

Lance Baird

Chief Houde & Fire Service Guidance Committee,

I would recommend we go for building Wagner station, staff Zeeb with BC and an engine, staff Wagner with a ladder and the rescue with the goal to achieve this level of service ASAP. As an employee of this Fire Department for the past 12 years we have been neglected and under funded for a very long time (I apologize if any former or current BOT Members feel angered by this).

- This option would give us the ability to staff the Rescue and build a 2nd station on S. Wagner rd. With HVA struggling to maintain an adequate number of ambulances operating daily this option would allow us to provide BLS transport and start to push towards ALS which is what level of medical service we should strive for and offer to the citizens of Scio Township. This option would also give us the staffing to adequality handle majority of our major incidents without relying heavily on our mutual aid departments.
- I also would recommend that we purchase land for a 3rd station on the Northeast corner of Jackson and Baker Rd
- We also should recommend to the board in the next 5 years to locate and purchase land for a station that would replace the current Zeeb Rd station.

Dear Chief Houde,

Thank you for your service and all that you do to improve the Fire Department in Scio Township. I have learned a lot while serving on the Fire Services Guidance Committee. I have especially been impressed with your expertise.

As to the options that have been presented for service improvement, my first choice would be to start with option 1 to fully staff the fire station on Zeeb Road and include a separate ambulance station that would be staffed with emergency personnel rather than fire fighters. This would be followed by proceeding with options 2 and 3.

Bob Groden of our Guidance Committee proposed the separate ambulance station to address the fact that 60% of the calls that come into the fire station are for medical assistance and only 5% are for fires. Such a station is especially important considering the anticipated increase in emergency calls due to falls and other mishaps to seniors that will likely accompany the large increase in elderly population in the senior living buildings that are planned in the immediate future for Scio Township. This has been termed the "silver tsunami." It includes a 156-bed senior care center at Woodview Commons, and a 120-bed assisted living facility plus 82 duplex units and 149 rental units for seniors at Encore at Heritage Woods. Having a separate ambulance service that could take care of many of the 60% ambulance service calls that come into the Fire department makes sense. This entity could be created by Scio Township, or it could be subcontracted to the private sector such as Huron Valley Ambulance. Many issues with this approach were raised at our last meeting including the facts that it takes 2 years to obtain a new ambulance, there is a shortage of EMTs, and a separate building would be needed (e.g., lease an existing structure or build a new building, etc.). These issues are of concern, but I believe this option should be fully explored before it is completely rejected.

My second choice would be option 3, which would be achieved incrementally by starting with option 1 and proceeding to options 2 and 3. Option 3 gives us most of the desired deliverables and performance at a cost of 3.83 mils, which I believe would be acceptable to Scio residents given the improved safety that would result and the possibility of much of this increased cost being covered by a decrease in the price of homeowners insurance with an ISO rating of 3 or 4 instead of the current rating of 6. We would have 2 fire stations instead of 1 with the goal of 2 in /2 out at 100% for the Zeeb station and 90% at Wagner, 6 minute response time from both stations, and BLS and ALS from both. Although option 4 is ultimately desirable, with staff for 3 apparatus instead of 2, and an ISO rating of 2 or 3, the cost of 5 mils would be hard to sell to Scio residents.

To get buy-in from the residents for all of the options, the benefits of the options will have to be clearly explained at a simple level. It is especially important to explain the stepped approach and the review of the improvements achieved and need for additional steps/options before additional millage is approved for each option. That is, we would seek a millage of 3.83 for option 3. However, the stepped approach would start with an initial millage of 1.69 for option 1 for a certain number of years followed by a review by the Scio board of the achievements and need for option 2, which if approved would increase the millage (for option 2) to 3.04 for a number of years, followed by a similar review and assessment of the need for option 3, which if approved would increase the millage (for option 3) to 3.83. The number of years for each step / millage would need to be estimated before this issue appears on the ballot.

Thanks again for all that you do. We are very lucky to have such a devoted public servant in Scio Township.

Sincerely,

Mitch Goodsitt

From: [Robert Groden](#)
To: [Fireservicescommittee](#)
Cc: [Township Board](#); [Robert Groden](#)
Subject: fire committee recommendations
Date: Tuesday, November 22, 2022 1:14:46 PM

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My opinion is we have not completed a thorough analysis, based on the data presented, that warrants a tripling of the millage plus the additional expenditure for the purchase of the additional equipment necessitated by a second fire house.

Facts-

- Less than 5% of calls are fire related
- Approximately 60% are medical related and much of it are minor calls.

If we want to benefit Scio it would be more beneficial and cost effective to investigate ambulance services. We could rent a professional type office building in the southeast part of the Township and staff with an ambulance/ first responder crew. This would greatly improve our response % metric. There is no reason not to thoroughly develop and give this concept a trial period. (We could easily find a layout that allows for a couple of beds in a separate room of the facility if these are required).

The desire to build another firehouse and purchase expensive equipment (including another engine and ladder truck) is just not justified by the data.

I am also skeptical of the need for a full-time training officer, unless that officer is part of the regular fire crew.

We have an obligation to give the Township a recommendation that is both cost effective and improves services that are needed; not just tax and spend.

Bob Groden

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

On Mon, Nov 21, 2022 at 10:34 AM Bob Hyde <robert.allan.hyde@gmail.com> wrote:

All,

Piggy-backing on David Read's recommendation letter, I offer the following:

My priorities for the various goals we discussed for our Fire Services Department are as follows:

- 1.a Fully staff Zeeb Rd Station. This gets the 2-in/2-out at a fire scene, plus a full time Training Officer.
- 1.b Build, staff and equip Wagner Rd Station. This gets the response times down toward the desired levels.
2. Identify/purchase property for a third station in the NE quadrant of Scio Twp
3. Identify/purchase property for relocation of Zeeb Rd Station to the west/SW of Scio Twp

I recommend we begin both 1.a and 1.b simultaneously, from the beginning. Accomplishing this would require a flip in our thinking, from "ramping up" the millage over the years to "stepping down" the millage. Not all the cost will come in at once, so we may not need to levy the whole 4.0 rate we have been discussing at the beginning, but would need to levy higher than the 1.75 mills merely going after the staffing requires. Mark could run the numbers for us, but perhaps levying 3.25 mills the first 3 or so years would allow for the Zeeb staffing increase, the design and start of the Wagner construction costs, and the order/purchase of the trucks for the Wagner Station once we initiate construction. If the 3.25 mills is the right calculation, this could take us to the point in the future where we only need to hire the Wagner Station personnel, continue to pay off the build of this station and plan for the future 3rd station. At this point we would be able to reduce the levy to the residents to meet those projected costs.

I realize that we haven't discussed this funding strategy yet, but the top priorities are both staffing and stations. They address separate issues that are both needed ASAP. If we set the millage rate properly, we would have the funding needed to initiate 1.a and 1.b right away. Once we have accumulated enough of a reserve while paying for these priorities, we could reduce the levied millage for the rest of the life of the millage.

Even if calculations show the above scenario for funding needs changes to make it work out, my listed priorities are what I would recommend.

Bob Hyde

MEMORANDUM

TO: CHIEF ANDREW HOUDE
FROM: MARK PERRY
CC: FIRE SERVICES GUIDANCE COMMITTEE
DATE: NOVEMBER 20, 2022
SUBJECT: SUGGESTED FIRE SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

The purpose of the Scio Fire Services Guidance Committee ("SFSGC") is to evaluate the Fire Chiefs' suggested service improvements and make a recommendation to the Township Board of the Trustees.

The SFSGC was directed to research and make findings on the following subjects:

1. Which preferred service improvement(s) plan would meet the needs of the citizens of Scio Township;
2. any recommendation should include a statement of how long might the service improvement plan meet the needs of the community;
3. what would be an estimated ongoing personnel cost for any recommendation(s); and,
4. what would be a needed millage rate to support any recommendation(s).

Chief Houde presented (4) service plan options that were additive in nature increasingly building on services from option to option as Scio continues to grow. Unfortunately, it was difficult to accurately predict and forecast new housing and commercial building starts beyond the known starts currently under construction and pending before the planning commission. The following table summarizes the first-year cost and capital expenditure estimates in today's dollars.

Intentionally left blank.

	Option #1	Option #1.25	Option #1.5	Option #2		Option #3		Option #4	
Station	Zeeb	Zeeb	Zeeb	Zeeb	Wagner	Zeeb	Wagner	Zeeb	Wagner
Timeline	1.5 yr, 4/2024	2.5 yr, 4/2025	2.5 yr, 4/2025	3.5-4.5 yr, 4/2026-2027		5.5-6.5 yr, 4/2028-2029		7.5-8.5 yr, 4/2030-2031	
Overall Hires	4 in 24	6 in 24, 3 in 25	6 in 24, 3 in 25	6 in 26	6 in 27	6 in 28	3 in 29	6 in 30	7 in 31
Total Response Hires by Station	12	18	18	18	24	30	33	39	45
Total Hires /1	12	18	18		42		63		84
Payroll (millions)									
Response	\$1.639	\$2.827	\$2.827	\$1.639	\$1.617	\$2.035	\$2.398	\$2.035	\$4.004
Admin	\$0.330	\$0.330	\$0.330		\$0.303		\$0.303		\$0.303
Prevention	\$0.175	\$0.175	\$0.175		\$0.175		\$0.175		\$0.250
Admin & Prevention	\$0.505	\$0.505	\$0.505	\$0.505		\$0.505		\$0.580	
Total Payroll by Station	\$2.649	\$3.837	\$3.837	\$2.144	\$2.095	\$2.540	\$2.876	\$2.616	\$4.557
Total Payroll /1	\$2.649	\$3.837	\$3.837		\$4.239		\$5.416		\$7.173
Est. Payroll Millage /2	1.783	2.583	2.583		2.854		3.646		4.829
Operating Expenses by Station	\$0.210	\$0.210	\$0.210	\$0.210	\$0.210	\$0.210	\$0.210	\$0.210	\$0.230
Total Operating Expenses /1	\$0.210	\$0.210	\$0.210		\$0.420		\$0.420		\$0.440
Est. Operating Expenses Millage /2	0.141	0.141	0.141		0.283		0.283		0.296
Reserve for Replacement									
Vehicles	\$0.111	\$0.111	\$0.111	\$0.098	\$0.171	\$0.098	\$0.171	\$0.098	\$0.195
Equipment	\$0.050	\$0.050	\$0.050	\$0.050	\$0.050	\$0.050	\$0.050	\$0.050	\$0.075

	Option #1	Option #1.25	Option #1.5	Option #2		Option #3		Option #4	
Station	Zeeb	Zeeb	Zeeb	Zeeb	Wagner	Zeeb	Wagner	Zeeb	Wagner
Vehicle & Equipment	\$0.016	\$0.016	\$0.016	\$0.016		\$0.016		\$0.024	
Reserve for Replacement by Station	\$0.177	\$0.177	\$0.177	\$0.164	\$0.221	\$0.164	\$0.221	\$0.172	\$0.270
Total Reserve for Replacement /1	\$0.177	\$0.177	\$0.177		\$0.385		\$0.385		\$0.442
Est. Reserve for Replacement Millage /2	0.119	0.119	0.119		0.259		0.259		0.2988
Total Est. Overall Payroll & Operating Cost	\$3.036	\$4.224	\$4.224		\$5.044		\$6.221		\$8.055
Est. Overall Payroll & Operating Millage /2	2.044	2.844	2.844		3.396		4.188		5.423
Capital Expenditure									
Vehicles & Equipment					\$2.770			\$0.871	
Building Improvements		\$0.217	\$2.000		\$6.500				
Start-Up Capital				\$0.070	\$2.700				\$0.871
Furnishings /3	\$0.070	\$0.070	\$0.070		\$0.150		\$0.150		\$0.150
Station #3 Land Bank	\$0.440	\$0.440	\$0.440	\$0.440					
CapEx Request Including \$0.075 Principal, Excluding \$1.5 mil. Loan Payoff by Station	\$0.510	\$0.727	\$2.510	\$0.510	\$12.120		\$0.150	\$0.871	\$1.021
Total CapEx Request	\$0.510	\$0.727	\$2.510		\$12.630		\$0.150		\$1.892

	Option #1	Option #1.25	Option #1.5	Option #2		Option #3		Option #4	
Station	Zeeb	Zeeb	Zeeb	Zeeb	Wagner	Zeeb	Wagner	Zeeb	Wagner
Total CapEx Request Millage, Excluding \$1.5 mil. Loan Payoff /2	0.343	0.489	1.690		8.502		0.101		1.274
Loan Pay-Off	\$1.500	\$1.500	\$1.500	\$1.500					
Loan Pay-Off Millage /2	1.010	1.010	1.010	1.010					
Total Payroll, Operating, CapEx & Loan Payoff	\$4.054	\$5.071	\$6.854		\$17.526		\$5.838		\$8.815
Total Payroll, Operating & Loan Payoff Millage	2.729	3.414	4.614		11.798		3.930		5.934

Notes:

/1 Figures supplied by Chief Houde, may vary slightly from estimates used by SFGC forecast.

/2 Total 2022 real property taxable value from ad valorem and special acts report posted on Scio Assessor. Total 2022 BOR Taxable Value = \$1.485 billion. Total real property parcels, 6,753; total improved residential real property parcels, ~5,859'; total improved all classed, 6,085; total vacant parcels, 668.

/3 Chief Houde's CapEx excludes fire station furnishings, Opt. #1.25-Opt. #1.5 estimated cost ~\$70,000; Opt. #2-Opt. #4 ~\$150,000.

While it was generally agreed that eventually the citizens of Scio will demand all of the services Chief Houde recommends in Option #4, given the data available, it was difficult to forecast when Scio may need Option #4 services to come online. Option #3 was also difficult to forecast when these option levels of service should come online.

Regardless of when #3 and #4 services will be needed, they can be better judged over time as it takes time to adopt and continuously improve a 10-15 year long-range plan to achieve the deliverable goals of:

1. Meet 2-in, 2-out fire safety standard;
2. response time of less than 6 minutes;

3. staff the department with a full-time Training Officer;
4. reduce current ISO 6-rating (10 for the "corners") to a 4 and possibly 3;
5. achieve Basic Life Support ("BLS") transport status; and,
6. achieve Advanced Life Support ("ALS") transport status.

One component of all the options that was certain and agreeable by all committee members ("CM") was that within 10 to 15 years, Scio will need a 3rd and possibly a 4th fire station and should land bank the ideal site now in Option #1 or #2.

At the rate of present growth in the northeast quarter section (sec. 1-3, 10-15), a site should be land banked within the next 1-3 years followed by land banking a site in the southwest quarter section of Scio (sec. 19-21,28-33). Land banking now will increase the probability of identifying an ideally suitable strategic site while land is vacant and available as well as priced in today's dollars.

The CM's had a healthy discussion addressing current and foreseeable future needs. Chief Houde presented a 2-year lookback on types and frequency of incident services calls. The data showed that 55%-60% of all calls were of EMS in nature and the remaining 40%-45% were of varying fire service-related incidents in nature. I believe there was general recognition that with the continued population growth and aging of Scio's citizenry, the rate EMS call incidence will continue to grow and continued enforcement of fire building code, fire incidence may stabilize or flatten at current levels.

With that being said, I support the proposed concept of taking immediate action of:

1. fully staffing the Zeeb Station as recommended by Chief Houde meeting the 2 in-2 out fire fighter standard;
2. hiring a dedicated training officer; and,
3. fully staffing the Zeeb Station with a EMS unit cross-trained as fire fighters to operate a rescue transport unit at basic life support ("BLS") levels and eventually attaining advanced lifesaving ("ALS") transport ability level.

Option #1.5 does move close to achieving bullet points 1-3 above, but comes with bricks and mortar problem as the Zeeb facility does not have sufficient square footage to accommodate the required staffing during a standard 24-hour shift. Consequently, an additional ~2,000 sq.ft. would have to be constructed on to the recently completed \$3.6 million renovation of Zeeb. The estimated cost to add on to the Zeeb facility would be in the \$2,000,000+/- range. It is my belief investing anymore capital into this building would not be prudent at this time.

In the short-term until the Wagner Station is constructed, an Option #1.25 might be considered as a short-term solution to achieve bullets 1-3 above.

Option #1.25 would utilize the existing approximate 1,800 sq.ft. office area at the Zeeb Station currently occupied by the Washtenaw County Sheriff as its substation in Scio. I estimate the cost to convert this space into needed administrative, training, and dorm rooms might be ~\$300,000+/-.

I have not been able to locate the Scio/Sheriff service agreement so I'm not aware if Scio is contractually obligated to provide office space in Scio or does Scio currently provide space in Scio out of professional courtesy. CM's should better understand the Sheriff's office space arrangement with Scio at the Zeeb Station.

It should be understood, I support Option #1.25 over #1.5 as a lower cost alternative with a relatively short execution period relative to Option #2 which will be a longer-term for design, funding, and build. And, of course Option #2 comes with a higher immediate price tag.

Construction of the Wagner Station is inevitable as without this SE Scio location, Scio will be unable to meet this first-step toward a 6-minute response time standard and achieve the desired ISO rating of 4 or lower rating of 3.

Addressing the approximate ramp-up time each of the 4-options may take to serve the needs of Scio citizens, the table above identifies it may take from as little as 1-1.5 year for Option #1 from approval by Scio voters to as long as 8-9 years for Option #4. It is with fair certainty; Option #2 construction of the Wagner Station will be at a minimum of a 4-5 year look out before possession and operation. The unknown variables in any of the plans is availability of fire safety labor force, lead time on building materials, lead time on fire safety vehicles and equipment. One or all of these variable factors could delay possession and operation by 1 or more years in the current economy.

The estimated cost of personnel starting at Option #1 which is fully staffing Zeeb, might be as much as \$3.9 million in the first year, Option #2 once the Wagner Station is complete and staffed may be as much as \$4.2 million. See the table above for personnel cost for each of the 4-options.

One of the BOT's directives was to project estimated operating cost and capital expenditure request needs, also known as "cash flow" forecast, is very difficult to accurately forecast due to the numerous variable assumptions required in an unstable inflationary economy. The SFSGC did undertake an initiative to forecast operating cost and CapEx over a 10-year period from 2024 to 2033. These multiple scenario forecasts are available on Scio website for review and comment. Also see the table above.

However, before the multiple 10-year cash flow and millage rate forecasts can be considered reliable source documents by documents by Scio citizens and the BOT, I recommend the SFSGC, Chief Houde and his executive staff, carefully scrutinize the financial model assumptions and

projections as the modeling was developed by myself with no experience with Scio's Fire 206 Fund, general ledger chart of accounts, and actual "t-accounting" policies.

Specific to the CapEx requirements, it should be understood the accuracy of the cost estimate is directly dependent upon: 1) final approved design; 2) material and labor cost 1 to 2-years from authorization to proceed with any of the options; and, 3) final cost to implement any plan won't be known until after the RFP's have been sent to contractors for bid and "not to exceed" bids have be returned and evaluated.

Specific to the maximum authorized fire SAD millage rate, I recommend the operating and Capex millage rate be high enough so that the combination Scio real property taxable value base and maximum authorized rate generate sufficient net operating revenue year-over-year so that the fire fund does not have to depend on limited general law 1-mill unrestricted general fund appropriations to balance the restricted fire fund.

To that end, I recommend the fire SAD ballot initiative language include a statement authorizing up to a yet to be determined maximum levy rate including language that requires the BOT to annually set the ensuing budget year levy at a level to not-to-exceed 9-months cash reserves. In order accommodate unforeseen financial circumstances, the ballot language should also permit the BOT authorize a not-to-exceed fire fund cash reserve of no more than 100% of annual operating expenses plus annual debt service within a (5) year-over-year period supported by demonstrated just cause by the fire chief and township manager.

I look forward to discussing my observations at our meeting over the next couple of weeks leading up to a unified recommendation to the BOT in January.

Mark

DT: 11/18/22

FR: David Read

TO: Chief Houde

CC: Fire Services Committee

Thoughts on the STFD improvement plan...

I have been involved with the STFD in one way or another for the last 18 – 20 years. Over that time, I've seen the Department grow but not in proportion to the Township. For years we have had the need of, and the property for, a second fire station but have ignored that need as well as the Fire Department staff and the Zeeb Road Fire Station (Station 1). We recently renovated Station 1 but the result has been a hobbling of the Department's ability to adequately serve the Township. The "loan" of \$1.5M must be expunged immediately.

With the current size of the Township and the projected growth in just the next few years (i.e.: properties already under construction), the need for a second station is now urgent. We have been kicking the can down the road for far too long – now is the time to build, equip and staff Station 2 (Wagner Road).

I am not in favor of creating a separate branch of the STFD dedicated to performing only medical calls. As we learned the other day, this model has been tried by several departments and has been abandoned by most if not all, with Detroit being the latest department to do so. HVA is a separate "branch" and is struggling to maintain staff and response time. How could we expect to do better? One of the factors behind this thought is the desire to reduce cost. But the Fire Department is not a business to be managed by the bottom line. It provides a service to the Township – a service that protects property and, more importantly, saves lives.

Secondly, changing our model to be an all-encompassing Public Safety Department would be a mistake. The residents wouldn't vote for it, the structure is more expensive to manage, staffing might be problematic, and the size of the Township does not warrant it.

Chief Houde has laid out a multi-year, 4-step plan to grow the Department to a size that would eliminate the various service issues the Department faces today as follows:

1. Ability to provide 2in/2out coverage on a structure fire only 35% of the time

2. Response time of less than 6 minutes only 40% of the calls
3. Lack of a full-time Training Officer
4. Current ISO rating is 6 for most of the Township and 10 for the "corners"
5. Not licensed to provide Life Support Transport

The multi-step plan developed by the committee provides for an approach to bring the Department up to the staffing level needed to solve nearly all of the above issues. I would propose that we recommend to the Board a 3-step program as follows:

1. Fully staff Station 1 – 1.75 mills (an increase of 0.4 mills from today).
2. Begin to build/staff /equip Station 2 – 3.25 mills (additional 1.5 mills)
3. Expand Station 2 - 4.0 mills (additional 0.75 mills)

This could be accomplished by multi-step millage request spread out over the first 7 years of the 10 year millage as follows:

- 2023 - 2025: 1.75 mills
- 2026 - 2028 – 3.25 mills
- 2029 - 2033 – 4 mills

And, once again, the Board must expunge the \$1.5M "loan" immediately. To do otherwise punishes the Fire Department and, by extension, the residents of the Township, most of whom vote.



Ryan Yapple

Good afternoon,

I would select Build Wagner, staff Zeeb with BC (1) and engine (3), Wagner with ladder (3) and rescue (2) daily. We were tasked to answer our four questions in our charge and I feel that this service improvement would be the preferred plan to meet the needs of the citizens of Scio Township. Having Zeeb fully staff with the ability to respond 2 in/2 out should be our first priority. Following this, we must begin working on our response times to citizens. The next step should be the design/build for the Wagner fire station. This process should start as soon as possible once the millage has been passed by the voters. This service level plan would likely service the needs of the township for the next 7-10 years. I agree that we also must plan and purchase a future fire station site for a replacement for Zeeb no later than 12/31/2025. This allows for millage revenue to be captured and site selection to occur before Jackson Road/Baker Road is completely developed.

After reviewing the projections prepared by Mark Perry as well as predicting future growth in the townships tax base, I would recommend we also begin at a higher millage. As a business owner and fiscally minded individual, I do not recommend this lightly. I believe we can further review/discuss the numbers to ensure they are correct, however, a 4 mill levy for the first 3 years does seem to support the capital and operating costs of our Scio Township Fire Department. I would suggest a limiting ordinance as suggested by Clerk Flintoft at our November 16th meeting. This would allow for our millage to be reduced to meet the continued operating needs after construction, equipment/vehicle purchasing and one time startup expenses are complete. It would also ensure prudent fiscal management so that we are funding our department but not placing a burden on our taxpayers.

If we move forward with staffing Zeeb and Wagner as suggested the estimated cost yearly is between 5.4 million and 6 million dollars annually.