

Middletown Springs Volunteer Fire Association Board of Trustees

Replies and answers to the Town Survey of 2019.

Area of concern: Budget (Money)

Comments from the survey are listed with an appropriate answer or response.

1. C: Fire Department Expenditures are extravagant. **R: The Fire Department Budget has basically been level-funded for the past 5 years. Where some new monies were approved by the citizens for building refurbishing/replacement, this was primarily money moved from other budget areas. Inflation over the past 5 years is slightly over 9% according to US Economy and News.**
2. C: Keep cost to bare minimum. **R: If inflation alone has not increased the budget, some areas may have been underfunded.**
3. Q: Why tear down and replace? Where can money be saved? **R: The building was not designed to be a Fire house. Compromises and make does have allowed the building to function has a Fire House up to now. Equipment size increases (as mandated by state and federal rules) have outgrown this facility. By making a new building more efficient and larger to accommodate present and future trucks, we will have savings down the road while providing the public safety the town deserves.**
4. Q: Why did the town purchase a truck that wouldn't fit? Repairs are cheaper than replacement. **R: The Fire Association purchased the most modern vehicle for the best price. A vehicle worth hundreds of thousands of dollars, purchased for less than \$10K, seems like good stewardship of funds. Newer vehicles have grown in size due to safety and other government requirements. Older, inefficient buildings do deteriorate to a point where replacement is more cost effective than repair.**
5. C: Connect with other towns; grants **R: The Fire Association has actively sought grants and will continue to do so. Mutual aid agreements with neighboring towns is an ongoing process. Many of these towns have similar issues.**
6. C: current building is more than sufficient. It needs a new roof and basic maintenance. We need a million-dollar boys club almost as bad as we needed that ladder truck. **R: This comment is from someone who is ill informed and seems to hold some king of grudge. Perhaps this person would like to come to the Fire House to see its condition and to discover that the ladder truck can save property and more importantly lives, of both citizens and fire personnel.**
7. C: Buying a truck too large to house then expecting to have a new building to house it feels a bit more like poor planning. I worry that this "more, more; bigger, bigger!" trend will continue until living in our town becomes cost prohibitive.... **R: Buying a truck that fits means purchasing a much older, less advanced one. Why go backwards with life-saving capabilities?**

8. C: Scale back on building & equipment. ...spread cost to surrounding towns.. **R: The equipment we have provides remote, off-road firefighting, water delivery to areas without a water source, roof top and chimney fire response with less manpower, traffic response, rescue and control, and emergency vehicle housing. By eliminating some of these capabilities, which of the town's citizens will be shortchanged? Mutual aid is a voluntary program.**
9. C: Again need not wants! We're told we need more space to house 1 or 2 ladder trucks. Why do we even need ladder trucks in this small town? Custom steel buildings seem to be priced considerably lower than this proposal. **R: Fire and Emergency Services are needs for all the citizens, young and old. The old (out of service since late 2018) and the new ladder provide a cost effective, manpower preserving, time saving way to provide rescue and fire suppression (roof or chimney fires) on any multi-story building in town. Children are in upper floors of our schools! A steel building is what was quoted in the bond request!**
10. C: ...seems a foolish waste of money to build a new building to house a truck that the town knew wouldn't fit... **R: See the answer to item 7 above. Again, why go with older, less capable equipment?**
11. C: Frugality-focus on needs rather than wants... **R: See the answer to item 1 above. Is Emergency Fire and Response a want or a need?**