

Borough of Ben Avon
7101 Church Avenue, Ben Avon, Pennsylvania 15202
Regular Meeting of Council – October 15, 2013
Minutes

Call to Order

Council President Lloyd Corder called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Council Members Present

Rob Galbraith, Michael Bett, Earl Bohn, Lloyd Corder, Richard White, Brian Tokar, Sue Weiss

Council Members Absent

None

Others Present

Bob Jones, Mayor

Chuck Means, Solicitor

Ed McGee, Engineer

Dale Regrut, Public Works Foreman

Carmella Hallstein, Secretary

Sam Diana, Emergency Management Coordinator

Jim Rupert, Chief; Ben Avon Volunteer Fire Department

Norbert Micklos, Chief; Ohio Township Police Department

Public Participation

Len Barcoucky of 7028 Flaccus Road gave council an updated report on the efforts of the Friends of the Ben Avon Bookmobile. Mr. Barcoucky read a prepared statement. See Exhibit A.

Approval of Minutes

Motion: Mr. Galbraith; Second: Mr. Bett; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to approve the minutes of the September 17, 2013 council meeting.

Engineer's Report – Report given by Ed McGee

Financial Report - Report given by Brian Tokar, Chair

Motion: Mr. Tokar; Second: Mr. White; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to approve the September 2013 financial reports as presented.

Motion: Mr. Tokar; Second: Mr. Bett; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to approve the October 2013 accounts payable reports as presented, authorizing payments of \$136,250.82 from the general account.

Mr. Tokar presented the first draft of the 2014 budget. He stated that he would meet with Dale Regrut and each of the department chairs to review the draft before the November council meeting.

Intergovernmental Cooperation Report – No Report

Administration Report – Report given by Richard White, Chair

Public Works / Building and Property Report – Report given by Rob Galbraith, Chair

Public Safety / Strategic Projects Report – Report given by Michael Bett, Chair

Fire / Public Affairs Report – Report given by Earl Bohn, Chair

Property Maintenance and Code Enforcement Report – No Report

Mayor’s Report – No Report

Emergency Management Report – Report given by Sam Diana, EMC

Police Chief’s Report – No Report

Fire Chief’s Report – No Report

Tri-Borough Joint Planning Commission Report – No Report

Solicitor’s Report – Report given by Chuck Means, Solicitor

New Business

Avonworth Municipal Authority Voting Board Appointment

Motion: Mrs. Weiss; Second: Mr. Tokar; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to appoint Michael Schwartz to the Avonworth Municipal Authority Voting Board for a term that begins immediately and ends December 31, 2017.

Kilbuck Township Fire Services Contract Addendum

Motion: Mr. Bohn; Second: Mr. Tokar; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to approve an Extension Addendum to the Fire Services Contract between the Township of Kilbuck and the Borough of Ben Avon for a period of five years commencing January 1, 2015 and ending December 31, 2019

Purchase of Quint Pumper Ladder Truck

Chief Rupert stated that the process to research and purchase the truck started about three months ago. He stated that Dr. Corder, Mr. Tokar and Mr. Bohn helped the VFC put together a package to purchase the truck. Chief Rupert stated that the VFC would self-finance the purchase of the truck and he asked the borough to increase the amount budgeted for fire protection service to cover operating expenses such as vehicle insurance and maintenance. Mr. Tokar stated that the VFC found an amazing deal on a truck from a fire company in Mendham, NJ and that the acquisition cost of \$145,000.00 would be financed by the VFC. He stated that there would be an incremental annual cost of about \$5,000.00 for maintenance and insurance. Mr. Tokar stated that the truck would fill a need that was specified in earlier fire studies and would eliminate the gap in ladder coverage. He stated that we currently utilize Bellevue’s ladder truck, which is not able to get to 25% of the borough’s streets. Mr. Tokar stated that the Quint pumper ladder truck has a 75-foot ladder the gives the truck the ability to reach the third floor of many of the homes that have elevated footprints, adding that the truck is fully capable to handle both rescue and fire

suppression with only three firefighters. He stated that the truck would provide 100% street coverage as well as 100% fire fighting capability with a skeleton crew. Mr. Tokar stated that the VFC is financing the truck from savings and a PEMA loan. He stated that the VFC is asking the borough to co-sign a \$60,000.00 120-day bridge loan because PEMA requires the fire truck to be titled before PEMA loan proceeds are released. Mr. Bohn stated that one out of four streets in Ben Avon is unreachable by Bellevue's much larger mechanized ladder truck. He stated that the alternative is for our volunteer firefighters to wrangle ladders, which requires four men to place them and raise them. Mr. Bohn stated that the Quint pumper provides full coverage for all of our streets including those that Bellevue's truck cannot reach. He stated that a minimal crew can operate the truck, roll up to the scene, raise ladders and put rescue equipment and water at the top of any building in Ben Avon, which is beneficial during daylight hours when the borough has minimal crew available. Mrs. Weiss asked Mr. Tokar if he expected the annual incremental costs to exceed \$5,000.00. Mr. Tokar stated that he thought \$5,000.00 would be sufficient to cover the costs. Mrs. Weiss asked if any other fire company in the area had a Quint pumper ladder truck that could cover the borough during the day. Chief Rupert stated that Bellevue has a dual axel ladder truck, which is tough to maneuver on some of the streets especially on the east side of the borough. Mrs. Weiss asked if the BAVFC would be covering other communities if they purchased the Quint. Chief Rupert stated that he could not answer definitively because it is up to the individual departments to decide who they call out, but more than likely, the BAVFC would cover other communities. Mrs. Weiss asked if the VFC has had any conversations with the other community fire departments that would benefit from our obtaining the Quint in terms of their financial support of this purchase. Chief Rupert stated that the VFC had not contacted any other fire companies because they did not want to advertise this purchase without having council's approval first. Mrs. Weiss stated that if we were going to continue to offer these kinds of benefits to other communities she would prefer that we invite them to participate financially. Mrs. Weiss stated that we have talked about fire departments working together and that there has been some resistance, but that is where she would like to see us go with public safety. She stated that she would like to see some sort of collaboration and cooperation in the financial realm as well. Mr. Galbraith expressed his concern about drawing down significantly on the VFC budget, adding that he was concerned about not having enough of a safety cushion if there was a major issue with a piece of equipment where there would be a capital cost. Mr. White suggested taking the \$60,000.00 from the borough's general account instead of taking out a bridge loan since the loan would be paid back with the PEMA money within 120 days.

Motion: Mr. Tokar; Second: Mr. White; Motion carried by voice vote to:

1. Approve a proposal by the Ben Avon Borough Volunteer Fire Company to purchase a Quint fire truck as described in a printed presentation entitled *Closing the Gap: Ben Avon Borough Volunteer Fire Company's Plan To Self-Finance a Solution to a Chronic Need*, a copy of which is made part of the official record of Council (See Exhibit B);
2. Disburse \$60,000 from the borough's general account as a no-interest temporary bridge loan toward the purchase price of the Quint fire truck contingent upon the prior execution of a promissory note from the Ben Avon Volunteer Fire Company assuring repayment in full immediately upon the fire company's receipt of the proceeds of a loan from the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency;
3. Authorize the fire company to proceed with structural modifications of the overhead clearance of the fire hall to accommodate the Quint truck, and
4. Increase the funds budgeted for fire protection service in 2014 sufficiently to cover the incremental increase in operating expenses related to the Quint, such as vehicle insurance, maintenance, inspection and certification. Mrs. Weiss opposed the motion.

Ordinance No. 764

Mr. Galbraith stated that in order to meet the TreeVitalize requirements to be eligible to get free trees he had suggested that the borough eliminate the permitting and private property clauses from the proposed shade tree ordinance. Dr. Corder stated that Ordinance No. 764 establishes a shade tree commission. Mr. Galbraith stated that the commission would educate and provide support to the community. Mr. Means stated that Ordinance No. 764 does not change the old shade tree provisions, does not impose any duty on a person to do anything or not do anything, nor does it establish a fine for any violation because there is not any duty for anyone to violate. He stated that Ordinance No. 764 sets up the terms of office of the commission, the number of members on the commission and states generally that they are to guide council decisions regarding conservation and maintenance of Ben Avon Borough's shade trees and educate the public how to plant, maintain, care and protect shade trees of the borough.

Motion: Mr. Galbraith; Second: Mr. White; Motion carried by voice vote to advertise Ordinance No. 764, which establishes a borough shade tree commission by amending Chapter 25 of the Ben Avon Borough Code of Ordinances. Mr. Bohn opposed the motion.

Bookmobile Service

Mr. Bett stated that when he was canvassing the borough for signatures he discovered that there was overwhelming support for the bookmobile. He stated that nearly everyone he reached gladly signed the petition, adding that he gathered 300 signatures. Mr. Bett stated that it is dead flat wrong to say that the bookmobile is not widely supported in this borough. He stated that the Friends of the Ben Avon Bookmobile raised \$3,900.00 to help fund the bookmobile and he asked council to approve a four-year contract for the bookmobile.

Motion: Mr. Bett; Second: Mrs. Weiss; to fully-fund the bookmobile and approve a four-year agreement for bookmobile service for 2014 through 2017 for \$43,749.00.

Mr. Galbraith asked Mr. Bett why he was requesting approval for a four-year contract. Mr. Galbraith also asked what the patronage of the bookmobile was this year versus last year. Mr. Barcoucky stated that in 2013 the door count for the 3rd quarter was 517 people compared to 387 in 2012. Mr. Bohn stated that an email he received from Chuck Arrigo, the Operations manager for ACLA Mobile Library Services, states that 46 different people came through the door of the bookmobile in the 3rd quarter of this year. He stated that some people came through more than once because they are regulars who love the bookmobile. Mr. Bohn stated that Chuck Arrigo said that there were 46 different people who used the Ben Avon bookmobile stop last quarter and by the latest statistics, about 60% of those individuals are from Ben Avon. Mr. Barcoucky stated that those number were impossible, adding that there were 517 people who used the bookmobile in the 3rd quarter. Mr. Bett stated that the number for unique visitors had to be per week not per quarter. Mr. Bohn stated that the first bookmobile in recorded history was in 1853 in England and that the first bookmobiles in the United States appeared in the early 1900's in Georgia and Western Maryland because there were so few libraries. He stated that bookmobile activity peaked in the 1950's and 1960's and has been on the decline ever since as prosperity and innovation delivered brick and mortar libraries to just about every community. Mr. Bohn stated that e-books, electronic data and the worldwide web make information available to all of us. He stated that Mr. Bett was asking council to appropriate ten thousand of the taxpayers' dollars so that some portion of Ben Avon residents could enjoy the ambiance and coziness of the bookmobile on Saturday morning for one hour. Mrs. Weiss stated that she did not see the bookmobile as a budget breaker. She stated that maybe the bookmobile is a little antiquated, but we are also a little antiquated. Mr. Bohn asked Mr. Bett if he made any attempt to negotiate the

cost, adding that the Northland Library receives two hours of service every Saturday for \$16,000.00 a year at two different locations. Mr. Bett stated that he has talked to the Library Association about price, adding that the actual cost of the service is more than the cost that is billed. Mr. Bett stated that if you listen to democracy, the will of the people is that the bookmobile be supported. Mr. Galbraith offered to help to negotiate a better cost. Mr. Tokar stated that the spirit of the conversation last year was that the borough co-fund the bookmobile. He stated that the fund raising efforts and response rate of the Friends of the Ben Avon Bookmobile were great and that he would like to continue this spirit and arrangement. Mr. Tokar asked Mr. Bett to modify his motion to state co-fund instead of fully-fund and he stated that he thought a four-year agreement was too long. He stated that we should consider our current arrangement of co-funding and discuss bookmobile service on an annual basis. Mr. Tokar stated that a discussion on an annual basis sets the right arrangement so that the Friends of the Ben Avon Bookmobile continue to support the bookmobile. He stated that with a four-year arrangement he did not know if the motivation would be in place to continue that support. Mr. Bett stated that the residents who signed the petition are asking for full funding. Mr. Tokar stated that he would support a one-year agreement for the bookmobile. Mr. Bett asked Mr. Tokar if he would support a two-year agreement. Mr. Tokar asked Mr. Bett if he would commit to the same level of funding next year. Mr. Bett stated that he could not commit to raising \$3,900.00. Mr. Tokar reiterated that he would support a one-year agreement and that he though council should discuss the bookmobile on an annual basis.

Mr. Bett withdrew the motion to fully-fund the bookmobile and to approve a four-year agreement for bookmobile service for 2014 through 2017 for \$43,749.00.

Motion: Mr. Bett; Second: Mr. Tokar; Motion carried by voice vote to approve the expenditure of \$10,815.00 for bookmobile service for 2014 with the understanding that the Friends of the Ben Avon Bookmobile will continue fundraising efforts to help offset the cost of the service. Mr. Bohn opposed the motion.

Old Business

None

Adjournment

Motion: Mr. White; Second: Mr. Galbraith; Motion carried by unanimous voice vote to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carmella Hallstein

Borough Secretary

I'm Len Barcoucky, 7028 Flaccus Road, representing the Friends of the Ben Avon Bookmobile.

I'm here to report on the efforts of our new organization and to request action from council that my neighbors and I believe would be good for our borough and for its residents in all stages of life.

When I spoke to you in April, I told you that the Friends of the Bookmobile have had good luck in raising awareness of the weekly bookmobile service and in raising funds to supplement the money that borough council has provided for more than 20 years.

This fall I watched several episodes of the Ken Burns' series, "The National Parks." That PBS series is subtitled "America's Best Idea." That statement is hyperbole, but I do believe that government-supported national parks, libraries and bookmobiles are indeed among our nation's oldest and best ideas.

Great vistas like the views of Yosemite Valley should not be limited only to those wealthy enough to be able to buy great swaths of wilderness. Similarly, access to great ideas like those in the works of Thomas Paine, James Madison and, in our own time, David McCullough, should be widely available. I don't think that I have to remind you that the two greatest supporters of publicly financed libraries were among America's most practical and tough-minded business people. Benjamin Franklin and Andrew Carnegie backed the idea that maximizing citizen access to knowledge was critical to maintaining a democratic republic.

Bookmobile service can bring every book, DVD and CD from every library in Allegheny County to Church Avenue. The materials that arrive with the bookmobile help pre-schoolers learning their letters, students researching hands-on science projects, and young mothers and dads seeking to escape in a novel or history book for a few minutes.

As we Friends of the Bookmobile have gathered 300 signatures from voters, one surprise has been how broad and deep support is for continuation of the service. That support extends across generations and includes past, present and future users.

"I remember my kids using it," some people say. "I look forward to taking my toddler when she a little older," is another common remark.

“I don’t go myself, but I know my grandchildren still use it,” is another response. Few local institutions appear to have more popular support. Another sign of that support is the success of our kids’ petitions, which have 67 names.

And now to report on the progress we have made since launching our efforts earlier this year.

The number you may be most interested in as you plan your budget for 2014 and beyond is our fund-raising efforts. As of the end of last month, the Friends have raised \$3,900 toward 2014 service from a variety of undertakings. The sources have included patron donations made during bookmobile visits, proceeds from the balloon game and sweets sale at the Friends booth during the Ben Avon Fall Festival and grants from the Avon Club and from DTE Energy.

The Friends also partnered with the Community Theatre Players to put on a benefit staged reading of “Pride and Prejudice” to mark the 200th anniversary of the publication of Jane Austen’s novel. I cannot think of a better way to raise funds for the bookmobile.

The Allegheny County Library Association, which operates the bookmobile, has provided statistics that show growing use in both number of patrons and number of items circulated. I’ll provide you with a copy of the raw statistics.

For the first quarter of 2013, both circulation and visitors had dropped compared to the same time period the year before: Bad weather was probably the biggest factor in the 11 percent decreases in both items circulated and number of visitors.

As our Friends organization grew active and bookmobile awareness grew, patronage and items circulated grew – up 29 percent in patronage and 4 percent in number of items.

For the just completed third quarter, year-to-year comparisons show number of items circulated rose 20 percent and the number of patrons rose 33 percent.

We members of the Friends believe that these numbers – showing both financial support and growing usage -- provide evidence that Ben Avon residents value and use the service.

These have been the results while our group, Friends of the Ben Avon Bookmobile, still is formally organizing. We hope you will support our efforts. Some of you already have. We are thankful to Mayor Bob Jones who, among others, made a generous personal contribution to our efforts during the Fall Festival.

We have more work to do. Residents from Emsworth, Ben Avon Heights and Bellevue make regular use of the bookmobile. We hope residents in those communities will urge their elected officials to start to contribute or increase their contribution toward the annual cost of the bookmobile stop.

We are continuing our efforts to inform people about the bookmobile service through print and on-line media, including the Avonworth School District newsletter. We plan to continue our fund-raising efforts.

I look forward to seeing what kind of kids' game Michael Bett will come up with for next year's street fair. I'll admit I already am looking forward to next year's production, which this year raised several hundred dollars for the bookmobile.

Avonworth High School Senior advisor Michelle George has agreed to steer students seeking senior projects to the Friends organization, and we hope they will assist us with our 2014 efforts.

We Friends, and the residents who have signed petitions backing bookmobile service, urge you to continue to fund the bookmobile. The ideal situation would be a long-term contract to assure service for the next four years. Were you to take that action, it would have several advantages. They would include not having to hear from us on so frequent a basis.

I leave you with two interconnected thoughts:

Fifty-one years ago on July 4, 1963, President John F. Kennedy told an audience at Independence Hall that "to govern is to choose." Thirty-five years earlier, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. wrote that "Taxes are what we pay for the civilized society." I think that choosing to continue support for bookmobile service that brings both the Federalist Papers and Will Ferrell movies to Ben Avon is an important part of that maintaining that civilization.

Closing the Gap:

Ben Avon Borough Volunteer Fire Company's Plan
To Self-Finance a Solution to a Chronic Need

October 2013

Objective & Agenda

Objective

- To present BAB VFC's proposal to self-finance the purchase of a multi-purpose truck that improves capabilities to close a coverage gap at minimal cost to Ben Avon taxpayers.

Agenda

- Proposal Summary
- Proposal Details
 - Fire Company Overview & Current Situation
 - Truck Details and Benefits
 - Purchase Details
 - Financials
- Actions Needed

Proposal Summary

- Purchase of a 1992 E-Quint multi-purpose fire truck
- Acquisitions costs of \$145K financed entirely by fire company
- Incremental annual costs of \$5K for maintenance and insurance
- Fills needs specified in 2009 and 1997 evaluations
- Eliminates gap in ladder coverage: \approx 25% of borough streets now unreachable by Bellevue ladder truck
- E-Quint fully capable of rescue and fire suppression using skeleton crew typical of response during daylight hours

Fire company requests that Ben Avon Borough:

- Co-sign a \$60K temporary 60-day bridge loan from PENMA
- Align annual maintenance and insurance costs
- OK interior height adjustment of fire hall at no cost to borough

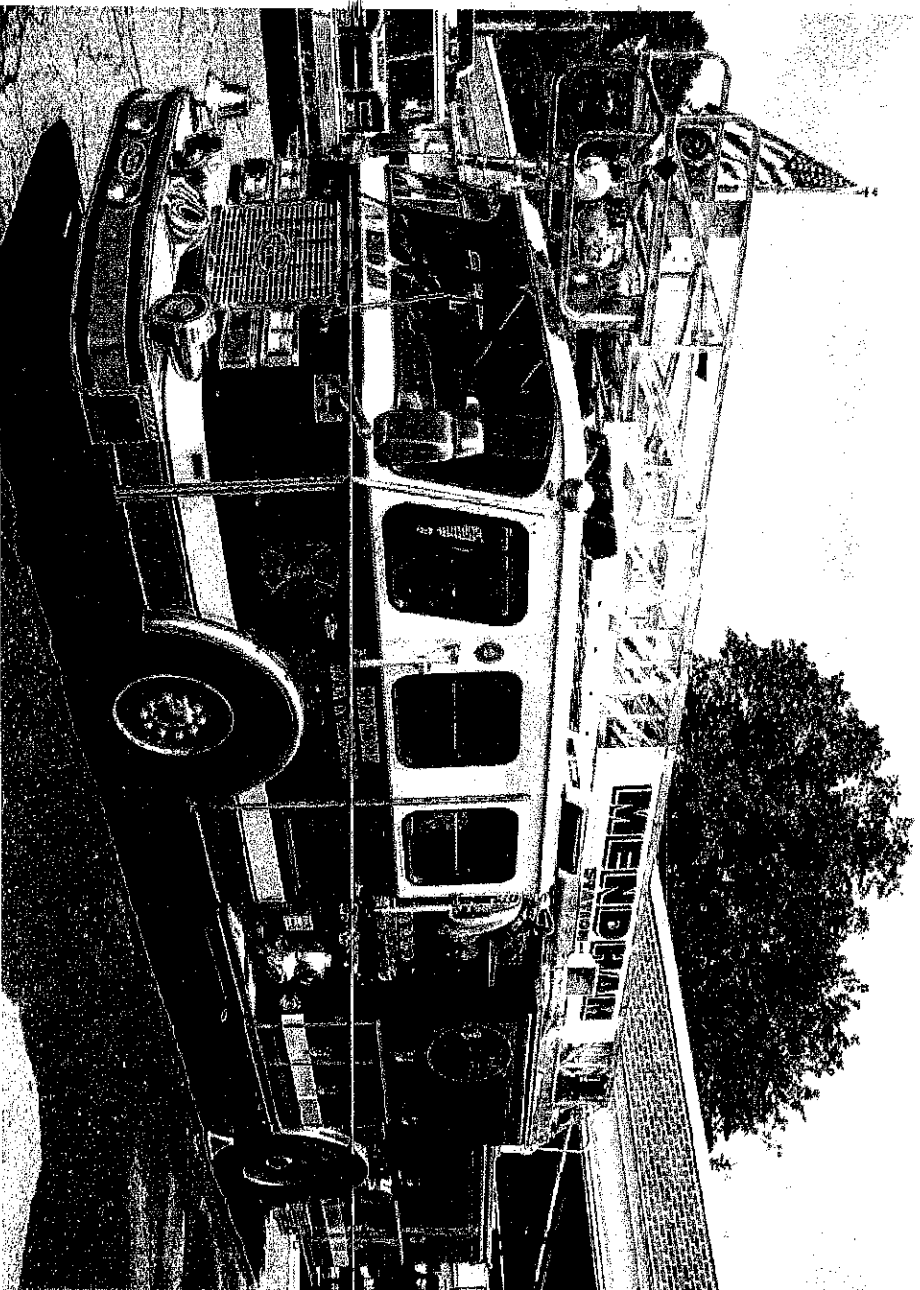
Ben Avon Volunteer Fire Company Overview

- All-volunteer company in service since 1892
 - “committed to protecting the people and property within the communities we serve”
- Volunteer performance
 - 200 to 250 calls per year requiring about 1,300 man-hours
 - Turnout: 7 to 8 firefighters per call (fewer during business hours)
- Track record of self-funding via grants and donations
 - \$47K over past 3 years for equipment, radios, & services
 - Paid down a large portion of cost of current engine
- Current equipment
 - 1 heavy rescue truck as command post and crew support
 - 1 engine/heavy pumper with six-man cab and static ladders
 - Lack of mechanized ladder means dependence on Bellevue
 - Four firefighters needed to move and place static ladders

The 1992 E-One Quint

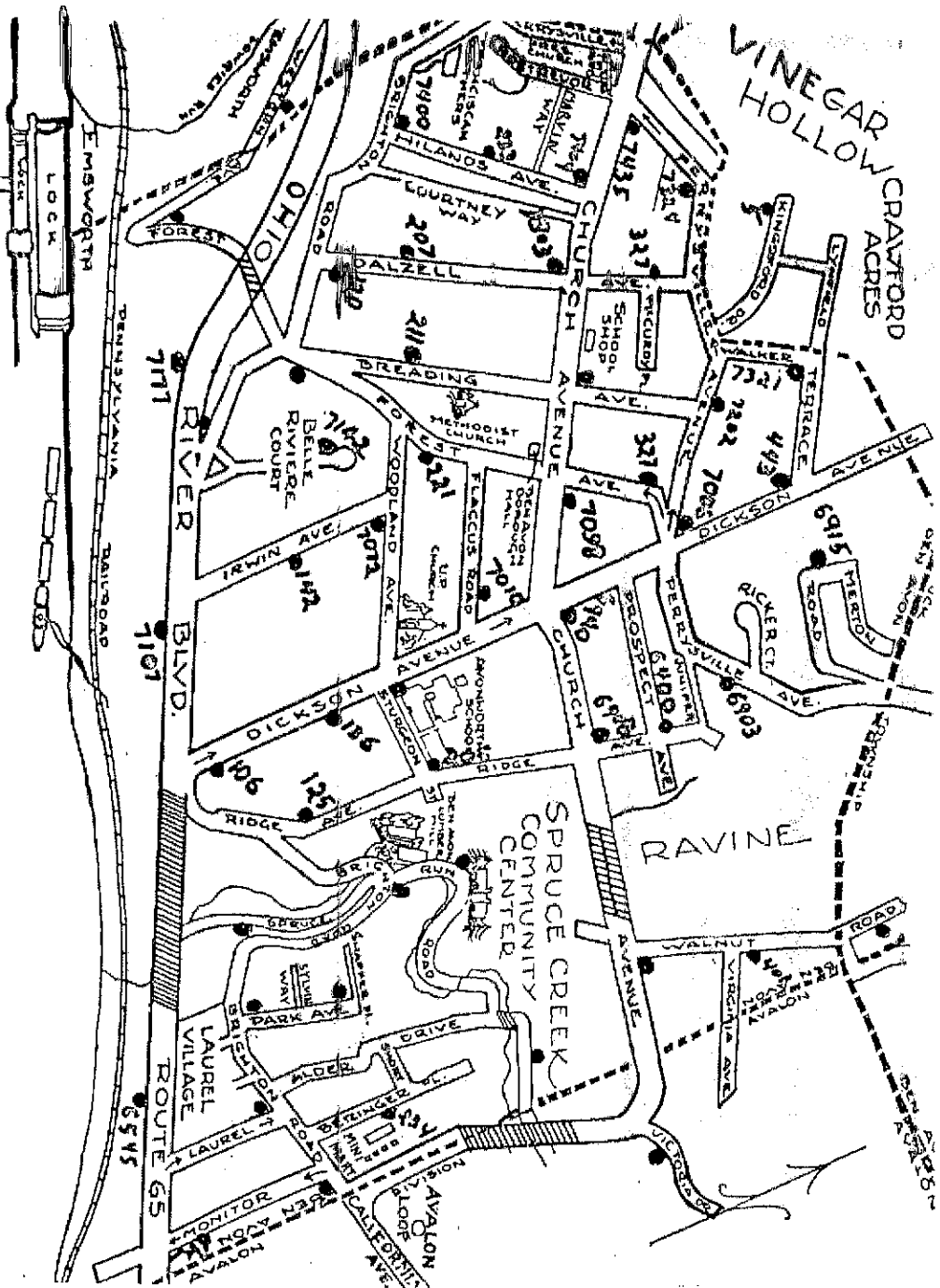
Nimble, Multipurpose Truck with Features Ben Avon Lacks

- ✓ 1,500 gpm pump
- ✓ 75' mechanized ladder
- ✓ Six-person cab
- ✓ 500-gal tank
- ✓ Fills 1st-at-scene role of rescue & suppression
- ✓ Nimble, reaches all borough streets



The 1992 E-One Quint: Benefits

Reaches the \approx 25% of streets off limits to bulkier Bellevue truck

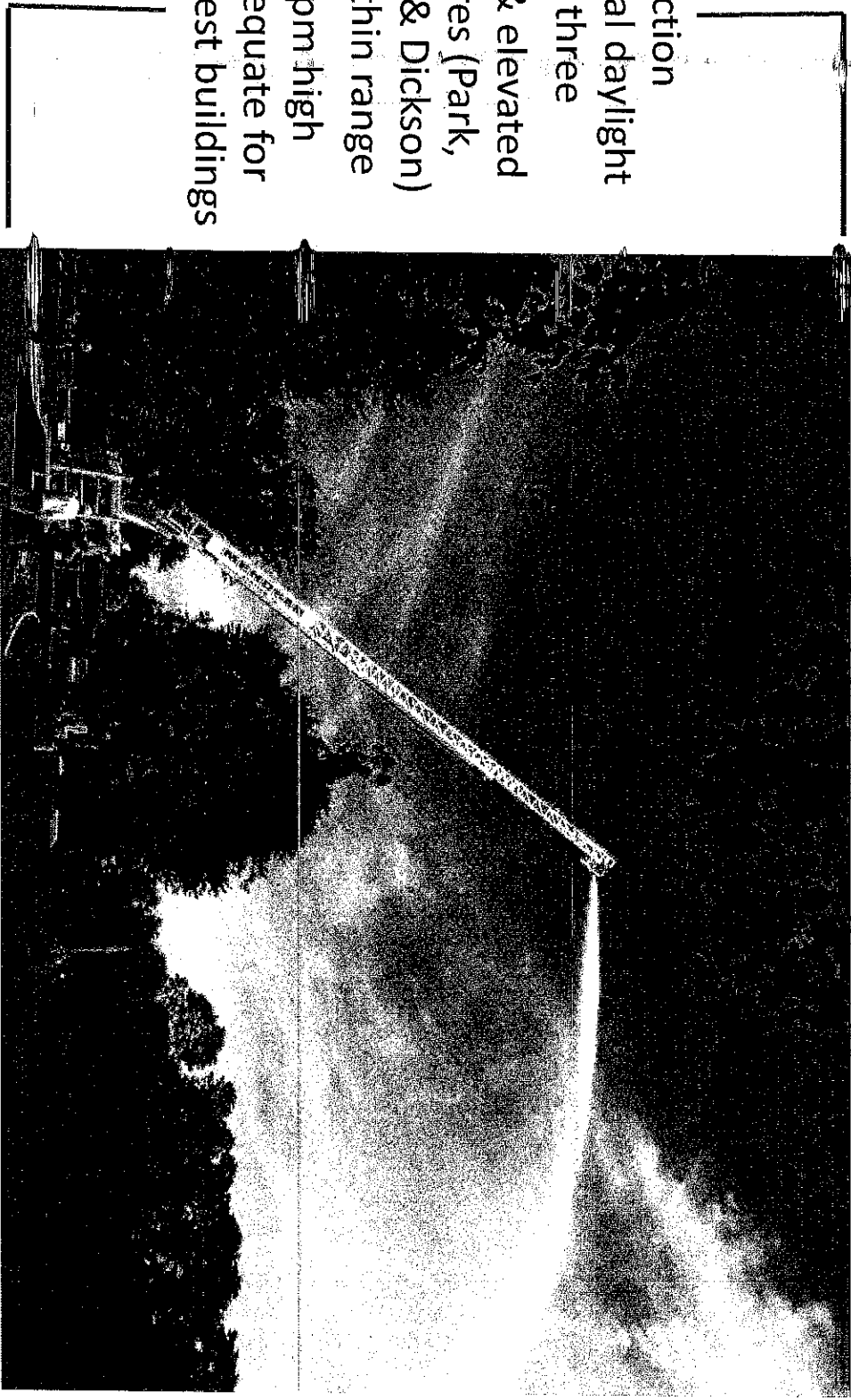


Yellow highlighted streets represent additional coverage that current solution does not

The 1992 E-One Quint: Benefits

75' Extension Ladder & Hose Nozzle Provides Benefits

- ✓ Full function w/typical daylight crew of three
- ✓ All tall & elevated structures (Park, Church & Dickson) now within range
- ✓ 1,000-gpm high flow adequate for our largest buildings



The 1992 E-One Quint: Benefits

Calls where Quint would have led to better outcomes

Location	Type of Fire	Additional Information
Shannopin CC	Vent	
McCurdy Place	Vent – Prevention	2 fire fighters hurt due to lack of ventilation
Walnut Rd 400 Block	Vent – Property Damage	
Devin Lane	Vent – Property Damage	
Dalzell Ave	3 rd floor Vent/Rescue	Short Crew & 35ft ladder used
Perrysville Ave	Vent – Property Damage	Short Crew & 35ft ladder used
Upper Perrysville	Vent – Property Damage	
Lower Monitor Ave	Vent – Property Damage	35ft ladder used
Monitor Ave 100 Block	2 nd Floor Vent – Property Damage	
Virginia & Walnut	2 nd Floor Vent – Property Damage	Rescue - Bellevue Truck had positioning issues
New Brighton	Vent – Property Damage	Kitchen Fire with Small daylight crew
Prospect Ave	Vent – Property Damage	Midnight Rescue of Special needs resident
225 Park Ave	Vent – Property Damage	Recent High Occupancy Basement Fire
Forest Ave 300 Block	Vent – Property Damage	Smoke in 2 nd Floor- Bellevue Truck Too Large
Forest Ave 300 Block	Vent – Property Damage	Living Rm Fire- Bellevue Truck Too Large

1992 E-One Quint: Purchase Details

- Handshake price: \$145K (estimated market value ≈ \$180K+)
- Seller: Mendham, NJ, which is buying new Quint for \$963K+
- Truck has only 20K miles, immaculately maintained, extensively tested annually
- Price includes \$17.2K of additional items (see appendix)
- Fire station needs slightly higher overhead clearance, costs covered by Mendham & BAB VFC funds
- Purchase subject to independent inspection and certification of pump and ladder
- ISO* says purchase could improve Ben Avon's rating and possibly help to lower homeowner insurance premiums

*Insurance Services Office, Inc. of Marlton, NJ, rates community fire-fighting capabilities for America's largest property insurers

The 1992 E-One Quint: Purchase Details

Self-funding by BAB VFC means NO acquisition cost to borough

Source	Amount	Additional Information
PEMA Loan/Bridge Loan *	\$60,000	2% Loan for 10 Years
Shared Ben Avon Savings Account	\$35,000	From Kilbuck Revenue
Existing Fire Company Savings	\$50,000	Contributions to own fund
Total	145,000	Completely paid for by Fire Company

*Vehicle title must be issued before PEMA loan proceeds will be released, requiring a short-term 60-day bridge loan co-signed by borough

The 1992 E-One Quint: Actions Needed

- Approve co-signing short-term \$60K bridge loan
- Align annual maintenance and insurance costs
- Authorize fire company to raise station's overhead clearance at no cost to borough

Thank you for your consideration and support

Appendix

Equipment included with the Quint Purchase

Equipment included	Approximate Value
167' Ground Ladders	\$5,000
6 Hooks (Pike poles)	\$900
Hand Tools (Axes, Bars, Sledge Hammers)	\$1,000
Combination Nozzle at the Tip of the 75' Ladder (Neg. the Straight Nozzle)	N/A
5 Inch Intake Valves (Possibly 2 of those)	\$1,600
200' of 2 inch Attack Hose and 200' of 1 ¾ Attack Hose	N/A
1000' of 5 inch supply hose (Used)	\$3,000
Onboard Generator (Power plant)	\$500
Quarts Scene Lighting System	\$200
Pre-wired Stream Light System with 6 rescue lights	\$1,000
“On Spot” Winter Chains	N/A
David Clark Head Sets	N/A
Federal Q Emergency Siren	\$4,000
Total Estimated	\$17,200

Training & Certification

- Borough will incur no costs for training and certification
- Prior to driving and operating the new truck, members without required certifications must successfully complete training
- Fire company will absorb all training costs; no cost to borough
- County and state agencies will provide much of the training & certification
- Kevin Joa will lead local in-house training
 - BAB VFC lieutenant and training officer
 - Firefighter since 1986 with volunteer, military, and career experience
 - Completed extensive training (46 hours) in aerial ladder truck and truck company operations at Allegheny County Fire Academy and Pennsylvania State Fire Academy