land	ISO	Empl	Budget
Amherst	11,928	33.9	4	2.5	\$504,807
Milford	13,606	35.4	4	4	\$545,161
Raymond	10,825	28.8	4	2	\$480,525
					<b>Ave \$510,164</b>

# ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN (CONT.)

## *Fiscal Analysis*

Fire Department	FY2010	Cost Per	Cost Per	Cost Per
	Budget	Resident	Call	Full time Employee
Hanover	\$3,387,185	\$301	\$2,034	\$147,269
Lebanon	\$3,195,270	\$230	\$1,007	\$110,182
Seabrook	\$2,981,978	\$357	\$814	\$135,544
Windham	\$2,650,915	\$207	\$1,866	\$120,496
Hooksett	\$2,846,099	\$211	\$1,355	\$88,941
Berlin	\$2,018,117	\$198	\$4,426	\$100,906
Claremont	\$1,750,500	\$136	\$2,059	\$97,250
Somersworth	\$1,660,382	\$138	\$1,436	\$97,670
Franklin	\$1,646,151	\$191	\$1,089	\$102,884
Tilton-Northfield	\$1,616,914	\$186	\$1,108	\$115,494
Pelham	\$1,601,712	\$129	\$1,228	\$84,301
Milford	\$545,161	\$40	\$944	Not Applicable
Amherst	\$504,807	\$42	\$987	Not Applicable
Raymond	\$480,525	\$44	\$645	Not Applicable

**Average                      \$2,023,771                      \$182                      \$1,497                      \$100,835.25**



# ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN (CONT.)



Figure 9 – Taxable Property Comparison

Town	2011 Gross Taxable Property	FD Budget	% of taxable property
Seabrook	\$ 3,410,399,100	\$2,981,978	.0874
Windham	\$ 2,259,434,100	\$2,650,915	.1173
Hanover	\$ 1,900,268,200	\$3,387,185	.1782
<b>Amherst</b>	<b>\$ 1,855,640,200</b>	<b>\$504,807</b>	<b>.0272</b>
Lebanon	\$ 1,752,403,911	\$3,195,270	.1823
Hooksett	\$ 1,651,798,834	\$2,846,099	.1723
Milford	\$ 1,584,799,583	\$545,161	.0343
Pelham	\$ 1,557,821,853	\$1,601,712	.1028
Raymond	\$ 1,002,557,905	\$480,252	.0479
Tilton-Northfield	\$ 907,544,300	\$1,616,914	.1781
Somersworth	\$ 888,371,007	\$1,660,914	.1869
Claremont	\$ 735,510,978	\$1,750,500	.2379
Franklin	\$ 628,840,275	\$1,646,151	.2617
Berlin	\$ 475,964,178	\$2,018,177	.4240
<b>Average</b>	<b>\$ 1,442,747,248</b>	<b>\$2,013,498</b>	<b>.1598</b>

Using the average % of taxable property to calculate the Amherst FD Budget

Amherst	\$ 1,855,640,200	.1598	<b>\$2,965,313</b>
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# ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN (CONT.)

## ✗ Further examination

- + Of the 13 departments 11 staff 24/7
- + The average staffing is 4 around the clock
- + All contain paid-on-call members that are not represented in figure 6
- + All members compensated for training and meetings
- + 67% of these departments and 67% of fire departments in the state provide primary ambulance service
- + Amherst Budget is  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the average with property values 400 million above the average

# ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN (CONT.)

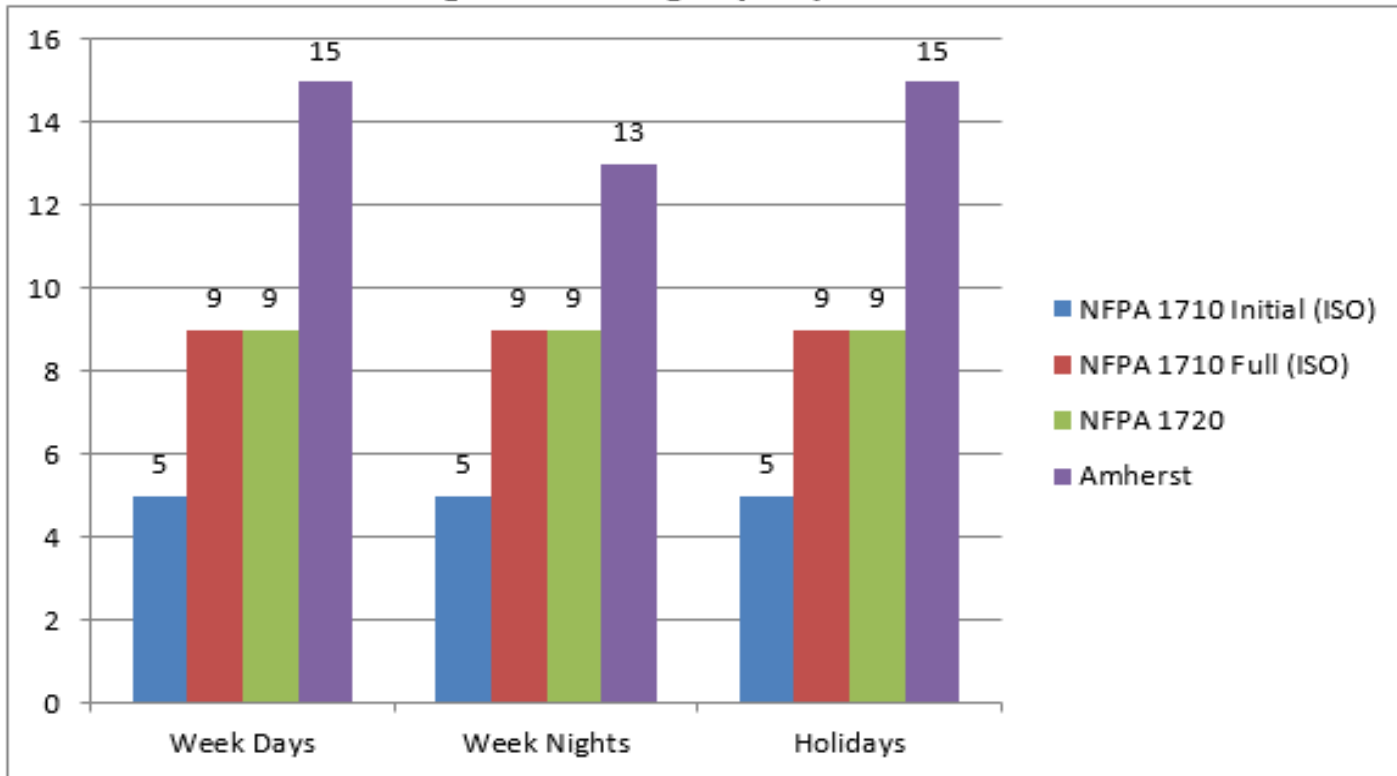
## ✗ Response Time Analysis

- + NFPA 1710 – Full-Time response time standard
  - ✗ 5 minutes from time of alarm to arrival of fire apparatus 90% of the time
  - ✗ 9 minutes from time of alarm to full response of 15 personnel 90% of the time
- + NFPA 1720 – Volunteer response time standard
  - ✗ Population over 1000 9-minute to full response of 15 personnel 90% of time
- + ISO Sets fire protection rating for communities which is used to calculate insurance premiums
  - ✗ ISO now uses 1710 and 1720

# ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN (CONT.)

## ✘ Amherst Emergency Response Times.

Figure 10 – Emergency Response Times



# ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN (CONT.)

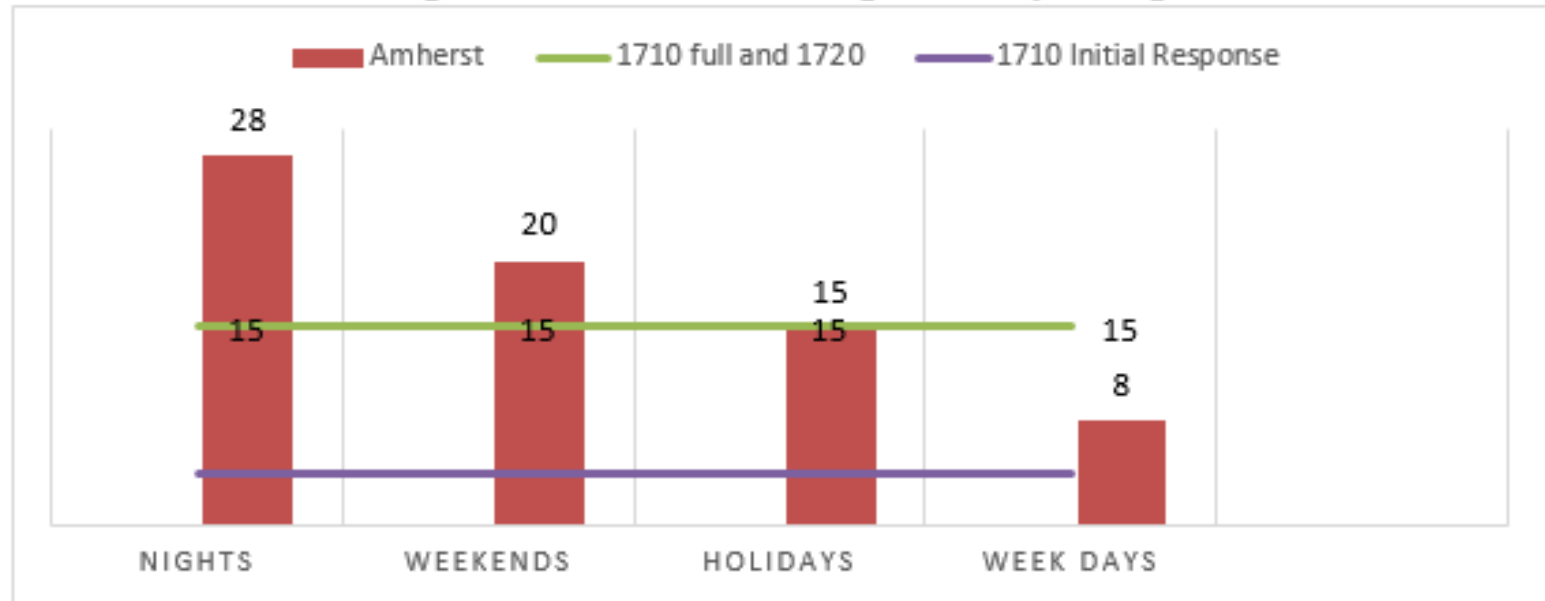
## ✗ Staffing Levels

- + NFPA 1710 – Full-Time response time standard
  - ✗ 1<sup>st</sup> fire apparatus 5 minutes with four personnel
  - ✗ Full Response 15 personnel
- + NFPA 1720 – Volunteer response time standard
  - ✗ Full response of 15 personnel 90% of time
- + ISO Sets fire protection rating for communities which is used to calculate insurance premiums
  - ✗ ISO now uses 1710 and 1720
- + OSHA – 1910.134 Standard for Two-in-Two-Out

# ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN (CONT.)

## ✗ Amherst Average Staffing

Figure 11 – Number of Firefighters Responding



# ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN (CONT.)

## ✘ Firefighter Competency Levels.

- + Firefighter level one certification 240 hours
- + Firefighter level two certification 140 hours
- + 15-20% (6-8) probationary, not certified level one and require direct supervision
- + 25% not level two

## ✘ Turn-over Rates

- + 23 new members in last three years 25% increase
- + 12 resignations (9 for job relocation 3 unable to commit time)
- + 6 Applications currently being processed

## ✘ Experience Levels

- + Average of 7.5 years of experience primarily due to three 5 officers with 20+
- + Firefighters average is less than five years

# ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN (CONT.)

- ✗ Why are response times, staffing levels and experience levels important?
  - + Today's homes are furnished with synthetic materials that burn faster, hotter and produce an abundance of toxic smoke and gasses.

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_detailpage&v=aDNPhq5ggoE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=aDNPhq5ggoE)



# ENVISION THE FUTURE

- ✖ 2012 Amherst Fire Created its first mission, and values statement. Prior to that a slogan had been used that we believe originated in the 1800's "*Be Swift to Do Good*"

*Amherst Fire Department is a Community based all hazard emergency services organization comprised of loyal members dedicated to the health and well-being of its citizens by providing high quality emergency response, fire prevention education, life safety code enforcement and community support services.*

*We accomplish this through a balance of mutual aid between neighboring departments, accountability to the local community and support from Amherst Fire Department Association.*

*community and support from Amherst Fire Department Association*

*through mutual aid between neighboring departments, accountability to the local*

# ENVISION THE FUTURE (CONT.)

## ✕ Core Values

**A** - *Accountability*

**M** - *Managed Risk*

**H** - *Honorable Service*

**E** - *Effective and Efficient Response*

**R** - *Respect of Community*

**S** - *Strive for Excellence*

**T** - *Teamwork*

**S** - *Spirit*

**P** - *Pride*

**I** - *Integrity*

**R** - *Responsibility*

**I** - *Innovation*

**T** - *Tradition*

# STRENGTHS

- ✘ Effectively fight fires
- ✘ Respected by the community
- ✘ Treat citizens with respect and compassion
- ✘ Extremely low cost
- ✘ Adapt and overcome difficult situation
- ✘ Well rounded background
- ✘ Excellent relationships with neighboring departments

# WEAKNESSES

- ✘ Slow response times
- ✘ Staffing levels below national standards
- ✘ High frequency of fires and high fire losses
- ✘ High turn-over rate
- ✘ Incomplete second floor, inability to staff during storms or major disasters

# OPPORTUNITIES

- ✘ Grants for staffing, second floor and apparatus
- ✘ Fundraising to complete second floor
- ✘ Engaged in CIP process and strategic planning process
- ✘ Opportunity to evaluate and adjust our model

# THREATS

- ✘ Losing public trust respect by failing to meet expectations
- ✘ Failing to provide an adequate response to a major event
- ✘ Injury or loss of a civilian or a firefighter due to substandard response time, staffing or equipment failure.

# STRATEGIC GOAL

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*“Increase the level of fire protection to the Town of Amherst to meet the needs of the community, stabilize or lower insurance rates, protect the tax base and reduce property loss from fire.”*

# STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

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- ✘ Change the fire protection model.
  - + Increase staffing levels weekdays, weekends and holidays
  - + Reduce response times
  - + Increase the level of competency
- ✘ Invest in Protecting the Community
  - + Preserve the paid-on-call volunteer force
    - ✘ Pay Firefighters to attend training
  - + Invest in capital improvements
    - ✘ Second floor completion
    - ✘ Scheduled replacement of fire apparatus

# FIRE PROTECTION OPTIONS

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## ✕ Option One

- + Continue with current model, increase compensation and provide wages for training, meetings and all on-call shifts
  - ✕ Pro's – prolongs the current model and minimizes financial impact to taxpayers
  - ✕ Con's – Accepts the previously identified risks and liabilities

Proposed in 2013-2014 budget

# FIRE PROTECTION OPTIONS (CONT.)

## ✕ Option Two

- + Systematically add part-time staff phased in over five years to address each of the objectives
  - ✕ Pro's – addresses the immediate deficiency in incremental steps. Avoids cost of FTE benefits and minimizes cost
  - ✕ Con's – juggling 30 part-time employees in addition to 40 paid-on-call, high turn over, loss of continuity and consistency, significant investment in protective clothing



# FIRE PROTECTION OPTIONS (CONT.)

## ✘ Option Three- *Recommended Option*

- + Systematically add full-time staff phased in over five years to address each of the objectives
  - ✘ Pro's – No juggling of PTE, consistency and continuity in work force, minimal turn-over, in-house development of future leaders, work force committed to the well-being of Amherst
  - ✘ Con's – Considerable cost in employee benefits

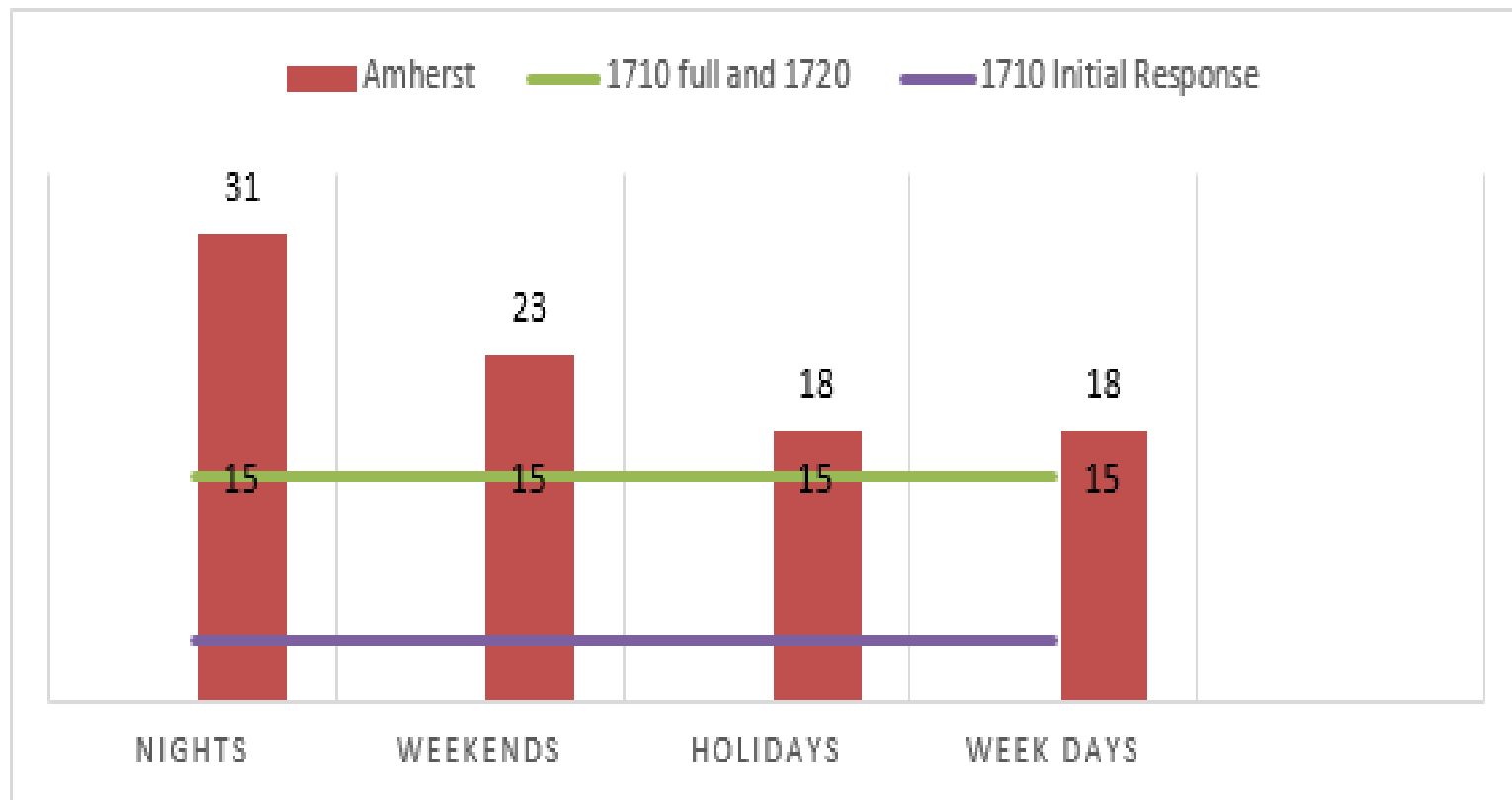
# FIRE PROTECTION OPTIONS (CONT.)

## × Option Four

- + Part-time, Full-time Hybrid phased in over five years
  - × Pro's – Delays financial impact of full-time benefits
  - × Con's – Juggling part-time staff, turn-over, continuity, consistency, significant cost in protective clothing, equally as expensive as full-time option

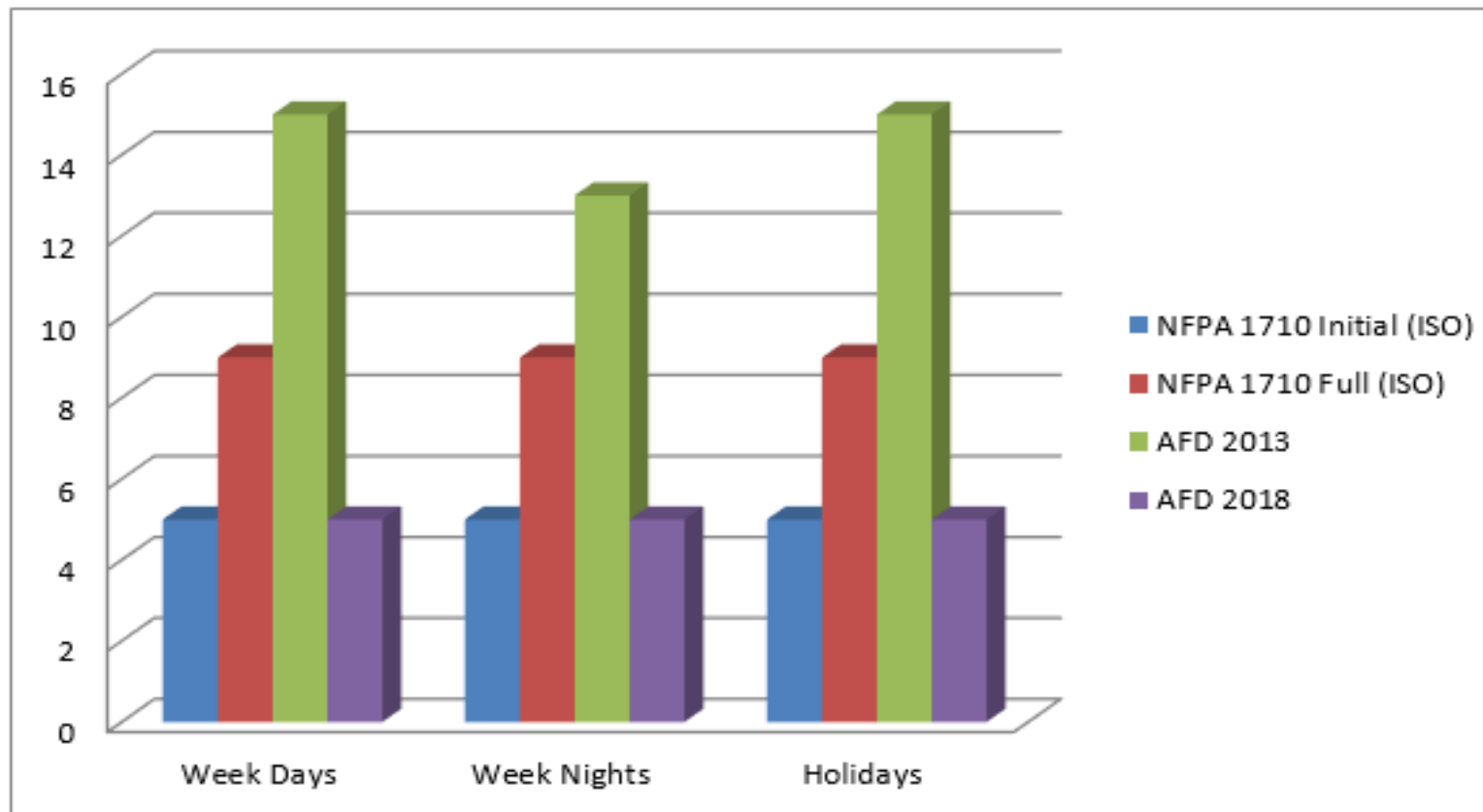
# VISION DASHBOARD

Figure 13 – Number of Firefighters Responding



# VISION DASHBOARD (CONT.)

Figure 14 – Vision Dashboard Emergency Response Times



# ANNUAL OPERATING PLANS & BUDGETS

- ✖ Option 1 – continue with current model and increase compensation.

Amherst Fire Dept.	Proposed	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Operating Budget		<i>Increase Call Pay</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Fire Chief	\$ 85,565.00					
Deputy Fire Chief	\$ 68,657.00					
Part-Time Lieut.	\$ 18,366.00					
Part-Time Salaries	\$ 18,366.00					
Call Pay	\$ 58,304.00	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 75,000.00			
Operational Costs	\$ 255,850.00					
Budget Adjustments	\$ 16,998.00					
One-Time Gear Expenses	-					
Pre-Employment	\$ 2,200.00					
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 524,306.00</b>	<b>\$ 599,306.00</b>	<b>\$ 674,306.00</b>			

# ANNUAL OPERATING PLANS & BUDGETS

## ✖ Option 2 – Part-time staffing.

Amherst Fire Dept.	Proposed	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Operating Budget		<i>Increase Call Pay</i>	<i>Add 10 PTE</i>	<i>Add 12 PTE</i>	<i>Add 4 PTE</i>	<i>N/A</i>
		<i>Add 3 PTE</i>	<i>Weekend</i>	<i>Week Night</i>	<i>Fill the Gap</i>	
		<i>Weekday Response</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>24/7 Coverage</i>	
Fire Chief	\$ 85,565.00					
Deputy Fire Chief	\$ 68,657.00					
Part-Time Lieut.	\$ 18,366.00					
Part-Time Salaries	\$ 18,366.00	\$ 65,000.00	\$ 150,000.00	\$ 195,000.00	\$ 65,000.00	
Call Pay	\$ 58,304.00	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 75,000.00			
Operational Costs	\$ 255,850.00					
Budget Adjustments	\$ 16,998.00					
One-Time Gear Expenses	-	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 36,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	
Pre-Employment	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 1,050.00	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 4,200.00	\$ 1,400.00	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 524,306.00</b>	<b>\$ 674,356.00</b>	<b>\$ 922,806.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,124,506.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,162,706.00</b>	

# ANNUAL OPERATING PLANS & BUDGETS

## ✖ Option 3 – Full-time staffing – *Recommended*

Amherst Fire Dept.	Proposed	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Operating Budget		<i>Increase Call Pay</i>	<i>Add 2 FTE</i>	<i>Add 2 FTE</i>	<i>Add 3 FTE</i>	<i>Add 3 FTE</i>
		<i>Add 2 FTE</i>	<i>Weekend</i>	<i>Week Night</i>	<i>Week Night</i>	<i>Transition to</i>
		<i>Weekday Response</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>4 shifts of 3</i>
Fire Chief	\$ 85,565.00					<i>24/7 Coverage</i>
Deputy Fire Chief	\$ 68,657.00					
Part-Time Lieut.	\$ 18,366.00					
Full-Time Salaries	\$ 18,366.00	\$ 150,000.00	\$ 150,000.00	\$ 150,000.00	\$ 225,000.00	\$ 225,000.00
Call Pay	\$ 58,304.00	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 75,000.00			
Operational Costs	\$ 255,850.00					
Budget Adjustments	\$ 16,998.00					
One-Time Gear Expense	-	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00
Pre-Employment	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 524,306.00</b>	<b>\$ 757,306.00</b>	<b>\$ 982,306.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,132,306.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,361,306.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,586,306.00</b>

# ANNUAL OPERATING PLANS & BUDGETS

- ✖ Option 4 – Hybrid part-time to full-time.

Amherst Fire Dept.	Proposed	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Operating Budget		<i>Increase Call Pay</i>	<i>Add 10 PTE</i>	<i>Add 12 PTE</i>	<i>Add 4 PTE</i>	<i>Transition to</i>
		<i>Add 3 PTE</i>	<i>Weekend</i>	<i>Week Night</i>	<i>Fill the Gap</i>	<i>Full-Time</i>
		<i>Weekday Response</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>24/7 Coverage</i>	<i>4 shifts of 3</i>
Fire Chief	\$ 85,565.00					
Deputy Fire Chief	\$ 68,657.00					
Part-Time Lieut.	\$ 18,366.00					
PT/FT Salaries	\$ 18,366.00	\$ 65,000.00	\$ 150,000.00	\$ 195,000.00	\$ 65,000.00	\$ 425,000.00
Call Pay	\$ 58,304.00	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 75,000.00			
Operational Costs	\$ 255,850.00					
Budget Adjustments	\$ 16,998.00					
One-Time Gear Expenses	-	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 36,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	
Pre-Employment	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 1,050.00	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 4,200.00	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 12,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 524,306.00</b>	<b>\$ 674,356.00</b>	<b>\$ 922,806.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,124,506.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,162,706.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,586,306.00</b>



# SUPPORTING INITIATIVES

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- ✕ Fire Apparatus Replacement

  - + CIP Committee has done an excellent job.

- ✕ Central Station Second Floor

  - + Included in CIP plan

- ✕ Increase Firefighter Wages and Compensate for Training

  - + Proposed in 2013 – 2014 budget

# CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT BUDGET

**Figure 23 – 5 Year Capital Improvement plan.**

Amherst Fire Dept.	Current	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Capital Improvement Budget				<i>Second floor</i>		
				<i>complete</i>		
Apparatus Replacem	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 300,000.00	\$ 300,000.00	\$ 300,000.00
Second Floor	\$ -	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 100,000.00
Total	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 310,000.00	\$ 310,000.00	\$ 360,000.00	\$ 375,000.00	\$ 400,000.00

# CONCLUSION

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- ✘ The intent of this strategic plan is to educate you so you can make an informed decision.
- ✘ Thank you for challenging the department heads to think strategically and to present these plans to help shape the future of Amherst.

# DISCUSSION

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WELCOME TO



AMHERST, *NEW HAMPSHIRE*

September 2013

# AMHERST FIRE DEPARTMENT 2015-19 STRATEGIC PLAN