

Hillsboro Fire Protection District
Proposition Full Time Staffing

April 5th of 2022



Hillsboro Fire Protection District

Jefferson County, Missouri

Mission Statement

Our mission at the Hillsboro Fire Protection District is to provide emergency services and fire prevention education to the citizens we serve. Our mission shall be accomplished through the use of a pro-active force of firefighters that are trained in fire suppression, rescue, emergency medical care, and education.

Core Values

Honesty
Integrity
Teamwork
Commitment to Excellence
Knowledge
Respect

Vision Statement

The Members of the Hillsboro Fire Protection District will:

- Strive to be role models in the community and leaders in our profession.
- We will be accountable to those we serve, each other and any fire service organizations we interact with.
- We are committed to providing the best public service through innovative training, education and equipment.
- We will take the fire department into the future through productive teamwork, open and honest communications and participative decision making throughout our organization.
- We are committed to our values, mission, and dedicated to our fire service profession.
- Our organization is driven to provide a cost effective and efficient fire department while honoring our values, accomplishing our mission and achieving our goals.

Developed by your firefighters, December 22, 2014

Executive Summary

The Hillsboro Fire Protection District has reached the point where our full-time staffing levels are dangerously low. The citizens and visitors of the Hillsboro Fire Protection District are not properly protected. Our firefighters are being asked to put their lives on the line without necessary staffing levels to do their job effectively and safely. The Hillsboro Fire District has attempted 2 tax increases for \$0.50 on \$100.00 of assessed valuation and have failed both times. While the fire district has recently been successful in obtaining a SAFER Grant to hire 6 full time firefighters, it is only for a 3-year period. These additional positions have made the citizens and community safer, but in the long term the fire district needs these temporary positions to become permanent to ensure we can continue to deliver proper services to the community. The demands placed on the fire service are ever changing and growing. The Hillsboro Fire Protection District began to focus on Strategic Management Planning many years ago. One of the goals has always been on top of the list for many years. That goal is:

2021 Long Term Goal 2 – Consider additional full-time staffing – Partially achieved by obtaining a SAFER Grant, but they are only temporary, 3-year positions.

The AFG SAFER Grant

To help achieve the goal of better staffing, the fire district applied for what is called the AFG SAFER Grant in 2019. The AFG SAFER is awarded and managed through FEMA. The grant is used to help a fire department hire full time staffing on temporary basis while the fire department attempts to get permanent funding through tax increases to keep full time positions. The grant application goes through a lengthy review process by other Fire Service Leaders. Fire Service Leaders on the grant review committee concluded the Hillsboro Fire District needed the grant before a citizen or fighter was hurt or killed. In the fall of 2020, the Hillsboro Fire District was notified of the award.

Many taxpayers ask why would you accept an unsustainable grant? The answer is simple, denying the grant may cost someone's life due to slow response times.

Past Tax Increase Failures

The Hillsboro Fire Protection District has struggled in receiving tax increases over its history of existence.

Recently the Hillsboro Fire Protection District has failed 2 tax increase initiatives, one being in April of 2020 and one being in April of 2021. There are many reasons for the failure including political unrest in our country, a pandemic, and a general distrust in government. Each tax increase we asked our citizens for a (\$0.50) tax increase and both times we were turned down. We spoke to multiple residents about why they thought the tax increase failed and there were two main points that everyone said:

1. The district does not need a new firehouse
2. The district is asking for too much money

With the information provided by the citizens, we removed the building of a new firehouse from the tax increase plan and dropped the amount we requested from \$0.50 to \$0.35.

Goal of the Tax Increase

The strategic management goals set forth by the district have not yet been met. It is managements job to report to the Board the deficiencies of the district.

After listening to the public and their concerns with a \$0.5000 tax increase, we must adjust to the public's view, change our main goals, and lower the amount we are asking for. Our main goal must be as follows:

1. Create funding to maintain the 6 full time firefighters allowed for by the AFG SAFER Grant.

The Leadership Team of the Hillsboro Fire Protection District recommended to the Board of Directors that a thirty-five cent (\$0.35) Real Estate and Property Tax Increase on the April 2022 Ballot would be sufficient to meet the financial goals of maintaining the 6 full time firefighter positions. One thing must be made clear throughout this process:

Goal of the Tax Increase – Create a funding stream to retain the 6 Full Time Firefighters hired by the SAFER Grant by going for a \$0.3500 tax increase.

In order to ease the financial burden on the taxpayers, the Board of Directors choose to implement the tax increase in phases:

2023 - \$0.2500

2024 - \$0.0500

2025 - \$0.0500

Total - \$0.3500 per \$100.00 of assessed valuation

Dangers of Failure to the Citizens

The Hillsboro Fire Protection District is not enduring financial hardships. The Hillsboro Fire Protection District must plan for the future and the continuing increase in both calls and population. We are in danger of losing 6 full time firefighters which will have a huge impact on response times and the ability to maintain our current level of service.

The True Cost of Fire Protection to the Citizens

Citizens look at their tax bills and only see what they pay the Hillsboro Fire District and think we are a burden to their financial situation, but this far from the truth. Every 5 years a company called ISO (Insurance Services Office) visits every fire department in the State and grades us based on staffing, 911 dispatching capabilities, water supply, fire apparatus, training, equipment and many different items. We are then given a grade between 1 and 10 with 1 being the best and 10 being no recognized fire protection at all. They then sell this grade to insurance companies who base your homeowner's insurance rates on the fire department grade.

Currently, if you live within 5 miles of any of Hillsboro's Fire Stations you enjoy a class 5 rating. The difference between a class 5 fire department and a class 10 fire department could mean double the cost of insurance on your house.

Example

Mr. Jones lives 7 miles from a fire station and has a class 10 rating. He pays \$3,500.00 per year in homeowners' insurance. The Fire District he lives in, builds a new fire house and Mr. Jones is now only 3 miles from the fire station. The fire station is staffed helping the Fire Departments ISO score. Mr. Jones drops from a 10 to a class 5 and his insurance drops from \$3,500 to \$2,000 per year saving him \$1,500.00. His taxes to his fire department are \$200.00 a year.

By having a staffed fire station and a good ISO score, his fire department has put \$1,300.00 back in his pocket in insurance savings.

It is true, not all insurance companies use ISO, but all insurance companies look a loss in certain geographic areas. So a ill performing fire department that has high fire losses will inevitably cost the homeowner more.

Fire department services are basically free or highly reduced for high performing and well-staffed fire departments.

If this tax measure fails, the Hillsboro Fire Protection District will do everything to maintain its current ISO class. Reduced staffing and an increase call volume could cause us to drop to an ISO rating of 6. We have talked to some brokers that estimate this would cost a homeowner an extra \$290.00 per year. More than what we are asking for. The Hillsboro Fire Protection District will always do it's very best to maintain our ISO score.

About the Hillsboro Fire Protection District

The Hillsboro Fire Protection District (HFPD) is in central Jefferson County Missouri, which is located 29 mi. south of St. Louis. The district covers a substantial portion of unincorporated Jefferson County and the City of Hillsboro. The Hillsboro Fire District is not affiliated with the City of Hillsboro, we are a political subdivision of the State of Missouri. The citizens elect Board Members to govern the district. Our first due response area is 44 sq. miles. We have large areas of open undeveloped land, large, wooded areas, scenic lakes, large educational complexes, residential areas, and government buildings. Our first due population is approximately 16,834. We also have written/automatic mutual aid agreements with all 16 Fire Departments in our county increasing our response area to 664 sq. miles and a population of 226,739. The Hillsboro Fire Protection District also receive help from other departments on a regular basis. It is highly important prior to any goals or future planning of the district, that an overview of our current position is discussed. The following sections describe the Hillsboro Fire District and our current market position.

Response Area Hazards

The Hillsboro Fire Protection District has responsibilities for the following Critical Infrastructure in our first due area:

- 2- large Ameren UE Electrical Substations

- AT&T Battery Building 1,095 gals. Sulfuric acid & 11,628 lbs. of lead stored at this facility.
- NG regulator and boosting pumping station
- Propane Distribution Center 30,000 gals. propane storage
- 1 radio tower that is 1301' tall
- County 911 Communications Tower – 490'
- 1 Adult correctional facility housing 355 inmates and staff
- 2 Juvenile correctional facilities housing 60 inmates and staff.
- Missouri DNR Chemical Drop Facility/Chemical Storage – housing numerous chemicals used in the manufacture of methamphetamine (Eastern Missouri Storage Center) all chemicals seized from meth labs for the eastern half of Missouri are stored here.
- Jefferson County Court House and numerous other government buildings on the State and Local levels
- Jefferson College with approximately 3000 students
- Hillsboro School District with numerous school buildings and 3400 students
- State Rt. 21 a 4-lane highway with substantial amounts of truck traffic and hazmat traffic
- Numerous residential subdivisions
- Several miles of the Big River
- Several large Lakes and Lake Communities
- Thousands of Acres of Wild-land Urban Interface

Current Staffing

We are a 24/7/365 combination fire district, meaning we have paid and volunteer firefighters, comprised of 8 regular full-time members, 6 full time AFG SAFER Hired Firefighters, and 20 volunteer members. Our 14 fulltime FFs are certified at NFPA1001 levels of FF1 & FF2 and most are EMTs. We have numerous volunteer FFs certified at FFI & II. The HFPD requires all new members to be certified to NFPA1001 FF1 & FF2 levels by the end of their first year. We provide all fire suppression, technical rescue, hazmat, water rescue, non-transport BLS medical response, fire prevention programs, commercial building inspections, and public assistance.

The Hillsboro Fire Protection District has transformed from a traditional Fire Department to an All Hazards Emergency Response Agency that handles all types of emergencies.

Stations and Equipment

Station 1

120 5th St
Hillsboro, MO 63050

Staffed with 2 people 24/7/365. The Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief are also at Station 1.

Station 2

5750 State Rd. B
Hillsboro, MO 63050

Staffed with 2 people 24/7/365.

Total On Duty Staffing 4 Full Time Firefighters 24/7/365. However, if a tax measure isn't passed staffing levels will return to only 2 full time firefighters on duty 24/7/365.

Apparatus

The Hillsboro Fire Protection District Operates the following apparatus:

- 2021 pumper 1500gpm/1000gal. 5 seats/4 SCBA
- 2004 pumper 1250gpm/1000gal. 6 seats/6 SCBA
- 2001 Tanker 1250gpm/1000gal. 2 seats/4 SCBA
- 2016 Tanker 1000gpm/3000gal. 2 seats/2 SCBA
- 2017 4x4 brush truck 220gpm/250gal. 5 seats
- '95 4x4 brush truck 100gpm/300gal. 3 seats
- '19 4x4 command vehicle – 5 seats
- '12 4x4 command vehicle – 5 seats
- '13 4x4 utility vehicle – 5 seats
- 1 John Boat
- 1 Inflatable Boat
- 1 UTV
- 1 Heavy Rescue Trailer

Response Analysis

In 2006 we ran 577 calls for services

In 2021 we responded to 1295 Calls for Service. This is a 124% increase in call volume since 2006.

Recent Years

2016 - 792

2017 – 950 (19.94% increase from 2016)

2018 – 970 (2.1% increase from 2017)

2019 – 1014 (4.53% Increase from 2018)

2020 – 1022 (0.78% Increase from 2019)

2021 – 1295 (26% Increase from 2020)

Overlapping Calls (Multiple calls happening at the same time)

This issue is becoming a big concern for the administration. An overlapping call is when the Hillsboro Fire Protection District is running multiple calls at the same time.

In 2009 we had 89 overlapping incidents or 12.9% of our calls were happening at the same time

In 2020 we had 166 overlapping incidents or 16.24% of our calls were happening at the same time.

In 2021 we had 320 overlapping incidents or 25% of our calls were happening at the same time.

In 2020, prior to having station 2 staffed 24/7, there were 166 calls that volunteers, off duty paid staff or Chief Officers had to handle while the on duty crew was on another call. This delays responses because these individuals must come from home to pick up a fire apparatus to handle the alarm. Often the Fire Chief and/or Deputy Chief handled calls by themselves with no help.

Additional Staffing and Response Time Decrease

In 2021 with the Hillsboro Station 2 manned from SAFER Grant Firefighters, the response times still dropped throughout the district even with multiple calls happening at the same time. The Fire District in 2021 saw an overall district wide decrease in response times of over a minute. A minute may not seem like a lot, but when average out response times over 1295 calls, a minute decrease from 2020 is huge. Here is a look at some other specific decrease in response times for certain areas:

Highway C and White Rd, Woods of the Big River Area

Drive time from station 1 = 12 Minutes
Drive time from station 2 = 6 Minutes
Decrease in Response Time = 6 Minutes

Butcher Branch and Green Summers Dr.

Drive time from station 1 = 9 Minutes
Drive time from station 2 = 7 Minutes
Decrease in Response Time = 2 Minutes

Reynolds Creek and Stonebridge Estates

Drive time from station 1 = 8 Minutes
Drive time from station 2 = 3 Minutes
Decrease in Response Time = 5 Minutes

Front Gate of Raintree

Drivetime time from station 1 = 9 Minutes
Drivetime time from station 2 = 1 Minute
Decrease in Response Time = 8 Minute Decrease

2021 has shown a HUGE increase in overlapping calls. We have been extremely fortunate to have station 2 staffed with our AFG Firefighters. This has saved the district residents precious minutes in the event of an emergency.

Fire Department Standards and Response Times

We identified the main goal of this tax increase is to have an additional engine company on duty 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. This section answers the question of why that is important.

The Hillsboro Fire District has morphed from a standard “Fire Department” to an all-Hazards Emergency Response agency. In addition to fires, we respond to vehicle accidents, emergency medical calls, water rescues, building collapse, severe weather incidents, hazmat calls, wildland fires and many other types of emergencies.

There are certain benchmarks and time frames that we should be striving to meet to ensure we are providing the best industry agreed upon care for all the types of calls we respond to.

Fires

Years ago, a homeowner had 14 to 17 minutes to escape a house fire prior to flashover (where everything in a room is burning and the atmosphere isn't survivable). Today with modern construction techniques and the material used in furniture the time has decreased to 2 to 3 minutes to escape. This poses a huge problem for homeowners sleeping in the middle of the night when a house fire happens. They quickly become trapped and unable to escape. With only Hillsboro Station 1 staffed, it may have taken us 10-20 minutes to get to the west side of our district (Hwy C, Butcher Branch, Raintree). With station 2 staffed that will cut response times by precious minutes and give you a better chance of survival.

When a house catches on fire, here is a short list of some of the tasks that need to be completed in no particular order:

1. Search and Rescue needs to be performed by 2 people
2. Fire Extinguishment requires a minimum 2 people to complete
3. Ventilation (removing smoke and making the atmosphere tenable) requires 2 people
4. Salvage (Saving your personal items when we can) requires 2 people
5. Overhaul (Checking to ensure the fire is out) takes 2 people
6. Water Supply (Tanker shuttle for areas without water) takes several people
7. Exposure protection (Making sure the fire does not spread to other houses) takes several people

With the above list in mind, the National Fire Protection Association who sets standards for fire department responses, has developed a standard called NFPA 1710. NFPA sets the benchmark for how a fire department responds to structure fires, how many people should respond, and within what time frame we should respond. To summarize:

- The initial Arriving Engine Company shall arrive on the scene of all structure fires within 240 travel time seconds (4 Minutes)
- A fire department must deploy a full first alarm assignment within 480 seconds (8 minutes)
- There shall be an incident commander (someone in charge)
- Be able to flow 300 gallons per minute from 2 hose lines
- Perform a search
- Have a rapid intervention team (a crew to rescue a downed firefighter)
- Raise ground ladders

It is estimated a fire department needs a minimum of 15 – 17 personnel to arrive on the fire scene within 8 minutes to have a successful operation at a house fire. Successful equates to a quick-fire knock down, victims are rescued, the damaged is stopped, and no firefighters get hurt. The above number of people are just an example and not all the tasks need to be completed on every fire. In order to obtain the necessary help on fires, we rely heavily on our neighboring departments. Waiting for fire apparatus to show up from much further away with long response times allows

the fire to grow and could cost property and lives. We will always have to rely on mutual aid. We will never be staffed to the above NFPA levels. The Hillsboro Fire Protection District can make things much safer for the citizens and first responders by having additional full-time staff.

The Hillsboro Fire Protection District realizes that complete compliance of NFPA 1710 within our jurisdiction is not attainable, but we can come closer and make it safer for our citizens. Fire service Industry Leaders and the Federal Government agreed and award the district a SAFER Grant to hire additional manpower to help mitigate the dangers.

Many citizens will say “You have been doing just fine to this point with current staffing levels.” Just because we have managed up to this point without getting a citizen unnecessarily hurt or killed or one of our firefighters unnecessarily hurt or killed doesn’t make it right. We must strive to ensure the safety of all in our community.

Many people also say just get more volunteers! Times have changed, society has changed, and volunteerism is down in this country. Both parents now have to work jobs. Kids are involved in multiple activities taking away time to volunteer. Training requirements for firefighters have increased as they should, to keep first responders and citizens safe.

Why should the fire service continue to not properly compensate first responders? How many volunteer teachers are out there? How many volunteer police officers are out there? How about volunteer Paramedics? No other first responder agency in Jefferson County gets away with free help. Our volunteer firefighters are the best group of people you could meet. They selflessly serve the community and take time away from their family to help their neighbors and strangers. It is not the correct way of thinking to just get more free help.

Emergency Medical Calls

There is a huge misconception that we respond to EMS calls to only help the ambulance. The Fire service provides an invaluable service to our citizens by providing basic life support in the event of a medical emergency. We can provide CPR and early defibrillation in the event of a cardiac arrest, aspirin to help thin a patient’s blood in the event of heart attack, oxygen to help a person breathe, and multiple other treatments to help someone in distress. Having fire departments respond to EMS calls saves the taxpayers a large amount of money. Just like fire departments, EMS agencies are underfunded and cannot afford to staff more ambulances in our county. This means EMS agencies could have longer response times due to their positioning throughout the area. This is where we come into play by providing rapid access to medical care.

Having an extra engine company on duty at Station 2 cuts valuable minutes off response times to the west side of our district therefore potentially saving lives. Knowing we have multiple overlapping calls (simultaneous calls going on at the same time), having this extra engine company on duty provides the citizens in the City of Hillsboro. The east side of our district also benefits by having an additional engine company on duty and quicker access to emergency medical care.

The Golden hour refers to the time a person is involved in a traumatic accident that causes injury to the time they reach the surgery table to fix their injuries. Having crews arrive at the scene of a

traumatic injury quicker increases survival rates. Sometimes in the event of a traumatic injury, the person is trapped or entangled such as a motor vehicle accident. The quicker we can use the jaws of life to get the victim extricated, the better their odds of survival. Having an additional engine company on duty allows for better outcomes by having more help and quicker access to patients.

A summary of this section leads to 3 simple conclusions:

1. The Hillsboro Fire District is severely understaffed to meet national standards
2. A shorter response time saves lives
3. To have shorter response time we need to maintain the current staffing level of 4 personnel on duty 24/7, ensuring both our engine houses are staffed.

Tasks of the Hillsboro Fire District

As stated further up in the document, the Hillsboro Fire Protection District has identified a multitude of tasks required to be completed by the district to provide the services required of the public and fire service in general. The identified tasks are as follows:

1. Runcard/Responses
2. SOG Development
3. Long Range/Strategic Planning
4. Awards
5. Employee Benefits
6. 911 Liaison
7. Computer/IT
8. Hazmat Reporting
9. Budgeting
10. Health Insurance
11. Short and Long Term
12. Workers Compensation
13. Payroll
14. Paying of the Bills
15. Chamber/Rotary
16. Grant Administration
17. Employee Issues
18. Board Meeting Preparation
19. Paid Uniforms
20. Volunteer Uniform
21. Hydrant Testing
22. SCBA Maintenance
23. Apparatus Maintenance
24. Small Engine Maintenance
25. Medical Officer/Records
26. Engine House Supplies/Inventory

27. Hose Testing
28. Turnout Gear Maintenance
29. Engine House Maintenance
30. Medical Supplies
31. Full Time Scheduling
32. Operational Issues
33. Pump and Ladder Testing
34. Building Maintenance
35. Task Force 5 Responses
36. Rope and Rescue Equipment
Maintenance
37. Special Event Planning
38. Disaster Plans
39. SCBA Fit Testing
40. NFIRS Reporting
41. Emergency Responses
42. Public Relations Events
43. Public Education Events
44. Website Maintenance
45. CPR and First Aid Classes
46. Public Information
47. Social Media Management
48. Fire Prevention Education
49. Junior Program
50. Volunteer Recruitment
51. Volunteer Tracking and Statistics
52. Inspections
53. Preplans
54. Plan Review
55. Tier Reporting
56. Fire Training
57. EMS Training
58. Hazmat Training
59. Mutual Aid Training
60. Training Academy Representative
61. Engineer Training
62. Recruit Training
63. Training Records
64. Certification Tracking
65. NIMS Tracking
66. Exposure Plan

Although these tasks are delegated out to various paid and volunteer members, 66 different tasks are an incredible strain on 14 full time employees and 20 volunteer members. However, we will not waver and will complete them to the best of our ability no matter what.

District Financial Situation

The financial situation of the district is sufficient for the staffing we had prior to the SAFER Grant. We have been incredibly good stewards of the taxpayer's money. We are actively putting away a small amount of money for capital purchases such as a new fire truck, fire hose, large maintenance projects at the firehouse and other expensive items that take years to save for.

Our income for 2022 is projected to be \$1,130,528.00 (excluding the SAFER Grant)

The tax payers should be extremely proud of the district that we have been conservative enough to designate money annually to apparatus and other capital projects. The administration cannot stress the importance of ensuring the availability of proper equipment for our citizens and firefighters.

However, we currently have no room to grow staffing wise. We need 6 additional firefighters to staff a 2nd engine company at our station 2. This alone comes with an additional cost of well over \$420,000.00.

History of Taxes for the Hillsboro Fire Protection District

1974 – The Hillsboro Fire Association became a District, and a tax rate was set at \$0.3000

1985 – Changes in Assessment Laws required the district to set its tax rate back to 0.2000 per \$100.00 of assessed valuation.

1991 – The District received a \$0.1500 Tax Increase which assisted with hiring full time firefighters

2001 – The District received a \$0.3000 Tax Increase, which promised the taxpayers to build a Station 2 to combat rising insurance rates for homeowners and provide protection on the west side of the district. The district also promised to purchase 2 new firetrucks. All promises were kept.

2008 – The district weathered years of stagnation due to the 2008 financial crisis.

2015 – The District voters authorized a ½ percent Sales Tax and promised to staff station 2, with 2 people Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and create a funding source for Capital Replacements. All promises have been kept.

2022 – The district is asking for \$0.3500 implemented over a 3-year period to provide for 6 full time firefighters currently hired under the SAFER Grant.

As of 2022, the Hillsboro Fire Protection District has not received a Tax Increase on Real Estate and Personal Property in 20 years. Many other Fire District have received MULTIPLE tax increases in the same timeframe. The 2022 Tax Rate with Sales Tax Roll Back and Hancock Amendment Roll Back is \$0.4821. Below is a list of tax rates over the years.

| Hillsboro Fire | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Organized 10-25-1973 | |
| Tax Year | Tax Rate |
| 1974 | 0.3000 |
| 1975 | 0.2800 |
| 1976 | 0.3000 |
| 1977 | 0.3000 |
| 1978 | 0.3000 |
| 1979 | 0.3000 |
| 1980 | 0.3000 |
| 1981 | 0.3000 |
| 1982 | 0.3000 |
| 1983 | 0.3000 |
| 1984 | 0.4500 |
| 1985 | 0.2000 |
| 1986 | 0.1900 |
| 1987 | 0.1900 |
| 1988 | 0.1900 |
| 1989 | 0.1900 |
| 1990 | 0.1900 |
| 1991 | 0.3400 |
| 1992 | 0.3500 |
| 1993 | 0.3600 |
| 1994 | 0.3600 |
| 1995 | 0.3700 |
| 1996 | 0.3700 |
| 1997 | 0.3600 |
| 1998 | 0.3600 |
| 1999 | 0.3600 |
| 2000 | 0.3600 |
| 2001 | 0.3600 |
| 2002 | 0.5101 |
| 2003 | 0.5601 |
| 2004 | 0.6101 |

| | |
|-------------|---------------|
| 2005 | 0.6601 |
| 2006 | 0.6601 |
| 2007 | 0.6234 |
| 2008 | 0.6234 |
| 2009 | 0.6412 |
| 2010 | 0.6412 |
| 2011 | 0.6412 |
| 2012 | 0.6424 |
| 2013 | 0.6429 |
| 2014 | 0.6429 |
| 2015 | 0.6481 |
| 2016 | 0.6395 |
| 2017 | 0.6415 |
| 2018 | 0.6208 |
| 2019 | 0.5198 |
| 2020 | 0.5219 |
| 2021 | 0.5247 |
| 2022 | 0.4841 |

Structures and Entities that Pay No Taxes

It should be noted also, while driving through Hillsboro people may think we have a larger commercial base than what we really do. The following buildings/structures/entities pay no taxes to the Hillsboro Fire Protection District:

Hillsboro R-3 School District – 5 Large Schools, Administration Office, 600 Employees and 3200 Students who we provide protection for, however, receive no taxes from the school itself

Jefferson County Government – Courthouse, Administration Building, Jail, Sheriff’s Office, and several other facilities, we receive no taxes

Jefferson College – Large College campus with 3000 students and staff, large campus with multiple buildings, no taxes paid

Churches – We have approximately 12 churches throughout the fire district that we protect but they pay no taxes.

It should be noted that many of the citizens that attend or visit some of the facilities above, do pay taxes to the Hillsboro Fire District, but not all.

Bringing all the data together

1. In the preceding sections we have determined that the Board and Administration have outlined various Strategic Management Goals that include more staffing to ensure the district residents are protected.

2. We highlighted the fact that call volume and tasks bestowed upon the fire district have largely increased over the past 10 years.
3. We have seen that overlapping calls are a problem and additional staffing is needed to complete the necessary tasks and handle emergencies.
4. We have examined the current financial situation of the district and determined that we have been good stewards of the taxpayer's money
5. We need to increase our income to meet the goals and demands of the public and ensure the safety of our emergency responders is addressed. The next sections address the cost of 6 fulltime firefighters.

Cost of 6 Full Time Employees

There are multiple areas of the budget that are affected by hiring full time firefighters. Not only do we have the obvious cost of the wages themselves, but the costs that no one sees including Federal taxes, retirement costs, uniform costs, health insurance costs, disability insurance costs, and many other areas. Currently, our full-time firefighters top out at \$41,000.00 per year. The budget below looks at the costs of maintaining 6 full time firefighters.

Wages for Full Time Firefighters

| Position | Topped Out |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Firefighter 1 | 41,000.00 |
| Firefighter 2 | 41,000.00 |
| Firefighter 3 | 41,000.00 |
| Firefighter 4 | 41,000.00 |
| Firefighter 5 | 41,000.00 |
| Firefighter 6 | 41,000.00 |

Cost of 6 Full Time Firefighters

6 Full Time Firefighters Payroll

| | |
|--|------------|
| Wages | 256,000.00 |
| Scheduled Overtime | 20,000.00 |
| Unscheduled Overtime | 5,000.00 |
| FICA | 18,071.51 |
| Medicare | 4,226.40 |
| Longevity | 9,776.00 |
| Holiday Pay | 700.00 |
| Part Time Wages to cover Sick and Vac. Days | 10,000.00 |
| Retirement | 69,378.34 |
| Uniform Allowance | 2,450.00 |

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| STD/LTD Insurance | 2,000.00 |
| Health/Dental/Vision | 30,000.00 |
| Workers Compensation Insurance | <u>15,000.00</u> |
| Total Payroll 6 Full Time Firefighters | 442,602.25 |

As outlined above, the cost to maintain 6 full time firefighters is at a very minimum \$442,602.25 annually.

Assumptions for the “Numbers”

All taxpayers should be aware predicting the economy, sales tax revenue, legislation, and other outside forces are beyond our control. Predicting exactly what this tax increase will bring in is not possible. It is a forecast. Our income level is not guaranteed every year. We must make our best estimates as to how much money we will have to operate the district annually.

The cost of hiring 6 full time firefighters is based on the current top out pay of our existing staff prior to the SAFER Grant. A full-time firefighter starts out at \$35,000.00 or \$12.69 per hour and tops out at \$41,000.00 per year.

It costs an employer a lot more money than just an employee’s hourly wage. You must figure all aspects that are going to cost money for that firefighter such as insurance, retirement, taxes paid by the district, overtime to fill sick and vacation days for those firefighters, and much more.

SAFER Grant Funding

When we applied for the SAFER Grant in 2019, costs were different, pay scales were different, and times in general were different.

The federal government did not authorize step raises for firefighters over the 3-year grant period. The SAFER grant used to be a sliding scale grant, meaning year one they funded 100%, year 2 was less than year 1, and year 3 was less than year 2. However, the Federal Government granted a waiver due to the pandemic that allowed full funding for the entire 3-year period.

With that being said, the district has supplemented some of the grant up to this point to keep our firefighter’s salaries competitive and comparable to our other firefighters. The Hillsboro Fire Protection District does not have topped out firefighters with the SAFER grant. We use step raises for our firefighters to have livable wages as they gain years in the service. No firefighter on the grant has reached top out pay.

Tax Increase Income

The Hillsboro Fire Protection District has the option to go up to \$0.5000 per \$100.00 of assessed valuation. This option allowed by the state statue allows to go for less or somewhere between 0 to 50 cents. The Board of Directors was presented with multiple options but determined that \$0.3500 was the lowest we could go with our current revenue sources. The Board of Directors also wanted to help ease the burden to our citizens by implementing this over a 3 year period, with \$0.25 in 2023, \$0.05 in 2024, and \$0.05 in 2025. This will bring in \$520,000.00 and should

set the district up for success for many years to come. With the above costs of hiring 6 firefighters in mind, the estimated income from the tax increase is as follows:

\$0.3500 Tax Increase Income

| | <u>2022</u> | <u>2023</u> | <u>2024</u> | <u>2025</u> | |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Additional Tax Rate 0.3500 Tax Increase | 0 | 0.25 | 0.05 | 0.05 | |
| Personal Property and Real | \$0.5724 | \$0.5724 | \$0.8224 | \$0.8324 | |
| Hancock roll Back Requirement | | -0 | -0.04 | -0 | |
| <u>Subtotal</u> | <u>\$0.5724</u> | <u>\$0.8224</u> | <u>\$0.8324</u> | <u>\$0.8824</u> | Estimated Tax Rate Ceiling |
| Sales Tax Roll Back | -0.0883 | -0.09 | -0.09 | -0.09 | Roll Back from Sales Tax |
| Estimated Tax Rate | \$0.4841 | \$0.7324 | \$0.7424 | \$0.7924 | Estimated Tax Rate |
| Revenue | 836,688.00 | 1,258,410.00 | 1,275,592.00 | 1,361,502.00 | Total Additional Revenue |
| Additional Revenue Year Over Last | 0.00 | 421,722.00 | 17,182.00 | 85,910.00 | 524,814.00 |

In simpler terms, the Hillsboro Fire Protection District is estimated to receive an additional \$524,814.00 after the full implementation of tax increase which would allow us to keep the 6 AFG Grant firefighters.

Remember 2 things:

1. By law, Hillsboro Fire gives you back in the form of a reduced real-estate and personal property tax rate one half of the amount of sales tax revenue we bring in annually.
2. The Hancock amendment requires us to roll back every re-assessment year, so our budget does not grow by any more than the social security consumer price index and is also capped at 5%. So, our budget will never be able to grow by more than 5 percent. If your real-estate assessments go up 10%, we never see that increase. It protects from runaway government income growth.

Tax Increase Implementation Plan

Year 1

It must be remembered that the Hillsboro Fire Protection District is partially funding the Full Time Grant Firefighters to ensure they are getting paid the same as the other firefighters. There will be some additional money the first year. 2 major problems have arisen over the past few years that this extra income will address:

1. Radio Equipment – Jefferson County 911 is amid a lawsuit that may substantially reduce their income. Our current radios will no longer be supported in 2023 and parts will not be available. Originally Jefferson County 911 was going to provide new radios to all the agencies. That may not happen with the lawsuit to reduce their funding. This could cost approximately \$250,000.00 that the district currently does not have budgeted. This is beyond our control.
2. Fire Hose – We need to replace our firehose. This will cost approximately \$150,000.00.

Any extra money received in the first year will be earmarked for these projects and is reflected in the District's Capital Replacement Plan. This district estimated it may have an additional \$320,000 in year one to earmark for these projects. It could be less or slightly more dependent on other funding sources.

Year 2

The district will incur the full cost of the 6 Full Time Firefighters. The district will continue to place approximately 10 to 15 percent of our budget for Capital Replacement. This is shown in our capital replacement plan

Year 3

The district will continue to maintain 2 firefighters on duty 24/7/365 at each of our stations and continue placing money in our capital reserve account.

The full-time staffing will be permanent.

How do we Compare

The following tables list Jefferson County Fire District Tax Rates from highest to lowest. The Hillsboro Fire Protection District currently has the 2nd lowest tax rate in Jefferson County.

2022 Current Jefferson County Tax Rates

| | <u>County</u> | <u>Agency</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|----|---------------|------------------------------|--------------|
| 1 | Jefferson | Saline Valley Fire District | 1.4256 |
| 2 | Jefferson | Cedar Hill Fire District | 1.2590 |
| 3 | Jefferson | Rock Community Fire District | 1.1842 |
| 4 | Jefferson | Goldman Fire District | 1.1014 |
| 5 | Jefferson | DeSoto Rural Fire District | 1.0475 |
| 6 | Jefferson | Mapaville Fire District | 0.9236 |
| 7 | Jefferson | Antonia Fire District | 0.8991 |
| 8 | Jefferson | High Ridge Fire District | 0.8878 |
| 9 | Jefferson | Hematite Fire District | 0.6887 |
| 10 | Jefferson | Dunklin Fire District | 0.6601 |
| 11 | Jefferson | Hillsboro Fire District | 0.4841 |
| 12 | Jefferson | Jefferson R-7 Fire District | 0.4816 |

2025 Tax Rate

This table assumes where we will be in 2025 once the full tax increase is implemented. Again, the district will have to roll back or may get a tax increase so this may slightly change.

| | <u>County</u> | <u>Agency</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|----|---------------|------------------------------|--------------|
| 1 | Jefferson | Saline Valley Fire District | 1.4256 |
| 2 | Jefferson | Cedar Hill Fire District | 1.2590 |
| 3 | Jefferson | Rock Community Fire District | 1.1842 |
| 4 | Jefferson | Goldman Fire District | 1.1014 |
| 5 | Jefferson | DeSoto Rural Fire District | 1.0475 |
| 6 | Jefferson | Mapaville Fire District | 0.9236 |
| 7 | Jefferson | Antonia Fire District | 0.8991 |
| 8 | Jefferson | High Ridge Fire District | 0.8878 |
| 9 | Jefferson | Hillsboro Fire District | 0.7924 |
| 10 | Jefferson | Hematite Fire District | 0.6887 |
| 11 | Jefferson | Dunklin Fire District | 0.6601 |
| 12 | Jefferson | Jefferson R-7 Fire District | 0.4816 |

The Hillsboro Fire Protection District will still have the 4th lowest tax rate in Jefferson County.

A look at all St. Louis Metro Area Tax Rates

Currently, out of the 60 fire district's in St. Louis County, St. Charles County, St. Francois County, Washington County, Franklin County and Jefferson County, the Hillsboro Fire District has 44th lowest tax rate in the area.

| | <u>County</u> | <u>Agency</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|----|----------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | St. Louis County | Metro North Fire | 2.7414 |
| 2 | St. Louis County | North County Fire and Rescue | 2.6266 |
| 3 | St. Louis County | Mid County FPD | 2.5553 |
| 4 | St. Louis County | Northeast Fire and Ambulance | 2.4180 |
| 5 | St. Louis County | Robertson FPD | 2.4095 |
| 6 | St. Louis County | Spanish Lake | 2.2596 |
| 7 | St. Louis County | Kinloch | 2.2000 |
| 8 | St. Louis County | Pattonville FPD | 2.0367 |
| 9 | St. Louis County | Community | 2.0100 |
| 10 | St. Louis County | Valley Park | 1.7527 |
| 11 | St. Louis County | West Overland EMS and Fire | 1.7510 |
| 12 | St. Louis County | Maryland Heights | 1.6980 |
| 13 | St. Louis County | Black Jack | 1.4670 |
| 14 | St. Louis County | Florissant Valley | 1.4602 |
| 15 | Jefferson | Saline Valley Fire District | 1.4256 |
| 16 | St. Louis County | Fenton | 1.3840 |
| 17 | St. Louis County | Eureka Fire District | 1.3623 |
| 18 | Jefferson | Cedar Hill Fire District | 1.2590 |
| 19 | Jefferson | Rock Community Fire District | 1.1842 |
| 20 | St. Charles County | Central County | 1.1456 |
| 21 | St. Louis County | Afton Fire District | 1.1380 |
| 22 | Franklin County | Boles Fire District | 1.1035 |
| 23 | Jefferson | Goldman Fire District | 1.1014 |
| 24 | Franklin County | Pacific Fire District | 1.0848 |
| 25 | St. Louis County | West County Fire and EMS | 1.0560 |
| 26 | Jefferson | DeSoto Rural Fire District | 1.0475 |
| 27 | St. Louis County | Lemay | 0.9740 |

| | | | |
|----|---------------------|--------------------------------|--------|
| 28 | St. Charles County | O'Fallon | 0.9300 |
| 29 | Jefferson | Mapaville Fire District | 0.9236 |
| 30 | Jefferson | Antonia Fire District | 0.8991 |
| 31 | St. Charles County | Cottleville FPD | 0.8971 |
| 32 | St. Louis County | Monarch | 0.8960 |
| 33 | St. Louis County | Creve Coeur | 0.8950 |
| 34 | Jefferson | High Ridge Fire District | 0.8878 |
| 35 | St. Louis County | Metro West Fire | 0.8700 |
| 36 | St. Charles County | New Melle FPD | 0.8489 |
| 37 | St. Charles County | Lake St. Louis FPD | 0.8315 |
| 38 | St. Francios County | Leadwood Fire District | 0.7627 |
| 39 | St. Charles County | Wentzville FPD | 0.7299 |
| 40 | Jefferson | Hematite Fire District | 0.6887 |
| 41 | Jefferson | Dunklin Fire District | 0.6601 |
| 42 | Franklin County | St. Clair Fire District | 0.5619 |
| 43 | St. Louis County | Mehlville FPD | 0.5210 |
| 44 | Jefferson | Hillsboro Fire District | 0.4841 |
| 45 | Jefferson | Jefferson R-7 Fire District | 0.4816 |
| 46 | Washington County | Irondale Fire District | 0.4747 |
| 47 | Franklin County | Union Fire District | 0.4330 |
| 48 | Franklin County | Beaufort-Leslie Fire District | 0.4208 |
| 49 | St. Charles County | Augusta FPD | 0.4121 |
| 50 | St. Charles County | Orchard Farm FPD | 0.4114 |
| 51 | Washington County | Caledonia | 0.3752 |
| 52 | St. Francios County | Wolf Creek Fire District | 0.3000 |
| 53 | Franklin County | Sullivan Fire District | 0.2872 |
| 54 | St. Francios County | Doe Run Fire District | 0.2743 |
| 55 | Washington County | Richwoods Fire District | 0.2679 |
| 56 | Franklin County | Washington Fire District | 0.2632 |
| 57 | Washington County | Potosi Fire District | 0.2395 |
| 58 | Franklin County | Gerald-Rosebud Fire District | 0.2371 |
| 59 | Franklin County | New Haven-Berger Fire District | 0.2335 |

How much will this cost me, the taxpayer

1. Find out what the assessed value of your house is. Go to <http://jeffersonmo-assessor.devnetwedge.com/> and click Real Estate Search
2. Enter the information to find your house.
3. REMEMBER-Assessed valuation (The assessed value of your house is determined by a mass appraisal system by the Jefferson County Assessor's Office) has nothing to do with market value! Do not use the numbers for what you paid for your house! Your assessed valuation for taxing purpose is much lower than market value! Look at the number for the assessed total, that is the number you use!

The formula = Appraised Value x .19% = Assessed Value

Assessed Value/100 = Taxable Amount

Taxable Amount x Tax Rate = Taxes Paid

Current

Appraised value = 150,700

Assessed Value = 28,600 (19% of appraised value)

Fire District Tax Rate = .4841 per 100.00 of assessed valuation

$28,600/100 = 286$

$286 \times .4841 = \$138.00$

New Tax Rate Year 1 2023

Fire District Tax Rate = .7324 per 100.00 of assessed valuation

$286 \times .7324 = \$209.00$ (Total Taxes Paid to Fire District)

Year 1 Increase = \$71.00

New Tax Rate Year 2 2024

Fire District Tax Rate = .7424 per 100.00 of assessed valuation

$286 \times .7424 = 212.00$ (Total Taxes Paid to Fire District)

Year 2 Increase = 74.00

New Tax Rate Year 3 2025

Fire District Tax Rate = \$0.7924 per 100.00 of assessed valuation

$286 \times .7924 = 226.00$ (Total Taxes Paid to Fire District)

Year 2 Increase = 88.00

Current Payment to Hillsboro Fire = 138.00

After Tax Increase Implemented = 226.00

Total additional increase = 88.00

An increase of 0.25 per day, 7.33 per month, 88 dollars per year.

What if you do not roll back a single dime from the Hancock Amendment from where you are now?

$$\$0.4841 + \$0.3500 = \$0.8341$$

$$286 \times .8341 = 238.00 \text{ (Total Taxes Paid to Fire District)}$$

Or \$100.00 extra dollars annually.

Simplified Cost to Taxpayers

Assessed Valuation of 100,000.00 = Current \$92, after tax increase \$150 (An Extra \$58.00)

Assessed Valuation of 150,000.00 = Current \$137, after tax increase \$225 (An Extra \$88)

Assessed Valuation of 200,000.00 = Current \$183, after tax increase \$301 (An Extra \$118)

All the above numbers could fluctuate based on roll back amounts!

Summary

The Board of Directors, Staff, and Administration of the Hillsboro Fire Protection District believes the district has considered this issue in-depth and has developed a plan for the future. The Hillsboro Fire Protection District is always willing to provide information to our taxpayers, whom we work for. Please feel free to reach out to us if you have any questions.

More Information

Please visit www.hillsborofire.org for information regarding the Hillsboro Fire Protection District. Our website features the district's Strategic Management Plan, the district's budget, the district's annual financial audit and more.

Please visit www.propfulltimestaffing.com for more information regarding the tax levy proposal.