



April 19, 2012

Honorable Mayor
Common Council

Dear Honorable Mayor and Common Council:

The Fire Chief is requesting permission to replace the existing fire department's Fire Safety and Public Education vehicle with a new vehicle and trading in the old vehicle. The Fire Safety Education vehicle is almost 8-years old and is now experiencing issues with towing the 12,000-pound fire department Fire Safety Education House. The current vehicle is under-powered and is becoming a maintenance issue.

Several years ago, the fire department developed a fund to provide for the maintenance of the Fire Safety House and to eventually replace the current Fire Safety vehicle used to tow the Fire Safety House. Both are used on a regular basis from March through November of each year. The Fire Safety Trailer is utilized to teach school-age children the dangers of fire and to allow those school-aged children to practice escaping from a smoke-filled house that is simulated to be on fire under controlled conditions. We utilize theatrical smoke to simulate a live condition. This teaching tool is invaluable in saving the lives of these children by allowing the kids an opportunity to practice what they learn in the classroom. Without an adequate and reliable tow vehicle, we would not be able to deliver this critical Fire Safety education program.

In addition to towing the 12,000-pound trailer throughout the year, the vehicle is used to transport "Sparky the Fire Dog" and "Plug the Fire Hydrant." Both are utilized as part of the classroom portion of all fire safety education programs. We annually deliver the program to more than 4,000 elementary school kids.

During the budget process in 2011, for the 2012 budget, we were not able to determine whether the special Fire Safety Education Account would have adequate funding to replace the aging vehicle. Due to additional funds received this year, the account does have adequate funding to replace the aging tow vehicle. The account is funded with donations from the community and a portion of the Fire Inspection Fee. No levy dollars are utilized.

There is adequate funding available for this project in account number 222.000.5950/222.000.1180 Fire Safety Expense.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Hansen,
Fire Chief