

Below are some facts regarding the proposed purchase of a new fire engine (Engine 712) by the East Bloomfield Fire District. The East Bloomfield Fire District is the only official source for information regarding the proposed purchase. The Fire District welcomes questions and inquiries regarding this purchase, and will always provide information based on facts, not on speculation or hearsay. Additional information regarding the purchase of a new fire engine can also be found on the Fire District website at eastbloomfieldfiredistrict.org.

COST:

From gas, to groceries, everyone is feeling the pain of the current economy and high inflation for the past several years; the fire service is no different. The cost of everything from firefighter protective clothing, fire hose, nozzles, and yes, trucks has increased dramatically in the last 4-5 years.

- The cost of the new Engine 712 will be 1 million dollars when it is delivered in four years (2028). For context, the Fire District's other engine, Engine 711 was purchased new in 2019 at a cost of \$588,000.00. If Engine 711 were built again today, it would have a price tag of approximately 1.2 million dollars.
- The purchase of a new Engine 712 is a scheduled/planned replacement and is part of the Fire District 30-year long-range budget planning and apparatus replacement schedule.
- The Fire District is following (as close as possible) the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) recommendations that fire apparatus be removed from front-line service after 20 years and be used in a reserve capacity if needed. The current Engine 712 will be 21 years old in 2028.

PAYMENT:

- The purchase of the new Engine 712 would be done with a combination of reserve funds and financing (loan) as part of the 30-year long-range budget plan.
- Delaying the replacement of Engine 712 by a single year has the potential to increase the cost by \$100,000.00 or more.
- The Fire District currently has capital reserves held with NY Class, a municipal deposit funds that are fully collateralized. The Fire district is currently receiving 5.28% interest on deposited funds as of December 2023. It is anticipated that during the loan, the Fire District will be earning more interest on deposited funds than the interest paid on the loan.

TAXES:

Based on long-range projections and planning by the Board of Fire Commissioners, the board does not anticipate exceeding the property tax cap as set by the New York State Comptroller's Office because of the purchase of a new fire apparatus. Current long-term projections of interest income on Fire District assets will be sufficient to reduce the need to exceed the tax cap for future tax levies.

The tax rate for 2024 is set at \$1.34 per \$1,000.00 assessed value for fire protection:

- \$100,000.00 assessment = \$134.00 per year.
- \$200,00.00 assessment = \$268.00 per year.
- \$300,000.00 assessment = \$402.00 per year

The tax rate per thousand in 2028 is projected to be \$1.43 per \$100,000.00 assessed value.

- \$100,000.00 assessment = \$143.00 per year. - \$11.00 increase in four years
- \$200,00.00 assessment = \$286.00 per year. - \$22.00 increase in four years
- \$300,000.00 assessment = \$402.00 per year. - \$33.00 increase in four years

USAGE/OPERATIONS:

- The assertion that Engine 712 is not used is ABSOLUTELY false.
- Over the last five (5) years, Engine 712 has responded to over 200 emergency calls.
- Engine 712 is the first responding apparatus to the following emergency calls:
 - Structure fire
 - Automatic fire alarm
 - Odor of smoke/burning odor in a structure
 - Natural gas or propane emergency
 - Carbon monoxide (CO) incidents & alarms
 - Water problems (roadway flooding, flooded basement)
 - Mutual aid request to scene of a structure fire
 - Water supply (filling water tanker trucks for fire suppression)
- The majority of properties outside of the Village of East Bloomfield require the use of both Engine 711 and Engine 712 to supply water in the event of a fire. This is due to the lack of fire hydrants in portions of the town and/or the length of the driveway.
- In the event of a mechanical issue or extended mechanical repair to either engine 711 or Engine 712, one of the two engines will still be able to respond to emergency calls.

ADVERTISING/NOTIFICATION:

- The Fire District is following all NY State rules and regulations regarding public notification of the planned purchase of the New Engine 712, including the notice of public vote.
- In addition, the Fire District has prepared a detailed explanation regarding the purchase of a new Engine 712 on the Fire District web site at eastbloomfieldfiredistrict.org.

FIRE DISTRICT VS. FIRE DEPARTMENT:

The Fire **District** is a NY State Municipality with the legal authority to levy a tax to provide fire protection. Fire protection in a town or village is like snow plowing of the roads. It is an essential service that the public cannot provide individually for themselves.

The Fire **Department** is a separate organization made up of 100% volunteers that respond to, and operate at emergency calls. The funds raised by the Fire Dept. from Chicken BBQ's, donations and fund drive are used for:

- Fire Dept. dress uniforms
- Fire Dept. clothing (shirts, hats, sweatshirts)
- Training not covered by the Fire District
- Additional injury & death insurance not provided by the Fire District
- Additional equipment not provided by the Fire District
- Food and water used at emergency scenes, training events and the fire house
- Fire prevention materials used for the school, library, firehouse and other public events throughout the year.

Over the Fire Department's history (101 Years), the department has loaned money to the Fire District, and purchased apparatus or equipment on numerous occasions when the Fire District was unable to purchase needed equipment. The apparatus/equipment purchased by the Fire Department was then given to the Fire District to use for emergency responses.

CONCLUSION:

The replacement of Engine 712 has been planned and budgeted for almost 20 years, and is part of the apparatus replacement schedule that has been used successfully by the Fire District for decades. The committee that reviewed the need for a new Engine 712 has over 100 years of combined firefighting experience, including Chief Fire Officers with decades of operational experience.

Providing high quality fire and rescue services to the residents and visitors of East Bloomfield is the top priority of the Fire District while also being good stewards of taxpayer funds. The Fire District is asking for the public's support for the purchase of a new Engine 712 at the upcoming public vote on January 23, from 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm at the fire house.