

General Questions:

1. Why do we need a new or renovated fire station?

- a. *The Feasibility Study entitled "Ocean Pines Volunteer Fire Department - South Station Existing Conditions Assessment Report" provides a complete analysis of the purpose and need for a new or renovated fire station. It is located on page 20 of the Manns Woodward Studios report, which is available online here:*
https://chiefcdn.chiefpoint.com/content/External/opvfd//articlefiles/ArticleFile_ArticleMessageCenter_45449_03526.pdf/.

2. What specific structural problems have been identified with the South Station and where are those spelled out?

- a. *See the Manns Woodward Studios (MWS) "Existing Conditions Assessment Report" on page 6 of the Manns Woodward Studios report, which is available online here:*
https://chiefcdn.chiefpoint.com/content/External/opvfd//articlefiles/ArticleFile_ArticleMessageCenter_45449_03526.pdf/.

This analysis included an architectural evaluation of the station including, but not limited to, code compliance, ADA accessibility and firematic and operational observations. Additionally, MWS performed a cursory structural evaluation based on physically observable conditions.

The existing building was constructed in 1981 with additions added in 1985 and 1987. The structural code requirements at the time of construction were less stringent than the current codes.

The masonry constructed apparatus bays (1985 addition) appear to be in relatively good condition and would more than likely only need minor modifications to bring that portion of the building up to current code. The original structure (built in 1981) and the 1987 addition are constructed of a combination of masonry and wood framed construction. These portions of the building show signs of structural settlement, that we understand has gotten worse over time. If these portions of the building are to be considered to be reused/renovated as a part of the proposed plan, we would recommend a structural and geotechnical evaluation to be performed to fully determine the extent of settlement and make any recommendations for repair. Additionally, these portions of the building would need to be brought up to meet the minimum structural requirements of the current building code.

The building code classifies fire stations as essential facilities and are categorized as part of the most important building types in a community. With that, they must be able to withstand the effects of extreme conditions so that first responders may reach the public in need. Due to this, they are classified as "Risk Category IV" structures, the highest structural classification within the code.

Modifications to the existing building may trigger additional mandatory upgrades, replacements, or retrofits to ensure current code standards are met. If any existing

gravity load-carrying structural element for which an alteration causes an increase in design dead or live loads of more than 5%, that element shall be replaced or altered as needed to carry the gravity loads required by the International Building Code (IBC) for new structures. Any existing gravity load-carrying structural element whose gravity load-carrying capacity is decreased as part of the alteration shall be shown to have the capacity to resist the design dead and live loads required by the IBC for new structures.

In addition, if any element in the lateral system for which an alteration causes an increase in design lateral loads results in a prohibited structural irregularity as defined in ASCE 7 (The American Society of Civil Engineers minimum design loads and associated criteria for buildings and other structures), or decreases the capacity of any existing lateral load-carrying structural element, the structure of the altered building shall meet the requirements of the IBC for new structures. Alternatively, if any existing lateral load-carrying whose demand-capacity ratio with the alteration considered is not more than 10% greater than its demand-capacity ratio with the alteration ignored shall be permitted to remain unaltered.

In addition to the gravity and lateral load requirements, the structure shall also be required to meet seismic and wind loading criteria. These requirements include the following:

Seismic Loads –

The building is classified as a “Risk Category IV” structure with a seismic importance factor of 1.5, Seismic Design Category C, and will need to be designed per the IBC and ASCE 7 Design Codes.

Wind Loads –

The building is classified as a “Risk Category IV” structure with an exposure category of C and will need to be designed in accordance with the IBC and ASCE 7 Design Codes. Wind loads for the Main Wind- Force Resisting System (MWFRS) and individual Components and Cladding (C&C) will be determined accordingly with the use of base wind speeds as specified by ASCE Wind Hazard Design Maps.

- 3. How much square footage is needed for the new/renovated South Station and why?**
 - a. The square footage will be identified when the final design is developed. However, the station must comply with current National Fire Protection Association standards.*

- 4. What is the estimated cost per square for the new/renovated South Station?**
 - a. While similar fire stations average approximately \$420 per square foot, the actual cost will be identified when plans and specifications are developed.*

5. **Is the reportedly \$8 million option for the new station the only option, or are there others that should be explored?**
 - a. *While the feasibility study option 3 is the preferred option at this point in time, other options are being evaluated by a team composed of OPA and Fire Department staff, and several members of the community with specific expertise relevant to the project.*

6. **Can you provide the pricing breakdown (site work/utilities, foundation, shell, electrical, plumbing, etc.) prepared by the designer to help homeowners better understand the component costs?**
 - a. *That is not available at this point in time. When the final design is generated and approved, that data is expected to be available.*

7. **Would the proposed layout meet all county requirements, including parking and stormwater management, or would there be additional costs to meet those needs?**
 - a. *Yes, it would meet all those requirements.*

Location Questions:

8. **Why is the South Station location important and how does that contribute to the six-minute response time?**
 - a. *The South Station is centrally located in Ocean Pines. As a result, the career paramedic/firefighter staff and volunteer firefighters can respond to any location in Ocean Pines within six minutes.*

9. **Would another location for the South Station, such as the Ocean Pines owned land near the post office on Route 589, be a viable option?**
 - a. *At the direction of the OP Board of Directors, the General Manager has formed a team to look into all alternatives for reconstruction/renovation of South Station. The team is composed of the General Manager, Director of Public Works, the President and Chief of OPVFD, and several members of the community with expertise relevant to the South Station project. The community will be briefed periodically on the team's progress.*

10. **There are plans to move all the EMS vehicles to the new/expanded South Station, but it seems costly to build a new bay for one additional ambulance. Can you explain why that is necessary?**
 - a. *The bay is not solely for the purpose of housing the third ambulance. As envisioned as a 50-year station, South Station needs capacity to house whatever variety of apparatus is needed for the future. For the immediate future, the new bay would house the third*

ambulance. With the increase in multiple simultaneous medical calls, this would result in rapid response of the third run ambulance, which is not the case at this time.

North Station Questions:

11. What is the purpose of keeping the North Station?

- a. North Station is a very active operational station serving all of Ocean Pines. During an emergency incident, volunteers report to the North Station and respond on apparatus housed in North Station, in the same manner as the career staff and volunteers at the South Station.*

12. What is the impact of having both stations on homeowner insurance rates, and has that been recently verified?

- a. The stations, locations, equipment, staffing and response times are some of the factors used by the International Standards Organization (ISO) personnel in evaluating the ISO ratings for fire departments and the communities they serve. ISO ratings have an impact on insurance rates, and the feedback we previously received from ISO is that the presence of the North Station helps keep insurance rates lower for Ocean Pines homeowners. ISO is set to reevaluate the OPVFD operation in 2023, and we will provide an update at that time.*

13. Can the North Station be repurposed to reduce some of the needs of the new/expanded South Station?

- a. The South Station team previously mentioned will assess these issues if they become relevant during the evaluation process.*

14. With the South Station mostly staffed by paid workers, are there plans to use the North Station as the “volunteer station”?

- a. As previously stated, when an emergency incident occurs, mostly volunteers living in the northern portion of Ocean Pines respond to the North Station.*

15. How/why is the North Station better suited for volunteers?

- a. Being better suited is not a factor in the use of North Station. Volunteers respond to the closest station.*

16. Does the North Station need to be that large to accommodate just a few pieces of equipment?

- a. The North Station is completely full of apparatus at this time and has no additional capacity.*

17. With the trend of fully paid fire departments department supplemented by a volunteer contingent, what are the expected overnight workforce requirements in the South Station if the department becomes fully paid?

a. At this point in time, there is a career staff of four 24/7/365. While it is impossible to predict the future, OPVFD is anticipating that in the distant future the South Station would be expected to house a staff of eight with an overflow capacity.

18. With that trend in mind, are there issues with ownership and major maintenance of the structure being OPA's responsibility?

a. That decision will be evaluated at some time in the future by the previously mentioned team.

Fundraising questions:

19. What are the OPVFD's plans for a capital campaign?

a. OPA and OPVFD are working together to hire a company to do a fundraising feasibility study for the community to determine the viability of a fundraising campaign.

20. Could OPVFD fundraising expand beyond their annual raffle to host fundraising events such as carnivals, concerts, bingo, barbecue chicken dinners, etc.?

a. OPVFD is not staffed to fundraise beyond what is already done to support apparatus replacement. OPA and OPVFD equally provide funding for apparatus replacement. To fundraise for apparatus, OPVFD has a vehicle raffle, mail out, and sign program. This barely covers current apparatus costs. Member requirements for emergency response, meeting attendance, continuing training, and fundraising stretch member availability to the breaking point.

21. Because OPVFD is responsible for protecting local businesses such as the AGH and Tidal Health centers in Ocean Pines, the casino, and other businesses on Route 589, are there plans to approach those businesses for donations?

a. The fundraising feasibility study will develop the fundraising plan for OPVFD and OPA, which would likely include the businesses identified in the question.

22. How much money does OPVFD have to contribute to this project?

a. OPVFD has \$1 million in savings available for the project.

23. How much funding did the state contribute and how long is that funding good for?

- a. There is a total of \$1.6 million authorized by the state. Appropriation can take up to two years and project execution must be done within seven additional years.*

24. What plans do you have to seek funding from Worcester County?

- a. County funding will be addressed by OPA and OPVFD.*

Questions for the OPA workgroup:

25. What is the process of hiring a fundraising company? How much time will it take? What is the feasibility study? And about how much will all that cost?

- a. Our work group is preparing a feasibility study to determine the level of our preparation to conduct a capital campaign for a new South Fire Station. The RFP for that study should go out the first week of October, and ideally the consultant would start their work in mid-November and be completed by Feb. 28, 2023. The feasibility study will help determine if a capital campaign run by an outside consultant is the path forward, or if we would be better served having the fire department raise funds on their own, or whether a local coordinator of events is the best path forward. The estimated cost for the feasibility study is approximately \$20,000. Based on the results of the feasibility study, we would anticipate having a consultant on board in May 2023. The cost of a capital campaign will be a fixed amount, which must be offset against funds raised. That is one of many reasons to conduct a feasibility study as the precursor to launching a full-blown campaign. In reviewing other fire department fund raising we are seeing long time frames (five years) and, frankly, limited results. Therefore, it is critical we proceed with the feasibility study as soon as possible.*