



Fighting Fires, Saving Lives and Promoting Safety.

Phillip A. J. Charron
Fire Chief

MEMORANDUM

TO: Thomas A. Golden Jr., City Manager 

FROM: Phillip A. J. Charron, Chief of the Fire Department

DATE: May 26, 2022

SUBJECT: MOTION OF 3/22/22 UPDATE AS TO WHEN POLICY REGARDING CLOSURES OF ENGINE 6, ENGINE 4, AND ENGINE 10 WAS ADJUSTED TO BE INCLUDED IN BROWNOUT SITUATION.

In 1992, three engine companies were shutdown permanently and 33 firefighters were laid off. These companies included:

Engine #5 Fourth St. Covering Christian Hill, Centralville and parts of Lower Belvidere

Engine #8 Mammoth Rd. Covering Pawtucketville, Centralville and parts of Downtown

Engine #9 Fairmount St. Covering the Oaklands, Belvidere and parts of South Lowell

There was a verbal agreement between the City Manager's Office and the Fire Department that the temporary closing of Engine #6, Engine #4 and Engine #10 would be avoided if at all possible due to the gaps in coverage created by these closings. In an attempt to meet this requirement, a fourth firefighter was assigned to these units each shift in order to lessen the closures. The ability to maintain this requires full manning of the department up to its 213 person limit.

Over time, it has been impossible to maintain a 4th firefighter on each group at Engine #6 and Engine #4 consistently due to manpower shortages. This has meant closures from time to time of these units. Engine #10 has been maintained at 4 per shift throughout this period due to several extenuating circumstances including river rescue response, a large fire response area, and brush fire coverage for the Dracut/Lowell State Forest.

It is also important to note that these units have been subject to maintenance brownouts, due to apparatus repairs, many times in recent years due to the aging of the fleet.