

Fire District No. 3

TOWNSHIP OF HANOVER, COUNTY OF MORRIS

JANUARY 1, 2024

As a voter within the Fire District, during our annual election on February 17, 2024, you'll encounter five pivotal questions that require your attention. These questions hold immense significance for our community's safety and well-being.

The first two questions concern approving the annual budget and permitting the District to exceed the 2% tax cap. The 2024 budget encompasses moderate spending increases but necessitates a 12.8% tax hike above the allowable cap due to inflationary pressures and rising operational costs. These expenses stem from unexpected spikes in workers' compensation insurance, higher operating insurance premiums, and bolstering our fire and EMS personnel for quicker and more effective responses to your increasing calls for assistance. Your approval validates our prudent fiscal management, ensuring top-tier services, albeit with an additional cost of approximately \$21 per \$100,000 of assessed property value annually, or \$1.75 per month.

In prior years, the District has made substantial investments in essential vehicles and refurbishments. Now, to maintain our service standards and support our emergency responders, we're at a crucial juncture that necessitates fundraising.

The third question revolves around our aging fire station, built in 1937. While it has seen expansions, and is currently just over 6,500 square feet, it struggles to meet present needs and poses critical safety concerns due to structural issues and inadequate zoning between clean and contaminated areas. After extensive evaluation, a new, modern 20,000 square foot station has emerged as the most viable solution, ensuring safety, compliance, and future scalability. The project is estimated not to exceed \$16.9 Million. Your approval would greenlight this project, addressing crucial health and operational concerns.

The final two questions pertain to investing in a new ambulance and a replacement aerial truck. The ambulance is vital for our EMS services, essential for responding to over 2,500 requests yearly. Additionally, our aging aerial truck, burdened by unsustainable maintenance costs, necessitates replacement to ensure resident safety. The ambulance cost is approximated at \$350,000 and the aerial apparatus is approximated at \$2.1 Million. The Board remains in agreement that the ambulance and the aerial are necessary for the safety of our residents and now relies on our voters to hopefully approve these.

Your participation and input are highly valued. You're invited to a discussion on January 24, 2024, at 6:00 P.M. at the Township's Recreation Center, 15 North Jefferson Road, where representatives of our architectural team and the Board of Fire Commissioners will present plans for the proposed station. Detailed drawings and a forum for your queries will be available both via QR code and htfd3.com, aiding your decision-making process.

Thank you for dedicating your time to review these materials and contributing your invaluable input to our endeavors.

Sincerely,

The Board of Fire Commissioners

