MILL LEVY PROPOSAL

DEER MOUNTAIN FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

JULY 2020

INTRODUCTION

- LAST YEAR THE FORMER BOARD MEMBERS WERE CONSIDERING A PROPOSAL TO RAISE THE MILL LEVY TO ADDRESS THE BUDGET SHORTAGES. THIS PROPOSAL WAS SET ASIDE TO DEAL WITH OTHER ISSUES MORE PERTINENT TO THE DISTRICT AT THAT TIME. WHEN THE PROPOSAL WAS RAISED IN THE MAY 2020 REGULAR MEETING, IT WAS RECOMMENDED THE BOARD CONDUCT AN ANALYSIS AND CREATE A REPORT TO LAYOUT THE JUSTIFICATIONS FOR THE MILL LEVY INCREASE PROPOSAL. A COMMITTEE WAS FORMED, DATA COLLECTED AND THIS REPORT IS THE RESULT OF THEIR WORK.

- WHEN THE MILL LEVY INCREASE WAS ORIGINALLY PROPOSED THE ECONOMIC CONDITIONS FOR THE STATE AND THE COUNTRY WERE VERY DIFFERENT FROM THE SITUATION TODAY. THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC HAS RESULTED IN A 3.3 BILLION BUDGET SHORTFALL FOR THE STATE OF COLORADO WHICH ROLLS DOWN TO ALL LOCAL GOVERNMENTS. HOWEVER, THE UNDERLYING REASON FOR THE REQUEST, MAINTAINING CRITICAL SERVICES LOCALLY HAS NOT CHANGED. THERE HAS BEEN A CONTINUAL SHORTFALL OF THE BUDGET OVER THE YEARS WHICH HAS REQUIRED DEPENDENCE ON WILD LAND REVENUE. THIS DEPENDENCE IS NOT SUSTAINABLE IN THE LONG RUN. ONE POOR WILD LAND SEASON AND THE DISTRICT COULD FALL IN THE RED AGAIN AS IT DID LAST YEAR.

- THE BOARD ACKNOWLEDGES IT IS ALSO THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TO IDENTIFY INTERNAL PRACTICES AND STEPS THE DISTRICT COULD TAKE TO STREAMLINE PROCESSES, RECOVER OUTSTANDING DEBT OWED FOR SERVICES AND IDENTIFY POSSIBLE WAYS COSTS COULD BE REDUCED WITHOUT AFFECTING SERVICES.

- THE REQUEST TO INCREASE THE MILL LEVY WILL BE SUBMITTED TO FREMONT COUNTY BY THE AUGUST DEADLINE. SUBSEQUENTLY IT WILL BE PLACED ON THE BALLOT FOR THE DISTRICT IN NOVEMBER. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DEER MOUNTAIN FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT BOARD (DMFPD) TO INFORM AND EDUCATE RESIDENTS AS TO THE REASONING BEHIND THE REQUEST. WE HOPE THIS REPORT WILL ANSWER THE MAJORITY OF QUESTIONS RESIDENTS MAY HAVE AS TO WHY WE ARE MOVING FORWARD WITH THE MILL LEVY INCREASE REQUEST.

LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

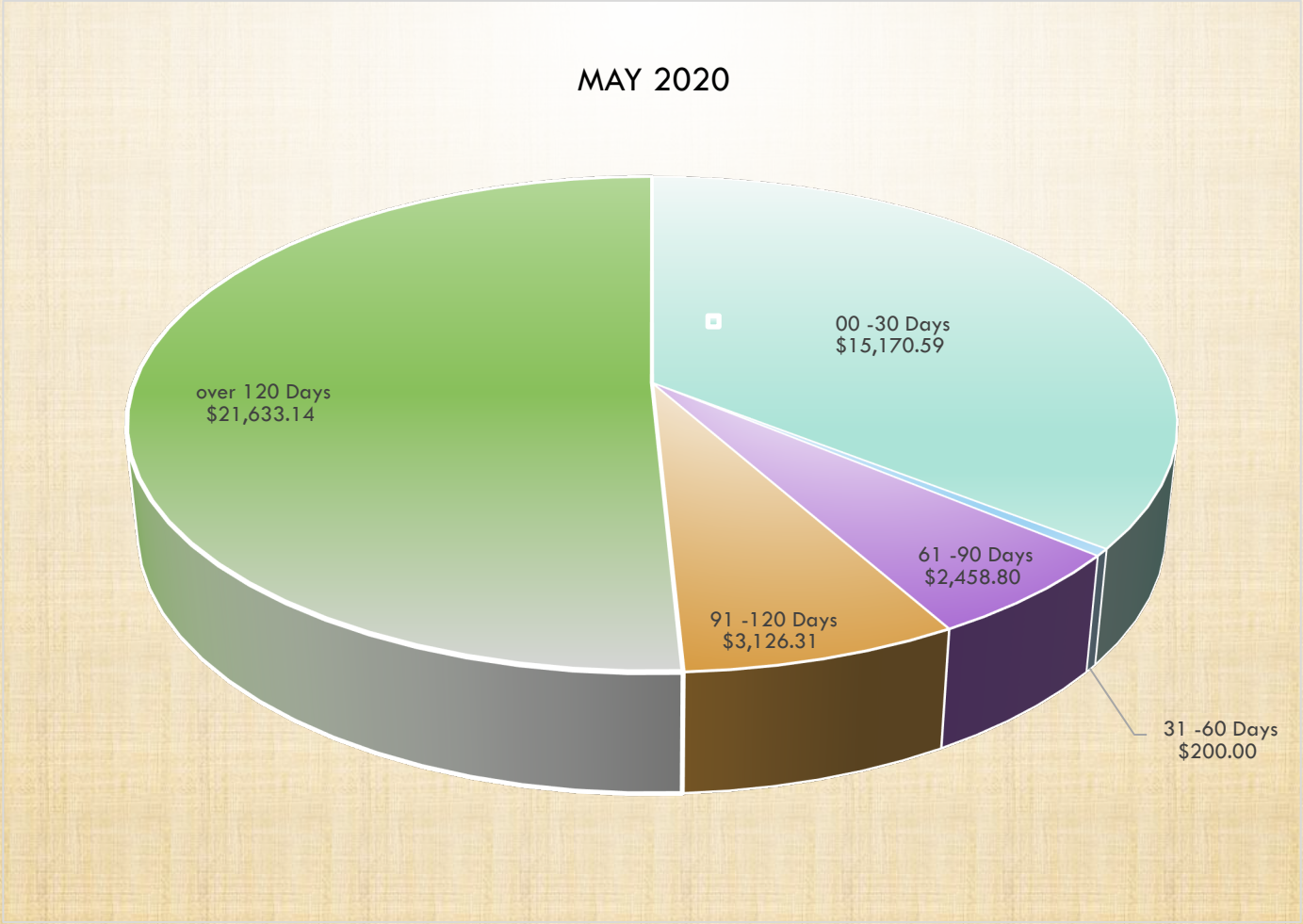
- LOSS OF PROPERTY TAX REVENUE
- SB 20-SCR001 REPEAL 1982 GALLAGHER AMENDMENT
- GALLAGHER AMENDMENT
- IMPACT TO DISTRICT FUNDS

Home Value	Proposed Mill Increase	Additional Annual Cost Per $100,000	Total Additional Cost	Monthly Cost
$200,000	.08 mill	$57	$114	$9.50
This is an example of possible estimated additional costs to property tax based on Fremont County Assessor Information. The final amount could change depending on whether the Gallagher Act is passed or if State of Local Governments change rates.				

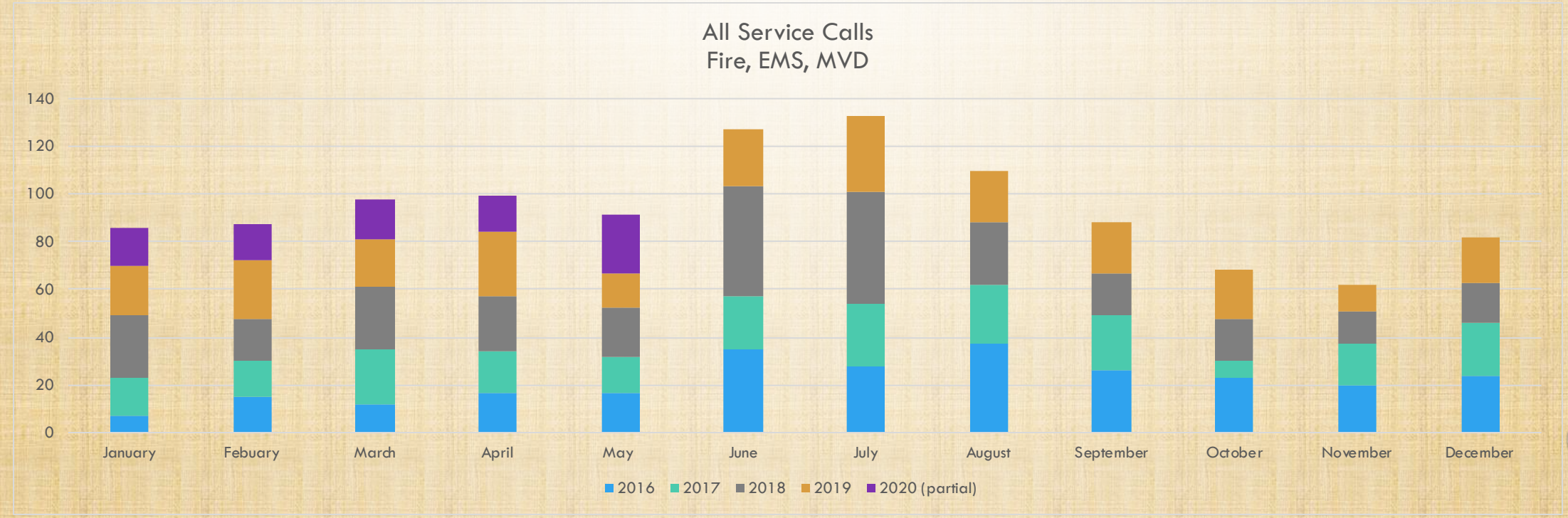
INTERNAL IMPROVEMENTS

- AGING ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE
- MIGRATE FROM PAPER TO COMPUTER
  - INVENTORY PROCESS
  - PERSONNEL FILES
  - SERVICE CALL DOCUMENTATION
- STUDY OF OTHER PRACTICES
  - CONTRACTS/BIDS
  - PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMUNICATIONS
  - WILD LAND REVENUE

AGED ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE



SERVICE CALL HISTORY



RECRUIT AND RETAIN STAFF

- RECRUITING AND RETAINING QUALIFIED STAFF ARE CRITICAL FOR SERVICES IN THE COMMUNITY. NATIONAL HUMAN RESOURCES STUDIES ON THIS SUBJECT ARE QUITE CLEAR ON THE INCREASED COSTS WHEN THERE IS HIGH TURNOVER AND THE DIFFERENT REASONS FOR IT. WHILE WAGES ARE A FACTOR, IT IS NOT ALWAYS THE MOST IMPORTANT ONE TO EMPLOYEES. HIGH ON THE LIST IS GOOD LEADERSHIP, RESPECT FOR THE EMPLOYEES, ADAPTABILITY TO CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES AND EMPLOYEES HAVING A VOICE ARE FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO STRONG, SATISFIED TEAM MEMBERS.
- WAGES IN DMFPD ARE AT THE LOWER END COMPARED TO SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES AND CAN MOTIVATE PEOPLE TO MAKE A CHANGE. TO HELP RETAIN STAFF IT WOULD BE BENEFICIAL TO HAVE A SIT-DOWN SESSION WITH EMPLOYEES TO FIND OUT WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO THEM FOR IMPROVING THEIR WORK ENVIRONMENT. IT COULD BE CHANGING LENGTH OF SHIFTS, ADDITIONAL TRAINING OR OTHER FACTORS THEY FEEL IS IMPORTANT. INVOLVING STAFF AND GETTING THEIR IDEAS FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE WORK ENVIRONMENT CAN ASSIST DMFPD IN RETAINING STAFF.
- IN THE CURRENT ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT AND THE REMOTE LOCATION OF THE DMFPD SERVICE AREA WAGES MAY BE A HIGHER FACTOR FOR SUCCESSFUL RECRUITING. THIS WAS REFLECTED IN THE RECENT SEARCH FOR A FIRE CHIEF WHERE THE DISTRICT ONLY RECEIVED 2 APPLICATIONS. THOSE WITH EXPERIENCE MAY CHOOSE TO GO WHERE THE MONEY IS. PEOPLE NEW TO THE PROFESSION USUALLY LOOK FOR WHERE THEY CAN GAIN EXPERIENCE. WHILE THE DISTRICT DOES HAVE A PATH THROUGH ANNUAL JOB REVIEWS FOR PROMOTIONS AND WAGE INCREASE IT MIGHT BE BENEFICIAL TO HIGHLIGHT THAT IN THE RECRUITING PROCESS. AN ANALYSIS COULD ALSO BE CONDUCTED INTO WHETHER PAYING HIGHER WAGES FOR A QUALIFIED SENIOR WHO COULD INTERNALLY TRAIN ENTRY LEVEL STAFF COULD INCREASE CANDIDATES' INTEREST. A HIGHER PERCENT OF EMPLOYEES ARE APT TO STAYING WORKING FOR A BUSINESS THAT INVESTS IN THEM THROUGH TRAINING AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXPERIENCE.

WAGE/SALARY DATA

Occupational Employment and Wage Rates (OES) for Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics in Colorado in All years

Occupational Wage Table

The table below shows the annual occupational employment and annual wage data for Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics in Colorado in All years.

Time Period	Employment	10th %	25th %	Entry level	Median	Mean	Experienced	75th %	90th %
2009	3,180	$19,700	$25,519	$22,342	$33,191	$36,081	$42,950	$45,035	$58,478
2010	2,880	$18,412	$24,812	$21,456	$34,812	$36,599	$44,171	$46,227	$59,169
2011	3,120	$20,706	$26,598	$23,240	$38,103	$41,009	$49,893	$55,026	$67,812
2012	3,220	$20,663	$26,325	$23,091	$35,706	$39,530	$47,750	$51,604	$65,907
2013	3,270	$20,026	$25,072	$22,379	$35,063	$39,465	$48,007	$52,169	$68,455
2014	3,500	$21,846	$27,255	$24,195	$35,350	$39,175	$46,665	$47,410	$65,175
2015	4,110	$20,476	$26,613	$23,309	$36,307	$40,705	$49,403	$50,551	$71,274
2016	4,290	$21,065	$29,231	$25,067	$37,647	$42,287	$50,898	$53,399	$72,297
2017	4,220	$21,175	$29,708	$25,793	$37,652	$41,901	$49,955	$51,477	$69,399
2018	3,700	$25,889	$31,902	$28,780	$38,303	$42,321	$49,092	$50,420	$62,700

Source: Occupational Employment Statistics Program

The mean wage is also known as the average wage. The mean wage is calculated by dividing the estimated total wages for an occupation by the number of workers in that occupation. Entry level and Experienced wage rates represent the means of the lower 1/3 and upper 2/3 of the wage distribution, respectively. Data is from an annual survey.
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***Note the 10th % salary of $25,889 extrapolated to determine hourly wage is equal to $12.37 per hour*

CONCLUSION

- DMFPD DELIVERS CRITICAL MEDICAL AND FIRE SERVICES TO THE RESIDENTS OF THE DISTRICT. EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES PROVIDE RESIDENTS WITH ON-GOING HEALTH PROBLEMS, SUDDEN HEALTH THREATS AND ACCIDENTS A HIGHER CHANCE OF RECOVERY DUE TO THE LOWER RESPONSE TIME WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.
- THE CONTINUAL DROUGHT IN SOUTHERN COLORADO, ALONG WITH THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE INCREASES FIRE RISK WITHIN THE COMMUNITY. LOCAL FIRE RESPONSE IS ABLE TO QUICKLY AND EFFICIENTLY CONTAIN A SMALL FIRE FROM GROWING, SAVE STRUCTURES AND POSSIBLY LIVES.
- WITHOUT THE LOCAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL AND FIRE SERVICES THE COMMUNITY WOULD NEED TO RELY ON CANON CITY OR OTHER COMMUNITIES WHICH COULD GREATLY DECREASE THE SURVIVAL RISK FOR MEDICAL EMERGENCIES EXPERIENCED BY RESIDENTS.
- ANOTHER ADVANTAGE TO HAVING LOCAL SERVICES AVAILABLE IS IT CREATES AN INCENTIVE FOR PEOPLE INTERESTED IN MOVING TO THE AREA WHETHER THEY ARE RETIREES OR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN. IN FACT, THE NUMBER ONE QUESTION RETIREES ASK WHEN CONSIDERING MOVING TO A NEW LOCATION IS AVAILABILITY OF MEDICAL SERVICES. GROWTH WITHIN THE COMMUNITY WILL ADDITIONALLY WIDEN THE TAX BASE THE DISTRICT RELIES ON FOR MAINTAINING LOCAL SERVICES.
- THE DECISION TO ASK FOR AN INCREASE OF THE MILL LEVY DURING THIS TIME OF ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTY IS NOT VIEWED LIGHTLY BY THE BOARD. BALANCING THE NEED TO CONTINUE OFFERING LOCAL SERVICES WITH THE POTENTIAL IMPACT ON RESIDENTS FINANCIALLY WAS NOT AN EASY DECISION. IN THE END, THE DISTRICT TIPPED THE SCALES TOWARD THE IMPORTANCE OF THESE CRITICAL SERVICES FOR THE LIVES OF COMMUNITY RESIDENTS.

RESOURCES

- SPECIAL DISTRICT ASSOCIATION
- COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & OCCUPATION
- FREMONT COUNTY ASSESSOR OFFICE
- DMFPD SERVICE CALL RECORDS
- BUSINESS OPTIONS
- GALLAGHER AMENDMENT LINK
  - HTTPS://BUILDINGABETTERCOLORADO.ORG/UNDERSTANDING-THE-GALLAGHER-AMENDMENT/

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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