

PFC - DRAFT RESPONSE TO CONCERNED CITIZEN – April 2009

The following is to address the issues addressed in the “Concerned Citizen” letter of April 2009 – Information in *“Italics”* re-states the issues raised and the information in **bold** is the Perdix Fire Company’s (PFC) response.

“The Fire Companies in Penn Township claim they need a 1 Mil real estate tax divided between the two companies to survive. (\$70,000. Each)”

- **PFC Answer – We have never asked for a 1 Mil real estate tax – we have always requested the equivalent to a 1 Mil tax. The Chairman has always insisted that we have a 1 Mil “True” fire tax and that the Fire Company needed to get the public’s support. We have provided several alternative options to avoid the implementation of a tax.**

“In 2009, the Perdix Fire Company will receive about \$60,000. in funds from the yearly Pa. State Grant, Penn Township and the Pa Firefighters Relief Fund.”

- **PFC Answer - in 2009, PFC will receive at total of \$36,686.46 as follows: The Office of the State Fire Commissioner Grant - \$9,686.46; and a donation from the Penn Township - \$27,000. The Grant, as part of the application process is identified for a specific purpose. PFC chose the fiscally responsible option of debt reduction, which means these funds, must be applied as payment to lessen the balance of one of our existing loans.**
- **PA Firefighter’s Relief Funds – the Perdix Fire Company does not receive relief funds. The relief association is not the fire company; they are a separate organization. Money is collected by the state from foreign fire insurance companies (companies outside of Pennsylvania); this money is then distributed to the municipalities as a flow through for the individual Fireman’s Relief Associations.**

“The Perdix Fire Company states they need \$43,000. more to survive.”

- **PFC Answer - The PFC has been asking for budgetary increases since 2003 and has received small incremental increases taking us from \$20,000 in 2003 to \$27,000 in 2009 or approximately 7,000 in seven years. While we appreciate the increase, it has not kept pace with the cost of operating and maintaining the fire company.**
- **Fundraiser participation by the public has declined; BINGO attendance declined to the point that we were losing money to hold our game; donations have declined steadily over the past several years.**
- **PFC is trying to protect their future, which would in turn affect the lives and property of the residents and visitors to the community we serve.**

“In 2007, the Fire Companies handed out a paper showing what their expenses were for the first six months of 2007.”

“Fuel, new equipment, apparatus and equipment maintenance. Total \$7,429.”

- **PFC Answer - True**

“Utilities. Total \$4,768.”

- **PFC Answer - True**

“Building improvements, maintenance and supplies. Total \$1,472.”

- **PFC Answer - True**

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“Total costs for 6 months \$13,669.”

- **PFC Answer – This is True for those categories.**

“They also showed \$5,480. for insurance, was that or the year or 6 months?”

- **PFC Answer - True - That was a six-month total. Annual cost is \$11,464.**

“That expense sheet also listed payments on 3 loans for equipment, which totaled \$48,805. Is that for 6 months or a year? What is the balance due on the 3 loans?”

- **PFC Answer - This is an annual total.**
- **The loan balances are as follows:**

2% State Loan	\$106,744.13
FNB Marysville	\$ 88,483.15
FNB Marysville	\$ 32,519.31

“In the past five years, the Perdix Fire Company has received about \$270,000. in funds from a yearly Pa. State Grant, Penn Township and the Pa. State Firefighters Relief Fund.”

- **PFC Answer - Between the PA State Grants and Penn Township, the PFC has received \$147,186.46 (2005-2009). As indicated above the Fireman’s Relief Association is a separate entity.**

“The Perdix Fire Company also received about \$370,000. in Federal Grants for equipment. Total \$640,000. In five years.”

- **PFC Answer - In the last 5 years, (2005-2009) PFC has received 1 Federal Grant for Safety Equipment totaling \$22,750.**
- **The total of all is \$169,936.46 (\$147,186.46 + \$22,750.)**

“The building in Perdix has been free and clear for many years. The Perdix Fire Company has a fire engine that is only a few years old, also a 1980 ex-New York City engine converted into an engine-rescue truck that only responds to calls a few times a year. About 7 or 8 years ago, they purchased a used 1984 rescue truck.”

- **PFC Answer – This is all true.**

“Why are they still paying \$48,805. on loans for equipment.”

- **PFC Answer – The annual equipment and apparatus loans for the entire fleet total \$48,805.**

“Where did all the funds go?”

- **PFC Answer – It is unclear what funds the anonymous author is speaking of?**

“Why did the Perdix Fire Company sell their tanker and buy a used rescue truck?”

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- **PFC Answer – PFC did not sell the 1973 Ford Tanker to purchase the rescue truck. The tanker was placed out of service prior to offering it for sale due to safety concerns and maintenance costs. To eliminate the safety issues with this vehicle, the estimates were upwards of \$15,000 in parts and service with no guarantee that it could be fully certified after repair. We weighed all of our options and decided that due to the age and value of the tanker it was more fiscally responsible for us to sell it “as is”.**
- **The rescue truck was purchased because the 1980 Mack (ex-NYC piece) was pulling double duty was overweight, and the maintenance costs (2 transmissions in less than 5 years) were outrageous. In an effort to save on maintenance and have a piece of apparatus that was functional for the type of calls we respond to, the company made the decision to purchase the used heavy duty rescue truck, allowing us to lessen the load on the engine. This truck provides a larger crew area, additional room for our hydraulic equipment, and has proven to be most functional.**

“Most all fires in Penn Township rely on tankers to get water to scene.”

- **PFC Answer – while this is partially true, most fire apparatus in Penn Township carries some amount of water.**
- **Our new Pierce Engine has state-of-the-art technologies that allows for less water usage for extinguishment. This piece of apparatus carries 1,000 Gallons of water with the use of our Compressed Air Foam (CAFS) system this 1,000 Gallons equals 5,000 Gallons. This has been demonstrated on many structure fires.**

“The longest run in Penn Township for the Duncannon Fire Company Rescue truck is 7 miles.”

- **PFC Answer – False.**

“Should the taxpayers of Penn Township be supporting two rescue trucks in Penn Township or two tankers?”

- **PFC Answer – The people who donate directly to Perdix Fire Company are supporting the following apparatus: 2005 Pierce Pumper; 1984 Mack Heavy Rescue; 1980 Mack Reserve Pumper. Duncannon will have to respond to what apparatus they operate. According to National Standards only Perdix Fire Company operates a Rescue. The unit you are referring to in Duncannon is classified as a pumper.**
- **In 2009, Penn Township is donating \$27,000 in taxpayer dollars to PFC this year. Last year we received \$26,000. Those funds were spent on apparatus fuel, insurance, utilities, and equipment maintenance.**
- **The volunteers of the PFC have demonstrated repeatedly our commitment to helping ourselves. We hold monthly fundraisers, sometimes two and three in a given month, without them we would have been gone long ago.**
- **If the author of the “Concerned Citizen” letter (and others who assisted) would have put as much thought and effort in to assisting the fire company this year, either through manpower, fundraisers, events, etc. maybe we wouldn’t be in the position to ask for a funding increase.**
- **PFC has stated many that we have nothing to hide. We have offered to sit down with anyone and answer questions about our operation. Our meeting is the 1st Monday of every month at 7 PM.**