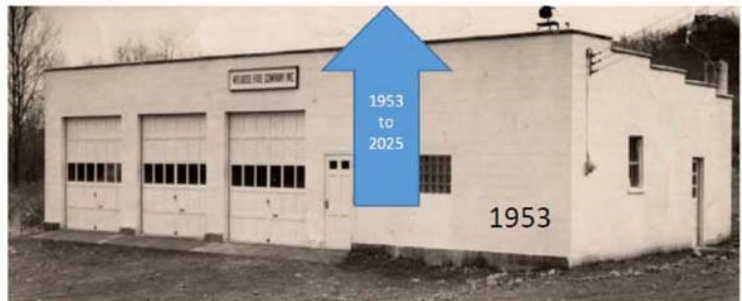
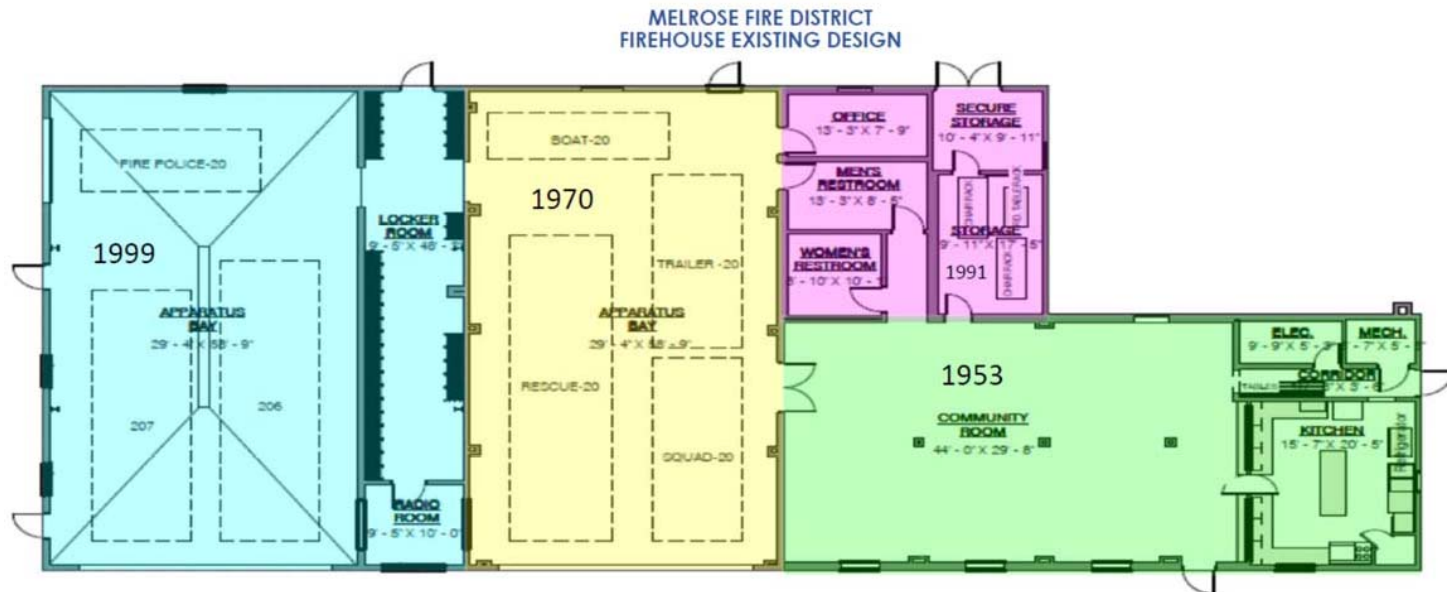


**MELROSE FIRE DISTRICT**  
Firehouse Project Facts #8  
December 3, 2025  
NEW FIREHOUSE – Q&A RECAP

**MELROSE FIRE DISTRICT FACTS**

**Q. WHAT IS THE NEW MELROSE FIREHOUSE PROJECT?**

A. The Melrose Fire District, Board of Commissioners is recommending a \$6.95 million firehouse replacement project. The project will provide a modern 10,276 sq ft firehouse that is operationally effective, energy efficient, safety focused, structurally sound and ADA compliant. This project will resolve significant issues that have arisen on the existing building site and throughout the current firehouse, a structure which is actually the product of four separate construction projects including the original firehouse built in 1953 and three additions built in 1970, 1991 and the last in 1999.



**Q. WHY DID THE MELROSE FIRE DISTRICT COMMENCE CAPITAL PLANNING IN 2016?**

A. The Board of Fire Commissioners (Commissioners), recognizing their fiduciary responsibility to the community to maintain effective, efficient and safe facilities, engaged an architectural and engineering firm in 2016 to perform a comprehensive Building Condition Survey (BCS) to evaluate facility conditions, identify any deficiencies and evaluate capital facility needs. The Commissioners also engaged the engineering firm CT Male to perform a site assessment.

**Q. WHY IS CAPITAL PLANNING IMPORTANT?**

A. "New York's local governments are responsible for maintaining and improving a substantial portion of our public infrastructure. A safe and reliable transportation network, clean and abundant water, modern educational facilities and other capital assets form the foundation for successful communities. Unfortunately, numerous studies have pointed out that New York's local governments have been underfunding their capital needs over the last several decades. In order to reverse this trend, additional federal, State and local resources may need to be dedicated for sustained investment. Equally

# MELROSE FIRE DISTRICT

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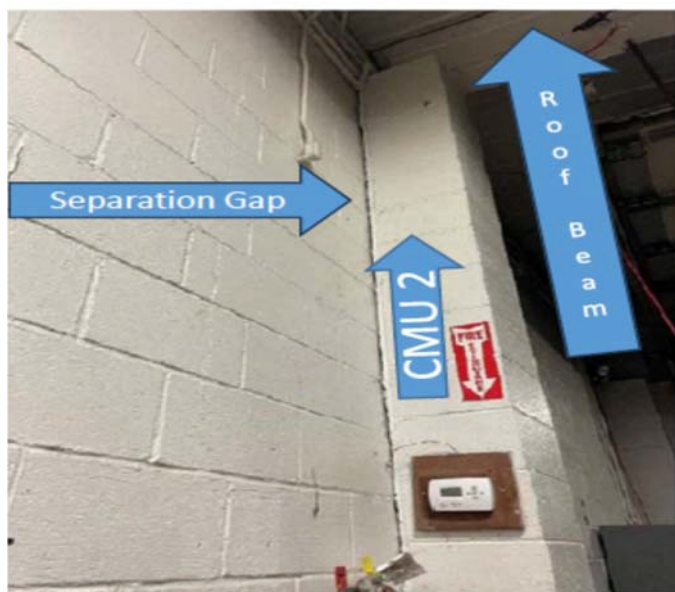
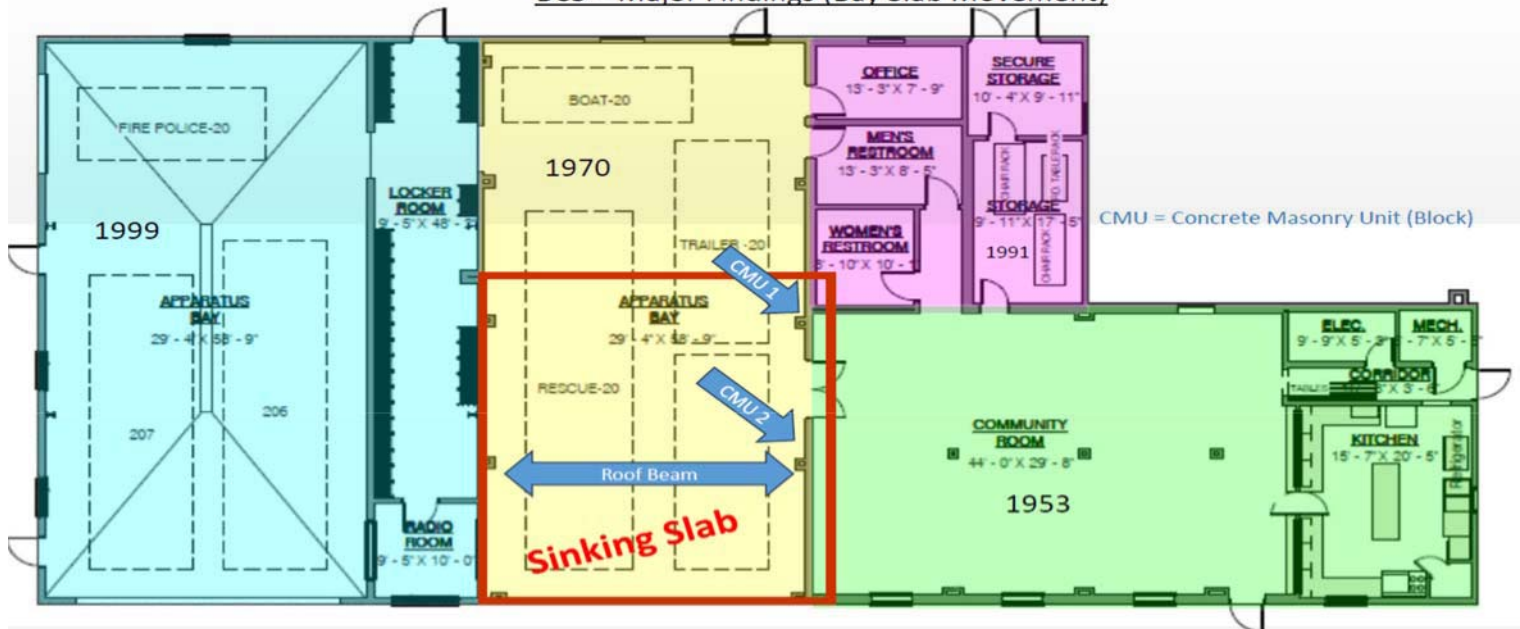
important is a commitment by local governments to engage in effective multiyear capital planning. The process of prioritizing capital investments can make sure key assets are repaired or replaced before an emergency occurs.” NYS Comptroller, Thomas DiNapoli’s, Local Government Management Guide, Multiyear Capital Planning

#### Q. WHAT WERE THE RESULTS OF THE BUILDING CONDITION SURVEY?

- A. The Building Condition Survey (BCS) was designed to evaluate facility conditions, identify any deficiencies and evaluate potential future needs. The BCS report cited several negative findings related to structural, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, septic system and building code/ADA compliance matters, all issues consistent with the lifecycle stage of the four firehouse building sections built in 1953, 1970, 1991 and 1999.

Significant settling of the south bay floor slab and the separation of the concrete masonry unit (CMU) pilasters in that bay from their CMU anchor walls was identified by the BCS as serious life-safety condition. Specifically, decaying fill material under the apparatus bay slab has created underground voids below the bay slab, causing the CMU pilasters that support the structural roof beam to separate from the CMU wall. Continued movement or a complete collapse of the CMU pilaster will create a dangerous safety condition by weakening the roof support beam system.

BCS – Major Findings (Bay Slab Movement)



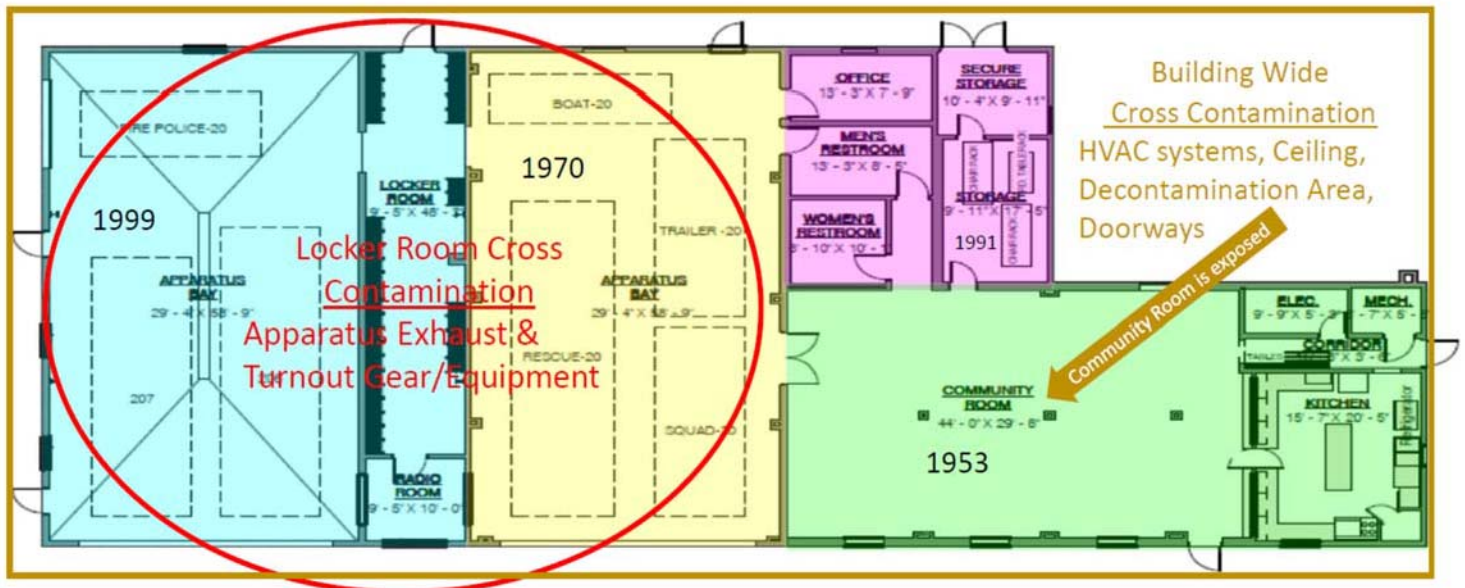
# MELROSE FIRE DISTRICT

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Firehouse “Hot Zone/Cold Zone” cross-contamination was also identified as a significant concern by the BCS. Cross-contamination in a firehouse occurs when contaminants from a hot zone (the area with the highest exposure) are transferred to the cold zone (safe living and administrative areas) through a failure to follow proper decontamination procedures, often via equipment, clothing, or personnel. Currently, the turnout gear & SBCA storage area and the decontamination & laundry facilities are not separate from other spaces in the building, especially the apparatus bays. Exposure to unfiltered apparatus exhaust has proven to be a carcinogen. Chemicals and materials from firefighting can be being inhaled, carried on their clothing, transmitted into the apparatus and transported into their living/working environment back at the station or even into their personal cars and homes. Constant interaction with such chemicals, materials, exhaust, and carcinogens have been shown to directly relate to respiratory disorders, pulmonary diseases, and cancer for firefighters. Community members who frequently use the firehouse facility also need to be protected from the Hot Zone.



There is currently no Apparatus Bay exhaust extraction system

CT Male site assessment identified a leaking underground fuel oil storage tank, causing below grade soil contamination. The fuel oil leak was deemed to be reportable as a spill incident to the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), necessitating a remediation plan that has to date, resulted in removal of the leaking tank and excavation of some contaminated soil. NYSDEC has authorized a plan to remove the remaining contaminated soil as a component of this project, since at this time, further excavating the soil abutting and under the building's foundation may lead to destabilizing the existing firehouse.

#### IMPORTANT FINDING

The Phase II ESA study completed at the site identified impacts to soil and groundwater in the vicinity of the 500 gallon UST which resulted in a spill being listed for the site. The spill was reported to the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation on October 26, 2020 (Spill No. 2006771) and is currently active. The recommended fuel oil, tank and soil removal was performed, but the spill has not been closed due to potential additionally contaminated soil under the firehouse building foundation.

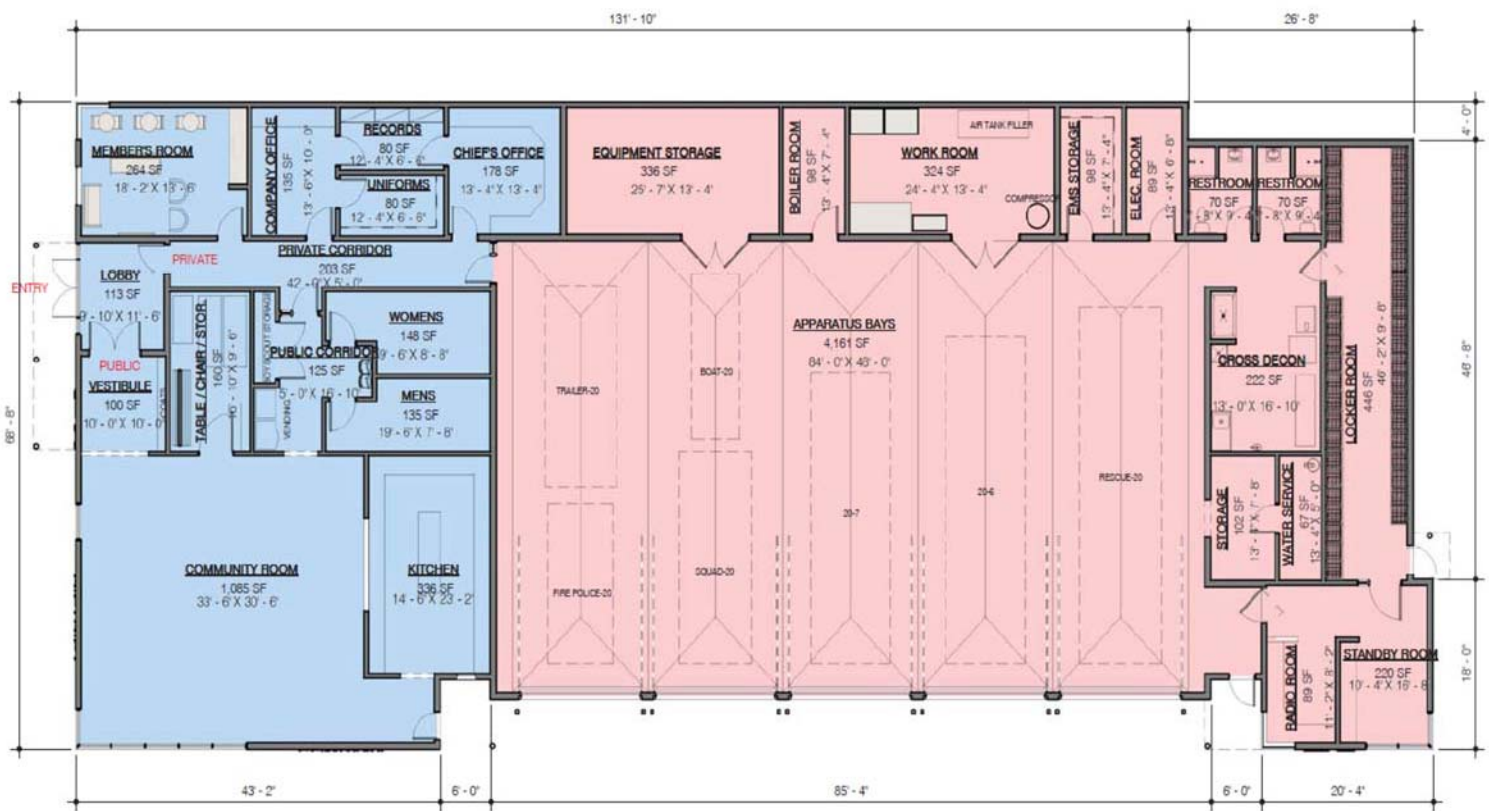


**MELROSE FIRE DISTRICT**  
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**Q. WHAT OPTIONS WERE PROVIDED BY THE BCS REPORT FOR ADDRESSING THE NUMEROUS ADVERSE FINDINGS?**

**A.** The Building Condition Survey provided three possible approaches for resolving the extensive number of conditions identified in BCS.

1. Building all new bays onto the north side of the existing bays. Demolish the entire south non-bay portion of the existing building and create offices, meeting, kitchen and other space within the existing bay space. This would include repair of the existing bay floor and structure where the building is settling.
2. Demolish the entire south non-bay portion of the existing building and create and build all new bays onto the south side of the existing bays. Create offices, meeting, kitchen and other space within the existing bay space. This would include repair of the existing bay floor and structure where the building is settling.
3. Demolish the entire existing building. Create a new building on the site as proposed in the illustration below.



REVISED FLOOR PLAN DATED AUGUST 27, 2020  
 10, 276 SF

ZONE DESIGNATION	FIRST FLOOR PLAN
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightblue; border:1px solid black;"></span> COLD ZONE	TOTAL GROSS SQUARE FEET: 10,276 sf.
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightcoral; border:1px solid black;"></span> HOT ZONE	

**Q. HOW DID THE COMMISSIONERS DETERMINE A NEW FIREHOUSE WAS THE PROPER LONG-TERM SOLUTION?**

**A.** The Commissioners evaluated the pros and cons of renovating the existing firehouse versus rebuilding a new firehouse to determine what solution would best support fire service delivery for the next 30-50 years.

**MELROSE FIRE DISTRICT**  
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**NEW FIREHOUSE – Q&A RECAP**

**Q. WHAT WAS THE RATIONALE FOR SELECTING THE NEW FIREHOUSE OPTION AS THE BEST SOLUTION?**

**A.** The Commissioners determined that a new firehouse was the most appropriate option for fulfilling their duties and responsibilities to the volunteer firefighters and to the residents of the Melrose community based on the overall positive impact a new firehouse will have on the following critical areas of concern:

**1. BUILDING CONDITION SURVEY:**

- Resolves all issues related to the apparatus bay slab conditions, eliminates the possibility that future movement below the slab will cause structural issues.
- Establishes the firehouse as one complete structure with a singular lifecycle, rather than a combination of four structures built in three different decades.
- Incorporates the latest technology and best practices for fire station design, including compliance with new safety and health standards, such as “hot zone/cold zone” separation, accommodate modern fire apparatus size and enhance energy efficiency.
- New construction allows for less costly compliance with current building codes and ADA regulations which can be difficult and costly to achieve in older buildings.
- Provides enhanced firefighter health and safety features like decontamination zones and shower facilities.

**2. THE DISTRICT’S RESPONSIBILITY AS THE EMPLOYER TO THE VOLUNTEERS AS THEIR EMPLOYEES :**

The proposed new firehouse fulfills the District’s legal duty as an employer to provide employees with a safe and healthy workplace, as well as substantially contributing to the District’s moral responsibility as an employer by promoting a shared culture that focuses on the volunteer firefighters’ overall wellbeing through the following improvements:

Proper Firematic Design:

- I. Apparatus Bay Design
  - Safe operation
    - Proper clearances around vehicles
    - Vehicle exhaust extraction system
    - Elimination of trip hazards
    - Correct floor drainage and adds snow/ice remediation
    - ADA/Code compliance
- II. Breathing apparatus sanitary storage, maintenance, and repair
- III. Proper storage of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- IV. Adequate light for safety and fine motor tasks
- V. Robust data technology
- VI. Proper pathways and distance to apparatus for response

Firefighter Health and Safety:

- I. Decontamination of firefighters; PPE & personal clothing
- II. Hot showers
- III. Durability & cleanability of building surfaces and materials
- IV. NFPA 1500 Hot Zone/Cold Zone Compliance

# MELROSE FIRE DISTRICT

## Firehouse Project Facts #8

December 3, 2025

### NEW FIREHOUSE – Q&A RECAP

- Air locks
- Air Sealing
- Ventilation
- Hot/cold separation of mechanical system
- System pressure differential between hot and cold zones

#### Training:

- I. Integration of instructive & practical training (interior and exterior)
- II. Instructional area improvements; added space, presentation systems and environmental enhancements

#### Departmental Cohesion:

- I. Proper area for volunteers to gather for fitness, respite and fellowship.

#### Building Envelope:

- I. Low/no maintenance materials
- II. Adequate daylighting
- III. Energy efficient envelope (better than code)

#### Site

- I. Adequate apron depth
- II. Proper line of site exiting onto street
- III. Safe & efficient on-site circulation
- IV. Adequate parking and the logical separation of apparatus and cars
- V. Space for training

### **3. FIREFIGHTER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION:**

The firehouse is a key component to the volunteer recruitment and retention plan for the following reasons:

- **First impressions:** The firehouse is often the first physical point of contact for a prospective volunteer. A tour of a station that is clean, well-organized, and modern creates a positive first impression, suggesting a professionally run company. Conversely, a poorly maintained station can send a message of neglect.
- **Atmosphere and morale:** A comfortable and functional station promotes a positive atmosphere, encouraging members to spend time there between calls, which builds camaraderie and a sense of community. Amenities like comfortable common areas, kitchens, and modern training spaces can motivate volunteers to stay engaged and be present.
- **Demonstrates value and support:** Providing amenities like showers, laundry facilities, and a space for training shows that the fire company values its volunteers and is willing to invest in their well-being and development. A station that lacks these basic facilities can suggest a lack of support and can deter potential members who have to juggle their volunteer work with careers and families.
- **Impacts reputation:** A firehouse's condition is a visible representation of the fire company's reputation within the community. A successful and well-maintained firehouse reflects positively on the organization, while a neglected one can lead to a poor reputation, making it harder to recruit.
- **Sets expectations:** The station's facilities can set expectations for the level of commitment and resources required, and can be used to highlight the benefits and lifestyle of being a volunteer. Showing potential recruits, the modern equipment and clean facilities can make the role seem more professional and less daunting.

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**4. CAPITAL PLANNING, THE FOUNDATION FOR SUSTAINED EFFECTIVE FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES:**

- The proposed new firehouse is the key component of the District’s capital plan and provides a foundation for the future by aligning long-term fire protection goals with the District’s operating budget over a multi-year period.
- The District’s firehouse capital plan and an apparatus replacement plan also adopted by the District, have been developed over the past ten years, to ensure the long-term financial and operational viability of the District’s capital assets. These plans were developed to address the critical capital asset replacement budgetary gaps identified by the Commissioners in 2016.
- The District’s Building Reserve, which is used to set aside funds to finance future construction cost, had a balance of only \$66,696 as of December 31, 2016. Moreover, the District’s 2016 Operating Budget of \$308,400, which had increased by only \$20,549 between 2010 and 2016, did not adequately include funding for the District’s future capital needs.
- The 2016 Operating Budget included only a small annual transfer of \$20,766 to the Building Reserve for future construction costs and a nominal amount of \$5,850 allocated for ongoing yearly building repairs and maintenance.
- The Commissioners realizing in 2016 that they were facing a firehouse with serious life-safety and operational issues, as cited in the Building Condition Survey report, and a budget unable to support routine firehouse repairs and maintenance, much less a major renovation or reconstruction capital project, began developing a long-term plan to address these major problems.
- The Commissioners adopted a multiyear plan that increased the District’s budgetary transfer to the Building Reserve from the \$66,696 in 2016 to the \$258,500 transfer that is included in the 2026 District budget. This plan has allowed for the District to accumulate about \$1.2 million in the Building Reserve since 2016. These funds will be used to reduce the amount necessary to borrow for the new firehouse.
- The Commissioners, by establishing a structured multiyear approach to funding capital asset replacement, are laying a financial and operational foundation for the current and future generations of Melrose residents that is designed to avoid unanticipated capital costs and the financial strain that can be caused by a failure to properly plan for long-term capital investments.

**Q. DIDN’T WE ALREADY APPROVE A NEW FIREHOUSE IN 2021?**

- A.** Yes, in October 2021, the Commissioners presented a firehouse replacement plan for public vote, receiving overwhelming community approval to proceed with the plan at that time. However, the construction budget and financing cost projections for the new firehouse, which had been developed prior to the COVID pandemic, did not provide sufficient funding to complete the project. Skyrocketing pandemic related construction costs and rapidly increasing interest rates resulted in the decision to delay the project until costs stabilized and interest rates declined, in order mitigate the project’s overall costs.

**Q. WHY IS THE NEW FIREHOUSE BEING PROPOSED AT THIS TIME?**

- A.** The Commissioners have determined that present construction pricing and the decreasing interest rate environment now make proceeding with the new firehouse financially feasible. Furthermore, the District’s coverage area grew in 2025 by adding 72 new properties, over 19 square miles in the Tomhannock Spillway region in the Town of Pittstown, making a new firehouse facility even more crucial at this time to support the increased call volume from this expansion.

**MELROSE FIRE DISTRICT**  
**Firehouse Project Facts #8**  
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**NEW FIREHOUSE – Q&A RECAP**

**Q. WHAT IS THE PLAN FOR FINANCING THE NEW FIREHOUSE?**

- A.** The \$6.95 million firehouse project budget includes existing facility demolition, temporary \*firehouse relocation and new firehouse reoccupation, project design, site development, building construction, project management, administrative services and project construction contingency planning.

The District is proposing to borrow up to \$5.75 million by issuing 30-year municipal bonds and to utilize \$1.2 million of Building Reserve funds to finance this project.

**Q. WHAT IS THE TAX IMPACT FROM BORROWING \$5.75 MILLION?**

- A.** The Commissioners have determined that if the District is not awarded any grant funding, an additional budget increase of \$84,500, spread over the 2027, 2028 and 2029 budgets will be needed to support the project debt service payment for the \$5.75 million bond issuance.

When fully implemented, this multiyear budget plan will result in a tax increase of \$1.73 per \$1,000 of assessed value for District properties in the Town of Schaghticoke and \$.25 per \$1,000 of assessed value for District properties in the Town of Pittstown. Please see the tables below for the projected tax increase amount for a range of properties in each town. For information on how to calculate your individual projected tax increase, please see Firehouse Project Facts #7, December 1, 2025 at [www.melrosefireco.org/capital-project-mfd](http://www.melrosefireco.org/capital-project-mfd)

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The table below illustrates the projected amount tax increase for Schaghticoke properties with assessed values above and below the average assessed value to fund the new firehouse.

<b>Town of Schaghticoke</b>		
<u>Taxable Assessed Value</u>	<u>Full Value**</u>	<u>Projected Tax Increase</u>
\$30,000	\$197,628	\$51.90
\$42,565*	\$280,402	\$73.64
\$75,000	\$494,071	\$129.75

\* \$42,565 is the average assessed value for Schaghticoke properties in the District.

\*\* Schaghticoke assesses property at 15.18% of full value.

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The table below illustrates the projected amount tax increase for Pittstown properties with assessed values above and below the average assessed value to fund the new firehouse.

<b>Town of Pittstown</b>		
<u>Taxable Assessed Value</u>	<u>Full Value**</u>	<u>Projected Tax Increase</u>
\$200,000	\$200,000	\$50.00
\$308,062*	\$308,062	\$77.02
\$500,000	\$500,000	\$125.00

\* \$308,062 is the average assessed value for Pittstown properties in the District.

\*\* Pittstown assesses property at 100% of full value.

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# MELROSE FIRE DISTRICT

## Firehouse Project Facts #8

December 3, 2025

### NEW FIREHOUSE – Q&A RECAP

#### Q. ARE THERE ANY GRANTS AVAILABLE TO HELP FUND THE FIREHOUSE CONSTRUCTION?

A. The Commissioners will be applying for a \$1 million grant from the NYS Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services, *Volunteer Fire Service Infrastructure Grants* to offset our community's share of the project cost. This \$1 million grant, if awarded, will permit the District to reduce the borrowing amount to \$4.75 million, resulting in the project requiring no budget increase and no additional tax increase. Unfortunately, the grant window has not opened yet, so we won't know if the District is awarded a grant until after the vote date.

#### Q. WHY IS THE NEW FIREHOUSE PROJECT BEING VOTED ON IN DECEMBER?

A. The firehouse vote is being held on December 9, 2025 to coincide with the Annual Election for fire district commissioner. The date of the Annual Election is established as the second Tuesday in December by NYS Town Law.

#### Q. WHERE CAN I OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE NEW FIREHOUSE PROJECT?

A. To review prior Firehouse Project Facts 1-7, the Building Condition Survey and other firehouse project information, please visit: [www.melrosefireco.org/capital-project-mfd](http://www.melrosefireco.org/capital-project-mfd)



This new firehouse will facilitate dedicated and compassionate fire & rescue service delivery to current and future generations of District residents and will provide a functional and safe work space for the community's volunteers. At a time when many volunteer fire companies are experiencing declining numbers, the Commissioners believe a new firehouse will be a powerful recruiting tool, fostering a professional environment, that contributes to firefighter wellness, improves training capabilities, and enhances firefighter retention.

For more information on the Board's firehouse plan, please see Firehouse Project Facts #9, December 8, 2025, New Firehouse, Vote Reminder.