

Dear Moderator Goldstein and Waterford RTM Members:

I am writing in response to a question asked at the RTM meeting on September 22, 2025 about whether the Town has the right to make improvements at the four privately owned fire stations in Waterford. I thought I would provide some background information on this topic since other members may have similar questions.

As you know and as reported in the Fire Services Review Special Committee's recent report, Waterford has a long-standing agreement with each of the Fire Stations (copies of the Agreements are included in the Report's appendix) which authorizes the Town to provide funding for a variety of activities at these facilities ranging from training to equipment to building maintenance, in exchange for the private fire companies providing a volunteer workforce to assist in Waterford fire service operations. So, the short answer to the question of whether Waterford can maintain and make repairs at these stations is yes, it can.

I want to take this opportunity to inform the RTM about the plans I have started developing since becoming Director to begin systematically addressing the current and future capital requirements of our fire stations. Over the last few months I have reviewed the Town's Capital Improvement Plan as it relates to the Fire Department and personally visited each station on multiple occasions. We have already begun taking steps to review vendors, and more efficiently utilize service contractors who maintain the buildings, as well as target small scale maintenance repairs that can be addressed through our operating budget.

I have also conferred with one of the Town's on-call engineering firms and Downes, Inc. to seek some preliminary estimates of the cost of some of the higher priority large scale projects. My intention is to develop a revised plan to address the capital needs of the other four stations besides Oswegatchie, utilizing the advice of an engineering firm to confirm the appropriate sequence, on a prioritized basis, for making necessary repairs/improvements to these facilities. I believe this is the most sound and cost effective approach which will both achieve the best result from a fire service operational standpoint as well as provide the best value for the use of funds provided by Waterford's taxpayers.

I look forward to sharing more detailed information about this ongoing Town-wide effort as the engineers' reviews of the costs for priority initiatives become available over the course of the next several months. Thanks to you and your colleagues on the RTM for your continued steadfast support of the Waterford Fire Department. We are committed to providing a safe community for Waterford's residents and property owners and a department our residents and employees can look to with pride. We are grateful for your support in this important endeavor.

Sincerely,



Christopher Haley
Fire Director

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