



Hector Lopez  
*Board Legal Counsel*

**ST. TAMMANY PARISH  
FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT #4  
709 Girod Street  
Mandeville, Louisiana 70448  
Phone: (985) 626-8671  
Fax: (985) 626-8082**

Kenneth Moore  
*Fire Chief*

Commissioners:

William H. Dobson, Jr.  
*Chairman*  
David Lindsey  
*Vice Chairman*  
Jack Schell  
*Treasurer*  
Ambrose G. Amedee, Jr.  
*Commissioner*  
Darryl M. Taylor  
*Commissioner*  
Marlaine Peachey  
*Secretary*

June 30, 2020

To: Stakeholders of Fire Protection District 4  
St. Tammany Parish Council  
Fire Protection Districts of St. Tammany Parish

Fr: William Dobson, Jr., Chairperson  
Board of Commissioners  
St. Tammany Parish Fire Protection District 4

Dear Stakeholders, Council Members and Chairpersons:

During my tenure as Chairperson, I have rarely had the opportunity to publicly witness the profound organizational passion expressed by senior leadership of our companion Fire Districts as shown during the June 25, 2020 televised agenda review meeting hosted by our Parish Council.

From my perspective as one of five, taxpaying commissioners whose responsibility it is to ensure the purpose of District 4 is carried out, I routinely learn of the heroic work that our men and women firefighter life-safety personnel accomplish. They eat, sleep and work at every station in our District, poised twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, to respond in the event of individual crisis and community catastrophe. They always place our needs before their own families, lives and safety. These sentiments were powerfully echoed by other Districts.

Our Board is supremely confident in the acumen and leadership of Fire Chief Kenneth Moore and his executive team and that they will continue to implement operational measures that result in the greatest protections for our stakeholders' property and life-

safety as well as our personnel. In 2017-18, Chief Moore and his leadership team met with every homeowners' association, civic group and individual, who accepted his invitation, to educate District 4 stakeholders on our strategic needs and goals through 2024. During the 2018 election, stakeholders overwhelmingly approved our renewal millage for twenty years.

Our primary strategic goal is to achieve response-time parity between the thirty percent of our stakeholders who we can consistently reach within the nationally accepted time and the seventy percent who are beyond it. This need was confirmed by internal and external subject matter experts, the Property Insurance Association of Louisiana, our accreditation process and through data collection and study. Simply, District growth, construction and population density requires we construct two new stations to meet increasing demands - our last station was constructed more than thirty years ago.

Attached is a report authored by District leadership articulating justification for these two new stations. Our Board will consider a millage roll forward to service a bond already secured for these capital projects. The balance of the roll forward will be used for additional personnel costs and equipment to staff these stations after existing fire company reconfiguration.

Our Board meetings are open to the public and agenda, minutes, monthly financials, reports and budgets are consistently posted to our website. Notwithstanding Chief Moore's stakeholder education effort, I recently, and indirectly, received questions from a stakeholder concerning use of our approved millage. Also attached are detailed and complete responses from District leadership to those questions.

As fiduciaries and taxpayers of District 4, this Board echoes the sincere gratitude expressed by our companion Districts for the sacrifice the men and women firefighter life-safety personnel expose themselves to for our wellbeing and security. We are also conscious and grateful for the similar efforts and risks men and women of the Mandeville Police Department and St. Tammany Sheriff's Department also routinely demonstrate.

With best regards, I am,

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "William H. Dobson, Jr.", written over a circular stamp or mark.

William H. Dobson, Jr.  
Chairman  
Fire Protection District #4

CC: Fire Chief Kenneth Moore  
Police Chief Gerald Sticker  
Sheriff Randy Smith  
St. Tammany Parish Fire Chief's  
St. Tammany Parish Fire District Chairpersons

Attachments: 2

# Mandeville Fire/EMS

St. Tammany Fire Protection District No. 4



2020 Community Risk Assessment

Needs Assessment Report



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*Secretary*

Honorable Board members

Wm. H. "Bill" Dobson, Jr., Chairman Board of Commissioners,  
David Lindsey, Vice-Chairman Board of Commissioners,  
Jack Schell, Commissioner Treasurer,  
Ambrose G. Amedee, Jr., Commissioner,  
Darryl M. Taylor, Commissioner,  
and the Citizens of St. Tammany Fire Protection District No. 4,

The following summary of the Mandeville Fire/EMS (the district) Needs Assessment is being submitted for your consideration. The district has completed an updated community risk assessment using the latest technology to determine population demographics, types of structures protected, at-risk community members, road networks, and their impact on response. In addition, an updated study of the district's last three years of response data along with ESRI Arc GIS Network analysis to provide accurate response times for the entire district. From this data and with assistance from the CPSE Technical Advisory Committee the district is also near completion of its Standards of Cover and performance benchmarks for the next 5 years. This work is an essential piece of the Accreditation process that the district is undertaking. This needs assessment along with the district's Strategic Plan will be the basis of planning and budget recommendations to achieve the district's mission and strategic goals. From this collective work the district can continue to improve and maintain the high level of service our citizens and stakeholders deserve.

Respectfully submitted,

*Kenneth Moore*

Kenneth Moore  
Fire Chief

# Mandeville Fire/ EMS Needs Assessment



## Overview

Beginning in 2016, under the leadership of a new Fire Chief, the district conducted a community risk assessment and needs assessment for the area served. A review of previous PIAL Impact Statements were considered as well as the new standards based PIAL changes following NFPA standards. Changes were implemented at that time that were procedural and had little cost impact to help improve district operations. Some of these changes included staffing response, a reduction in personnel allowed on leave, dispatch cadence, travel routes, speeding up turnout time, and tracking performance daily. These changes along with others subsequently lead to an improved fire rating. Obtaining a Class 1 fire rating was a huge accomplishment but only addressed the property conservation aspect of the core mission. The full mission of protecting Life, Property, and Environment from fire and other hazards had a significant gap effecting life safety and property conservation. This core deficiency was specifically related to response time and dependability of available resources. The district recognized deficiencies in two areas: 1. Response times due to lack of adequate distribution of resources and 2. Reliability of resources due to response overlapping, or in other words units already on a response when additional responses occurred. A secondary issue identified was meeting the national standard of at least four (4) firefighters per apparatus consistently. Regardless of the emergency, time matters. According to studies by Underwriters Laboratories (UL), in today's buildings fire spreads up to seven (7) times faster than forty-years ago<sup>1</sup>. Research conducted by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) shows a distinct difference in survivability and fire spread/damage based on response time and crew size<sup>2</sup>. In a medical emergency response times improve survival and "anticipated benefits far exceed the costs."<sup>3</sup> There is a clearly known and direct impact on outcomes when responding to life and property emergencies indisputably related to response time; therefore, that deficiency must be addressed.

## Risk Assessment and Needs Analysis

To understand the needs of the district it is essential to conduct a community risk assessment. Fire chiefs must assess a wide array of hazards, the level of risk associated with those hazards, and the necessary resources for response to an adverse event. Risk assessment should focus on how fire department resource deployment affects community outcomes or "consequences" in three key areas<sup>4</sup>:

1. Firefighter injury and death
2. Civilian injury and death
3. Property loss and environmental harm

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<sup>1</sup> Underwriters Laboratories (UL) retrieved from <https://closeyourdoor.org/>

<sup>2</sup> (NIST) "Report on Residential Fireground Field Experiments" (NIST Technical Note 1661) retrieved from <http://www.firereporting.org/documents/resources/2.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Do Emergency Medical System Response Times Matter for Health Outcomes? <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/22700368/>

<sup>4</sup> FIRE SERVICE DEPLOYMENT: Assessing Community Vulnerability <https://www.nfpa.org/~media/files/membership/member-sections/metro-chiefs/urbanfirevulnerability.pdf?la=en>

## Mandeville Fire/ EMS Needs Assessment



The consequences of an emergency event are equal to the combination of the risk level of the hazard and the duration and nature of the event. (Risk + Duration = Consequences). What are the consequences? Some examples include<sup>5</sup>:

- Human impacts (firefighter and civilian injuries and deaths)
- Economic impacts (property loss both direct and indirect effects)
- Psychological impact (public confidence, quality of life)
- Functional impact (continuity of operations, loss of community resources)

For example, in October 2017, NFPA Research Foundation published a study called "Total Cost of Fire in the United States". This study states that estimated total cost of just Fire related injuries are 9-Billion dollars and total cost of death to be 30.4-Billion dollars annually. Property loss impact in dollars estimated to be 13.2- Billion dollars annually<sup>6</sup>. This does not take into account all the other hazards today's fire service has at least some responsibility for.

### Operational Performance

Another very important function of risk assessment is evaluating fire department operational performance. Operational performance is a function of three considerations;<sup>7</sup>

1. Resource Availability/Reliability is the degree to which the resources are ready and available to respond.
2. Department Capability is the ability of the resources deployed to manage an incident.
3. Operational Effectiveness or "Performance" is the product of availability and capability. It is the outcome achieved by the deployed resources or a measure of the ability to match resources to the risk level to which they are responding.

Availability & Reliability + Capability = Operational Effectiveness or Performance.

### Distribution of Resources

The district is currently functioning on a thirty (33) year old operational model relating to the distribution of its resources:

Station 41 was put in service in 1963. In 1963 the district responded to 79 calls.

Station 42 was put in service in 1975, in 1975 the district responded to 148 calls.

Station 43 was utilized beginning in 1985, in 1985 the district handled 560 calls.

Station 44 was the last fire station built, and was placed in service in 1987, in 1987 the district responded to 595 calls<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> FIRE SERVICE DEPLOYMENT: Assessing Community Vulnerability  
<https://www.nfpa.org/~media/files/membership/member-sections/metro-chiefs/urbanfirevulnerability.pdf?la=en>

<sup>6</sup> (NFPA) Total Cost of Fire in the United States <https://www.nfpa.org/News-and-Research/Data-research-and-tools/US-Fire-Problem/Total-cost-of-fire-in-the-United-States>

<sup>7</sup> FIRE SERVICE DEPLOYMENT: Assessing Community Vulnerability  
<https://www.nfpa.org/~media/files/membership/member-sections/metro-chiefs/urbanfirevulnerability.pdf?la=en>

<sup>8</sup> Mandeville Fire/EMS <https://www.mandevillefire.com/mandeville-fire-department-history/>

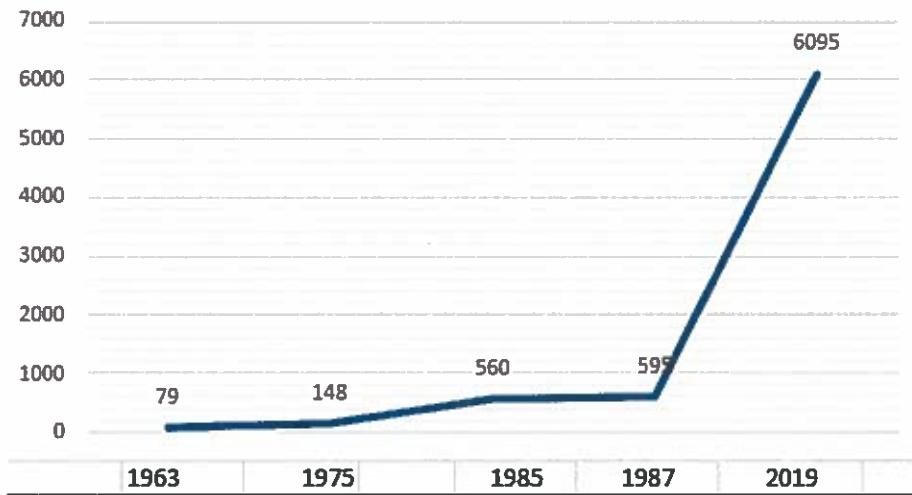


# Mandeville Fire/ EMS Needs Assessment



With the same four fire stations in place since 1987, the district is now responding to nearly 10 times that number of calls.

## Year Station Built vs. Responses



In addition to an increase in call volume the assessment showed that nearly half of all responses were in one of four station areas. Station 42's service area, located on Hwy 22 handles 49% of the total district responses. This one station is located in the western half of the district while three stations are located in the eastern portion. (see Attachment 1. Mandeville Fire & EMS Call Distribution Analysis Map)<sup>9</sup>

3-Yr. Average Responses by Station	
Average Responses	Percentage
Station 41 - 2054	33.10%
<b>Station 42 - 3026</b>	<b>48.77%</b>
Station 43 - 729	11.75%
Station 44 - 376	6.06%
Out of District - 18	0.29%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6204</b>
	<b>99.97%</b> <sup>10</sup>

With only four stations responding, more than 50% of the time when a response is dispatched, units are already handling an incident somewhere else in the district. This overlap in responses can increase response times throughout the district, even in areas that are normally within a 5:20 response.

<sup>9</sup> ESRI GIS data St. Tammany Fire Protection District No.4 Boundaries

<sup>10</sup> Emergency Reporting records management system Doc Id. 857



# Mandeville Fire/ EMS Needs Assessment



Percentage of Overlapping Responses	
Year	% Overlapped
2017	61.80%
2018	63.37%
2019	50.70%
	3-year average <b>58.62%</b>

The need to add additional stations and apparatus to distribute the call volume was known as far back as 2001. PIAL first recommended additional fire stations based on the old standard of road miles for coverage in 2001. Again in 2008, three additional stations were recommended and in 2013, four additional stations. In 2016 the PIAL Rating changed to meet NFPA standards that included a move to performance-based verses road miles<sup>12</sup>. NFPA 1710 Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments addresses staffing and response time minimum standards. Beginning in late 2015 the district began analyzing response times based on NFPA 1710 and began collecting the data that would improve the rating and determine needs based on the NFPA standards not just PIAL recommendations.

## Conclusions

The district is statutorily responsible for protecting life, property, and environment from fire and other hazards for 75 square miles, along with 14 miles of the causeway bridge. Within its borders the district protects a calculated 58,967 residents and 21,757 households, including 4,558 households with disabilities; additionally, 3,198 businesses and their 25,639 employees<sup>13</sup>. With improved data and new tools to better analyze that data, the district knows that only an estimated 30% of the people in the fire district have a minimum response time within the NFPA national standard of 5:20<sup>14</sup>. Additionally, those areas may often have longer response times due to overlapping responses. This is a clear deficiency in the operational performance of the district and is a legitimate safety concern for the 70% who are outside the national standard for response time; likewise, it is of concern for those effected by response overlap. In addition to the increased risk to the community, this puts responders at an increased risk and makes distributing workload very difficult.

When analyzing the districts operational performance and its potential impact on consequences to life, property, and the environment (outcomes), the district has the necessary capability to meet the majority of potential community risk. The district has a relatively adequate availability of resources, meaning the number of resources available are generally adequate but should be improved; however, the district has a clear deficiency in reliability of these highly capable, mostly available resources.

<sup>11</sup> Emergency Reporting records management system Doc Id. 1645

<sup>12</sup> Property Insurance Association of Louisiana (PIAL) <https://www.pial.org/products-and-services/municipal-division/#1539327820810-c636280d-d925>

<sup>13</sup> ESRI GIS data St. Tammany Fire Protection District No.4 Boundaries Key Facts infographic

<sup>14</sup> ESRI GIS data St. Tammany Fire Protection District No.4 Boundaries Network Analysis

## Mandeville Fire/ EMS Needs Assessment



In other words, the distance and sometimes immediate availability of resources due to a lack of fire stations, personnel, and apparatus creates a reliability void. These voids effect 70% of our district and at times more depending on response overlap. The district has done everything it can do to address these deficiencies without adding the additional stations.

The district must build new stations to begin to address these needs now. Building these two fire stations improves coverage in that area from 30% of the resident population covered to 64% covered. Additionally, there are 1,769 businesses that will directly benefit from the additional fire stations; with the additional stations built, over 81% of businesses will be within the national standard for response time in this area<sup>15</sup>.

Long range the district will need to build additional fire stations in the Lonesome Road area, and the Soutl Street and Highway 1088 area. The district must begin now addressing these needs to provide a majority of the district with minimum response times and adequate resources meeting national standards.

Based on the data and the nationally accepted consensus standards<sup>16</sup> the district recognized the need to add additional fire stations, apparatus, and personnel to better meet its mission of protecting life, property, and the environment. This led to the request for an early millage renewal and extended 20-year term, as well as the parcel fee request. The voters approved both millages for a total of 26 mills on November 6th, 2018 for twenty years. In a record high voter turnout, the millages passed 69.5% for, to 30.5% against<sup>17</sup>. The district needs the full voter approved 26 mills to address these known deficiencies.

Attached in this report is the cost analysis of adding two needed additional fire stations compared to the additional revenue projected from a reassessment roll-forward of the voter approved 26 mills. Also attached is a map of the district showing exiting station locations and the two proposed additional stations.

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<sup>15</sup> ESRI GIS data St. Tammany Fire Protection District No.4 Boundaries Network Analysis

<sup>16</sup> National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1710 <https://www.nfpa.org/codes-and-standards/all-codes-and-standards/list-of-codes-and-standards/detail?code=1710>

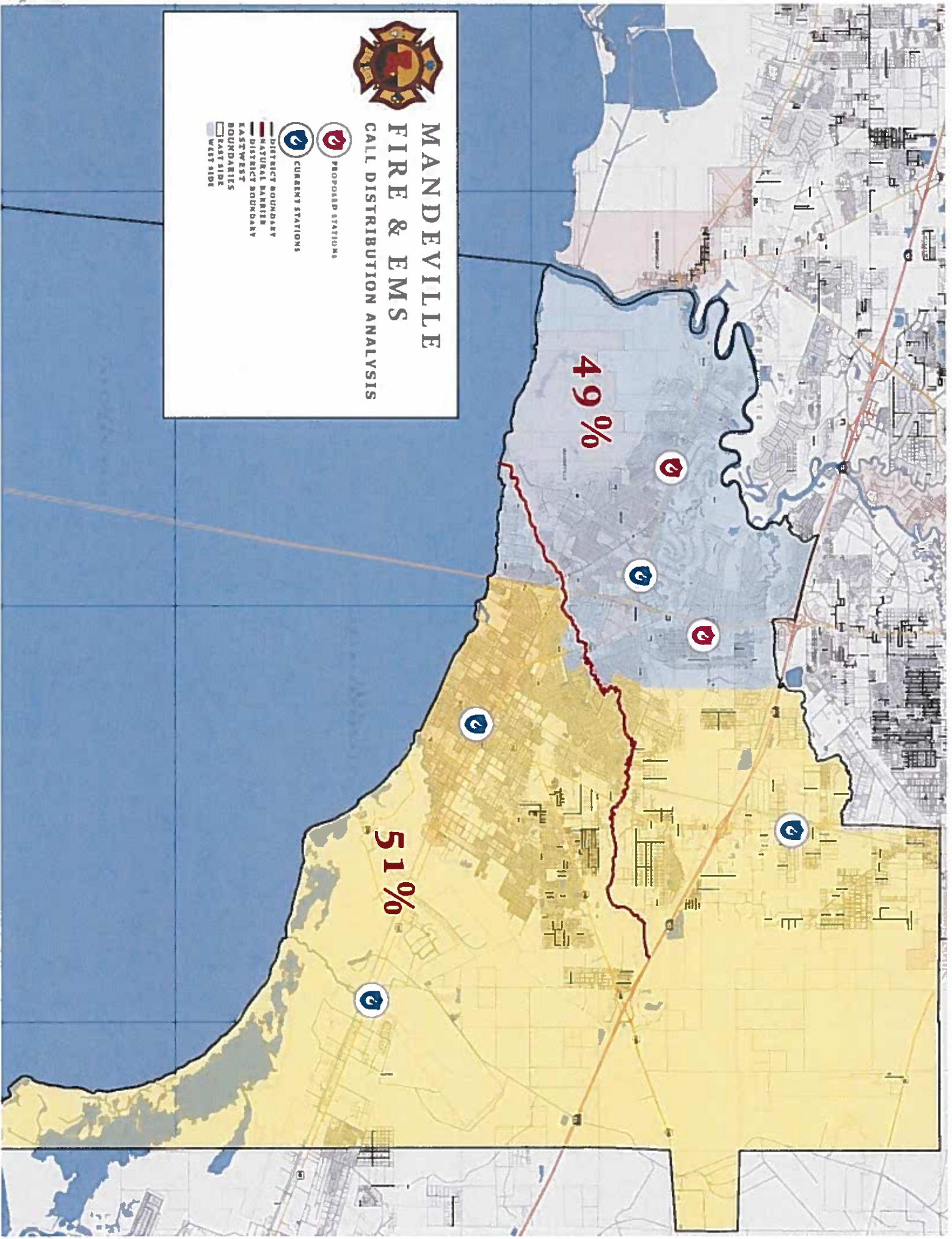
<sup>17</sup> Louisiana Secretary of State

<https://www.sos.la.gov/ElectionsAndVoting/GetElectionInformation/FindResultsAndStatistics/Pages/default.aspx>



# MANDEVILLE FIRE & EMS CALL DISTRIBUTION ANALYSIS

-  PROPOSED STATIONS
-  CURRENT STATIONS
-  DISTRICT BOUNDARY
-  NATURAL BARRIER
-  DISTRICT BOUNDARY
-  EAST WEST BOUNDARIES
-  PAST SIDE
-  WEST SIDE







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1-In 2018 FD4 requested a \$75 parcel fee that the taxpayers voted down. After that defeat, the FD said it could build using existing revenues. Now FD4 is seeking to roll up the millage increase that the voters had previously approved. However, just because something "can be done" does not mean it "should be done".

The Fire Chief stated that although the parcel fee would have allowed the district to add additional firefighters to emergency vehicles, the approval of the 20-year millage rate of 26 mills allowed the district to borrow funds to build the stations. The adjusted plan after the parcel fee failed was to redistribute apparatus and personnel and run with fewer firefighters per station. With the millage rates approved the district would be able to roll forward after reassessment as it did in 2016 to the voter approved 26 mills. The increase from any valuation adjustments through reassessment and new growth would help cover the cost of the additional stations, and the mandatory promotion of district Chiefs per LA RS 33:1972. Without the parcel fee there would be 3 firefighters, possibly 4, to cover one fire truck and one ambulance verses the 5 firefighters that would have covered the same equipment with the \$75.00 parcel fee in place. The National standard found in NFPA 1710 states a minimum of 4 firefighters per truck are required and up to 6 or more depending on the occupancy and construction type of the community served. The district was attempting to address two known deficiencies: 1. The distribution of resources for response time and their reliability when needed. 2. Staffing of apparatus based on National standards and LA RS 33:1967 & RS 33:1972. Even with the roll forward to the voter approved millage rates and the parcel fee, the district would have only then achieved consistently the 4 per fire apparatus staffing standards. The national standard of 4 per apparatus will only happen in some instances with just the millage roll forward.

2-The FD's are already among the best funded entities per STP Steve Stefancik (then STP Council Chair).

The statement that the "FDs" are already among the best funded entities is vague and lacks context. Best funded compared to what? A recreation district? A lighting district? The School system? Mr. Stefancik is not a council person in Fire District 4, to our knowledge he has never visited Fire District 4, and knows very little about the districts operations or needs. Fire Districts are heavily regulated essential services that provide all hazards response to communities during fires, medical emergencies, rescues, hazardous materials response, natural disasters, and more. As a result, fire districts require highly trained and physically capable personnel to provide these services, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Providing the trained personnel requires revenue, not to mention the cost of equipment and facilities needed. No different than our military, there are large costs associated with public safety and with failures to provide for it adequately.

3- A Cost Benefit Analysis by a third party is needed to confirm or deny the FD's claimed needs?

Who would that third party be? Unless the third party is a qualified consulting firm with subject matter experts and a clear understanding of the purpose and scope of the fire service the "analysis" would be invalid. If a trained and experienced consulting firm was to provide a "third-party" evaluation it would come with a very large price tag. If this is done by qualified

experts specializing in public safety, they would do their analysis the same way we have, following national standards and best practices. They would perform a community risk analysis, create a standard of cover for that risk and then project the cost. It is a core function of the fire district to do a risk assessment/needs assessment, we have trained personnel for this purpose. This is the process the fire district completed in 2016/2017 that confirmed that the community needed additional fire stations. The fact is the district is currently completing a more in-depth needs "Analysis" through the accreditation process. The methods the district has used were guided by the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) a "third party". This process has provided the district with the accreditation model, various accreditation publications and trainings, and access to experienced peer assessors. The district also took advantage of the Technical Advisory Program (TAP) another "third party" that provided Community-driven strategic plan facilitation, Community risk assessment and standards of cover facilitation and Self-assessment document facilitation. TAP advisors have years of fire service experience and are chosen for their depth of knowledge about fire and emergency services operations as well as CFAI accreditation requirements. This is the industry standard of validation of the agency, its services, and standards of cover. Everything the district has "claimed" is being scrutinized and evaluated by the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CAFI) as part of the accreditation process. The process has reinforced the need yet again for additional stations. We know that building the two stations the district has been "claiming" are needed would increase the number of residents covered within a five minute twenty second (5:20) response time by 46%.

**4-Even if needed, it appears these additions and replacements can be made with existing revenues and reserves (as FD4 previously said could be done). More on this below.**

See response to question/statement 1. This is correct the district can cover the two additional stations with the voter approved 26 mills not less than that.

**5- FD4 has obtained the absolute BEST fire rating possible with the equipment and stations it now has.**

The fire district has made obtaining the absolute best fire rating possible with the resources provided by the citizens we proudly serve a high priority. However, the fire rating focuses on just fire protection and is focused on property loss. The district's focus is on life safety first and property conservation second. The district therefore makes plans and takes actions in that order, life first, property and environment second. Although the fire rating is very important and represents a core function/service the district provides, it alone is not the driver for the needs of the community. This is why reducing response time is so critical, smoke kills people, long before the fire destroys the building. Heart attacks, strokes, traumatic injuries, severe allergic reactions, etc. kill or debilitate people without rapid medical intervention, often well before they ever make it to a hospital, the list and types of emergencies the fire district responds to is vast. Response time is the common denominator in a positive outcome and why it must be addressed. Simply saying we have equipment and trained personnel and a class 1 fire rating does not correct a known deficiency related to response time.

**6- FD4 wants to upgrade its equipment even though its equipment is still serviceable. Many taxpayers would also like to upgrade their vehicles and tools and homes, but we make do with what is still serviceable.**

What qualifies someone to determine what is serviceable? What standards are being applied to determine the serviceability of the district's equipment? The fire district cannot rely on opinions regarding life safety equipment. The district relies on Certified Emergency Vehicle Technicians (EVT's), industry standards and best practices to determine the maintenance, repair and replacement schedules of its equipment. There is a cost to purchase, maintain, repair and replace this essential equipment. Additionally, the district assesses community need based on data, community risk assessment, national standards and best practices not opinions.

**7- FD4 claims its millages are flat, but its revenues are up 24% vs 14% inflation 2007 to 2017. This is because the FD's revenues increase with every new structure, therefore negating the need to increase millages.**

Comparing the growth in revenue to national rate of inflation has little to do with the cost impact from adding structures and population locally. The real measure is how much did the revenue keep up with the growth and demand for services. Revenue was up during those years, but not every new building that is on the tax role adds to the increase in revenue. Not every new structure added is paying tax nor is every structure added to the tax role paying a full share of tax. Homestead exemptions, total exemptions, tax free exemptions, senior freeze, veterans freeze, disability freezes and business/industry exemptions all reduce revenue but add to the services required. So, every new structure increases the burden on services but not necessarily equal to the revenue it may bring if any at all. On top of all of this, millages are paid in the rears, meaning in 2007, the district was finally receiving revenue from 2006 or even late 2005 structures. In other words, the fire district must provide services long before the revenue is collected. Finally, in contrast to the 24% increase in revenue stated, in the same time period, 2007 – 2017 the district call volume grew by 42% (4416- 6285).

8- FD4 has net income (profit) of \$9,630,187.00 in 2018 and net equity (retained earnings) of \$18,908,493.72. Hence, FD4's profits and accumulated reserves seem to provide more than adequate money to pay-as-you-go (something that was indicated after the Parcel Fee failure) rather than raising still another tax. This is, again, especially true since its revenues automatically increase with every new structure.

The numbers used here come from the district Annual Financial report commonly known as the Louisiana Legislative Auditor (LLA) financial audit report. The district operates on a cash basis and for the audit report that cash basis is converted to an accrual basis. This conversion makes understanding the numbers challenging. Further complicating things is that the district falls under Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) for their Generally Accepted Accounting Practices (GAAP). These standards differ from traditional business accounting practices further confusing the numbers. To clarify the numbers, the \$9,630,187 is a combination of the districts \$5,200,000 restricted "Emergency Reserve Fund" held in a certificate of deposit and can only be used in a declared disaster. The districts unrestricted discretionary fund or "Contingency Reserve Fund", the "Capital Reserve Fund" used to fund buildings, land, vehicles and equipment replacement schedule and the restricted Training Facility "MRI Reserve fund". The MRI Reserve Fund is funded by payments of all the participating fire departments in west St. Tammany Parish and can only be used for maintenance, repairs and improvement of the training facility, this is not really the fire districts money, at least not all of it. In total these three funds equal the remaining \$4,430,187. These reserve funds are required under GASB and GAAP, they are part of being responsible stewards of tax dollars. This is not free money that can just be spent to "pay as you go". That is against best practices, would definitely hurt the districts bond rating and is a sure-fire way to end up in a financial crisis. GASB requires the district to have adequate reserve funds, the minimum for any government is 2 months of the Operating budget and the amount increases with the type of governmental service provided and the vulnerability to natural and man-made disasters. The Fire Service is considered an essential service so that two months is increased. Additionally, the district is vulnerable to natural disasters, particularly hurricanes so again the emergency and contingency funds must be increased to match the essential service and vulnerability. The emergency reserve fund is for major disasters/emergencies and is kept at three-six months and the contingency reserve is for immediate short-term emergencies and unbudgeted/unforeseen emergencies and is kept at a minimum of two to three months of operating budget. Lastly the "retained earnings" \$18,908, 493.72 is the total of all revenues received in 2018; however, there is a \$1,435,492.67 early receipt of 2019 taxes included in that number. In other words, it is next year's revenue just received early. If the district spent it as they go the budget would be short 1.4 million dollars the next year. So, the reason the "profits and accumulated reserves" seem to provide "more than adequate money" is the numbers include restricted required reserves and early receipts of tax dollars.

9- HERE ARE SOME INTERESTING STATS. Newer homes and businesses are being built with fewer combustible materials, and federal stats show from 2006 to 2015 – 19.1% fewer fires, 3% fewer deaths, 8% fewer injuries, and 20.4% fewer dollar losses.

Regarding these "interesting" statistics. The first statement that newer homes and businesses are being built with fewer combustible materials is incorrect. Newer homes and businesses burn faster than in the past because of the synthetic and

lightweight materials used. Simply do an internet search to fact check this statement. There has been a reduction in fires over the years, there are many factors but Fire Prevention efforts are credited as being a big reason. Education, inspections and code enforcement all help reduce the number of fires and fire related casualties. We are not sure where the 2006 to 2015 data came from? We went to the US Fire Administrations website to find this data. The US Fire Administration compares 2009 -2018 data under their Statistics section. According to their data Fires are down 2.5%, deaths are up 20.5%, injuries down 17%, dollar loss up 90.6%.

10- AND MORE STATS FROM FD4 ARE: EMT calls are 65.4% of all calls but Fire calls are only 1.66%. (The rest are 'convenience calls', services calls, etc.). This being the case, it would seem to make more sense to consider ambulance sub-stations (near assisted living and memory care facilities that generate an inordinate number of calls) rather than full Fire Stations. We should have this study – ambulance sub-stations vs full fire stations - before raising taxes for these uncertain needs, and that study should be done by an independent 3d party.

We are not sure where the data above came from, what year, etc.? Additionally, the classification of calls used by the National Incident Fire Reporting System (NIFRS) is universal and "convenience calls" is not a category. Here are the statistics for FD4 as classified by NIFRS compared to national averages:

Series	Heading	National Average	FD4 Average
100	Fire	4.0%	3.0%
200	Overpressure Rupture, Explosion (No Fire)	0.1%	0.1%
300	Rescue and Emergency Medical Services	64.3%	65.0%
400	Hazardous Condition (No Fire)	3.5%	2.7%
500	Service Call	7.4%	12.5%
600	Good Intent Call	11.2%	9.4%
700	False Alarm and False Call	8.4%	7.1%
800	Severe Weather and Natural Disaster	0.2%	0.1%
900	Special Incident Type	0.8%	0.0%

National Average: US Fire Administration <https://www.usfa.fema.gov/data/statistics/states/louisiana.html>

The fire districts response numbers are similar to national averages, not sure why we would not follow national standards and best practices for fire services based on the statistics?

11- Another reason is that a new station farther west on Hwy 22 does not seem to give a big enough bang-for-the-buck. From the current station, it only takes 1 minute & 20 seconds to get to the memory care facility (less than 1 mile) (which has sprinklers), 2 minutes 20 seconds to get to Beau Chen (1.3 miles), 3 minutes 15 seconds to get to Marina Beau Chen (1.9 miles), 3 minutes 40 seconds to the apartment complex (which has sprinklers) and 4 minutes 20 seconds (3.9 miles) to get to the river to get to 6 mega mansions which probably have sprinklers.

Using the "memory care unit" (100 Beau West) as the starting point as done above, and using ESRI GIS mapping software, calculated the population, number of businesses, homes, and response times in the area described above. Here are the real numbers for everything west of 100 Beau West to the River including all of Beau Chene:

Population from 100 Beau West as described: 9,534

Number of homes: 3,726

Number of Businesses: 256

Currently within a 5:20 Response time: 2,711 or 28.44%



With a Heavens Drive Station added 5:20 Response time: 6,991 or 73.33%

With the additional fire station on Heavens Drive the number of residents increases to 73.33% or 6,991 residents now within the National Standard for fire service response time. This represents a 158% increase in coverage by adding one fire station and clearly reflects a very "big bang-for -the buck".

12- This means that only one new station is possibly justifiable and that one should be the only one on the table, the one near Lakeside Hospital. See answer to number 11. and the summary.

13- The FD's goal is to get to a fire in 5 minutes and 20 seconds. Beyond that time, it is less likely to be able to "save the building." At some point, homeowners should simply rely on their insurer, regardless of the amount of the claim, especially since there are 20.4% fewer dollar losses per the above stats.

As explained before, the mission of the fire service is to protect 1. Life, 2. Property and the environment from fire and other hazards. Those beyond 5:20 response time could rely on their insurance company to rebuild their homes and businesses, yards, fences, trees, automobiles, sheds, etc. However, insurance does not replace family heirlooms, pictures, family keepsakes, art work, antiques and other very important and meaningful personal items. Insurance cannot replace a beloved pet, friend or a family member. The 20.4% fewer dollar losses cited in item 9. may have been true for the years cited, no source is given? However, as stated in the item 9. response, the 2009 -2018 data taken from the US Fire Administration website shows fire loss up 90.6%. Regardless, the idea that we should let buildings and other property burn and let insurance companies pay for it is irresponsible at best.

14- INTERNAL SAVINGS also seem possible.

A- FD4 has some lavish benefits. Those benefits far exceed what the private sector receives. Consider that FD4 even pays the employees portion of Social Security on top of lucrative retirement pay, lucrative medical benefits, plus the employees get the usual federal social security. To be fair, the employees also receive a fairly low base pay.

Here are the facts concerning Firefighter pay and benefits: Nothing "lavish or lucrative". The pension is the only clearly rich benefit but the district has no option, it is mandated by state law.

1. The fire district does not pay the employees social security, the employee does. The fire district is mandated to pay social security by federal law.
2. A starting firefighter makes 10.25\$ per hour.
3. A firefighter receives health insurance but must pay for family coverage and if a spouse works and can receive benefits, they are not allowed on the district's plan.
4. The fire district pays educational incentives for Paramedic, Hazmat Technicians, College degrees, etc. the largest is for Paramedic and equals \$6000 annually.

Unfunded state mandates: Required by state law, all fire departments must provide, not optional.

5. LA RS 33:1999 Firefighters receive 10 paid holidays at double their hourly rate for holidays worked or can be given compensatory time off with pay.
6. RS 33:1992 Firefighters shall receive a 2% pay increase annually.
7. LA RS 33:1995 Firefighters shall receive 52 weeks sick leave with full pay.
8. RS 33:1996 Firefighters shall be entitled to an annual vacation of eighteen days with full pay.
9. RS LA RS 11:2251 Firefighter Retirement System, - Currently the fire district contributes 32.5% per firefighter and the firefighter pays 10% mandated by law.
10. RS 40:1666 Firefighters and police officers receive state supplemental pay of \$6000 annually, paid by the state, however the fire district is required by law to factor it into the retirement calculation, overtime rate and taxes paid.

B- The FD4 board has already granted huge salary increases to the chief. Total compensation in 2017 was \$177,234 and \$179,057 in 2018. 2019 compensation is unknown to this writer but estimated at \$181,000 and still another annual raise is likely for 2020 to some \$183,000. Worse, this is reportedly \$30,000 to \$40,000 more than the other fire chiefs in STP. This compensation flies in the face of taxpayers who have to fund these increases when their own total compensation and increases are minuscule compared to the public sector. **By law the Board of Commissioners establish the pay and benefits in accordance with Federal and state laws based on the district's needs.**

C- To request a tax increase now seems terribly insensitive as many taxpayers do not have jobs and don't even know if or when they may get their jobs back.

The fire district takes seriously the harsh health and economic consequences of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The study of sales tax revenue and data provided by St. Tammany Corp was strongly considered. Additionally, the study of impact on the average homeowner in the district was considered. The fact is the average homeowner will see an annual increase of about \$22.00 dollars beginning in December/January as a result of a roll forward. Based on the needs verses the cost, the district feels compelled to move forward without delay, building two new fire stations, equipping, and staffing them to improve a known and significant deficiency in response coverage.

D- This increase is on top of a \$5 million revenue bond ready to be signed.

The 5 million revenue bond is borrowed money that must be repaid. The purpose of the early renewal at 26 mills for a term of 20 years was to "bond out" or borrow funds to construct two fire stations.

E- With huge revenue reserves, huge annual profits, available bond revenues, and now a tax increase, Just How Much is Enough??

The district has adequate funding reserves following GASB and GAAP. The 26 mills for 20 years as approved by the voters on November 2018 by 69% to 31% is what is enough at this time to fund the additional needed fire stations, personnel and equipment.

## 15- SUMMARY

Before we enact a new tax, we should consider:

A- one station rather than two,

**Already answered in item 11.**

B- paying for that one with future and retained earnings and/or using that revenue to fund and pay for bonds rather than another tax increase,

**See item 14, D. simply using the voter approved 26 mills**

C- consider ambulance sub-stations instead of full stations, and have a 'needs audit' by 3d party,

**Already answered in item 3.**

D- discontinue compensations not in line with the private sector.

**Already answered in item 14.**

E- Remember that with each new house or subdivision, FIRE DEPT REVENUES GO UP AUTOMATICALLY, and those revenues are growing double the rate of inflation.

Already answered in item 7 and 8

F- Consider taxing the 'memory care' and 'assisted living' businesses that cause an inordinate amount of EMT calls,

The district cannot legally levy a tax or fee on a specific business or entity. Regardless, for the record looking back over 2017, 2018, and 2019 only 8.55% of responses were to the Nursing homes and assisted living centers located in the district. Clearly 8.55% is not an inordinate amount.

G- Remember Councilman Stefancik's observation that the fire departments are already among the best funded entities in our parish.

See answer to item 2.

16- The new chief has done an excellent job getting FD4's financial house in order. He took over an incredibly horrible financial wreck, so bad that some predecessors allegedly destroyed many records. Our request is that he continue his efforts and pay for future needs from its annual automatic property tax increases and its increases in reserves before asking for more taxes.

See answers to item 7. And 8.

### Mandeville Fire/ EMS Funding needs SUMMARY

Beginning in 2016 under a new Fire Chief the district conducted a community risk assessment and needs assessment for the area served. Changes were implemented at that time that were procedural and had little cost impact to help improve district operations and subsequently lead to an improved the fire rating. Obtaining a Class 1 Fire rating was a huge accomplishment but only addressed the property conservation aspect of the core mission. The full mission of protecting Life, Property and Environment from fire and other hazards had a significant gap effecting life safety and property conservation. This core deficiency was specifically related to response time and dependability of available resources. The district recognized deficiencies in two areas: 1. Response times due to lack of adequate distribution of resources and 2. Reliability of resources due to response overlapping or in other words units already on a response when additional responses occurred. A secondary issue identified was meeting the National Standard of at least 4 firefighters per apparatus consistently.

### 3-Yr. Average Responses by Station

3-Yr. Average	Percentage
41 - 2054	33.10%
<b>42 - 3026</b>	<b>48.77%</b>
43 - 729	11.75%
44 - 376	6.06%
OD - 18	0.29%
Total = 6204	99.97%

OD = Out of District

The assessment showed that nearly half of all responses were in one of four station areas. Additionally, this was causing resources to be pulled from other stations to cover gaps in coverage. Over 50% of the time when a response was dispatched units were already handling an incident somewhere in the district. Above and below are charts illustrating the response numbers taken from the districts report management system (Report doc. Id. 857 & 1645).

Percentage of Overlapping Responses	
Year	% Overlapped
2017	61.80%
2018	63.37%
2019	50.70%
3-year average	58.62%

The need to add additional stations and apparatus to distribute the call volume was known as far back as 2001. PIAL first recommended additional fire stations based on the old standard of road miles for coverage in 2001. Again in 2008 three additional stations were recommended and in 2013, four additional stations. In 2016 the Rating changed to meet NFPA standards and that included a move to performance-based need verses road miles. NFPA 1710 addresses staffing and response time standards for fire departments. Beginning in late 2015 the district began analyzing response times based on NFPA 1710 and began collecting the data that would improve the rating and determine needs based under the new standards not just PIAL recommendations.

Based on the data and the standards the district recognized the need to add additional fire stations, apparatus and personnel to better meet the national standards. This led to the early millage renewal and extended 20-year term as well as the parcel fee request. The voters approved both millages for a total of 26 mills on November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018 for twenty years. In a record high voter turnout, the millages passed 69.5% for to 30.5% against.

Today with improved data and new tools to better analyze that data, the district knows that less than 30% of the people in the fire district have a minimum response time within the NFPA national standard of 5:20. Additionally, those areas may often have even longer response times due to overlapping responses. This is unacceptable, and is a legitimate safety concern for the 70% who are outside the 5:20 response time and for those effected by response overlap. In addition to the increased risk to the community this puts responders at an increased risk and makes distributing workload very difficult. The district must build new stations to begin to address these needs now. Building these two fire stations improves coverage in that area from 30% of the resident population covered to 64% covered. Additionally, there are 1,769 businesses that will benefit from the additional fire stations; with the additional stations built, over 81% of businesses will be within the 5:20 minimum standard response time in this response area.

Long range the district will need to build additional fire stations in the Lonesome Road area, Soult Street and Hwy 1088 area. In total once the district response area is fully developed (homes and businesses), the total estimated number of fire stations needed is eight (8). The district must began now addressing these needs to provide a majority of the district with minimum response times and adequate resources meeting national standards.