

**Town of Avon**  
**Special Town Meeting Minutes**  
**January 24, 2023**

- I. TOWN COUNCIL CHAIRMAN: Mr. Dan Polhamus called the Annual Town Budget Meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. in the Avon High School Auditorium. He led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance. He asked the citizens for nominations for a moderator.
- II. CITIZENS: On a motion made by Ms. Ann Clark and duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to elect Mr. Brian McDermott as Moderator of the Special Town Meeting.
- III. MODERATOR: Mr. McDermott welcomed those present. He outlined the meeting process. This meeting is an old-fashioned system, with a call to all the residents of the town to come to the town center and listen to the town proposal before them and then we get to raise our hands and vote Yes or No. It's really kind of quaint and classical. So, I'm enjoying the process here tonight to be able to be the moderator. My aspect of my job here is to try to help the show run a little smoother. We'll be able to listen to each other, be able to listen to the proposal and make an informed decision before the end of the night. I want to give a couple of housekeeping measures of how the process goes tonight. You will hear a lot of motions to be able to waive the reading of certain proposals or certain resolutions and that's not a vote on something you're missing out on. It saves us some time to be able to sit here and listen to reading pages and pages and pages of information if the members of the Town of Avon so feel fit to do that. You will hear me go through a process of a series of motions to be able to accomplish that. Then you're going to hear a full proposal by the Fire Marshall and from some of the town leaders here, from the Town Council and from the Board of Finance. There's going to be an opportunity to have discussion after that, so all of you will be able to have an opportunity to come up to either microphone on either side of the room, have two to three minutes to say your peace, and then we're going to have an opportunity to put the motion to the floor and all of the residents of Avon who are here and duly signed in by the Town Registrars will be able to vote on that motion. We have two motions tonight that we're going to be able to put forward. So, if that sounds good to all of you, I just want to give you that update of where we're going and how the process is going to work. First, in accordance with the Town Charter, I announce that the Town Clerk, Nick Hogan, will act as Clerk of this meeting. I look for a motion to be able to waive the call of the meeting.
- IV. CITIZENS: On a motion made by Ms. Clark and duly seconded, it was voted unanimously to waive the reading of the resolutions.

- V. TOWN COUNCIL CHAIRMAN: Mr. Polhamus made motion that the first Resolution entitled RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING \$1,259,000 FOR THE ACQUISITION OF A FIRE ENGINE AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$1,259,000 BONDS OF THE TOWN TO MEET SAID APPROPRIATION AND PENDING THE ISSUANCE THEREOF THE MAKING OF TEMPORARY BORROWINGS FOR SUCH PURPOSE being presented to this Special Town Meeting as stated in the notice be waived and that the full text of the Resolution as made available to those in attendance at this meeting be incorporated into the minutes of this meeting.
- VI. MODERATOR: It was voted unanimously to waive the reading of the first Resolution and full text of the Resolution be made available into the minutes of the meeting.
- VII. TOWN COUNCIL CHAIRMAN: Mr. Polhamus made motion that the second Resolution entitled RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING \$2,172,000 FOR THE ACQUISITION OF A LADDER TRUCK AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$2,172,000 BONDS OF THE TOWN TO MEET SAID APPROPRIATION AND PENDING THE ISSUANCE THEREOF THE MAKING OF TEMPORARY BORROWINGS FOR SUCH PURPOSE being presented to this Special Town Meeting as stated in the notice be waived and that the full text of the Resolution as made available to those in attendance at this meeting be incorporated into the minutes of this meeting.
- VIII. MODERATOR: It was voted unanimously to waive the reading of the second Resolution and full text of the Resolution be made available into the minutes of the meeting.
- IX. TOWN COUNCIL CHAIRMAN: Mr. Polhamus: First, I'd like to take a minute to recognize everybody here in the audience, thank you for coming out and participating, for your civic duty. Welcome everybody online as well. And most importantly, we have a lot of volunteer firefighters with us here today, thank you all from the Town of Avon, your service is much appreciated by all of us; and this weekend we had a reminder of the sacrifice that you make with the incident in Meriden where several firefighters were hospitalized. As always, thank you from the Town. So, tonight's program; we will look at the overview of the proposed purchases, an overview of the financial impact. We'll have a question-and-answer session and as Brian mentioned, it will all come down to a hand vote at the end. The questions for tonight, number 1, shall the resolution appropriating \$1,259,000 for the acquisition of a fire engine and authorizing the issuance of \$1,259,000 bonds of the town to meet said appropriation and pending the issuance thereof the making of temporary borrowings for such purpose be approved, and the second, a similar resolution for \$2.172 million for the acquisition of the ladder truck rather than a fire engine. These 2 vehicles came on our radar Spring of last year. At that point, we started discussing the right way to finance these, whether to go through bonds or not. And that leads us to today, over the course of the year, we had

this Fire Study complete, that Fire Study confirmed the need for these vehicles. The Fire Study can be found online if you're interested in the very comprehensive review of our current vehicular fleet as well as our future needs. Again, these 2 trucks, not only were identified by our volunteer fire department, but by a third party performing this review. So, today, we've had a very busy January discussing this topic, and part of the reason for that is we learned that the price of these fire trucks increases by 3% to 5% February 1<sup>st</sup>. So that's why we've had several iterations, special town meetings, to try and bring this to you so we could move forward on this and avoid the 5% price hike. So, what are the proposals today? The proposals are to replace 2 pieces of fire apparatus in the fleet. Our oldest fire engine, which is a 2001 HME/GK, Engine 14, would be replaced by a new Pierce PUC Pumper; and number 2, the existing 2001 Rosenbauer HME/Metz ladder truck, Ladder 12, would be replaced with a new Pierce Enforcer mid-mount 100-foot tower ladder truck with a pump. And to tell you a lot more about these than I'm able to, I'd like to welcome our Chief, Bruce Appell.

- X. FIRE CHIEF: Mr. Bruce Appell made his presentation from the Special Town Meeting Handout, pages 11 through 13 (which is attached and made part of these minutes). Mr. Appell made a few key points:
1. Fleet is assessed every 5 years, information was assessed 5 years ago
  2. Engine 14 is higher need priority, is busiest engine, answers most calls, average 20 – 25 years of service
  3. Engine 12 is 22 – 24 years old, hydraulic leak under main swivel
  4. Engines must fit into older facilities/stations, need smaller sized trucks, more maneuverability, more compact units
  5. The fleet will be reduced by one engine, currently 5 pumpers, 1 tanker, 1 rescue, 1 ladder, will be 4 pumpers; oldest 1993 pumper will come offline
- XI. MODERATOR: Mr. McDermott called on Ms. Catherine Salchert, Chairperson of the Board of Finance.
- XII. BOARD OF FINANCE CHAIRPERSON: Ms. Salchert made her presentation from the Special Town Meeting Handout, pages 13 through 18. She also stated that it's important to remember that we're not actually going out to the bond market for a couple of years, and that's why that initial chart shows the debt starting in 2025. Again, we're here to try to take advantage of avoiding a price increase that will result in us having to spend even more money to get these vehicles that we already know that we need. Ms. Salchert took a moment to acknowledge the members of the Board of Finance that were there this evening: Margaret Bratton, Carl Gismarian, Charles Harvell, Brian Loveless and Ellen Retelle.
- XIII. MODERATOR: Mr. McDermott read the Next Steps from the Special Town Meeting Handout, page 19. Mr. McDermott stated as said by Chairman Polhamus, the Volunteer Fire Department in Avon is indispensable. The volunteers that show up every day as

volunteers are incredible men and women who protect and defend us at great cost to their own sacrifice to their own families themselves. So, we owe all of the volunteer firefighters in town a great deal of gratitude (round of applause). They are always looking to fill the ranks. Mr. McDermott then referenced Join the AVFD on page 19 of the Special Town Meeting Handout. They look for volunteer of all stripes and strengths. So please take heed of that, and if you can volunteer or know somebody who wants to volunteer, there's guys and gals and men and women here tonight, they can help you and give you some more information on that. He then checked if any other members of the official Town Departments had any further comments which there were none and invited the Council back to the stage. He then called on Mr. Joe Speich to address the audience.

- XIV. Mr. Joe Speich – 115 Old Farms Road – I am the Assistant Fire Chief and I have the pleasure of being the chairman of the group of our members that did this whole process, as far as inspecting these new trucks. I'd like to take a moment to thank the town for their support during this process and for your support to get us to this night, it's been a long time coming. As Chief had commented about the current trucks, I'll start with the ladder. The current ladder is a 2001 and reaching 22 years of service, and by the time the new truck comes in, it will be about 25 years. It does have some significant issues that need repair that Chief also mentioned. I'll go into a little more detail about that. It is going to take bringing that truck to South Dakota to get those repairs done and we just don't know, really, what they're going to find once they start to make the required repair; and speaking with the Public Works Department and considering the fire study that was done, the recommendation was to replace the truck as opposed to making repairs on it. And how we got to the point of the trucks that are on the program tonight, it started about mid to end of 2021, where we started to look at what our current fleet was and what were out there for trucks. Obviously, fire trucks change over the course of 22 years, so we really took a good look at what was out there. We looked at every manufacturer that made ladders. Again, we have some limits as far as length and height of our trucks and Pierce came up with a truck that can fit our limitations. They're the only manufacturer that fits our length and heights limits for our fire stations. One thing that we do understand is that it is quite a bit of money. We always try to be good stewards of town taxpayer money, but we can't in good conscience make a choice to repair something that we just don't quite know what we're going to find when we start repairing. And like I mentioned before, talking with Public Works and looking at the fire study that was done, and so it came to the recommendation that we have made. Thank you.

Gina Kline – 40 Frandel Drive – I've been a resident for about 20 years in Avon, volunteered with the fire department for almost about 19 years. I currently serve on the department as a firefighter, I'm a driver operator, so Engine 14 is one of the trucks that I'm going to drive. I serve as the (inaudible) advisor and I currently serve as President for the Directors, and as President of the Board that is speaking tonight, to convey our unanimous approval of this proposal that the Apparatus Committee has brought to the town that we're hoping to get approved tonight. What Assistant Chief Speich didn't mention tonight about the Apparatus Committee is the numerous hours that they spent

putting the proposal together and coming to the recommendation that you see tonight. They spent 2 ½ years assessing the needs of the department, looking at that long range apparatus replacement plan that the Chief referred to, made the decision based on factors that Assistant Chief Speich had mentioned that replacement really was necessary for these trucks, and they did their due diligence, they evaluated several manufacturers before really coming to the recommendation as said. Based on how we operate, based on what the department needs, based on what the town needs, these are the right choices for us to have for this apparatus. So, this information was presented to the Board, they made the (inaudible) with us with their recommendation and we wholeheartedly approve of this. So, we hope that the Town Selectmen and the residents here tonight recognize the efforts that went into that and also vote Yes to approve these trucks.

Jim Speich – 14 Yorkshire Lane – I am the Town Council’s Representative for the Fire Department. I’ve been in town since 1978; almost a 40-year veteran of the Avon Volunteer Fire Department. As you’ve heard from Chief Appell, Assistant Chief Speich and from President Kline, we have 22-year-old vehicles within this year, and we have a lot of fire house limits. So, the apparatus that this committee has worked so hard on is the proper apparatus that should be purchased. There’s a long-time fire truck filing program that goes on at the fire department and we look over a number of years and we look at ages of trucks to see how these trucks roll off over time. The most interesting chart I saw tonight, and I used to be the Chairman of the Board of Finance (inaudible), is the debt rolling off. I think it’s important to realize that as this debt rolls off, we can then (inaudible) in these fire trucks on top of that debt over the years. Normally we would buy these, and my experience at the Town Council and Board of Finance for 16 years, we usually paid for these out of capital. This is a great opportunity to be able to purchase these trucks through bonding, our debts rolling off and this is just good time for the fire apparatus. So, I encourage the residents from the town that are here to vote Yes for the apparatus.

Dave Bourgoïn – 95 Lawrence Avenue – I am also in the Fire Department. I’ve been in Avon for 34 years. I’ve been in the Fire Department for 34 years. I’m Captain of Company 3 and responsible for the two pieces of apparatus we’re proposing to replace tonight. I fully support purchasing the new apparatus. These apparatuses go to, as the Chief said, the majority of the calls in town because of their central location. In addition, we’re the primary station when our surrounding towns call for mutual aid, so they go for that. When you look at the ladder, not only the cost of repair, now that ladder is out for 6 to 8 months to repair that, we have to rely on mutual aid and that lengthens the time it takes to get the apparatus to the scene. So, I would highly encourage everyone to consider supporting this. Thank you.

Mark Zacchio – 15 Ridgewood Road – I’d like to echo Jim’s comments. I fully support the purchase, fully understand the Fire Department has sort of waited in the wings very patiently as we’ve done other projects in town to deal with the support apparatus of this type. A couple of comments on the bonding; I’m not a fan of a bonding process. We paid cash in those years and we’re sitting in a spot where we have tremendous bonding

capacity in the future because Councils didn't do this. So just think about that from the slippery slope perspective, it's really easy to continue to bond but look back at the Plan of Conservation and Development, think about all that public input that went into that and those high target properties, that as the Town Manager likes to say, you want to keep some powder dry, for when those opportunities present themselves, think about that (inaudible) because you're going to be presented with more of this. It's \$250,000 for (inaudible) truck, why not get four, we can afford it (inaudible) available so, just think about that as you go forward. A couple of quick questions, I think I heard Chief Appell and I know I heard both Mr. Speichs say the apparatus will fit in the Fire Departments, have you considered the weight as well, this happened before (inaudible), we brought them in, it was awesome, and then we found out it just didn't fit and that had to take a lot of changes to the uphill fire department to make fit. So, they will fit? We've considered the weight? I knew you were going to say that I just want to hear it again. My second question is really for the Council. If you go forward and you bond this, do you expect any bond premium, and if so, do you have any ideas what you're going to do with that. It's not a huge purchase, (inaudible) the bond premium would be, the Town Manager or others may have that on the top of their head. I'd encourage you think about putting that in undesignated surplus. I don't know where our ratio is compared to what our budget is, but as our budget rises our surplus needs to keep pace with that for AAA bond rating which puts us in a position to buy things like this, so just keep that in mind if you're going to bond the index and premium, what you're going to do with the (inaudible). Thank you.

Joseph Gilbert – 45 Longview Road – I fully support this decision. Keep in mind that this is a volunteer fire department so there is a big savings and therefore they should get everything that they need. I thought it was a ridiculous question, one of my questions was will it fit the garage so, happy to hear that. Another potentially silly question is, I noticed that one of the stations is (inaudible) wondering if the tail end of that ladder truck might hit the ground, if even that was a consideration. And my other question is (inaudible) into machinery myself, some of the basics are the delivery time is 2 years, but sometimes it goes way beyond that, if there's a penalty clause with the manufacturer, also what the warranty would be on the equipment, the maintenance and lastly, the training of the trainees is going to be the same as the existing equipment that you have or if this will require new training, if the manufacturer is providing that training.

Fire Chief Appell – As far as the training goes, yes, the manufacturer will be coming out, we would have to get retrained on this specific apparatus, actually both apparatuses would have to be trained on new technology manufacturing (inaudible). As far as the station design, it will fit, anticipating right now is probably the ladder truck will be going to Company 1 due to the length, the ladder at 43 feet, the actual apron here at Company 3 is about 43 feet, just shy; it will fit at Company 3 if absolute need be, but the plan is to relocate the aerial at Company 1. And the study from Center for Governmental Research show that the highest target area of the aerial is 44 ¼, so Company 1 has a much longer apparatus bay length, and the actual apron is much more to fit that station, it's bigger. As far as the warranty, I believe it's a standard 2-year,

State of Connecticut requires 2-year warranty from the manufacturer. There're component warranties; engine, transmission, so forth, are warrantied through the engine manufacturers and they, and I think it's a 5-year warranty on the engine and transmission, and there's paint and corrosion warranties that are, extend out. On these particular trucks you'll hear a lot of issues with corrosion, road salts that are on the road; both these trucks are coming through galvanized spring dip frame rails. The industry is touting that the galvanized spring rails will corrode out like your normal steel frame rails, so that's these trucks (inaudible), we tried to cover all bases. Were there any other questions (inaudible)?

Mr. Gilberti – Just the maintenance.

Fire Chief Appell – The maintenance would be handled from the local vendor which is Firematic here in Rocky Hill. They would handle all the service (inaudible), we would also, our inhouse mechanics will get training on it and they would be able to handle light maintenance of the aerial inhouse.

Frank Rawden – 46 Woodmont – Projection as the town grows, are we looking at the (inaudible) purchase in 5 or 10 years down the road for another truck plus the questions he had.

Fire Chief Appell – As far as purchasing another aerial device right now, the plan, again our Fire Department plan and the plan through Center for Government Research did indicate a need for 2 aerial devices for the Town of Avon. We get credit for our Rescue truck, which is housed in Company 1, that will get relocated to a different station, is classified as a service company because it has a ladder and has ventilation equipment in, so we get a bunch of credit for the Rescue company being a service company as a secondary ladder actually, believe it or not, as far as the eyes of the insurance industry goes. So, there's no glaring indication that we would need 2 aerial devices for the Town of Avon.

Chris Atiyeh – 15 Woodhaven Drive – 39-year resident. First thing I wanted to say was thank you to all the members of Avon Fire Department for their service and (inaudible) I'm sure, that (inaudible) an incredible amount of volunteer time to pull together what trucks are needed and how they'd be equipped so I just want to say thank you again because I've been on some committees before and volunteers don't get the credit they deserve so I just wanted to say thank you personally. I've got a couple of questions. One was when was the last fire truck replaced?

Fire Chief Appell – The last fire truck that was actually replaced was in 2020, we replaced the Rescue truck. The Rescue truck was a 1988 Rescue. With the advent of Covid, we realized we could find a manufacturer that had one that they built for demo and all the trade shows were cancelled that year and we happened to be the first in line to contact. So, we were able to pick up the Rescue truck prior to all the price increases and they just wanted to unload it. So, the Rescue truck is a 2020, 3 years old. Prior to that, we picked up a Mini Pumper 2018 and it's on a Ford F150 chassis, it's a small

(inaudible) 4-wheel drive. It does have a 1500-gallon (inaudible) pump, 300 gallons of water (inaudible) the ladder, it's more maneuverable to get up into the Deercliff areas and some of the (inaudible) areas, the Secret Lake area. Prior to that we had 2 (inaudible) which were purchased in 2016, Engine 7 and Engine 11.

Mr. Atiyeh – So, it's generally around every 2 to 3 years. Maybe not?

Fire Chief Appell – Probably, right now our average fleet is 16 years old if you add (inaudible) the whole fleet. Typically, we probably want to be closer to 5 years for replacement.

Mr. Atiyeh – A couple other questions, somebody else just asked about the warranty which you said is 2 years, and I think you also said, he asked about the maintenance, and I guess you said Firematic, they're the authorized repair people for these Pierce trucks?

Fire Chief Appell – Correct, they are the Pierce vendor, yes.

Mr. Atiyeh – And the reason I say that is people may not know this, you're replacing 22, 21-year-old fire trucks that are a lot less sophisticated; these fire trucks are probably the most sophisticated, hook up your laptop to it, and so, my kind of question a little bit further is would Firematic handle all that or would Pierce come in?

Fire Chief Appell – So, Firematic is the Pierce dealer, they're the only Pierce dealer I believe in New England. They handle New York. The aerials major service would be in a New York facility which is just over the border into New York. They have a facility here in Rocky Hill that would do all the (inaudible) testing, minor servicing, things like that, load testing. Major service would go to the New York office, which is their primary facility that handles aerial (inaudible) for Pierce, and they can do everything inhouse.

Mr. Atiyeh – So the key thing I heard is that Firematic is the authorized Pierce dealer.

Fire Chief – Correct.

Mr. Atiyeh - And distributor, and then they can handle basically anything on this sophisticated, these two new pieces.

Fire Chief Appell – Correct.

Mr. Atiyeh – Ok, that's great. Thank you. Did you guys' test drive these fire trucks?

Fire Chief Appell – Yes, so we had over a course of 2 ½ years we've had numerous vendors come in with their different aerial devices that were on the circuit. Pierce brought in a couple of their rigs, and we test drove this one, we also had an opportunity, this aerial device is the exact same aerial that Farmington bought in 2020. There's a



couple of upgrades that Pierce has done since that came up, but Farmington was nice enough to have them come out with their aerial, they spent about half a day with us with the committee and we literally drove around everywhere in the Town of Avon to Pond Place, Farmington Woods, Deercliff, up and down the mountain, and it really ran it through its paces, the cul-de-sacs, they told us what pros and cons of their truck were and what they would have done differently, or look at some of the options that Pierce has today. So, we took the base spec, which is a cooperative bid, they offered HGAC, which is a cooperative bid process, so anyone can buy into it. Pierce sets the price for the (inaudible), so anyone that buys into the (inaudible) bid price from anywhere in the United States, get the truck at that price, cheaper than if we went out to bid directly. Then you can add on the add-ons, a couple of upgrades.

Moderator – Excuse me, time is up, you’ve been going for about 5 ½ minutes and I want to give other people an opportunity, I’m not sure how many questions more do you have, but if you have more, we want to just kind of give everybody a fair opportunity to ask questions. If you have any more questions, you can come back to ask them. Again, I just want to make sure I open the floor to everybody.

Mr. Atiyeh – No, I think that’s it. I’m in favor of voting Yes for these fire trucks and I think it would be good. It’ll help us protect the town better. Thank you.

Dave Whitney – 13 Towpath Lane – I moved to Avon when I was 1 year old. I want to say that I’m 100% in favor of this expense. We need to give the volunteer fire fighters the tools they need to do their job. I’m really not here with a question, just a comment. I went on the website to the Frequently Asked Questions and question 12 was “what will you do with the old engines once they’re removed from service” and the answer was “the old vehicles will be turned over to the Department of Public Works for disposal, these vehicles can either go to auction, sold for 3<sup>rd</sup> party dealer or donated to departments in need”. And I just want to say I think it would be fantastic, I think it would be good karma if we could consider donating these engines to other departments in need. Thank you.

Carin Solonia – 308 West Avon Road – Good evening. I’ve been a resident of the town for over 22 years. Both my husband and my son are volunteer fire fighters with the Town of Avon. I think tonight’s presentation speaks volumes of professionalism, the due diligence and the thoughtfulness of our Fire Department, as well as our Town Council and the Committee to evaluate options for us. I’m in strong favor of this proposal, not only for the safety of the residents of Avon but also the safety of our fire fighters who work every day to make sure we’re safe. I’m in full support of this proposal.

Alex Battaglino – 252 Lovely Street – Good evening. I just want to ask a couple questions. I am in support of a resolution to purchase new fire trucks; however, I do not support this resolution to purchase these fire truck and I have a couple of questions as to the process having to spec these trucks out. So, in the proposals they sent out, the questions rather (inaudible) to the town, you had spoken about combination fire

apparatus not being an applicable thing in Avon, and I noted that the ladder truck is a combination fire apparatus. Also was noted in reports that you are in need of replacing the tanker in a couple years. Was it explored that you were going to possibly replace the engine that you're replacing now with the engine tanker supposed to just handle.

Fire Chief Appell – We did look at the options of an engine tanker and one of the Committee's considerations for an engine tanker was this engine we're replacing is the busiest apparatus on the fleet that we have. And we have a very narrow, limited area in town that is not hydrant. So, with an engine tanker we would currently (inaudible), our tanker holds 3000 gallons of water, the engine tanker we'd be looking at about 2500 gallons of water, you have to downgrade the amount of water and we're driving a lot of weight and water around every day or every (inaudible) call, every call we go on and we felt it wasn't prudent to do that to (inaudible) the engine tanker and to keep the tanker as a stand-alone tanker. Our current tanker is a '97. It's a simple truck, it's an International. It goes back to the manufacturer every year. (Inaudible) built it. There's no indication of any issues with it other than the fact that it's getting a little tired as far as age but because of the limited response, it goes on the least amount of calls the town responds to. We figured we could put that off for a couple of years and we didn't want to combine (inaudible) big engine tanker and we have an issue with a modern-day engine tanker fitting into the fire station.

Mr. Battaglino – In the CGR report, it noted that by 2030 we will have replaced 4 apparatus in total to the tune of about \$4.5 million, is that correct?

Fire Chief Appell – I think they even talked about Engine 10; in that study, the tanker, the 2 engines which would be Engine 14 and Engine 10, the tanker and the ladder need to be replaced in that time frame. But right now, we're probably looking at 3, these 2 and then a 3<sup>rd</sup> one in (inaudible) time.

Mr. Battaglino – So, it suffices to say there's a possibility that if you were to replace it with an engine tanker and just replace the aerial devise then you kind of kill 3 birds with 1 stone. More or less, you can replace an engine with an engine tanker suffice 2 needs if you're going to (inaudible) with an aerial (inaudible). Also, dropping another piece of apparatus (inaudible) replacement years down the road.

Fire Chief Appell – Our biggest thing is (inaudible) at a scene. And so, we're finding, we're getting a lot of pieces on the road with one person. Having that ladder on the road with a tank and a pump on can make an initial (inaudible).

Mr. Battaglino – Was it explored going out to other manufacturers possibly, as you stated previously, purchasing demo trucks to cut down the cost, and I understand that aerial devise especially, engines included, are drastically more expensive than they were a couple of years ago, but it could be a potential cost savings in maybe getting a demo rig as opposed to a brand new (inaudible).

Fire Chief Appell – We’ve been scouring the demo market with Pierce for 2 years now. Part of the (inaudible) issue of coming across a demo truck is you find one and by the time we get it, get the information, present it to the Town Council, get funds available, it sold. And that happened to us probably, at least 2 or 3 times, we’ve seen other vehicles (inaudible) purchases, we’ve made presentations or go to buy it, and then we find out that it's already sold. So, the market is extremely tight, there’s no, no one has reduction trucks that are coming off the line in our vicinity.

Mr. Battaglini – And you specifically, you had looked it up at manufacturers (inaudible) with Pierce.

Fire Chief Appell – We did look at all the manufacturers, I believe we had (inaudible) in town, we had a bunch of the other vendors in town. We also went to FDIC, huge fire trade conference, the Committee went out, we looked at every (inaudible) manufacturer, we looked at every spec that they had, we compared them all. The biggest thing is the length of the vehicle. We have bay length requirements; we have height requirements to fit in the station as (inaudible) Company 3. So, we looked at all those factors and Pierce was the smallest profile truck that would fit our needs.

Mr. Battaglini – (inaudible) I’m guessing the recommendation of the truck (inaudible) for a mid-mount tower ladder as opposed to a straight (inaudible) aerial device (inaudible). The reason I’m asking is I know that Farmington has a mid-mount tower ladder; Simsbury also has the tower ladder.

Fire Chief Appell – Simsbury has 2, they have a tower and a straight. Canton has a straight single ladder; Farmington only has one tower.

Mr. Battaglini – The question really is though, what is the (inaudible) need in the Town of Avon for a tower ladder as opposed to less expensive straight aerial devices.

Fire Chief Appell – So, we went; one straight aerial devices are typically top-mount, or not a mid-mount tower, so now we have a height issue. All of our bays here are 12 foot high. So, our ladder currently is a (inaudible) aerial, and it was able to come in at 11’4”, so we were able to back it in. It backs into the station with literally 2 inches of clearance at the back of the station. Even our Company 1 headquarters station (inaudible) doors, so a conventional rear-mount aerial with a ladder on top would not fit in any of the fire houses. As far as the need for aerial device and the maneuverability of it, we have all the industrial drive areas, Darling Drive, Tower Lane, Security, Old Farms, the industrial facilities. We have the (inaudible) apartments, Avon Mill, Avonwood Apartments, the new Town Center, Whole Foods, the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase that’s not built which is going to be across the street from Market is going to be taxpayer on the 1st floor, apartments on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, that’ll be a 3-story apartment, a 3-story building that (inaudible) the town and the Town Center. The Farmington Woods, the Pond Places, yes, they’re single-family homes, but they’re very tight clustered homes and if a fire gets going in one of those (inaudible), so, you need a lot of water, you need (inaudible) while other facilities. Our larger buildings in town, the churches, Town

buildings. Then you get into the single-family homes, a lot of them, a lot of people say we don't need an aerial on a single family, but a lot of our single family homes are well over 3000 square feet up into the 10,000 or more, and they have extremely steep roof pitches and they have long roof pitches. So, our ground ladders can't reach the roof line and our wrought iron (inaudible) roof ladders can't reach the peak. They can (inaudible) 19-foot roof peaks, some of these peaks are well over 20 to 24 foot from the ridge line, so, to safely access a roof, if we have to get to a chimney or cut vent holes, we can't access it from 2 ground ladders (inaudible). So, we try to get an aerial that can get us (inaudible) to make that roof accessible.

Mr. Battaglino – Okay, thank you very much for your time.

Micah Rousey – 129 Stagecoach Road – I just wanted just to comment I'm incredibly impressed with the city committees that had to do anything with presentation on why we need this. It's obvious to me and I'm of no expertise (inaudible) question, any of it. So, thank you. Absolutely in support for both resolutions.

- XV. MODERATOR: Mr. McDermott asked three times if there were further comments. Seeing there were none, he closed the comment period. Mr. McDermott stated going forward now, we're going to read each of the Resolutions and vote on one at a time. The process is to call for a show of hands, we ask you that you all have received a green wristband if you are qualified and eligible to vote tonight. We ask that you raise your hand high when I call for Ayes or Nays and you will leave them there until we are done counting. Theoretically we might be able to in the eye of the Moderator looking on the audience, I might be able to see an overwhelming vote going either way, and we can call that without objection, I will call Yay or Nay as I see it from here to avoid you having to strain in holding your arms up all night. If it's close, we will go through that process and have that go forward. The first motion, the first Resolution before us is:

SHALL THE RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING \$1,259,000 FOR THE ACQUISITION OF A FIRE ENGINE, AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$1,259,000 BONDS OF THE TOWN, AS WELL AS TEMPORARY BORROWINGS FOR SUCH PURPOSE, BE APPROVED:

There was a motion, and it was seconded. All in Favor raise your hand and say Aye, all those Opposed say Nay, In the eyes of the Moderator, there was an overwhelming support in Favor of first Resolution. There were 126 Yes votes and 1 No vote.

The second Resolution:

SHALL THE RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING \$2,172,000 FOR THE ACQUISITION OF A LADDER TRUCK, AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$2,172,000 BONDS OF THE TOWN, AS WELL AS TEMPORARY BORROWINGS FOR SUCH PURPOSE, BE APPROVED?

Actually, I was a bit wrong on the (inaudible) rules here, that motion was made earlier in the evening so we're going to just be taking a vote. So, all those in favor of the second Resolution, raise your hand for Yes. All those opposed, In the eyes of the Moderator, the Ayes overwhelmingly have it, so we will consider that motion adopted.

There were 126 Yes votes and 1 No vote.

Both Resolutions were adopted.

Before I close out this evening, I want to thank the Town Council and all the staff of the Town of Avon and the Town Clerk and the Town Manager and the Board of Finance and the Fire Department who has worked so diligently on this effort. I want to once again thank the incredible volunteers that we have to serve us every day and our Volunteer Fire Department, and please take note if you would like to volunteer. And just one final applause for all the volunteer fire fighters. My reign of terror has come to an end, do we have a motion to adjourn. Motion was made and seconded. All in favor.

XVI. ADJOURN – The Meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

## *Special Town Meeting*

*Acquisition & Financing of a New Fire Engine & New Ladder Truck for use by the Avon Volunteer Fire Department*

**Tuesday, January 24, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.**

Avon High School  
510 West Avon Road

1

## **Tonight's Program**

- Overview of the Proposed Purchases
- Overview of Estimated Financial Impact
- Questions & Answers
- Hand Votes

2

## Tonight's Questions

1. *Shall the Resolution Appropriating \$1,259,000 for the Acquisition of a Fire Engine and Authorizing the Issuance of \$1,259,000 Bonds and Temporary Borrowings of the Town for Such Purpose be Approved?*
2. *Shall the Resolution Appropriating \$2,172,000 for the Acquisition of a Ladder Truck and Authorizing the Issuance of \$2,172,000 Bonds and Temporary Borrowings of the Town for Such Purpose be Approved?*

3

## What are the Proposals?

- Replace two pieces of the Town's fire apparatus fleet with two new vehicles:
  1. Town's oldest fire engine, a 2001 HME/GK (Engine 14) would be replaced by a new Pierce PUC pumper.
  2. Existing 2001 Rosenbauer HME/Metz ladder truck (Ladder 12) would be replaced with a new Pierce Enforcer mid-mount 100-foot tower ladder truck with a pump.

4

## Why are these purchases needed?

- Engine 14 has reached the end of its expected service life.
  - Anticipate parts availability will become a challenge
  - Between 2019 and 2022 vehicle required \$65,000 in repairs.
- Ladder 12 has reached the end of its expected service life.
  - Requires \$120,000 in repairs to the main swivel.
  - Risk of complete ladder failure which would take the truck out of service.

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## Features of New Engine

- Pierce Enforcer “PUC” Pumper
- Increased horsepower
- Increased storage
- Increased pumping capacity of 2,000 gallons per minute
- Easier to maintain
- Crash tested cab with airbags (safer for firefighters)

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## Features of New Ladder

- Pierce Enforcer 100' mid-mount
- Increased horsepower
- Increased seating
- Steerable rear wheels
- 2,000 gallons per minute pumping capacity
- Crash tested cab with airbags (safer for firefighters)
- Will allow department to reduce fleet by one engine

8



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## Purchase & Financing Costs

	Ladder	Pumper
<b>Purchase Price</b>	\$ 2,123,309	\$ 1,210,182
<b>Debt Issuance Costs</b>	\$ 48,691	\$ 48,818
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 2,172,000</b>	<b>\$ 1,259,000</b>

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# Estimated Financial Impact

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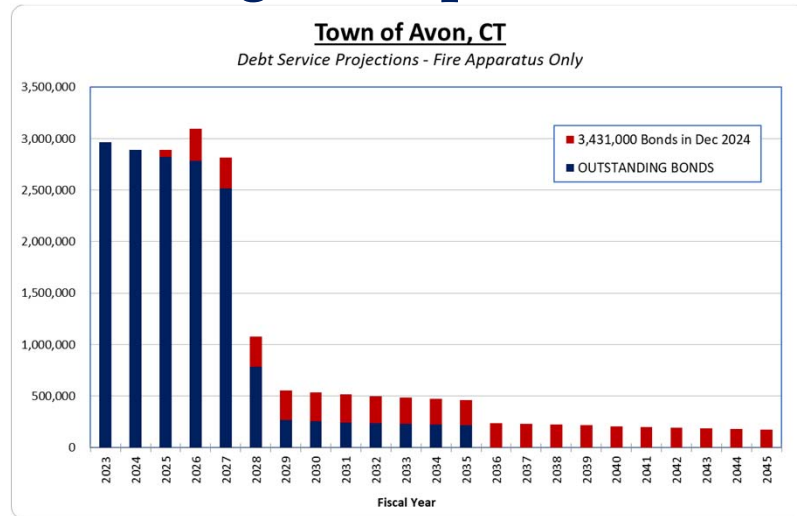


## Issues for the Board of Finance

- Can the Town manage the additional debt?
- If so, what will the additional and total tax impact be on each household?

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## Existing & Proposed Debt



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## Estimated Tax Impact – Fire Engine\*

FISCAL YEAR	COST	FISCAL YEAR	COST
2024-25^	\$ 2.50	2035-36	\$ 8.31
2025-26	\$ 11.06	2036-37	\$ 8.04
2026-27	\$ 10.75	2037-38	\$ 7.77
2027-28	\$ 10.45	2038-39	\$ 7.51
2028-29	\$ 10.16	2039-40^	\$ 7.27
2029-30^	\$ 9.91	2040-41	\$ 7.01
2030-31	\$ 9.64	2041-42	\$ 6.75
2031-32	\$ 9.36	2042-43	\$ 6.49
2032-33	\$ 9.09	2043-44	\$ 6.23
2033-34	\$ 8.82	2044-45^	\$ 6.00
2034-35^	\$ 8.57	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$171.69</b>

\*Assumes: 20 yr. borrowing period; interest rate of 4% (not capitalized); Home with estimated market value of \$350,000 and a taxable assessment of \$267,180; Vehicle value estimate at \$40,000 (assumes two vehicles/household); Revaluation period every five years (indicated with a ^); Property assessed at uniform rate of 70%; Grand list growth of 0.33-0.75% non-revaluation years, 1.00% in revaluation years.

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## Estimated Tax Impact – Fire Engine

### Property Assessment Percentile

Assessed Value	Total Cost over 20 years	Average Cost per Year
25 <sup>th</sup> percentile (\$205,510)	\$ 132.06	\$ 6.60
50 <sup>th</sup> percentile (\$267,180)	\$ 171.69	\$ 8.59
75 <sup>th</sup> percentile (\$374,660)	\$ 240.74	\$ 12.04

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## Estimated Tax Impact – Ladder Truck\*

<i>FISCAL YEAR</i>	<i>COST</i>	<i>FISCAL YEAR</i>	<i>COST</i>
2024-25^	\$ 4.32	2035-36	\$ 14.33
2025-26	\$ 19.07	2036-37	\$ 13.87
2026-27	\$ 18.55	2037-38	\$ 13.41
2027-28	\$ 18.03	2038-39	\$ 12.95
2028-29	\$ 17.52	2039-40^	\$ 12.54
2029-30^	\$ 17.10	2040-41	\$ 12.09
2030-31	\$ 16.62	2041-42	\$ 11.64
2031-32	\$ 16.15	2042-43	\$ 11.20
2032-33	\$ 15.68	2043-44	\$ 10.76
2033-34	\$ 15.21	2044-45^	\$ 10.35
2034-35^	\$ 14.79	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$296.18</b>

\*Assumes: 20 yr. borrowing period; interest rate of 4% (not capitalized); Home with estimated market value of \$350,000 and a taxable assessment of \$267,180; Vehicle value estimate at \$40,000 (assumes two vehicles/household); Revaluation period every five years (indicated with a ^); Property assessed at uniform rate of 70%; Grand list growth of 0.33-0.75% non-revaluation years, 1.00% in revaluation years.

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## Estimated Tax Impact – Ladder Truck

### Property Assessment Percentile

Assessed Value	Total Cost over 20 years	Average Cost per Year
25 <sup>th</sup> percentile (\$205,510)	\$ 227.82	\$ 11.39
50 <sup>th</sup> percentile (\$267,180)	\$ 296.18	\$ 14.81
75 <sup>th</sup> percentile (\$374,660)	\$ 415.36	\$ 20.77

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## Estimated Tax Impact – Ladder & Engine\*

<i>FISCAL YEAR</i>	<i>COST</i>	<i>FISCAL YEAR</i>	<i>COST</i>
2024-25^	\$ 6.82	2035-36	\$ 22.64
2025-26	\$ 30.13	2036-37	\$ 21.91
2026-27	\$ 29.30	2037-38	\$ 21.18
2027-28	\$ 28.48	2038-39	\$ 20.46
2028-29	\$ 27.68	2039-40^	\$ 19.81
2029-30^	\$ 27.01	2040-41	\$ 19.10
2030-31	\$ 26.26	2041-42	\$ 18.39
2031-32	\$ 25.51	2042-43	\$ 17.69
2032-33	\$ 24.77	2043-44	\$ 16.99
2033-34	\$ 24.03	2044-45^	\$ 16.35
2034-35^	\$ 23.36	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$467.87</b>

\*Assumes: 20 yr. borrowing period; interest rate of 4% (not capitalized); Home with estimated market value of \$350,000 and a taxable assessment of \$267,180; Vehicle value estimate at \$40,000 (assumes two vehicles/household); Revaluation period every five years (indicated with a ^); Property assessed at uniform rate of 70%; Grand list growth of 0.33-0.75% non-revaluation years, 1.00% in revaluation years.

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## Estimated Tax Impact – Ladder & Engine

### Property Assessment Percentile

Assessed Value	Total Cost over 20 years	Average Cost per Year
25 <sup>th</sup> percentile (\$205,510)	\$ 359.88	\$ 18.00
50 <sup>th</sup> percentile (\$267,180)	\$ 467.87	\$ 23.39
75 <sup>th</sup> percentile (\$374,660)	\$ 656.10	\$ 32.81

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## Determine Your Own Tax Impact

- Ladder Truck
  - Multiply your assessed value by 0.0011086
- Fire Engine
  - Multiply your assessed value by 0.0006426
- Ladder & Engine
  - Multiply your assessed value by 0.0017512

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## Next Steps

Special Town Meeting Vote January 24, 2023

*Assuming Approval,*  
Execute Contracts January 25, 2023

Town's orders placed in the  
Pierce Queue for Assembly February 2023

Vehicles Delivered to Town February 2025

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## Join the AVFD!

- Come volunteer with us! We provide all necessary training. Contact us:
  - Via phone at (860) 677-2644;
  - Via web at [www.avonvfd.org](http://www.avonvfd.org);
  - Via Facebook @AvonVFD;
  - Email at [contactus@avonvfd.org](mailto:contactus@avonvfd.org), or;
  - Stop by a fire station during Monday evening drills, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.



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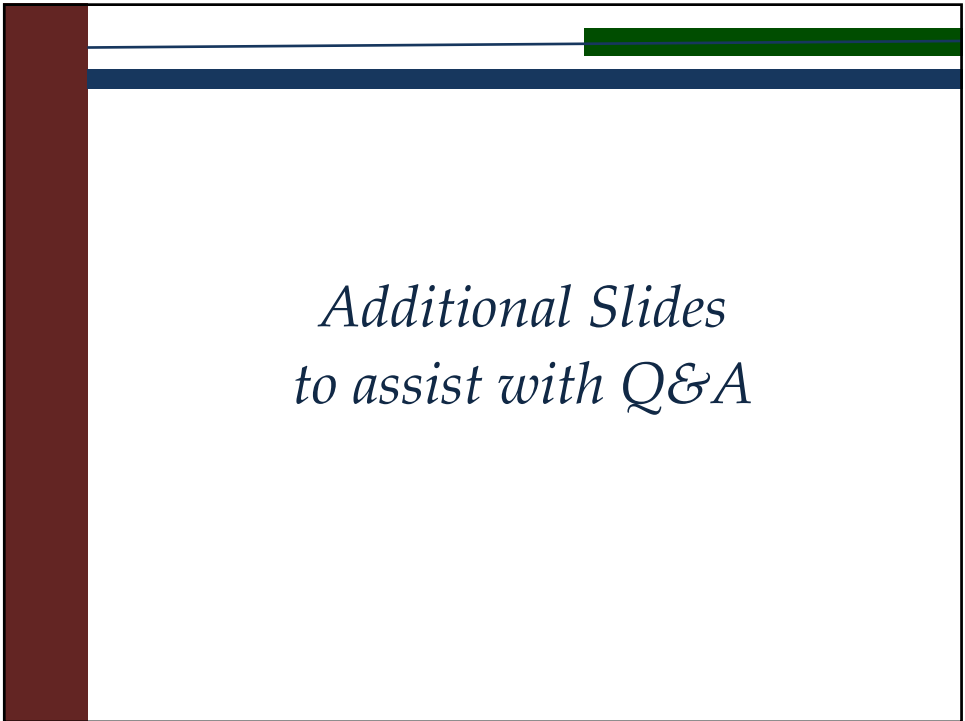




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QUESTIONS?

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A presentation slide with a dark red vertical bar on the left and a dark blue horizontal bar at the top. A green rectangular box is positioned at the top right. The text "Additional Slides to assist with Q&A" is centered in a dark blue, serif, italicized font.

*Additional Slides  
to assist with Q&A*

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## Overview of the AVFD

- 100% volunteer: 34,437 hours of time in 2022 including training, community events, meetings and call response.
- Four fire stations
- 35 Firefighters
- 12 Fire Police Officers
- 19 Administrative Members
- 5 Engines, 1 Rescue, 1 Ladder, 1 Mini-Pumper, 1 Tanker, Support Vehicles
- Average 671 calls per year

25

## How are Vehicle Replacements Prioritized?

- AVFD maintains an apparatus replacement program based on recommendations from NFPA and the Town's Department of Public Works.
- Apparatus are ranked based on age, condition, response rate and annual maintenance costs.
- In 2021, Town and AVFD contracted with the Center for Governmental Research (CGR) to review facilities and apparatus and develop a 10-year master plan, including an apparatus replacement schedule.
- Proposal for new engine and new ladder is consistent with the recommendations of CGR, the AVFD and Public Works.

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## **How would the Vehicles be Procured?**

- AVFD has identified Pierce as the manufacturer that will best meet its needs.
- Today, most fire apparatus manufacturers generate their business primarily through sales via cooperative purchasing contracts.
- The identified Pierce vehicles are available through a competitively bid cooperative contract through the HGAC-Buy Purchasing Cooperative of which the Town is a member.
- Proposed purchase prices are based on this contract pricing.

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## **Why does Avon need a Ladder?**

- The ladder truck allows the AVFD to access the upper floors of large commercial properties, apartment buildings, residence halls, and hotels.
- Many houses in Avon exceed 3,000 square feet, are 3 stories high and have a large setback from the street.
- Examples: Avon Old Farms School, the Residence Inn by Marriott, Avon Village Center and River Ridge at Avon.

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