New Engine/Rescue

In The City Article

As you may or may not have heard the City will be purchasing a new fire truck with a delivery date of either July or August, 2014. I would like to take this time to explain the capabilities of this new apparatus:

The first notable feature is this vehicle is a combination engine/rescue that will replace two current vehicles now in operation at your fire department. In short, with this new purchase, we are able to reduce the number of apparatus by one with no effect on the services provided to you. One less fleet vehicle can reduce operational cost.

The difference between an engine and a rescue vehicle is that an engine is designed as a first line firefighting vehicle carrying necessary equipment for fighting structure fires but, due to its limited space, carries little if any rescue tools. A rescue truck carries tools needed for rescues in many different types of calls but carries no water or hose lines for providing fire protection. In the event that a fire occurs while firefighters were performing a rescue [like at a car accident], currently both an engine and the rescue vehicle would typically respond. The new fire apparatus covers both types of calls having water supply, pumps, and hose lines ***plus*** all of the rescue equipment … meaning that only the one vehicle responds.

Another great feature of the new apparatus is the ability to ‘pump and roll’. This is a feature seen primarily on airport firefighting vehicles. Since Presque Isle Fire Department provides protection to the Northern Maine Regional Airport, the new truck allows us a second vehicle for fire protection in the event of an aircraft incident and a backup to our current airport firefighting apparatus in the event it goes down for an extended period of time.

In the past we have experienced FAA issues because we did not have the required replacement units at the airport when our truck was out of service leaving the City with the decision of closing the airport to commercial flights until we were back in service. With the new unit, that will no longer be a concern we have to deal with plus it adds value as the City looks to expand the airport with the possibility of future larger aircraft or jet service because, under FAA rules, Presque Isle would already have the necessary equipment to service larger aircraft.

The ‘pump and roll’ feature mentioned before means that in a scenario of a fire at a home with attached buildings [like a garage], the pump and water can be engaged while the vehicle is still in motion allowing an immediate attack on a fire while the truck is still entering the fire arena … this eliminates several, time consuming steps that currently are needed to be accomplished before an attack on a fire can commence like stopping the truck, exiting, engaging the pump, climbing to the top of truck to operate the turret, and engaging hoses. With the new apparatus, the fire engine can begin to spray water as it is still coming down the street(s) from a front- mounted turret operated by the driver, knocking the fire down as it goes. This saves precious time that enhances the Firefighters’ ability to make the difference between saving or losing property and structures.

This new vehicle will serve these three functions mentioned in this article for the City extremely well over the next 25 plus years.

It is difficult to explain ***all*** of the features of this new unit and what it means to the citizens of Presque Isle in this article so I would encourage anyone wanting more information to, please, feel free to contact me at the fire station.

Darrell White, Presque Isle Fire Chief