



Town of New London
Office of the Fire Chief

*P.O. Box 375
237 Main Street
New London, NH 03257*

December 31, 2024

New London Board of Selectmen,

The New London Fire Department would like to modify our budget request for FY 2026. The increased amount reflects the need for one additional full time Firefighter. If approved the difference requested is a net increase of \$80,657. as there are several line items that could be modified. The on-call line (125) can be reduced by \$17,280 from the requested \$43,200 and the part-time line (120) could be reduced by \$10,500 for a total reduction of \$27,780. I understand this is a substantial increase but it is not being made without our careful consideration and deliberation.

This is a multifaceted plan. In addition to the budget request, the NLFD will be asking the Selectboard for approval to apply for additional staffing through a SAFER Grant in April. We had hoped to apply for three additional personnel through this funding source, however this is a competitive grant and is not guaranteed. Therefore, to minimize the impact on the tax rate, the Board of Firewards believes that adding one position in this coming fiscal year is the best approach.

You have heard me talk about the difficulties of recruitment and retention within the Fire Service for years. Unfortunately, the NLFD's operating model that has worked so well for years is no longer as effective as in the past. Currently, the Town of New London Fire Department has three full-time career personnel and one per-diem employee. These members cover the hours of 7am to 7pm, Monday through Friday. The issue is covering the on-call shifts during weeknights, as well as all weekend shifts. We have seen significant changes to our demographics over the last 40 years. As we examine staffing levels and the challenges of covering shifts, we recognize that additional full-time employees are required to meet our coverage shortages while trying to provide adequate service to our residents.

Thank you for your consideration of this request,

Jason B. Lyon, Fire Chief