



Page 1
Community Day

Page 2
Letter from Chief
New Fire Truck

Page 3
The New Fire Truck
Board of Trustees

Page 4
The Formation of
Severe Weather



PROSPECT HEIGHTS 2024



COMMUNITY DAY

June 1, 2024 | 9am - 12noon
and Lions Club Pancake Breakfast

10-14 E. Camp McDonald Road
(between the Fire and Police Stations)

- ✓ Fire and Police Stations Tours
- ✓ Public Works Equipment Display
- ✓ Children Activities & Clown
- ✓ Lions Club Breakfast (Adults \$5 | Children \$3)
- ✓ Raffle

Learn more about the agencies in your community that serves you!



For more information, please contact
Peter Falcone, Assistant City Administrator, City of Prospect Heights
pfalcone@prospect-heights.org | 847-398-6070 ext 206

Message From the Fire Chief Drew Smith



It has been one year since voters approved the \$10,000,000 bond issue for the fire protection district. I do not take lightly the trust and confidence our community has placed in us to use that money wisely. As we have promised all along, the money will fund many of the initiatives in our comprehensive plan that was adopted in the fall of 2022. In the last 12 months we have accomplished many things. Most notably, we purchased the new aerial ladder truck. You can learn more about it elsewhere in this newsletter, but I would also encourage you to attend the upcoming Community Day where it will be on display, and you can see and touch your investment. This truck, while beautiful, is also practical and will serve our community for the next 20 years.



We are preparing for contract negotiations with our firefighters. The current labor agreement expires at the end of this year. I believe they deserve a fair and competitive wage, and we intend to collectively bargain with them to achieve that. Wages are an issue. A decreased pool of candidates for open jobs is also an issue. We need new hires to be licensed paramedics and certified firefighters at time of hire. Those requirements further decrease the pool of available candidates. Larger communities seem to be able to afford to hire then train. Currently, the cost to train someone while also paying them a wage exceeds \$150,000 and takes nearly two years. That is time we cannot wait. So, better wages may help attract more qualified people. We will let you know how things are going in future newsletters.

Historically, the PHFD has used part-time firefighter-paramedics supplemented with full-time firefighter-paramedics. For the past few years, starting just before Covid, we have seen a dramatic decrease in the number of people who desire part-time work with us. There are several reasons for this but our program which once had more than 50 part timers now has only 12 and we need more. Over this period we have flipped our model to now use mostly full-timers. However, we cannot create enough revenue to operate a fully full time fire department and staff at past levels. I asked for your support for the bond and you gave it. I will not ask taxpayers for more money and I don't think we need to in order to get to where we need to be.



Another way we are addressing recruitment challenges is to reimage our apprentice program and begin an internship program for high school students who seek a career as a firefighter-paramedic. By restructuring our apprentice program, we hope to attract more applicants. By starting the internship program for high school students, we hope to develop a "feeder" system for our apprentice program. We are optimistic that these changes will help.

Last, the biggest part of the \$10,000,000 bond issue is for our main firehouse. We have appointed an architect, selected a construction manager, are working on designs and hope to by year's end have the construction schedule set. It's an enormous task, will use the majority of the bond money, and take probably two years (from now until early 2026) to complete. We will let you know how things are going in future newsletters.

We have other projects under way: New radios for our firetrucks and ambulances, new protective gear (fire coats and pants) for our firefighters, and two ambulances that will not arrive until 2026 (that's normal now, regardless of who is building them). And, like all the other things, we will keep you informed of our progress.

As we move towards summer, I hope you are able to enjoy the outdoors – whether here or elsewhere – and do so with friends or family.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Drew Smith".

Drew Smith
Fire Chief

Many Changes Here at PHFD, Some New Things Arriving and Some Older Things Moving Along to Help Others

On April 29th the Fire District took delivery of a new 107' ladder truck built by Pierce Manufacturing in Appleton Wisconsin. This \$1,5 million dollar vehicle was funded by bond proceeds approved by the voters in 2023, this is the first large purchase made as part of the overall district improvement plan. Currently the district has 5 larger fire vehicles and with the new ladder having a larger water tank,



it can take on roles of both a ladder truck and pumper truck. The retiring ladder tower is 31 years old, purchased in 1993 for \$480,000. This 1993 "Tower 9" had increasing maintenance costs and known structural issues with



the vehicle therefore replacement was necessary. Expect to see new Truck 9 responding to calls by summer 2024.

In other news, our 2001 fire engine has been purchased by a religious group who supports small rural fire departments in Mexico. Engine 39 started a driving journey to a rural community near Guajajara on Thursday. Originally purchased in 2001 and funded by a grant received from the State of Illinois this fire engine has seen primary duty on the east side of Prospect Heights was moved to reserve status in 2020. With the upcoming delivery of the new Truck 9 with increased capabilities to handle the jobs of ladder and pumper truck, the Board approved decommissioning of a 1993 ladder truck and a 2001 pumper truck to reduce our fleet by 1 vehicle, this will save on future maintenance and operational costs.



PROSPECT HEIGHTS FIRE DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES



James Rebecca
President



Shawn Clisham
Treasurer



Joseph Vertone
Secretary



Charles Ferguson
Trustee



Lars Anderson
Trustee



Prospect Heights Fire District

10 East Camp McDonald Road
Prospect Heights, IL 60070

Non-Emergency Phone: 847-253-8060

Fax: 847-253-4759

Email: phfd@phfire.com

PRSR STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Mt. Prospect IL
Permit No. 33

Visit Our Website:
WWW.PHFIREFIRE.COM



ECRWSS
POSTAL CUSTOMER

The formation of SEVERE WEATHER

Lightning

LIGHTNING is the No. 2 weather-related killer in the U.S. Only floods kill more people each year. Any metal, water or mineral deposits make excellent conductors.

LIGHTNING FORMS when atoms in rain or ice collide. During collisions such as these, electrons are stripped from some of the other particles. They fall with rain to the lower clouds in the thunderstorm. Electricity, in the form of lightning bolts, equalizes the remaining positive charges from the negative particles that have fallen.

Hailstorm

HAIL FORMS when small pieces of ice are caught by currents and blown into freezing cloud formations. Within the clouds, ice builds up on around the nucleus of the hail, called graupel, and eventually it becomes heavy enough to fall to earth.

Tornado

TORNADOES CAN OCCUR at any time, but the afternoon, after the hottest part of the day has passed, seems to be the most common time for tornadoes to strike.

TORNADOES FORM when warm, moist air and cold, dry air meet. The different fronts collide and create an updraft, which can form a storm supercell. Sometimes, within these supercells, a vortex of swirling air forms. When the vortex touches the ground, it is considered a tornado.

TORNADOES MOVE about 20 to 50 mph, but some have been recorded to move faster than 70 mph.

MYTH
A TORNADO is stronger than a MICROBURST

TRUTH: The strongest winds of a microburst can be just as strong as a small tornado, but they inflict destruction over a much wider area.

Microburst

RAIN FALLING THROUGH CLOUD LAYER

AREA OF DRIER AIR

DOWN DRAFT

SEVERE WINDS contained in the downdraft can reach speeds of over 100 mph.

CLOUD BASE (can be as high as 15,000 feet)

MICROBURSTS can appear when rain falls into an area of dry air within a cloud and evaporates, causing the air to become more dense and descend at a more rapid pace.

WINDS DISSIPATE around a mile from the area's center

DOWN DRAFT

THE AREA AFFECTED by a microburst is roughly two miles in diameter

Did you know?

IN THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE: The rising air in a tornado almost always rotates counterclockwise

ANVIL (the top of the storm system)

ROTATION

UPDRAFT

DOWNDRAFT

FUNNEL CLOUD

ROTATION

UPDRAFT

LOW PRESSURE in a tornado causes the air to cool quickly and water droplets to condense and form the characteristic funnel cloud.

AVERAGE TORNADOES are 400-500 feet wide, travel 4-5 miles on the ground and last only a few minutes. Some documented tornadoes have been almost a mile wide and lasted more than an hour on the ground.

Sources: 6News meteorology; National Weather Service; "Tornado: Terror and Survival," The Counseling Center, of Butler County; University Weather Service; Storm Prediction Center, Norman, Okla.