

Board Action Request

SUBJECT: Stipend for Driver Operator/Engineer responsibilities

DATE: August 30th, 2023

FROM: Fire Chief Ben Guerrero

To: Tubac Fire District Board of Directors

Background: The driver operator/Engineer role within our fire district brings important advantages. Driver operators are trained not only in safe navigation but also in overseeing equipment maintenance and readiness. The driver operator would handle both detailed inspections and the safe maneuvering of our fire vehicles, we bolster our response effectiveness, minimize breakdown risks, and emphasize our commitment to operational excellence and community safety. With more detailed and guided inspections of our apparatus we would focus on preventative maintenance and discovering problems before they become major mechanical issues that compromise safety and our ability to maintain a state of readiness.

The driver operator/Engineer would be responsible for another key component; records keeping for the repairs and services provided in coordination with the Deputy Chief or Administrative Captain.

Below are examples a Driver Operator would be tasked of inspecting but not limited to:

1. Wheel Axle Seal Leak: When detected early, a leaking wheel axle seal can prevent extensive repairs, such as replacing brake shoes, hardware, wheel seals, and associated parts.
2. Tire Condition: While tire inspection can be somewhat subjective, certain guidelines dictate replacement. These include factors like wear patterns, tread depth, manufacturing date, and overall tire condition (e.g., gouges or missing chunks). Identifying these issues early can minimize downtime caused by the truck failing to meet DOT inspection standards, necessitating tire replacement and reinspection.
3. Engine Components: Detecting coolant leaks or oil leaks in their early stages prevents the risk of significant failures during drills or emergency calls. Often, a simple tightening of a clamp can resolve the issue.
4. Air System Component Maintenance: Despite our newer trucks being equipped with receiver dryers to remove moisture from the system, regular draining of storage tanks is crucial. This practice significantly enhances the longevity of air system components by reducing internal corrosion.

While achieving this level of inspection will require some training, the extra effort invested upfront will ultimately extend the service life of our trucks, minimize downtime, and reduce repair costs.

Fiscal Impact: Seven thousand dollars

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of the Stipend for new Driver Operator responsibilities.

Proposed Motion: I move to approve a \$0.60/hr. stipend for driver operator/engineer responsibilities.

Attachments: