

**ROSS VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT
STAFF REPORT**

For the meeting of September 8, 2021

To: Board of Directors

From: Jason Weber, Fire Chief

Subject: Authorize the Purchase of one (1) Pierce All-Steer Type 1 Engine and Associated Fund Transfer

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Board approves:

- (a) the purchase of one (1) new Pierce Manufacturing All-Steer Type 1 Fire Engine one year earlier on the fleet purchase plan;
- (b) and authorizes the Fire Chief to negotiate the best financial package and to sign the associated purchase documents, not to exceed \$1,056,000 plus a 10% contingency;
- (c) and as discussed with your Board at the June budget hearing, approve the transfer of \$250,000 from the unrestricted fund to the Fleet Fund.

BACKGROUND:

The Ross Valley Fire Department currently maintains a fire apparatus fleet of six fire engines, six “Type 1” engines, and one “Type 3” engine. The Type 1 engines are designed for structural firefighting, and the Type 3 engine is specifically designed for wildland firefighting. The Type 1 engines carry a full complement of wildland firefighting equipment but are limited to paved roadways, whereas the Type 3 engine has limited structural firefighting capabilities. One of the Type 1 engines is owned and maintained by the State of California and operated by Ross Valley Fire Department for the local and statewide response.

In 2018 the Board approved an updated vehicle replacement schedule through 2029. The schedule calls for the replacement of Type 1 engines after 20 years of service, 15 years as a first-run apparatus, and five years in reserve status. First run engines are the fire engines used every day, one at each of the three fire stations. Station 18 and Station 20 also house a reserve Type 1 engine, and Station 21, in addition to the first run Type 1 engine, has the first run Type 3 engine. This purchase authorization moves up the next planned Type 1 engine purchase by one year (from 2022-23 to 2021-22) due to significant and costly repair costs on the 2003 Types 1 engine. It would take between six months and nine months to repair the 2003 Types 1 engine at an estimated repair cost of \$60,000 - \$80,000; thus, the recommendation is to instead purchase the new engine one year earlier than planned.

Beginning in 1995, the Department has been purchasing Type 1 fire engines with “All-Steer” capability. All-Steer provides coordinated steering of all four wheels, not just the front wheels as with normal vehicles. The All-Steer capability provides a significantly increased maneuverability on the towns’ narrow roadways. Currently, Pierce Manufacturing is the only fire apparatus manufacturer that provides the All-Steer capability.

DISCUSSION:

It would be standard for the Department to develop specifications and request proposals through the formal bid process; however, Ross Valley Fire Department utilizes the All-Steer system. The Oshkosh Corporation holds the patent on the All-Steer system. Pierce Manufacturing is a subsidiary of Oshkosh. Currently, Pierce Manufacturing is the only fire apparatus manufacturer that provides the All-Steer capability. The current design is consistent with our four current first-run fire engines.

There are various ways to finance this purchase in line with our Fleet Replacement schedule to find the best overall price, including tagging on to existing competitively bid agreements similar to how we purchased engines in 2019. Staff will analyze to find the best overall deal, make the purchase and its associated purchase agreements, and bring the relevant financial documents back to the Board for approval at a future board meeting.

During budget discussions in May and June 2021, staff discussed setting aside \$250,000 of the one-time surplus funds at year-end to the Fleet Fund to move up some engine purchases to improve fiscal policy regarding repairs on the older engines. These one-time funds were generated by revenue from the 2020 fire season.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Not to exceed \$1,056,000 plus a 10% contingency to purchase one (1) new Pierce Manufacturing All-Steer Type 1 Fire Engine, inclusive of taxes and projected interest charges. This remains within the funding available in the Fleet Fund.