

I am writing to provide insight on the capital needs of the Northfield Fire Department and clarify misinformation contained in former Northfield Mayor Milani's letter published in the February 5, 2014 edition of the News Leader.

Since I was appointed Chief, I have worked to improve the Village's I.S.O. rating, which, along with improving our services, will result in a reduction in insurance rates for the Village's residents and businesses. One component of the I.S.O. rating system is the Department's equipment.

The recommended service life for a fire engine is 25 years. One of Northfield's engines is 23 years old. A basic replacement engine would cost at least \$400,000, while a larger ladder truck more suitable for responding to emergencies at our large apartment buildings and businesses would cost from \$550,000 to \$850,000. The ladder trucks owned by the surrounding departments mentioned by Mr. Milani are also 23 years old or older, at the end of their service lives, and frequently out of service or unavailable. Therefore, the best solution for replacing our engine may be to acquire a new reliable ladder truck that would meet the needs of Northfield and the surrounding communities.

Whether or not a new truck is purchased, the need to add an additional bay to the station already exists. At present, the Department must store its F150 emergency response truck and an ambulance outside, resulting in additional response times during inclement weather and increased wear and tear on those vehicles.

The Mayor and Council will determine when these upgrades are fiscally possible, keeping in mind Northfield Village's other priorities. In the meantime, Northfield is in no position to agree to the re-allocation of any of its racino host community money to Walton Hills and Macedonia.

Jason Buss, Fire Chief
Village of Northfield