

Ingram Volunteer Fire Department
February 4, 2016

Presentation To The
Residents Of
Ingram Borough

Why Are **WE** The Viable Option
For Your Fire Protection?

Who are We?

- The Men and Women of your community and surrounding communities.
- Your Friend/Neighbor
- Your Son/Daughter
- Your Niece/Nephew
- Your Aunt/Uncle
- We are families raised in this borough, here to serve you

About Us

- Founded in 1906
- Original location was 40 West Prospect Avenue
- Currently we have three locations
 - Greenwood Avenue
 - Borough Building
 - Runnymede Avenue
- Current roster is 30 Firefighters
 - 25 Active Firefighters
 - 6 Applications Pending
- Current apparatus count is 4

Locations and Apparatus

- Borough Building – Station 1
 - 1975/2004 – Quint with 85' ladder and 1000 GPM Pump
- Greenwood Avenue – Station 2
 - 1998 – Pumper with 1500 GPM Pump
 - 2005 – Squad (Obtained through grant)
- Runnymede Avenue – Station 3
 - 1979 – Pumper with 1000 GPM Pump

Certifications and Training

- Our members go through extensive certified training at various facilities throughout the state and on-line where certified. Some highlights are:
 - 11 members are Nationally Certified Firefighter I
 - 6 members are Nationally Certified Firefighter II
 - 1 member is a Haz-Mat Specialist
 - 16 members have Haz-Mat Awareness
 - 1 member is Fire Instructor II Certified
 - 2 members are SCBA Tech Level II Certified
 - 1 member is BLS-AED-CPR Instructor Certified

Certifications and Training Continued

- In addition to the highlights, all members must attend the following:
 - Essentials of Firefighting (40-188 Hours)
 - First-Aid/CPR
 - NIMS
 - EVOC where applicable
 - In-House Training where applicable
- We meet every Tuesday to perform the following duties:
 - Meetings
 - Equipment Maintenance
 - Training

How Did We Get Here?

- In 2004 The Ingram Volunteer Fire Department in conjunction with Ingram Borough embarked on the refurbishment of the aforementioned 1975 Quint.
 - This project was expected to add 10 years of life to the apparatus.
- The Ingram Volunteer Fire Department approached Ingram Borough Council in 2013 about total replacement the aforementioned 1975 Quint.
- Throughout the years of 2013 through today, several meetings occurred between The Ingram Volunteer Fire Department and Ingram Borough Council in which many ideas were shared.

Proposals

- The Ingram Volunteer Fire Department has always been cost conscious for the citizens of the borough and explored many cost-efficient proposals to replace the current apparatus:
 - Used – Both Stowe Township and Wilkinsburg recently had apparatus for sale
 - All used apparatus must also meet 1999 NFPA standard at a minimum and the max VLAP (2%) loan amount cannot exceed \$120,000
 - Rebuild – The Refurbishment Project in 2004 came with a lifetime warranty body. We proposed re-using that current investment and placing it on a brand-new chassis (Cab, Engine, Pump, Ladder)
 - All used apparatus must also meet 1999 NFPA standard at a minimum and the max VLAP (2%) loan amount cannot exceed \$120,000
 - New – Brand New
 - The max VLAP (2%) loan amount is \$300,000 to meet current NFPA Standards

The Results

- Used – At the time of conversation, Ingram Borough Council was against used apparatus stating it could just be another person's problems. We estimated this cost to be roughly \$350,000 - \$425,000
- Rebuild – At the time of conversation, Ingram Borough Council was concerned about any manufacturer's honoring that lifetime warranty and particularly engineering. We estimated this cost to be roughly \$500,000
- New – At the time of conversation, The Ingram Volunteer Fire Department was directed by Ingram Borough Council that if we were to replace that apparatus it would indeed have an elevated device (Ladder) and that it would be new or a demo unit. The Ingram Volunteer Fire Department was tasked with meeting manufacturer's drawing up the specs and trying to stay within \$750,000

2014 - 2015

- The Ingram Volunteer Fire Department assembled a Truck Committee as advised and began our work
- We met with manufacturer's and narrowed our list to two who could meet our initial requirements
- We engaged these manufacturer's, even traveling out of state to build the specs and discuss keeping the cost under \$750,000 at the direction of Ingram Borough Council
- We estimated this process to consume approximately 2000 man hours
- Since completing our spec and having "ball park" figures provided by both manufacturers, in which both came in under the proposed ceiling of \$750,000, we have received numerous excuses from Ingram Council

What Happened?

- That is the million dollar question
 - Is this personal? Maybe. The Proposal from Pittsburgh was prepared for Ingram Borough Council on **October 30, 2015**, however Ingram Council told the Ingram Fire Department and you, the Ingram citizens on **December 14, 2015** they didn't know who went to the city and there were no proposals at that time. This proposal is clearly addressed to Mayor Stetz and Honorable Members of Council.
 - Is it financial? Don't believe so considering Ingram Council is willing to shell over \$100,000 a year for PBF (Pittsburgh Bureau of Fire)
 - Is it because we declined to further talk about consolidation when we felt it was not feasibly economic for Ingram Borough? Possibly
 - Are there complaints? Council said no
 - The only thing stated thus far is there is a concern about safety but I assure you, our men and women are trained to perform the level of public safety our borough needs and if this is really safety, why are we now entertaining another volunteer fire department with no guarantee of response?

Where Are We?

- Currently, The Ingram Volunteer Fire Department has completed all tasks assigned to us by Ingram Borough Council.
- The cost of the apparatus, just like anything in the world, is continually rising as Ingram Council now decides to search new avenues
- The new apparatus would not only replace the aforementioned 1975 quint, but it would also replace the 1979 pumper at station 3 thus reducing maintenance costs.
- The cost of the new apparatus which The Ingram Volunteer Fire Department offered to pay 1/3 or approximately \$250,000 would cost Ingram Borough around \$500,000 over twenty years.

What We Lose?

- Should the Ingram Volunteer Fire Department be disbanded we would lose more than a Fire Department. Did you know the following:
 - Charter Member of Cub Scouts
 - Team Sponsor to CIT Baseball
 - Team Sponsor to Ingram Girls Softball
 - Sponsor of Halloween in Ingram Borough
 - Sponsor of Ingram Days Celebration
 - Sponsor of Public Safety Days and Shredding Event
 - Sponsor of Santa Clause coming to town
 - Members would be in jeopardy of losing FireVEST scholarships through CCAC
 - Cooperative fire department for Montour/Ingram Fire Safety Days at Forest Grove Elementary

What We Lose Continued

- Should the Ingram Volunteer Fire Department be disbanded would your new service do the following?
 - Pump your basement during flooding?
 - Block the street during storms where trees or wires fall?
 - Assist your community days committee with traffic control for parades and fire protection during fireworks celebrations?
 - Fund Raise to help keep the cost of fire protection in check
 - Lift assist for the EMS personnel if you need help getting into their emergency vehicle
 - Dig out hydrants for quick access during heavy snowfall
 - Assist your children with senior projects or Eagle Scout projects

What We Lose Continued

- Fast response by chief officers
 - Quick size up and determination of response level
 - Allows quick knock down of fires in incipient stages
- Knowledge of hydrant placement and nuances
- Street configurations and challenges
- Time to spend with our residents
- Vested interest in the community and our residents
- Ability to keep costs under control

Hidden Cost?

- Should the Ingram Volunteer Fire Department be disbanded and your new service doesn't do such things as pump basements and block roads then:
 - That responsibility becomes Police, Public Works or maybe a company of your own choosing.
 - If these events occur outside of typical working hours, do people need called in? If so, is that overtime?
 - Are we prepared to pay for it?
 - Where does that money come from?
 - There are yearly hydrant fees covered under the current Ingram Fire Department budget of roughly \$14,500 per year. These are not part of the PBF proposal and will be an addition to their base contract price

The Reality

- Recently, Ingram Borough was named one of the best Suburbs in Pittsburgh: <http://www.wtae.com/news/new-rankings-what-are-the-best-pittsburgh-suburbs/33719896>
- We are part of the very fabric that makes Ingram Borough what it is
- The Ingram Volunteer Fire Department essentially built this town
- The very floor you are standing on was The Fire Department at one time and we graciously gave it to the town to be used as our Borough Building
- Stations 2 and Station 3 were built by the men and women of The Fire Department
- All of this was designed to save money where we could

The Reality Continued

- PBF has a proposal that would cost \$459,170 for 5 years
- This cost will adjust accordingly higher should PBF and it's union renegotiate higher salary or benefits
- Unbeknownst to many, this is taking into account a credit total of \$100,000 over the 5 years to take ownership of two pieces of apparatus and equipment:
 - 1975/2004 quint
 - 1999 Pumper
 - Hose
 - Nozzles
 - Cascade System
 - SCBA – Self Contained Breathing Apparatus
- This contract in reality is \$104,777 for 2016 and climbs to \$121,690 by 2020. The average per year basis is \$111,834.
- This represents a 14% increase over the life of the five year contract from 2016 through 2020

The Reality Continued

- The borough cannot sell the two pieces of apparatus because the fire department is part owners and have a financial stake in them
- The rest of the equipment was purchased using fire department funds and cannot be sold
- Hidden costs of this contract
 - PBF is understaffed and a recent article states that overtime expenses are out of control
 - Since this proposal is simply budgetary in nature one would have to think that overtime costs will be added on to the yearly figures

5 Years From Now

- When this contract expires in 5 years the cost will likely increase due to inflation. The current \$100,000 credit is gone and the 5 year base becomes \$559,170 or does it?
- PBF just renegotiated with Wilkinsburg, who mind you was paid and the current base increased 13%. This just happened within the last few months.
- If this were to happen in Ingram, your starting base in Ingram could be \$631,862 for 5 years. Yes, this is spread over the 5 years of that contract but be aware.

Crafton

- Crafton VFD shows 38 active members on their web site
- Approximately 8 are junior firefighters
- So in actual, numbers they are similar to Ingram
- Ingram has 30 members with three more becoming members in the next three weeks and more applications coming in
- Close Ingram and you immediately lose 25 interior firefighters
- Where is their second alarm coming from?
- What happens if they are on mutual aid to Greentree, Carnegie, Scott Township or Robinson Township?

Crafton Continued

- Once Ingram VFD is shut down there is no going back
- This would allow Crafton to continually raise the cost to the borough because options are further limited
- Crafton loses a mutual aid company
- Their daylight manpower is limited to firefighters on their road crew and mutual aid

Moving Forward

- Just by being here tonight Ingram Council has shown that they do not care what the residents of this community want
- We still have options
 - Residents have offered to coordinate and run fund raising events to pay for a new quint
 - Residents have offered to start a “GoFundMe” account
 - To help with safety why couldn’t we sell stations 2 & 3 and use the proceeds to build one station that includes bunk rooms, kitchen and day room?
 - We could then start a “live in” program to help with manpower particularly on daylight calls

Moving Forward Continued

- Ingram VFD has always been willing to sit and discuss how to move forward and we continue to be open to all options in the best interest of the residents
- The problem is when we sit with members of council they are evasive and unwilling to discuss any compromises
- With this in mind Ingram VFD recommends that we return to the table to discuss and both council and the fire department bring three residents of their choosing to sit in on discussions
- If council refuses to sit down with the fire department then they should stop stonewalling and place the question on a referendum for the residents to decide

Final Thoughts

- The Ingram Volunteer Fire Department has the utmost respect for The Pittsburgh Bureau of Fire and Crafton VFD
- Our thoughts are nothing personal against PBF and Crafton VFD. We have our community and the financial obligations of our residents at the forefront of our thoughts.
- We, the men and women of The Ingram Volunteer Fire Department are part of the very fabric that makes our borough what it is.
- By disbanding this organization, you are giving up so much more than just a Fire Department and you will see the decline of this borough accelerate.