



FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT NO. 13
ST. TAMMANY PARISH
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2025 Budget Statement

Members of the Board of Commissioners, Citizens, and Personnel of Fire District 13,

Attached we present to you the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2025. The proposed budget was developed based on parameters established by the Board of Commissioners and in accordance with the Fire District Budgetary Process Policy and our Strategic Plan. Through guidance from the commissioners, planning meetings with personnel and administrative meetings with key staff, the proposed budget framework was drafted and financial priorities set. As in all decisions before us, we applied our purpose of protecting lives and property to all budget considerations. We believe the proposed budget improves our ability to meet our purpose, mission, and vision while responsibly utilizing the tax dollars afforded us by our constituents. The proposed budget highlights include the following:

OPERATING BUDGET OVERVIEW:

The proposed 2025 Operating Budget is \$4,497,285, increased from \$3,993,500 in 2024 and represents an increase of 9.0% over 2024. As is the case for all professional fire service organizations, payroll expenses make up the largest portion of the operating budget. We recognize that personnel also have the greatest impact on our mission and purpose, and therefore are a focus when prioritizing budget expenses. With the growth the community is experiencing and the continued need to transition to an adequately staffed and structured department, the following positions have been budgeted with regard to the construction of Station 134: three (3) full time Captains and three (3) Fire Equipment Operators are presently on staff for Station 134. Our projection is to hire three (3) full-time firefighters. The three (3) firefighters, in combination with the Captains and Fire Equipment Operators already on staff, will reflect a cost of \$160,000.00. A 2% guaranteed raise with an additional 5% increase (total 7% overall) is included in the 2025 operating costs. Best case scenario, a projected 4th quarter completion is expected and have budgeted for related expenses such as increases in insurance(s) and worker's compensation. It also includes an increase in operating expenses as construction for Station 134 is about to begin.



CAPITAL BUDGET OVERVIEW:

The capital budget funds are primarily earmarked for the following projects:

Station 134: to begin the construction on purchased property located at 425 Leeward Loop, including furnishings, and fixtures for the new station: \$2,000,000.00.

Replacement of Cascade air fill station and eight (8) SCBA and Safety Equipment (Grant if obtained).

The savings from unspent capital budgets over the last seven years, operating budget savings, along with revenue bonds of approximately \$1.3 million dollars, have provided revenue to construct station 134. This station is needed to reduce Station 132's existing coverage area. Over 70% of the Fire District's responses historically come from Station 132 and those calls need to be redistributed. Looking to the near future, the Fire District will need to add a second Ladder company to the Station 134 area and recognize that one truck with equipment will exceed \$2,000,000.00, not including the personnel to staff it or the additional operating costs. In addition, the capital equipment, maintenance, repair, and replacement schedule is running behind. There are several items that should be replaced or remounted, but adequate funds are not currently available. Various grants are being pursued to assist with some of these needs, such as the aged Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). The Fire District recognizes the need for budget planning, restricted reserve funds and strategic planning in preparation of the many future needs.

Overall, the Fire District is on track to meet the short and long-range goals based off the current adopted strategic plan. Moving forward, there is a need to continue to address adequate staffing levels as the Fire District is under-staffed on all apparatus per NFPA 1710; the Fire District will continue the volunteer program and the use of part-time trained firefighters to address staffing needs. Long term, the goal is to achieve compliance with NFPA 1710 Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the public by Career Fire Departments by staffing a minimum four personnel per front-line apparatus and five or more for high risk/high volume response areas. Having enough properly trained personnel has the single biggest impact on our fire rating and on emergency incident outcomes. Therefore, this will continue to be a high priority. Fire District personnel have worked diligently helping Fire District 13 obtain and maintain a PIAL Fire Rating Class 2. This is the second-best possible rating on a scale of 1 - 10, saving most homeowners and businesses money on their property insurance. These are just some of the accomplishments achieved using the funding so generously provided by our community safety, reduce risk, and place Fire District 13 on course for an improved fire rating.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Lonnie Johnson, Fire Chief