

Fire / EMS Organizational Evaluation

Discussion of MRI Recommendations

ORIGINAL MRI PRESENTATION

MAY 31, 2022

DISCUSSION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

JULY 18, 2022 (TODAY)

NEXT COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

AFTER LABOR DAY, 2022

MRI Report & Presentation (5/31)



The screenshot shows the official website for the Town of Holliston, Massachusetts. The header includes the town's seal and name, a Facebook icon, a language selection dropdown, and a search bar. Below the header is a navigation menu with links for Community Profile, Town Links, Departments, Boards & Committees, and FAQs. A "Find it!" button is also present. The main content area features a left sidebar with a list of links and a main section titled "2021-2022 Project Study Reports & Information".

Community Profile **Town Links** **Departments** **Boards & Committees** **FAQs** **Find it!**

Alcoholic Beverage License Information
Annual Town Report
Cemeteries (Historic Town)
Citizens Guide to Town Meetings
Community Notification Information
Holliston Traffic Rules and Orders
One Day Alcohol License
One Day Alcohol Permit
Open Meeting Law

Home » [Boards & Committees](#) » [Select Board](#)

2021-2022 Project Study Reports & Information

Fire and EMS Services Study

[MRI's Fire and EMS Services Study Report](#)

[MRI's Fire and EMS Presentation to Select Board \(5/31/22\)](#)

Progress Reporting for July 18, 2022

Review and response work to-date comes from below Department Heads:

1. Operations: Chief Cassidy, Fire Chief & Emergency Management Director
2. Personnel:
Kathleen Buckley, ATA / HR Director
Mary Bousquet, Treasurer/Collector (Payroll)
3. Facilities: James Keast, Facilities Manager
4. Technology: Chris Meo, IT Director
5. Budget: Travis Ahern, Town Administrator

Overarching Themes

Community decisions that will impact response/outcome of multiple MRI recommendations

- 1. Advanced Life Support (ALS):** Community support required to set goal of ALS service-level for Ambulance/EMS
 - Personnel & Equipment Costs being analyzed for ALS vs. BLS
 - Pursuant to community support, timeline and benchmarking of transition
- 2. Assistant Chief Position:** Community discussion needed prior to development of job description
 - MRI recommendation is to have this individual as the #2 on Fire, and oversee EMS
- 3. Facilities:** Prior to further investment in current facilities, community discussion of options for new/consolidated facilities
 - 5-Year CIP assumes current facility portfolio
- 4. Dispatch (Organization-wide):** Tie MRI and Collins Center recommendations together
 - Consolidation of dispatch at PD would impact facilities needs at Central Fire

1. ALS vs. BLS

MRI Recommendations VIII-1 to VIII-22 (pages 60-62)

1. Schedule visit with OEMS inspectors to discuss benchmarks with Town officials
2. EMS compensation beta test (90 day period – July 1 to Sept. 28, 2022)
3. Development of Job Description for EMS Supervisor (next slide)

Three (3) Options for Holliston to consider:

1. Status Quo – Basic Life Support (BLS) / incremental changes
2. Obtaining Advanced Life Support (ALS) licensure
3. Outsourcing to private ambulance (loss of revenue)

2. Assistant Chief Position

MRI Related Recommendations:

- VI-2 (page 43): Fire Dispatch – MRI recommends position to oversee EMD
- VII-12 (page 50): Fire Services – Work with Chief in all Fire/EMS items, and succession planning
- VIII-3 (page 60): EMS Services – MRI recommends position would require paramedic certification
- VIII-4 (page 60): EMS Services – Create/oversee pool of per diem paramedics
- VIII-8 (page 60): EMS Services – Quality assurance for PCRs and refusal forms (or 3rd party)
- X-4 (page 74): Budget & HR – MRI estimates ALS billing could offset 50% of cost of position

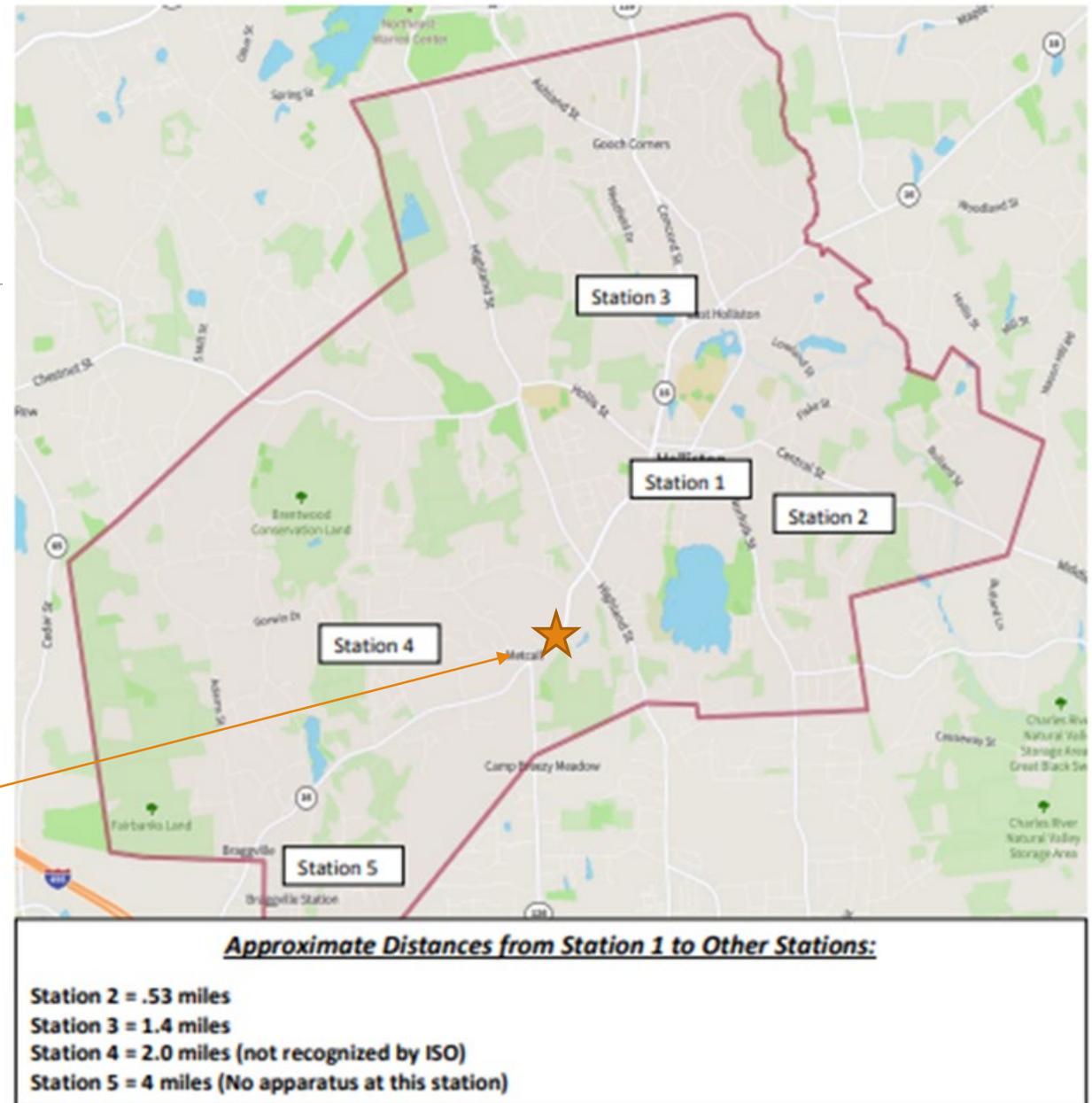
3. Facilities

5-Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
based on current facility envelope

MRI recommends consolidation which
would impact 5-Year CIP (IV-6)

MRI recommends end of rental at Engine 4
located in Pope Industrial (IV-5)

Cross Street (Previous
Axton-Cross Location)



4. Dispatch

MRI Recommendations VI-1 through VI-12

Prior to MRI, Holliston agreed to a E-911 funded study (done by Collins Center) looking at regional dispatch solutions with 5 other communities: Medfield, Medway, Millis, Dover, Sherborn.

General Findings of Collins Center:

1. Study did not support new regional PSAP for these six (6) communities (or any combination)
2. Study recommends pursuing existing RECCs (Holbrook, Metacomet, Foxborough)

Three (3) Options for Holliston to consider:

1. **Status Quo:** HPD dispatch located at Police Station; HFD/EMS Dispatch located at Central Fire
2. **Consolidated Dispatch:** HFD/EMS Dispatch moves to Police Station
3. **Join Existing RECC:** State 911 grant opportunities for operating/capital costs; a Town selection of RECC would commit Holliston for long-term

Note: 1 & 2 require capital investment in records management software, and other instrumentation upgrades (HPD & HFD)

Assignment of Target Dates for Implementation of Recommendations (1)

List of Recommendations not supported by staff:

Facilities/Equipment:

1. Fleet & Vehicle Placement: IV-3, IV-14, IV-15 (boats, dive truck, ambulance placement changes)
2. Facility Consolidation: IV-5, IV-6 (previous slide)

Incident Response:

1. 24/7 Staffing for Fire: V-1, V-3, VIII-21
2. Single Response (Fire): V-4, VII-18, IX-9

List of Recommendations under review by staff & Labor Counsel:

Budget and HR:

1. Training Compensation change for Fire/EMS: X-7
2. 65+ Age Restriction: X-10
 - Fire
 - EMS

Assignment of Target Dates for Implementation of Recommendations (2)

Progress Updates on Recommendations:

Facilities/Equipment:

1. Central Fire accommodations for 24/7 EMS staffing: IV-1, IV-2
2. Facilities Improvements: see Facilities Manager memo (Town website) for info on IV-1 through IV-16

Fire/EMS Services:

1. Standard Operation Procedures (SOP): VII-8, VII-10, VII-11
2. Post EMS policies to web: VIII-2

Progress Updates on Recommendations:

Staffing:

1. Pay Equity – EMS (90 Day Beta): V-2
2. Minimum Criteria Policy: V-5, VII-19, IX-10, X-8
3. Safety Officer Development: VII-7, IX-3, IX-23

Next Steps

1. MRI Report to Select Board: May 31, 2022
2. Staff Follow Up to Select Board: July 18, 2022
3. SB Chair / TA Discussion with Fire/EMS Officers: August 2022
4. Community Forum Discussion: Post-Labor Day
5. Fall Town Meeting Warrant Close: End of Sept. 2022
6. Fall Town Meeting: Oct. 17, 2022

Tracking document (with Facilities Manager memo) to be posted to the Town's website and updated with next appropriate check-in period.

MRI Recommendations for Fire/EMS Operational Changes (May 31, 2022)
Staff Updates to Select Board (July 18, 2022)
Next Reporting Date to Select Board

July 19, 2022

Recommendation ID - Description	Page	Section	Primary Assignment	Secondary Assignment	July 18,2022 Update	Next Reporting Date
T1 IV - 1: Central Station needs to be cleaned up, and items not needed on a daily basis should be moved to a dry storage area such as Station 5. Many outdated items need to be disposed of following procedures (donated to training institutions or destroyed).	29	Facilities	Fire Chief	Facilities Manager	Process begun; dumpsters utilized and storage being priced	9/30/2022
T2 IV - 2: Central Station second floor could be modified to reasonably accommodate a day room, bunk rooms, shower facilities and office space.	29	Facilities	Facilities Manager	Fire Chief	Additional sleeping furniture acquired; see memo from Facilities Manager	9/30/2022
T3 IV - 3: Evaluate all the space at the Central Station for better apparatus placement by moving some equipment (boat) to other spaces or Station 5.	29	Facilities	Fire Chief	Facilities Manager	Relocating boats would cause significant delays in response time for water-based emergencies / Select Board soliciting additional feedback	9/15/2022
T4 IV - 4: All stations need to be cleaned and fully evaluated for proper safe working environment.	29	Facilities	Facilities Manager	Fire Chief	See memo from Facilities Manager	10/31/2022
T5 IV - 5: Renting of space for Engine 4 should stop. The engine should be located in a Town owned space. Once the door at Station 2 is repaired, this may be feasible.	29	Facilities	Fire Chief	Facilities Manager	FD has requested garage on Cross Street once taken for tax title. Relocating Engine 4 to Foundry would cause significant response delays to west end of town.	9/15/2022
T6 IV-6: The Town should consider a new location and combine two or three stations into one new location. The new area should be large enough for future department staffing 24/7. The MRI team was shown a potential spot located at the Former Axton Cross facility that is in a good location and of the proper size. It is thought that Stations 2, 4 and 5 could be combined.	29	Facilities	Facilities Manager	Town Administrator	Fire Chief does not agree with consolidating substations; that would negatively impact response times / Select Board soliciting additional feedback	9/15/2022
T7 IV - 7: Station 1 roof leak on apparatus floor should be repaired.	30	Facilities	Facilities Manager		See memo from Facilities Manager	10/31/2022
T8 IV - 8: All stations should be evaluated and have exhaust removal systems installed in all areas where there is apparatus and equipment.	30	Facilities	Facilities Manager	Fire Chief	See memo from Facilities Manager	10/31/2022
T9 IV - 9: All stations should be evaluated for proper fire/smoke/CO alarm detection and be monitored to protect the Town's assets.	30	Facilities	Facilities Manager	Fire Chief	See memo from Facilities Manager	10/31/2022
T10 IV - 10: Station 2 door repairs should be expedited and door eyes should be installed to prevent door from moving when there is something in the way.	30	Facilities	Facilities Manager	Fire Chief	See memo from Facilities Manager	10/31/2022
T11 IV - 11: All stations should be evaluated to allow for proper restroom facilities, decontamination areas, and clean and dirty storage areas.	30	Facilities	Facilities Manager	Fire Chief	See memo from Facilities Manager; gear extractors at Central and E. Holliston substation	10/31/2022
T12 IV - 12: The empty bay of Station 5 should be converted into a shelved storage area for essential supplies. This would include developing shelving along the exterior walls and rear of the structure and moving the trailer into the center of the two bays.	30	Facilities	Facilities Manager	Fire Chief	See memo from Facilities Manager	10/31/2022
T13 IV - 13: All stations should have adequate backup emergency power for heat, lighting and door opening capabilities.	30	Facilities	Facilities Manager	Fire Chief	See memo from Facilities Manager	10/31/2022
T14 IV - 14: Evaluate the need for keeping three ambulances in service. Most communities of the size and call volume of Holliston keep two ambulances. Based on Holliston's abilities for EMS staffing, reducing the number will have little, if any, impact.	36	Equipment	Fire Chief		Fire Chief does not agree with reducing the number of ambulances in the fleet / Select Board soliciting additional feedback	9/15/2022
T15 IV - 15: Evaluate the need to keep two boats in one station. To free up space at Central Station, consider moving one boat and the dive truck to Station 5.	36	Equipment	Fire Chief		See note on IV-3. Dive truck won't fit at Station 5, and relocating it there would cause significant delays in response time for water-based emergencies / Select Board soliciting additional feedback	9/15/2022

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T16 IV - 16: When creating/reviewing a capital plan, do a true needs assessment for the number of vehicles and the actual needs and call volume. Just because the Town has it today, does it need to have it today and in the future? The overall number of apparatus is high compared to other call departments with similar incident volume.	36	Equipment	Fire Chief		Within the last few years, FD decreased overall number of vehicles in the fleet - when it took Tanker 1 OOS, it was not replaced. Current inventory is based not just on run volume, but also geographic distribution.	2/1/2023
T17 V - 1: Assure proper staffing is scheduled 24/7 for fire incidents. A single crew for fire-based operations should consist of an officer and 2 or 3 certified firefighters that are available to handle the first call.	41	Incident Response	Fire Chief		There is always a duty officer scheduled. The remainder of a first-due response is based on nature and location, and not scheduled. / Select Board soliciting additional feedback	9/15/2022
T18 V - 2: The primary ambulance should be staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with staff at the station. Others should be on-call for times when additional staff is needed or when a second ambulance needs to be staffed.	41	Incident Response	Fire Chief		Implemented a 90-day ambulance compensation beta test July-Sept 2022 in an effort to strive for 24/7 coverage	9/28/2022
T19 V - 3: When station is staffed with one person and second is on duty from home, have the ambulance respond with a driver only and meet the second person on scene.	41	Incident Response	Fire Chief		Some personnel do respond directly to the scene, and meet the ambulance on scene / Select Board soliciting additional feedback	9/15/2022
T20 V - 4: Stop a single person investigating an incident and then calling for resources. A single engine (at a minimum) should respond on all CO, gas, wires down, MVA, and alarm investigations (with no immediate phone call to cancel). Running a single person is a very dangerous practice. Refer to Section IX of this document for the "two-in/two-out" rule.	41	Incident Response	Fire Chief		Calls are screened by the dispatchers, and resources are dispatched based on info available from the caller. Not all calls require more than a single person response. / Select Board soliciting additional feedback	9/15/2022
T21 V - 5: Set and publish minimum criteria for active participation and ramifications for not meeting the minimums. A large roster is a false sense of security, and only people with proper training and skills that are dedicated (attend training and incidents) should be active.	41	Incident Response	Fire Chief	HR Director	Minimum Requirement for "Active" Classification Policy to be developed (impacts benefit eligibility)	10/31/2022
T22 VI - 1: There should be a single person who is a working supervisor for Dispatch that reports to the Fire Chief. This person should be handling all aspects of scheduling and operations within Dispatch.	43	Fire Dispatch	Fire Chief	HR Director	Related to implementation of Collins Center recommendations	12/31/2022
T23 VI - 2: The Department should obtain proper training and certification for EMD. EMD could be supervised by the Assistant Chief (new position) who should also be charged with EMS.	43	Fire Dispatch	Fire Chief	HR Director	The dispatchers are certified as EMD. During the APCO audit in the spring, one of the senior dispatcher was designated and received training as an EMD Manager, to track compliance with training and certification of other dispatchers moving forward.	3/15/2023
T24 VI - 3: The Department should transition all operations to a cloud-based CAD and records management system (RMS) and use this program "real time" for all incidents.	44	Fire Dispatch	Fire Chief	IT Director	Evaluating software options; related to implementation of Collins Center recommendations.	12/31/2022
T25 VI - 4: The cloud-based RMS system should incorporate pre-planning documents in a dispatch records management system that dispatchers can access.	44	Fire Dispatch	Fire Chief	IT Director	Evaluating software options; related to implementation of Collins Center recommendations. Looking at a different software being used and evaluated by other communities in the region.	12/31/2022
T26 VI - 5: The Department should add tablet-based mobile data and pre-planning capabilities to all "first due" apparatus.	44	Fire Dispatch	Fire Chief	IT Director	Evaluating software and hardware options; related to implementation of Collins Center recommendations.	12/31/2022

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T27 VI - 6: The dispatchers should be operating with a set of Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs). These will need to be developed and incorporated into training and operations.	44	Fire Dispatch	Fire Chief		Protocols to be reviewed and updated	9/30/2022
T28 VI - 7: There should be a constant review of dispatchers and a quality assurance program implemented for them that follows the same guidance as EMD.	44	Fire Dispatch	Fire Chief		See note on VI-2.	3/15/2023
T29 VI - 8: A procedure should be put into place that allows the dispatcher to be covered for a break and use of the restroom. Currently there are no remote capabilities to accommodate the human and biological needs of dispatch personnel.	44	Fire Dispatch	Fire Chief	HR Director	Related to implementation of Collins Center recommendations	12/31/2022
T30 VI - 9: The Department contact list is reportedly extremely outdated and must be updated with current 24/7 contact information.	44	Fire Dispatch	Fire Chief	HR Director	A shared RMS with police would partially address this issue; contact info is shared between public safety answering points.	12/31/2022
T31 VI-10: A formal dispatcher training program should be created that documents benchmarks and requires mentors/trainers to sign off on.	44	Fire Dispatch	Fire Chief	HR Director	Related to implementation of Collins Center recommendations	12/31/2022
T32 VI -11: The Department should begin to utilize "IamResponding" or a similar first response technology platform.	44	Fire Dispatch	Fire Chief	IT Director	Some companies already use this software. License comes up for renewal in the fall. Chief asked that billing and system administrator for <i>IaR</i> be changed at that time.	12/31/2022
T33 VI-12 Displays for the "IamResponding" or a similar system should be installed on the apparatus floor of every active station.	44	Fire Dispatch	Fire Chief	IT Director	Not all stations have internet access; making real-time displays a challenge at substations.	2/15/2023
T34 VII - 1: The HFD should develop a five-year plan to enhance training and proper documentation that is housed in a cloud-based records management system.	49	Fire Services	Fire Chief	IT Director	Training is coordinated by company-based training officers. Platforms exist that can track training modules completed; modeling budget impact.	2/15/2023
T35 VII - 2: With input from officers, there should be a formal Fire and EMS five-year capital plan that is reviewed annually with the Town, and adjustments made based on changing department needs.	49	Fire Services	Fire Chief	Town Administrator	FD capital requests are incorporated into Town's existing 5 Year CIP	June 2023
T36 VII - 3: The HFD should conduct a thorough Community Risk Assessment and use the assessment as a tool to move the Department into the future. Over the next year, a plan should be developed to utilize strengths to pursue opportunities and address weaknesses while mitigating threats. This should be an ongoing process that has member involvement and is moved forward by the officer core.	49	Fire Services	Fire Chief	Town Administrator	CRA is part of the budget development process.	2/15/2023
T37 VII - 4: The HFD should review and or develop a mission, slogan and values that reflect the department and should use these as a basis to educate the community.	49	Fire Services	Fire Chief	Town Administrator	Focusing on other initiatives at this time / Need understood, priority order	9/15/2022
T38 VII - 5: The HFD should develop a formal recruiting program that targets younger people who will be in town for many years.	50	Fire Services	Fire Chief	HR Director	Applied for AFG grant for formal recruitment and retention program. Was not awarded grant in last cycle. Can apply again.	2/28/2023
T39 VII - 6: The Department should be an active participant in Fire District 14 in attendance at meetings as well as on the many other regional opportunities.	50	Fire Services	Fire Chief		Time limitations currently preclude regular attendance at D14 meetings. FY24 goal.	7/1/2023
T40 VII - 7: Create a Safety Officer position for both training and incident response.	50	Fire Services	Fire Chief	HR Director	Exploring an Incident Safety Officer train-the-trainer initiative with a neighboring department; to facilitate multiple individuals being equipped to fill that role at an incident. HR to support development of job description	10/31/2022

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T41 VII - 8: Mandate proper wearing of all PPE at incidents and training.	50	Fire Services	Fire Chief	HR Director	See note on VII-11	8/15/2022
T42 VII - 9: Bring on staff who may work full-time elsewhere that could enhance training and response capabilities.	50	Fire Services	Fire Chief	HR Director	See note on V-5. Many members already work F/T in other public safety agencies.	2/15/2023
T43 VII - 10: Create an SOP work group to review drafted SOPs and create new SOPs that document the way the department operates. Once developed, begin to publish and train all members on SOPs.	50	Fire Services	Fire Chief	HR Director	See note on VII-11	8/15/2022
T44 VII - 11: Create a set of published rules and regulations.	50	Fire Services	Fire Chief	Town Administrator	SOP working group met in the past. Policies are under review by the Chief and can be issued within 30 days	8/15/2022
T45 VII - 12: Create a full-time Assistant Chief position (or other titled high ranking officer) to work with Chief in all Fire and EMS items as part of a succession plan.	50	Fire Services	Fire Chief	HR Director	Fire Chief feels this recommendation has three separate issues: 1) EMS Supervisor, 2) Assistant Chief, and 3) Succession Planning; which may not all be solved by the same initiative // HR can develop job description following discussion with Select Board 7/18	9/15/2022
T46 VII - 13: Create a work group to develop pre-plans for structures within the community. As part of this group's mission, they should be collecting information for structure files that is shared with the CAD and RMS systems.	50	Fire Services	Fire Chief		See notes on VI-4 and VI-5. If the platform were available, the part-time Fire Inspector could gather and enter that pre-plan information.	12/31/2022
T47 VII - 14: Officers who are on-call and handle calls in the absence of the Chief should be trained and allowed to complete NFIRS reports especially narratives for all calls. The importance of having a first-hand account with details of events at a given incident is crucial. Having an accurate first-hand description of operations creates a professional record in line with industry best practice to help minimize any potential liability to the Town.	50	Fire Services	Fire Chief		See note on VI-3. Hardware and software limitations currently preclude this option	12/31/2022
T48 VII - 15: The Department should be looking for a single cloud-based records management system (RMS) that is done in access layers to allow individual people to enter their specific data. The system should allow for remote access.	50	Fire Services	Fire Chief	IT Director	See note on VI-3. Hardware and software limitations currently preclude this option	12/31/2022
T49 VII - 16: The Department should be receiving and giving automatic mutual aid to all surrounding towns in a coordinated effort to provide at a minimum a dedicated Rapid Intervention Team (RIT).	50	Fire Services	Fire Chief		Exploring Rapid Intervention training initiative with a neighboring department	10/31/2022
T50 VII - 17: The Department should train (at a minimum) 12 members to provide the rapid intervention function as a three to four person team.	51	Fire Services	Fire Chief	HR Director	Exploring Rapid Intervention training initiative with a neighboring department	10/31/2022
T51 VII-18: The Department should prohibit the response of a single person investigating an incident and then calling for resources. Based on a number of best practices and national standards, a single engine (at a minimum) should respond on all CO, gas, wires down, motor vehicle collisions, and alarm investigations (with no immediate phone call to cancel). Running a single person is a very dangerous practice that places the Town at risk for significant liability.	51	Fire Services	Fire Chief		See note on V-4	9/15/2022
T52 VII-19 Set and publish minimum criteria for active participation and ramifications for not meeting the minimums. A large roster is a false sense of security, and only people with proper training and skills that are dedicated (attend training and incidents) should be active.	51	Fire Services	Fire Chief	HR Director	See note on V-5	10/31/2022

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T53 VIII - 1: The MRI team believes that the current EMS model with some modifications produces the best value for the Town as opposed to private contracted services. This would result in a loss of revenue, and most likely require a significant stipend to be paid.	60	EMS Services	Fire Chief	Town Administrator	See note on V-2	10/15/2022
T54 VIII - 2: The Department needs to improve morale in an effort to retain a quality EMS staff. The items listed below are some of the ways current members offered as part of their input into this study.	60	EMS Services	N/A			
T55 VIII - 3: Due to the lack of current EMS supervision and coordination, as well as the need to develop an ALS service, the Town should hire an Assistant Fire Chief (or high ranking officer). The new position should be a paramedic position that would be available days to cover EMS calls and also to be the manager of all EMS-related items. The Chief will need to delegate the authority to this position in order to operate efficiently.	60	EMS Services	Fire Chief		See note on VII-12. Fire Chief believes if a F/T EMS Supervisor position is to be filled by a paramedic, they should be dedicated to EMS duties and responsibilities, and not tasked with fire administrative functions. If the intent is to have this individual be a working supervisor, the schedule will need to be evaluated to address gaps in shift coverage - which are currently the greatest during the weekend. HR to develop job description following Board feedback.	9/15/2022
T56 VIII - 4: Create a pool of per diem paramedics to cover open shifts when the Assistant Chief is not on duty. This pool would cover open shifts during peak times as needed seven days a week.	60	EMS Services	Fire Chief	HR Director	Requires community support for ALS goal	10/15/2022
T57 VIII - 5: The Town will need to license the ambulance to an ALS level once all equipment and a staffing plan is finalized.	60	EMS Services	Fire Chief	Town Administrator	OEMS inspectors willing to come and speak with Town officials about benchmarks required; also see response to VIII-4	10/15/2022
T58 VIII - 6: The ambulance will need to be equipped to the ALS level. (A cost factor)	60	EMS Services	Fire Chief	Town Administrator	See note on VIII-4	10/15/2022
T59 VIII - 7: Existing EMS staff that would like to be trained and certified to the paramedic level should be supported. This would require some type of contract between the attendee with the Town to ensure a return on the Town's investment. Participants should have their tuition paid as well as receive stipends for completing pre-determined benchmarks during the program.	60	EMS Services	Fire Chief	HR Director	Reimbursement for advanced level of certification is past practice and is still available for those who continue to work regular shift for the department. // Common HR risk-reward of paying to train and then retain	2/15/2023
T60 VIII - 8: A complete quality assurance and quality improvement program should be in place to review 100% of all patient care reports (PCRs) and refusal forms. This could be done by a third-party company or the new Deputy/Assistant Chief.	60	EMS Services	Fire Chief		It could be done by a F/T EMS Supervisor or by a third party. Budget impact being evaluated.	2/15/2023
T61 VIII - 9: A complete review of the pay structure for EMS staff needs to be done. (Refer to the Budget and Human Resources section of this document for additional details.)	60	EMS Services	Fire Chief	HR Director	See note on V-2	9/28/2022
T62 VIII - 10: In order to maintain staff in the station, several items will need to be addressed that would allow for proper working and living conditions for the on duty staff.	61	EMS Services	Fire Chief	Facilities Manager	See notes on IV-1, IV-2, IV-4, IV-5, and IV-6.	10/31/2022
T63 VIII - 11: Regardless of the level of EMS certification, the department should consider requiring two staff members to be stationed at the station 24/7. This would not only cut down on response time, but you would know that two people were on duty to immediately respond to a call.	61	EMS Services	Fire Chief		Not all staff are willing to stay at the station during their shift; current 90 day beta test underway (see V-2 response)	9/28/2022
T64 VIII -12: The Department should develop, obtain approval and publicly post (on the Fire Department's website) a Billing Policy, Rate Schedule, Collection Policy and HIPAA Policy.	61	EMS Services	Fire Chief	HR Director	These existing policies will be reviewed and posted to the website	8/15/2022

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T65 VIII - 13: Work with the Town's Human Resource contact to document a formal hiring process that includes an application, interview, background check, physical exam, and probationary period that outlines the expectations and benchmarks to be accomplished.	61	EMS Services	HR Director	Fire Chief	This process has been utilized for hires starting in the spring of 2022.	2/15/2023
T66 VIII - 14: The Department should work to decrease response time by having the duty crew in-station 24/7.	61	EMS Services	Fire Chief	HR Director	See notes on IV-1, IV-2, IV-4, IV-5, IV-6 and VII-11.	10/15/2022
T67 VIII - 15: The Department needs to work on creating a proper working and living environment for staff working in the station.	61	EMS Services	Fire Chief	Facilities Manager	See notes on IV-1, IV-2, IV-4, IV-5, and IV-6.	10/31/2022
T68 VIII - 15: The Department should be providing some type of duty uniform for EMS staff.	61	EMS Services	Fire Chief	Town Administrator	Department provides department shirt to new hires during on-boarding process. Department has previously provided high visibility jackets to those working regular shifts. Researching options under IRS code.	2/15/2023
T69 VIII - 16: Current and future ambulances should be equipped with stretcher auto-lift and load devices.	61	EMS Services	Fire Chief	Town Administrator	A-1 has electric stretcher. A-3 replacement approved by 2021 STM; cost modeling did not include auto-lift and load option. Costing out this new outfitting or retrofitting for budget impact.	2/15/2023
T70 VIII - 17: All members should be properly trained in proper lifting techniques to prevent injury. This should be offered to all fire and police staff as well. The Town's insurance company may offer this type of training.	61	EMS Services	Fire Chief	HR Director	In-house training has been done. MIIA also has course available and tracking platform.	7/1/2023
T71 VIII - 18: EMS training needs to go back to being done in house with practical evolutions to enhance team approach to calls. "Train the way you work" needs to be the model.	61	EMS Services	Fire Chief	HR Director	Training physically in the station will resume in Sept. 2022	9/30/2023
T72 VIII - 19: A formal orientation program with documentation and benchmarks needs to be created, published and followed. The department should assign mentors that have high skill levels and have the right demeanor to work with a variety of people.	61	EMS Services	Fire Chief	HR Director	Program already in place; has been reviewed by OEMS. To be shared with HR.	8/31/2023
T73 VIII - 20: Ensure proper staffing is scheduled 24/7 for on-call fire and in-station EMS crews.	61	EMS Services	Fire Chief	HR Director	See notes on V-1 and VIII-14	2/15/2023
T74 VIII - 21: When the station is staffed with one person, and a second person is on duty from home, have the ambulance respond with the driver only and meet the second person on scene.	62	EMS Services	Fire Chief	HR Director	See note on V-3	9/15/2022
T75 VIII - 22: EMS will need to be evaluated on a regular basis to ensure staffing and response levels are in line with benchmarks and are adjusted as needed.	62	EMS Services	Fire Chief	HR Director	See note on V-2. This can be reviewed on regular and quarterly basis.	10/15/2022
T76 IX - 1: The Town should encourage cross-trained fire department personnel so that a person can work within the organization to provide both Fire and EMS services.	68	Staffing Levels	Fire Chief	HR Director	We encourage cross-training. Continue to develop new opportunities.	2/15/2023
T77 IX-2: The HFD should require its personnel, and strongly encourage its officers, to obtain a certain level of fire officer certification as a job requirement, such as Fire Officer 2 for Captain, Fire Officer 3 for Deputy Fire Chief, and Fire Officer Level IV for Fire Chief.	68	Staffing Levels	Fire Chief	HR Director	See note on X-1. Can be incorporated into job descriptions.	9/30/2022
T78 IX - 3: The HFD should require that all officers be certified as Incident Safety Officers (ISO). Additional personnel who may be interested should be encouraged to take this training and obtain this important firefighter safety certification.	68	Staffing Levels	Fire Chief	HR Director	See note on VII-7	10/31/2022

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Recommendation ID - Description	Page	Section	Primary Assignment	Secondary Assignment	July 18,2022 Update	Next Reporting Date
T79 IX-4: As part of the succession planning process, the Fire Chief should work to implement a professional development program to ensure that all officers can perform their superior's duties, as well as identify the core future leaders of the department.	68	Staffing Levels	Fire Chief	HR Director	We've focused on mentoring for many years, and encourage members to know the job of both those above and below them on the Org chart. See note on X-1. To be incorporated into job descriptions.	9/30/2022
T80 IX - 5: Working with a training officer, more training should be planned, delivered, and documented. In an effort to keep members interested in training, the department should be creative and offer training that is outside the normal programs. Making programs fresh, fun, and to some degree, competitive may increase the participation by members. If it's the same old training, people will lose interest. Make it so they want to participate and at the same time meet training goals. Training should be conducted as a department and not as companies.	68	Staffing Levels	Fire Chief	HR Director	Each company has training officers, who develop training for their personnel. More department-wide training can be incorporated into 2023 training schedule.	12/31/2022
T81 IX - 6: In consultation and cooperation with its neighboring departments, all participating fire departments should enter into formal automatic aid agreements that specify the number and types of resources that should be dispatched immediately to various types of reported emergencies, such as structure fires. These recommendations should be based upon a community-wide risk management process and/or pre- fire/incident plan.	68	Staffing Levels	Fire Chief	Town Administrator	The department sends and receives resources to neighboring communities as part of their run cards. Mutual aid agreement of Fire District 14 (Exec. Order 221, 1982)	2/15/2023
T82 IX - 7: Although more stringent than the requirements found in Table 4.3.2 of NFPA 1720 for rural communities, through the utilization of automatic aid agreements with neighboring communities, fire departments should consider the adoption of a *Standards of Cover (SOC) with the goal of attempting to have at least 16 personnel on the scene of any reported structure fire within 14 minutes. This should involve at least one mutual aid town for RIT.	69	Staffing Levels	Fire Chief		We do not normally struggle to meet that response level. 2019 ISO PPC review: average of 32.625 personnel on scene for most recent structure fires preceding the ISO audit. 2019 figure up from 30 in 2015.	2/15/2023
T83 <i>"Standards of Cover" is defined as "those adopted written policies and procedures that determine the distribution, concentration and reliability of fixed and mobile response forces for fire, emergency medical services, hazardous materials and other technical responses."</i>						
T84 IX - 8: The Department should make it a priority to improve its first unit on scene response times, including the adoption of an SOC, for the Town. The SOC should be based upon a hybrid of the NFPA 1720/1720 and Commission on the Accreditation of Ambulance Services (CAAS) recommendations.	69	Staffing Levels	Fire Chief		See note on IX-7	2/15/2023
T85 IX - 9: The HFD should review standards of cover benchmarks, to have the first unit responding to emergency incidents within one minute of dispatch (staffed station), and have the first unit on scene within eight minutes after responding to all types of calls, 90% of the time. With the current staffing model in place and no other calls in progress, this is something that can be met, if the staff in the station is properly qualified with the appropriate level of training and qualifications. A closer look at simultaneous calls and calls that run back-to-back (ambulance is transporting, and a second call comes in) should be looked at. At the time of this evaluation the program of having per diem staff in the station was still in its infancy, and it is not known if the station was sufficiently covered while this crew was committed to the first call.	69	Staffing Levels	Fire Chief	HR Director	Standard cited does not apply; we are not planning to staff stations with fire personnel. / Select Board soliciting additional feedback	9/15/2022
T86 IX-10: The HFD should set a minimum criterion for call members to remain in active status. This criterion should include both minimum training and response to incidents for a determined time period (one year). This criterion should also allow for people to go into an inactive status for a period of time due to approved circumstances. It would be important for inactive-status people to make up any important training prior to being put back on active status.	69	Staffing Levels	Fire Chief	HR Director	See note on V-5	10/31/2022

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T87 IX-11: The Fire Chief should expand the HFD social media presence and involve other members of the Department in this endeavor. The use of social media like Facebook and Twitter are what the younger generation use, and a very active social media account has the opportunity to reach out to this group of people for hiring.	69	Staffing Levels	Fire Chief	HR Director (ATA/Comms)	There has been a concerted effort to use social media more consistently since the report was issued.	2/15/2023
T88 IX-12: The Fire Chief or his designee should create a quarterly "newsletter" that will highlight the positive things that the Department has done the prior months. This newsletter should be posted on the Town's web page, shared in social media, given to the Town Administrator who in turn should share with the Select Board. It is important that the public is made aware of all of the great people and all the good things the Department does.	70	Staffing Levels	Fire Chief	HR Director (ATA/Comms)	Department member has expressed interest in this effort. Concept and logistics need to be fleshed out.	10/15/2022
T89 IX-13: HFD should develop a series of team-based activities that build involvement in the organization that includes both Fire and EMS staff as well as other Town departments and mutual aid partners.	70	Staffing Levels	Fire Chief	HR Director	We already do joint FD/EMS training, as well as combined training with some other town departments and mutual aid partners.	2/15/2023
T90 IX-14: All officer positions, from Captain to Fire Chief, should be filled based upon the person's firefighting/emergency services training, certifications, and experience, commensurate with the position being sought, along with successful completion of a formal, rank appropriate assessment process, and a basic practical skills evaluation.	70	Staffing Levels	Fire Chief	HR Director	Past practice used to evaluate candidates for promotion can be reviewed and codified.	2/15/2023
T91 IX-15: The HFD should ensure that all Department members are trained/certified to the minimal NIMS level required for their duties/responsibilities and ranks. In addition to the basic I-100/I-700 training mandated, it is MRI's recommendation that all officers be trained to the ICS-300 level. All chief level officers should be trained to the ICS-400 level.	70	Staffing Levels	Fire Chief	HR Director	ICS 200 is a 4 hr class, and can be done online. ICS 300 is a 21 hr class, and can be done online or in person. ICS 400 is a 14 hr course, and can be done online or in person.	6/30/2023
T92 IX - 16: HFD should assure that all fire staff are compliant with First Responder and CPR training as required by MGL.	70	Staffing Levels	Fire Chief	HR Director	In-house CPR instructor retired in June; until a replacement is identified, those who need CPR can get recertified online. Cost is \$14.95, but reimbursement becomes problematic. First responder (for those not EMT or higher certified, is a 9 hr course).	12/31/2022
T93 IX - 17: The Department should purchase and train on an Accountability System similar to what Fire District 14 has implemented district wide.	70	Staffing Levels	Fire Chief	HR Director	Officers were introduced to this accountability system at their March meeting. Equipment was ordered in March. Equipment arrived in June. Officers want to review the system at a meeting in August, prior to department wide implementation.	8/31/2022
T94 IX - 18: The Chief should require all officers to complete a report including a narrative for all incidents of which they are in charge.	70	Staffing Levels	Fire Chief		See note on VII-14	2/15/2023
T95 IX - 19: The Chief should assign a group of officers to review and create SOPs for the department. These SOPs must be published and trained on for all staff to operate under.	70	Staffing Levels	Fire Chief		See note on VII-11	2/15/2023
T96 IX - 20: The Chief should delegate administrative responsibilities to officers and hold them accountable to be completed. The officer pool is very much underutilized, and the Chief cannot handle it all. This will also be key in succession planning for the Chief's position.	70	Staffing Levels	Fire Chief		Some duties are already delegated to company and chief officers. The ability of current officers to carry out additional duties and responsibilities varies from person to person.	2/15/2023

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T97 IX - 21: The Department should hold regular officers' meetings for the purpose of sharing ideas and to work through issues, problems, training agendas, equipment needs, preplanning of structures and events, and to help create strategic goals and objectives for the Department.	71	Staffing Levels	Fire Chief		The Officers meetings are scheduled every two months.	12/31/2022
T98 IX - 22: Assign a Training Officer to develop a training schedule and to ensure all members are being trained with consistency.	71	Staffing Levels	Fire Chief	HR Director	See notes on VII-1 and IX-5	12/31/2022
T99 IX - 23: Assign a Department Safety Officer that oversees all safety and safety issues within the Department. This person should have the training and experience to conduct this type of evaluation for both Fire and EMS, concentrate on the stations and training as a primary focus, and be the lead on incidents if available.	71	Staffing Levels	Fire Chief	HR Director	See note on VII-7	10/31/2022
T100 IX - 24: The Chief should work with the Town's Human Resource contact to document a formal hiring process that includes an application, interview, background check, physical exam, and probationary period that outlines expectations and benchmarks to be accomplished.	71	Staffing Levels	Fire Chief	HR Director	See note on VIII-13	2/15/2023
T101 IX - 25: The Department should annually develop a set of goals and objectives for the next year as well as long term goals looking five years out.	71	Staffing Levels	Fire Chief	Town Administrator	Department goals have been a part of budget development process for years	2/15/2023
T102 X - 1: Create job descriptions for each position within the Department.	74	Budget & HR	HR Director	Fire Chief	Existing job descriptions can be reviewed and updated	9/30/2022
T103 X - 2: Create and publish a policy for all to be eligible and to continue to receive insurance benefits from the Town. Some people do not make enough to cover their part of the costs and are billed.	74	Budget & HR	HR Director	Treasurer / Collector	See note on V-5; Min. Requirement Policy development	10/31/2022
T104 X - 3: Increase the rate schedule for EMS staff to be more in line with fire staff. This may bring qualified fire staff to work EMS shifts that currently do not due to rate differences.	74	Budget & HR	Treasurer / Collector	HR Director	See note on V-2	10/15/2022
T105 X - 4: Hire a full-time Assistant Chief (or high-ranking officer) paramedic to oversee EMS and provide paramedic coverage weekdays. A paramedic with a strong skill set who has a great deal of experience should be sought for this position. This person would work with an EMT to fill out the primary ambulance staff and would work a rotation working four 12 hour days. It is estimated that with Holliston providing and billing for its own ALS level of service, approximately 50% of the full-time Assistant Chief (or high-ranking officer) salary could be offset.	74	Budget & HR	HR Director	Fire Chief	See note on VIII-3	9/15/2022
T106 X - 5: Create a per diem pool of paramedics to be used to fill shifts when the full-time paramedics are not on duty.	75	Budget & HR	Fire Chief	HR Director	See note on VIII-4	10/15/2022
T107 X - 6: If the Department is unable to fill the three days the full-time paramedic is not scheduled to work, the hiring of an additional paramedic (with no rank) should be considered.	75	Budget & HR	Fire Chief	HR Director	See note on VIII-4	10/15/2022
T108 X - 7: Change all Fire and EMS training pay rates to be the hourly rate for the rank or position.	75	Budget & HR	HR Director	Treasurer / Collector	Fire Chief disagrees / Analysis by HR shows this would create a disparity between compensation for Fire and EMS trainings	9/15/2022
T109 X - 8: Create a payroll policy that pays a minimum number of hours per activity or incident and then compensates at 15 minute increments above that. Best practice is to pay a one hour minimum per call.	75	Budget & HR	HR Director	Treasurer / Collector	Existing policy; under review by HR	9/30/2022

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T110 X - 9: Consideration should be made to allow current Holliston EMTs to be trained and certified to the paramedic level with some or all of the costs paid for by the Town. MRI would recommend that there be some written agreements made with the individual and the Town that would allow for some type of commitment to Holliston EMS to help offset the investment the Town would make. There are many variations to what communities have done. Some have paid all expenses and time. Others have paid all fees and have given stipends for accomplishing certain benchmarks. It is important to note that it could take 18 to 24 months for an individual to become a certified paramedic.	75	Budget & HR	Fire Chief	HR Director	See note on VIII-7	2/15/2023
T111 X - 10: Follow up on Town Counsel's opinion on call firefighters and retirement at the age of 65 and take appropriate actions if warranted.	75	Budget & HR	Town Administrator	HR Director	Fire Chief does not believe <i>Sec. 2 of Chapter 415 of the Acts of 1987</i> applies to <u>on-call</u> firefighters or EMTs. Language cites uniformed member of a paid fire department. That terminology usually denotes F/T firefighters. Our on-call FFs and on-call EMTs are not F/T firefighters for our department. // HR & Labor Counsel to discuss options with Town Officials	9/15/2022
T112 XI - 1: Although time consuming to accomplish, the Department should apply for funds for eligible items on the AFG grants. Grant awards will help free up Town dollars that can be used for other Department items that are not grant eligible.	76	Grants	Fire Chief	Town Administrator	We do apply for these, and have been awarded a few in the past	2/28/2023
T113 XI - 2: Once the Department has appropriate staffing, the Town and the Department should set their sights towards the State, insurance companies, and other private organizations looking for grant opportunities.	76	Grants	Fire Chief	Town Administrator	We already apply for these, and have been awarded several in the past	2/28/2023



To: Travis Ahern - Town Administrator

Cc: Chief Michael Cassidy - Fire Chief

From: James Keast - Facilities Manager

JK

Date: July 8, 2022

Re: **MRI Study Holliston Fire - Facilities Input**

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On Jun 29, 2022 I met with Chief Cassidy to review the MRI Study recommendations related to the various Fire Department Facilities. Specifically we reviewed section IV 1-13 and section VII-15 of the Recommendation Assignment document. Based on the Facilities Responses estimated costs (outside of station consolidation) are \$220,000

MRI Recommendation IV - 1: Central Station needs to be cleaned up, and items not needed on a daily basis should be moved to a dry storage area such as Station 5. Many outdated items need to be disposed of following procedures (donated to training institutions or destroyed).

Facilities Response IV - 1:

- Purchase and locate two 20 foot long shipping containers to the back parking lot of 59 Central St. One container should be connected to an electrical source for environmental control. Estimated cost \$12,000
- Rent a 30 yard dumpster for disposal of unused/obsolete items and arrange for a "clean out day" with temporary labor. Estimated cost \$2,500

MRI Recommendation IV - 2: Central Station second floor could be modified to reasonably accommodate a day room, bunk rooms, shower facilities and office space.

Facilities Response IV - 2:

- By adding additional storage outside of the station items in the two upstairs rooms and main conference room can be removed which would allow for two dedicated bunk rooms with an additional area in the training room as needed. The existing bathroom on this level can easily accommodate adding shower facilities. To renovate this bathroom the estimated costs are \$45,000.

MRI Recommendation IV - 3: Evaluate all the space at the Central Station for better apparatus placement by moving some equipment (boat) to other spaces or Station 5

Facilities Response IV - 3:

- The Fire Chief and Facility Manager are currently evaluating the space needs. No cost impacts at the moment

MRI Recommendation IV - 4: All stations need to be cleaned and fully evaluated for proper safe working environment.

Facilities Response IV - 4:

- For the Central Street Station Steps outlined in recommendation IV-1 will address this task. For the other four stations each will need to be gone through and have unused/obsolete items removed. Proper signage and markings will be added as needed. Estimate \$4,000 per station for a total of \$16,000.

MRI Recommendation IV - 5: Renting of space for Engine 4 should stop. The engine should be located in a Town owned space. Once the door at Station 2 is repaired, this may be feasible

Facilities Response IV - 5:

- The Fire Chief and Facility Manager are currently evaluating the space needs. No cost impacts at the moment

MRI Recommendation IV - 6: The Town should consider a new location and combine two or three stations into one new location. The new area should be large enough for future department staffing 24/7. The MRI team was shown a potential spot located at the Former Axton Cross facility that is in a good location and of the proper size. It is thought that Stations 2, 4 and 5 could be combined.

Facilities Response IV - 6:

- The Fire Chief, Facility Manager and Town Administrator are currently evaluating the space needs. No cost impacts at the moment.

MRI Recommendation IV - 7: Station 1 roof leak on apparatus floor should be repaired.

Facilities Response IV - 7:

- Roof repairs are scheduled to take place on July 18, 2022. Cost \$6,950. Roof replacement is outlined in the Capital Improvement Plan for an estimated cost of \$250,000 in FY24.

MRI Recommendation IV - 8: All stations should be evaluated and have exhaust removal systems installed in all areas where there is apparatus and equipment.

Facilities Response IV - 8:

- The upper apparatus bays in station 1 (Central St) have an exhaust removal system installed. The basement level needs to have a system installed. The other four stations

need systems installed. Note that the Pope Park station would require approval from the building owner. Each system will cost approximately \$8,500 per station for a total of \$42,500. Additionally Central Station needs a 16 foot step ladder to easily access the current exhaust removal system which requires frequent maintenance. Estimated cost \$1,200

MRI Recommendation IV - 9: All stations should be evaluated for proper fire/smoke/CO alarm detection and be monitored to protect the Town's assets.

Facilities Response IV - 9:

- Stations 3 (Gates), 4 (McCormack) & 5 (Pope Park) will need systems installed. Pope Park station would require approval from the building owner. Since these stations are small the system costs are relatively low. However, fees associated with monitoring services and cellular connectivity will add up over time. Individual system costs with installation are estimated at \$7,500 for a total of \$22,500. Monthly monitoring fees are \$42 per station.

MRI Recommendation IV - 10: Station 2 door repairs should be expedited and door eyes should be installed to prevent door from moving when there is something in the way

Facilities Response IV - 10:

- Door has been replaced.

MRI Recommendation IV - 11: All stations should be evaluated to allow for proper restroom facilities, decontamination areas, and clean and dirty storage areas.

Facilities Response IV - 11:

- Central Station complies with this recommendation. The four other stations present various challenges with respect to the installation of restrooms and decontamination areas. It is recommended that the evaluation in MRI Recommendation IV-6 take place before investing in these facilities.

MRI Recommendation IV - 12: The empty bay of Station 5 should be converted into a shelved storage area for essential supplies. This would include developing shelving along the exterior walls and rear of the structure and moving the trailer into the center of the two bays

Facilities Response IV - 12:

- Essential supplies, like PPE, need to remain at the Central Street Station. The area in the ambulance bays can be modified to accommodate covered and secure storage of these supplies. 6 Heavy Duty metal storage cabinets will need to be placed in that area for a total cost of \$6,500.

MRI Recommendation IV - 13: All stations should have adequate backup emergency power for heat, lighting and door opening capabilities

Facilities Response IV - 13:

- The Central station has existing backup power. The other four stations will need propane fired 10 kWh automatic standby generators installed. Note that the Pope Park station would require approval from the building owner. Each installation would cost \$15,000 per station for a total of \$60,000.

MRI Recommendation VIII - 15: The Department needs to work on creating a proper working and living environment for staff working in the station.

Facilities Response VIII - 15:

- The Facility Responses in the previous sections will address this recommendation.