



Centerville Fire Rescue Review Report

August 29, 2022

Presented by:

Matt Mardesen, CPM

Ray Reynolds, CPM

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Review Team Biographies

Matt Mardesen

Matt Mardesen currently serves as a Client Manger for a regional engineering firm and is a sworn police officer for the City of Nevada, Iowa. Matt has previously served as the Chief of Staff for the City of Council Bluffs as well as the Interim Director of Human Resources. Matt also served as the City Administrator for the City of Nevada and the City of Monroe. Matt has over 20 years of experience as a certified peace officer for the State of Iowa. Matt has experience in fiscal management and has conducted analytical studies on city expenditures to ensure that the organization identified opportunities to become more efficient in the services provided to the citizens served.

Mardesen holds a Bachelor of Criminal Justice Administration degree with a minor in Human Resources Management from Simpson College. Matt also earned a Master of Public Administration degree from Drake University, with an emphasis in Executive Leadership. Additionally, Matt is a Certified Public Manager accredited by the National Certified Public Manager's Consortium. In 2019, Matt earned the accreditation of a Credentialed Manager thorough the International City/County Managers Association. Matt is also Nationally Approved Family Law Mediator through the Association for Conflict Resolution.

Ray Reynolds

Ray currently serves as the Director of Fire & EMS and is a sworn police officer for the City of Nevada, Iowa. Ray has a M.A. degree in Organizational Leadership and specializes in conducting complex organizational change. While serving as a Special Agent in Charge, Ray was the state's Law Enforcement Intelligence Network (L.E.I.N) coordinator from 2008-2009. Ray is a Certified Public Manager (CPM). Ray previously served as the 13th State Fire Marshal for Iowa and led several successful state projects geared towards reducing fire fatalities, including implementation of a state-wide smoke alarm installation program.

Ray also works part-time on a metro fire department as a firefighter/critical care paramedic. With over 30 years of police, fire, and EMS experience, Ray has used those experiences to develop public safety departments into the 21st Century where the customer is priority. Conflicts are often the result of making complex change using incorrect steps. Ray seeks to assist organizations to identify, isolate, and move past impasses often created by poorly defined mission statements and goals. Seeing the outcome of a problem is most difficult when a person is operating within the problem.

Executive Summary

The city is fortunate to have the level of experience and dedication the current leadership team provides to the City of Centerville Fire Rescue Department. The discovery phase of the review, however, has revealed some serious behaviors negatively impacting the morale of the department. In addition, there are several suggested actions that the city may consider to improve the organizational efficiencies expected of a 21st century fire department. The following suggestions will be covered in greater detail within the report:

- 1) Invest in personal development and leadership training for the command staff officers and evaluation of the concerns over expressed morale issues.
- 2) Review and revise the fire chief's 24/48 schedule as it is not conducive to his availability for the public or ability to meet his administrative responsibilities without donating substantial off-duty time to the city, which itself presents a compliance risk with federal regulations.
- 3) The fire department would benefit from establishing a clear span of control, clearly defined organization chart, and clear delegation of duties.
- 4) Development of a succession plan and leadership training for future leaders within the Fire Rescue Department.
- 5) Implementation of conflict resolution processes and team building processes to avoid conflicts rising to a point of negativity and drama.
- 6) Consider a leave of absence policy when council members are involved with other city departments as employees or volunteers.
- 7) Development of an internal communication policy focused on communications between council members, city employees, and volunteers to avoid the appearance of task delegation outside the chain of command.

Leadership requires the ability to communicate well, model respect, and convey trust in your staff.

Background

In May of 2022, Centerville City Administrator Jason Fraser contacted Matt Mardesen seeking consulting services for a review of the Centerville Fire Rescue Department. City Administrator Fraser indicated there had been some discussion about implementing a Public Safety Director position but there was hesitancy to act due to the perception of underlying issues within the fire department. City Administrator Fraser was fully committed to investigating and understanding the perceived issues before continuing these departmental conversations. City Administrator Fraser summarized the scope of work to include a review of the current departmental structure, personnel, and, if possible, recommendations related to future capital needs. Given their experience and respective areas of expertise, Matt Mardesen and Ray Reynolds agreed to research the areas identified in the scope of work for the City of Centerville.

Centerville Fire Rescue Background

The Centerville Fire Department's first full-time employees were considered custodians. Chances are this is connected to the 1905 era when horses needed to be tended to at the fire house. (According to the Grinnell College Library). Over the course of time, the three custodian positions transitioned to that of firefighter. The three full-time employees now serve as Fire Chief, Assistant Fire Chief, and Fire Captain, all working a 24/48-hour shift. The department's command officers in the fire chief and assistant chief positions are the department's longest serving employees.

The fire department responds to 1900 EMS calls and 100 fire calls annually. The Centerville Fire Rescue Department recently took on EMS full-time and provides the entire Appanoose County with 911 EMS services. There was a short turn around for the fire department to stand up a licensed EMS program. Having accomplished this in less than a full year, this was an incredible accomplishment, and also a source of stress, for the fire chief. The EMS program has some loose connections to fire department staffing but operate as a standalone unit within the walls of the fire department. The department is mostly a volunteer department with a combination of employees and staff who share time with other rural volunteers or other part-time positions. The EMS employees are covered by IPERS while the fire employees are covered by 411 retirement systems.

Review Methods

On June 28, 2022, Mardesen and Reynolds held in-person interviews with Fire Chief Mike Bogle, Assistant Fire Chief Vern Milburn, Captain Ryan Moore. Police Chief Tom Demry did participate in an interview via phone. After the initial interviews, it was evident that the Centerville Fire Rescue Department membership could be experiencing some of the same issues brought forth in those we interviewed. Mardesen and Reynolds discussed our concerns with City Administrator Fraser and proposed seeking the input from the CFD membership through a voluntary survey. Mardesen and Reynolds prepared an anonymous ten-question survey to collect data about the department. The survey was sent out to all CFD members with twenty-five responses received. Please see the appendix of the report for additional information.

On August 9, 2022, Mardesen and Reynolds held individual interviews with Councilman Ron Creagan, Councilman Don Sherwood, Councilman Darrin Hamilton, and EMS Captain Katie DeVoll. Later that evening Mardesen and Reynolds met with the Centerville Fire Rescue Department at the Bridge Church. The agenda for the departmental meeting was as follows:

Centerville Fire Rescue Department Meeting Agenda
The Bridge Church; 415 Bank Street; Centerville, Iowa
August 9, 2022 at 6:00 PM

- Introductions and Overview of Meeting and Process
- Share the Survey Results with the Entire Department
- Review the Survey Results with the Membership
(Leadership was excused)
- Open Discussion with the Membership
- Closing Remarks

The survey results were categorized into similar responses, to protect the identity of the participants, and presented to the entire department. Following the presentation, leadership was excused to allow the membership an opportunity to openly discuss their concerns, and Mardesen and Reynolds sensed that they were relieved to have been heard.

Discovery and Conclusions

The individual interviews and membership survey revealed several areas of concern. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

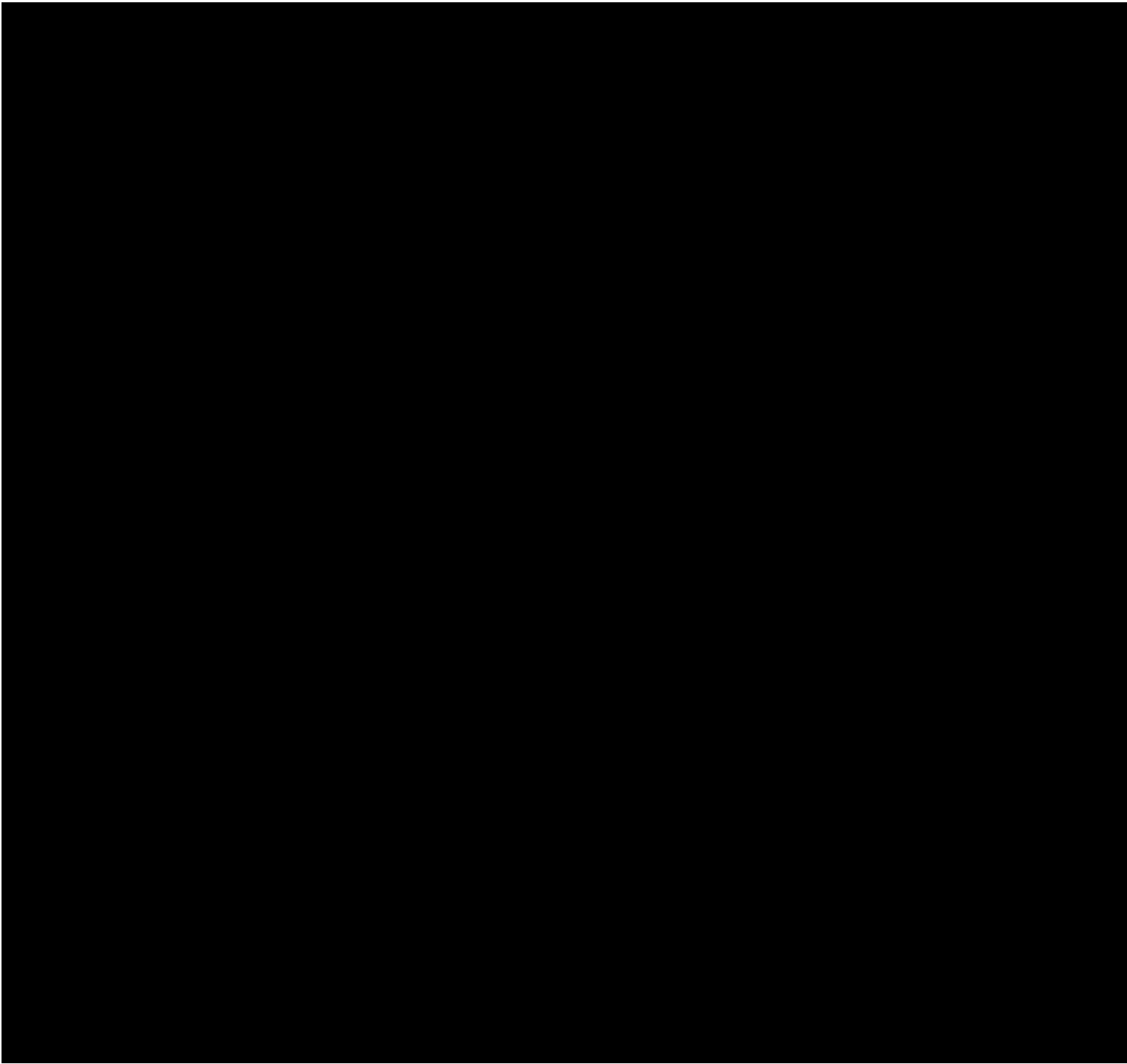
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Personnel

[REDACTED]



Fire Chief Schedule

The fire chief's 24/48 shift is not conducive to his availability for the public without his donating substantial off-duty time to the city. The college project, inspections, daily activities of meeting with the public, and simply running the operations of the department make it vital for the fire chief to be present and available. A 24/48 hour shift minimizes his availability to perform administrative duties, and the fire chief should not be expected or feel obligated to donate his time off just to run the department. The City of Centerville is large enough to warrant an accessible fire chief Monday through Friday. Expecting the fire chief to run calls

on shift and engage in city duties as a department head may have worked in the past, but accessibility to the fire chief is a public expectation. Doing more with less does not always equate to efficiency. [REDACTED]

- A plan to adjust the fire chief's schedule to that of a weekday employee will prove beneficial for the fire chief, the city, the public, and those entities that need an AHJ approval or inspection.

Department heads are expected to be accessible, and 24-hour shift work limits that accessibility.

Frankly, we are not aware of another career department where the fire chief follows a 24/48 schedule. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Because the business of the city and the fire chief occurs during the weekday, daytime hours, scheduling the fire chief for a 40-hour week Monday through Friday would allow him to meet both his public and administrative expectations. [REDACTED]

Organizational Structure

Span of Control

The fire department would benefit from establishing a clear span of control, clearly defined organization chart, and clear delegation of duties. The interview process found command officers were under-utilized and staff did not know who they report to directly. The survey revealed 52% of the department did not know their chain of command within the department. The department does not have a clear organizational chart and there is not a clearly defined list of duties or expectations for ranked officers on the department. Well-disciplined teams work best when there is a clear span of control and clear delineation of chain of command.

- The department should implement an organization chart from the top down to list the organization's command structure. The department should develop a list of responsibilities for each officer and the fire chief should assure those duties are accomplished using his command officers.
- Every member of the department should be assigned to a team using NFPA's recommended practice of 3-7 members for every supervising officer. An employee can effectively supervise 3-5 employees with the optimum number being 5. This development of teams will help add discipline and safety to the fire ground or other emergency. Without a written organizational chart and assigned teams, everyone is in charge.

Succession Plan and Personal Development

The top two command officers in the department are eligible to retire within 18 months, and the department is behind in developing the next fire chief. When asked to identify potential successors for these positions, those interviewed were not able to do so. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] However, as pointed out, fire scenes are 3% of the fire chief's job. The other 97% involves dealing with people. The absence of a leader suggests an outside hire may be a real possibility. Unfortunately, while that may be in the city's best interest, it does not improve morale of those that might be interested in the position.

- The city should consider the development of a succession plan and leadership training plan to invest in the department's future leaders. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The IAFC hosts an annual conference called Fire Rescue International. The nation's best fire service leaders teach Command Officer Leadership Symposium (COLS) courses during FRI. Attending COLS I, II, III would prep any officer for a command position. These courses are two to three days in length.

- Consider enrolling your future leaders as associate members to the IAPFC so they can interact with other fire officers. Assign reading projects and discuss leadership problems among the core of the fire department. The bottom line is that you cannot always be a leader by being friends with the members. Leading is so much more, and you will be investing in the success of the department by investing in the development of your future leaders.

- [REDACTED]

Conflict Resolution and Team Building Process

Interviews led to the discovery of negative comments and/or conversations shared between EMS staff and outside 3rd parties, who are not affiliated with the city. Rumors are bad for morale and bad for business. Also, it is important to note, not every conflict or complaint should rise to the level of a meeting with the fire chief or city administrator. The established grievance processes are being by-passed and employees are taking issues directly to the council and city administrator. Employees are involved in a practice of tattling on each other based on their fire or EMS affiliation.

- When employees are unhappy for whatever reason, there should be a formal system for sharing those grievances through a chain of command. Following established processes are key to addressing problems or starting the disciplinary process. Employees should not automatically jump to a fire chief or city administrator when others in the command structure have not had the opportunity to address the issue.
- Problem solving with emotional intelligence is vital for any modern-day fire department. Training and team building is recommended so employees can have open dialog and be able to discuss problems professionally. The city would benefit from conflict resolution processes and team building processes to avoid conflicts rising to a point of negativity and drama.
- Providing forums, climate surveys, department news articles, kitchen table talks, and suggestion box opportunities opens avenues for communication for all employees. Under no circumstances should mutiny and personal slander be tolerated when discovered. Employees who engage in these activities with 3rd party persons outside the department are not contributing to the health and wellbeing of the department.

City Council and Council Communications

Three city council members are also members of the fire department, with one serving as a volunteer Assistant Chief. [REDACTED]

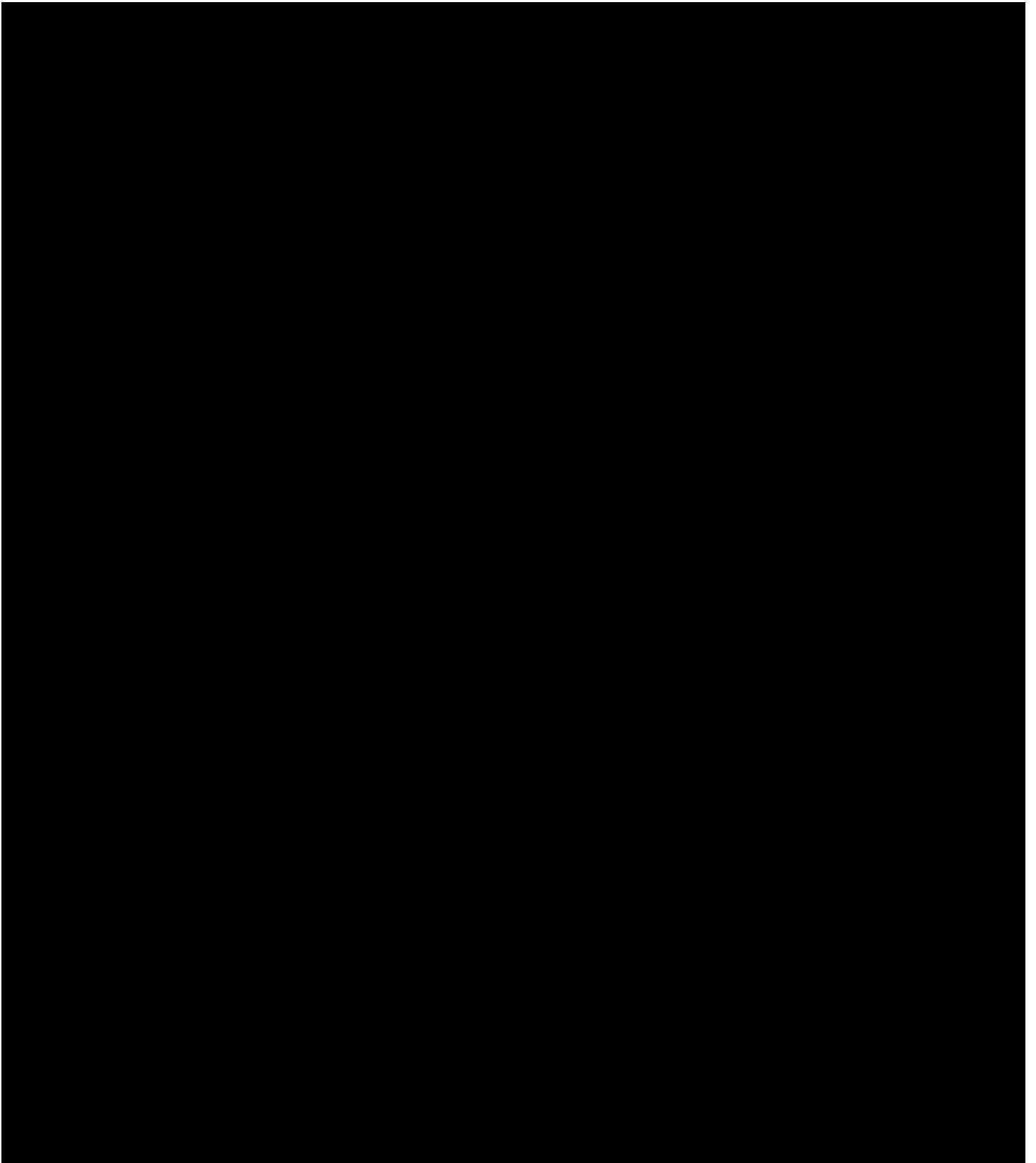
[REDACTED]

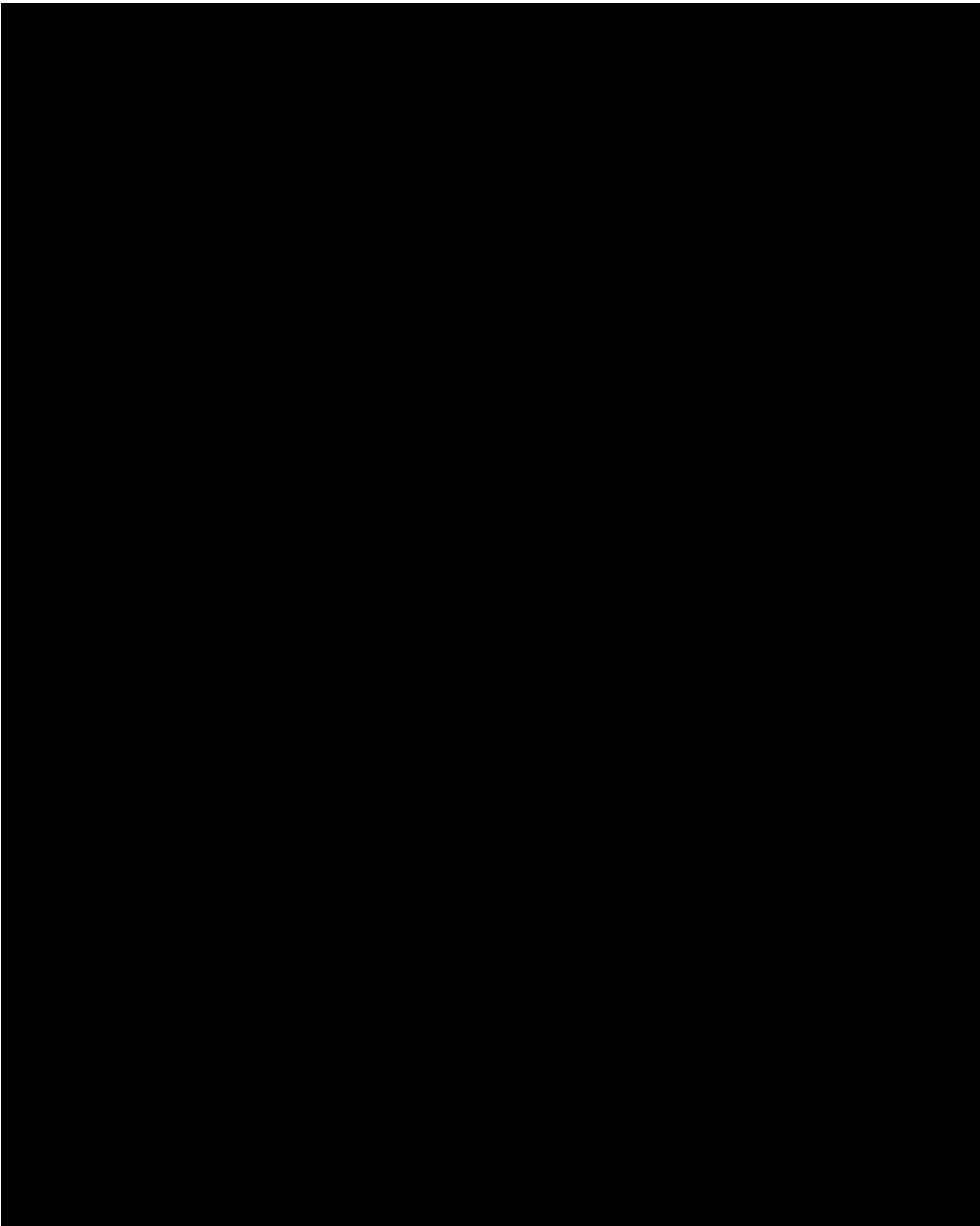
- The city could consider a leave of absence policy for persons serving a city department who are elected to serve on the city council. The appearance of departmental favoritism or holding power and control over a department from the bench is a legitimate concern. Department heads may find themselves in a difficult position as they lead those who oversee their departmental budgets. It could be suggested that council members abstain from votes affecting the department they serve. This currently presents a problem as a majority of council members are on the fire department, thus leaving the council without a quorum for votes involving the fire department. A leave of absence policy might address such an issue.

Another common theme impacting the morale of the fire department were the informal communications between council members and city employees or volunteers. Nothing in our review or recommended actions suggests council members should not have access to those employees who can best answer legitimate questions of city business. However, when two separate channels of communication develop, formal council member with city leader communication and informal council member with city employee communication, there is the risk of a perceived conflict or disregard for the chain of command.

- The city would benefit in developing a flow chart of communication expectations between the city council and city employees. All legitimate concerns should follow a process through the City Administrator. While no one on council intends to delegate tasks through city employees, employees when confronted by council members may feel a conflicted sense of loyalty to council and not their actual chain of command.

Recommendations







Closing

As consultants, this is a difficult assignment. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] We believe that the city wants the best for all Fire Rescue staff and will take necessary steps to continue the long and proud history of service and dedication to the citizens of the City of Centerville and the wider Appanoose County.



Centerville FD

SURVEY RESULTS

Introductions

Matt Mardesen

- Former City Administrator
- Police Officer
- DOT enforcement officer
- Consultant
- Work at Engineering firm

Ray Reynolds

- FF since 1987 (Vol, PPC, PRN, FT)
- CCP (PM since 1998)
- Former SFM for Iowa
- Police officer
- Work PRN Bondurant FD
- Fire Chief last 8 years

Purpose of the visit and survey

- * People closest to an organization do not have the advantage of clear vision.
- * We are a neutral 3rd party hired by your city leadership to assess the climate, sustainability, and succession planning of the fire department.
- *Some techniques involve: interviews, department interviews, climate surveys, one-on-one counselling, written documents, public inquiry, and group meetings.
- *We do not have the authority to hire or fire or make changes within the city.
- *In the end we will identify issues within the department's efficiency and functionality and make recommendations to the City Administrator.
- *Those recommendations can be guidance for future actions.

Schedule of Events

A) Introductions

B) Rules of engagement

C) Current climate of the department

D) What is the purpose of the survey

E) Results of the Survey

F) Member feedback (absent full time officers who were already allowed to provide feedback)

Rules of Engagement

Mutual goal Identify issues and make the department better together.

Line in the sand (we will not cross): At no time will we tarnish the reputation of the Centerville Fire Department or the City.

- 1) Respect- we are professionals and should speak without bringing emotion into the discussion
- 2) You are not required to speak or identify your thoughts beyond the survey results you submitted.
- 3) Keep issues in-house. Loose lips sink ships and destroy morale.
- 4) We are identifying problems in this meeting not leaving our own for dead. There will be opportunities for providing your input after the presentation..
- 5) Leave your ego at the door. One member alone does not make up the department nor speak for all the members.
- 6) If it is said here, respect the opinion. Do not retaliate if you disagree with a position.
- 7) At the end of the night, we will drive to our homes, you live here. Be 100% invested in a positive solution you all can live with.

In order to protect the identity of the members, the city, and the Centerville FD, we do not authorize recording this meeting.

18 U.S.C. 2511

Current climate? Yes or No

Walk on Eggshells

To walk on eggshells means to behave in a very cautious or careful manner to avoid upsetting someone; to be careful what you do or say around someone because they are quite sensitive, easily angered, or offended.



“I’m tired of walking on eggshells around here. Can we please just talk about it?”

www.idioms.online

- * TENSION
- * FEAR
- * AVOIDANCE
- * GIVING UP
- * CLIQUES
- * GOING THROUGH THE MOTIONS

Do these define why you joined the fire department?

Survey #1 Why did you join the Centerville Fire Department.

*Helping others (11)

*Close knit group/family (6)

*Give back to community (5)

*Benefits and shift convenience (3)

*To work EMS (3)

*Always wanted a 911 service (2)

* Gain knowledge/skills

*Want largest and busy department

* Feel like making a difference in community

*Recruited by FD member

* Loved community

#2 What do you like about being a member of the department

*FD is like family/bond/friendship (9)

*Solving people's problems/ helping others (5)

*Leadership provides resources

*Fun

* The rush (honesty award here!)

*Teaches life saving strategies

*Working with members

*Hours and benefits

*Public looks up to us

* **DANGER:** Use to like it but lost interest over current climate/issue/personality specific (4)

#3 Areas for improvement

*Approachability/attitude/personality concerns (14)

*Morale low for how problems are handled (4) *Lack of delegation from above

*Recruitment (3) *Don't punish the whole group for the sins of a few

*Cliques create low morale and high drama (3) *Overstepping when not trained

*Feel stuck in a rut *My personal obligations impact my attendance

*Lack of people showing up *More room and gear

*Perception non-competent people are allowed to slide

*Maturity of the department members/backbiting/condescending after calls/Hippa concerns

***DANGER: Morale is at an all-time low feeling not appreciated or belittled.**

#4 How would you rate your engagement and involvement in the fire department

Lowest 2	Highest 10	Mean 6.44	Median 7
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Score	votes		
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2	1	8	2
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3	3	9	4
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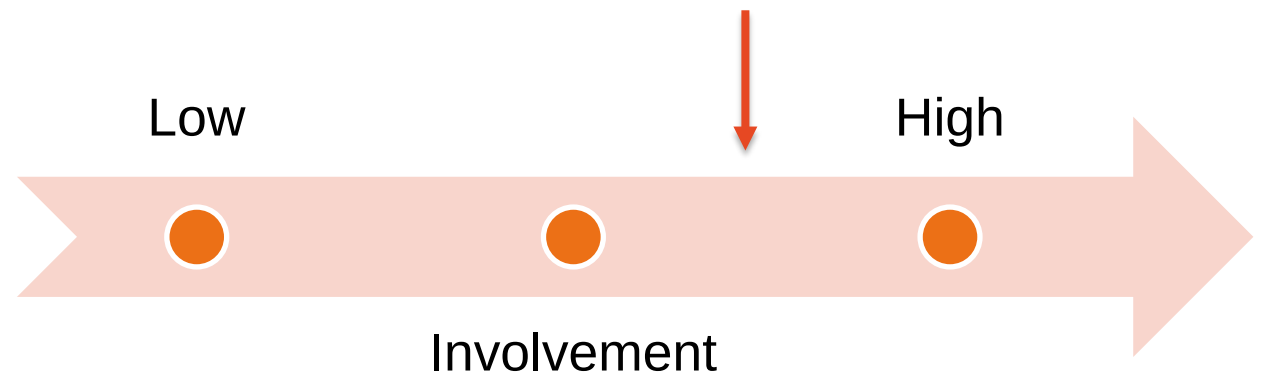
4	3	10	3
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5	2		
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6	3		
---	---	--	--

7	4		
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**Interpretation:* This tells me CFD is committed more than most departments. Many departments use higher numbers of volunteers to address a lower score on involvement.



#5 What ideas do you have to recruit new members to the department?

*Improve environment morale/issues/personality (8)

* More community interaction/involvement/transparency (4)

*Advertise more (3)

*Better pay (2)

*Improve morale of those on first

*Jr. FF program/day in the life program

*Application process streamline/currently not processed

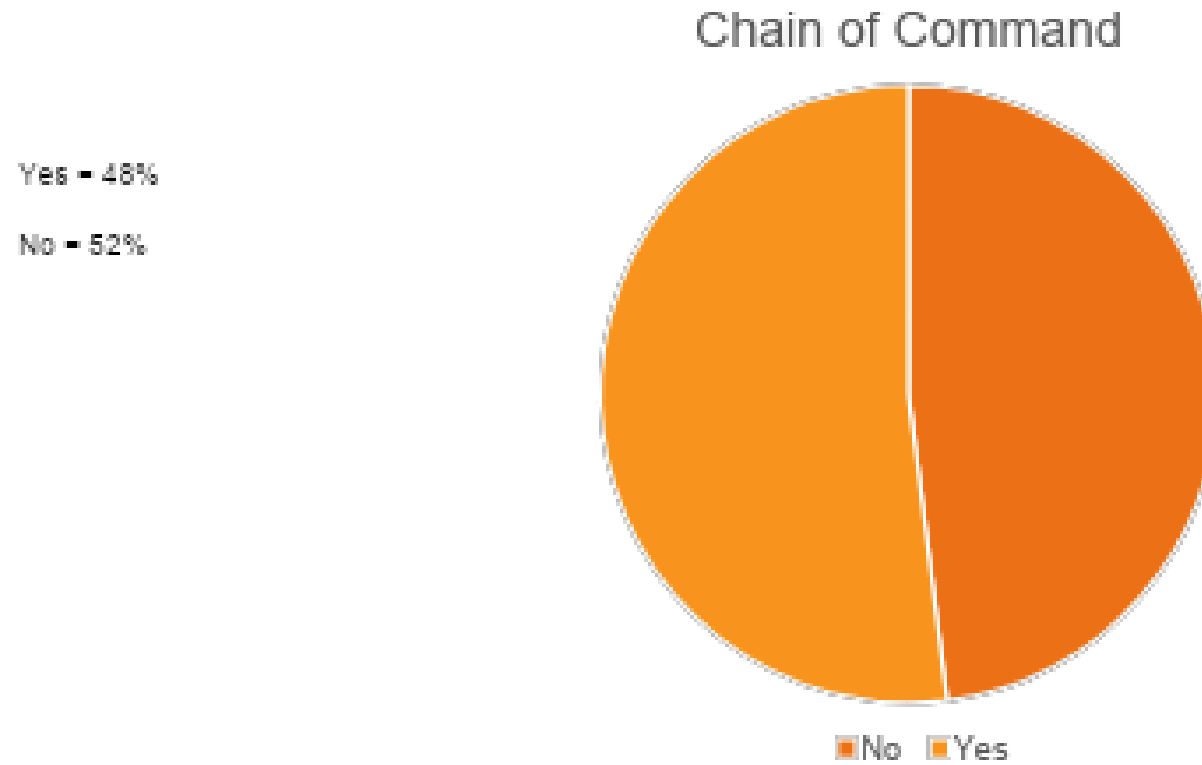
*Treat more like family and not employees

*Sign out front

*Social media

*Get kids involved/school programs/ college

#6 Do you feel there is a clearly defined chain of command within the department?



#7 If you were fire chief for a week, what would you change/implement about the department?

*Communicate with others respectfully/seek feedback/focus on strengths/control emotion (9)

*Delegate and put people in-charge of things (6)

*Be personable and kind (3)

*Public interaction and involvement (2)

*Find a way to get current member engaged/build back trust and respect (2)

*Seek input and opinions (2)

*Employee review system goals/expectations/feedback

*Stop comp time abuse

*Work with newer members to stop gossip, tattling, and in-fighting

#8 How satisfied are you with being a member of the department?

Score 1-10

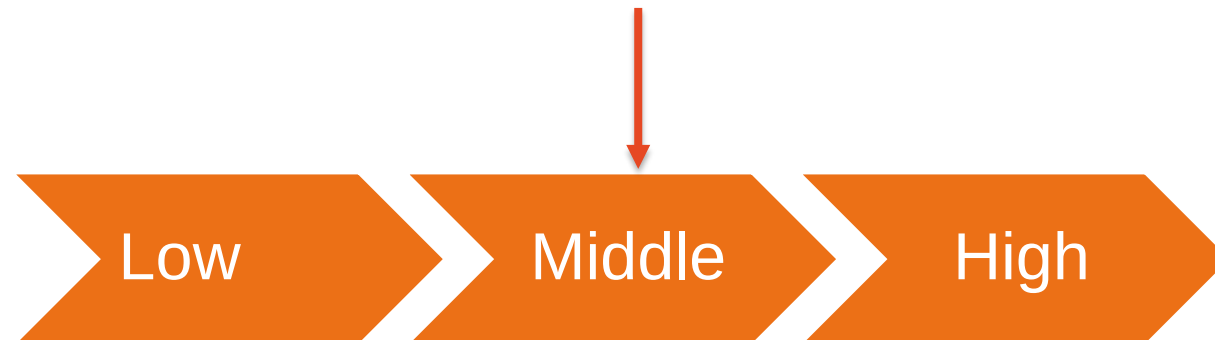
1 = low satisfaction

10 = high satisfaction

Danger: Research shows overwhelmingly high moral in the fire service occupation.
Lower than normal member morale should be concerning.

Mean: 5.67

Median score: 5.5



#9 Are there any obstacles that keep you from doing your job?

*No, not at this time (8)

*Negative attitude in the station/personality specific (4)

*Afraid we will get yelled at for doing something, so we don't (4)

*Officers are not allowed to address issues at a lower rank. Rank is title only meaningless. (2)

*Demeaning comments/drama brought to station

*Nothing will ever change (survey is useless).

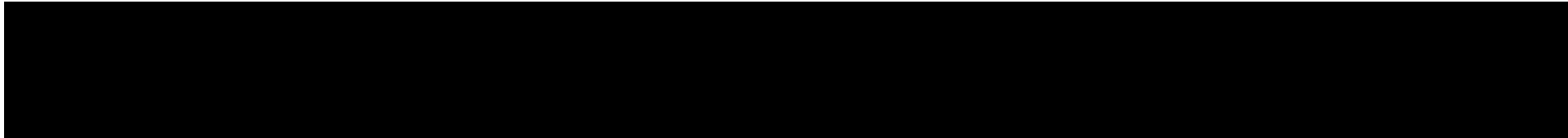
*Leadership needs development to work together.

#10 Any additional comments

- *When I speak of an issue, I do not like the entire fire department finding out- need confidence in voicing concerns
- *There is an atmosphere of distrust, anger, and as if I am a bother when I ask something.
- *Would like to see a hiring committee and a disciplinary committee.
- *Actions speak louder than words. Don't just say we are appreciated. Show it!
- *People underestimate all the items needed to be handled at the chief level.
- *I want the department to be like it used to be.
- *Why can't we talk about issues respectfully without it being a shouting match?
- *I have a lot of pride in being a member. But things need to change from where we are.

Do you want to hear our impressions?

*There is a lot of clique-like, back-biting, and gossip within the department.



*The data suggests you do not have each other's back.

*The communication from the top down and among the members is not effective.

- *Stop second guessing each other on and after calls.
- *Some members thrive on drama. Consider leaving.
- *Toxic behaviors are causing lack of response, lack of attention, and lack or preparing for emergencies.
- *There is a certain level of malaise and poor attitude in the firehouse.
- *There is a lack of professional communication among the organization.

The process of change



Use a scientifically-proven change model- (Kotter's 8-step process)

Thank you!

Matt Mardesen

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Ray Reynolds

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Centerville Fire Rescue Staff Survey Results

Why did you join the Centerville Fire Rescue Department?

25 respondents

Word Cloud

I always wanted to be on a fire department. Centerville is the largest and busiest in the county so I wanted to join this department.

7 days ago

At the time of joining CFD, my main drive was the 24 hour shifts and the benefits

15 days ago

I joined this department because it was active in the community and was a very close-knit group of guys that you could learn from and was proud to serve the community with. I had 10 years' experience with another department, so I already knew the requirements and the kind of involvement the Fire Department takes and was excited to join.

17 days ago

I joined because I always enjoyed helping others. The satisfaction of seeing a smile on someone's face at a troubled time made me happy. After getting on as a volunteer I really began to feel wanted and felt like I was making a difference in the community.

19 days ago

Help the community

19 days ago

Since centerville fire rescue established an ambulance, I always wanted to be apart of the department. The schedule is suitable and flexible. The environment always seemed fun and relaxed. I had always wanted to work on a 911 service.

19 days ago

Because I had friends who were on and asked me to come and see if I would like it

19 days ago

I've worked in Centerville since 2008 and wanted to see the new service succeed.

19 days ago

I joined Centerville Fire because I found love in the community I was serving and I wanted to remain in the area. I felt I would be able to excel for the service and be able to provide the community that I loved.

20 days ago

I joined because I wanted to give back to my community.

20 days ago

I wanted to be a member of the fire department since i was a small kid. Ive made many new friends since i have been on the departmant

20 days ago

To help people

20 days ago

To help people

20 days ago

I wanted to be part of another fire department and gain more EMS knowledge on a busy 911 service.

20 days ago

Because I enjoy helping people in need. We use to be like a big family there is still a handful that act like family.

20 days ago

I enjoy helping out people in time of need. Show community pride and volunteerism.

20 days ago

To help people in the community and for the environment of of the people on the department.

20 days ago

It's hard to find hours like CFR and the staff members are some of the best around.

20 days ago

I believe everyone should give back to the community and service for with a purpose larger than yourself is important. Volunteering to help people at a time of need fills that purpose for me.

20 days ago

help out in the committee

20 days ago

I joined the department bc i wanted to help the community, gain knowledge,skills and to be part a well rounded group of guys

20 days ago

To provide help to the community and save lives
20 days ago

I joined to help serve my community and make a difference
20 days ago

20 days ago

20 days ago

[Load more answers](#)

2

What do you like about being a member of the department?

25 respondents

Word Cloud

I like being apart of the group trying to solve the problem for someone. I enjoy fighting the fires or assisting people on things like car wrecks and medical issues. Trying my best to do what I can to end their bad situation. I also like the critical thinking aspect of it. The thought process that goes into a fire scene and the constant changing of said situation forcing you to reevaluate.

7 days ago

What I like the most about CFD is the feeling of working with family. My main partners are people who I have have not only developed friendships with, but family like bonds.

15 days ago

I used to be excited about this department and would stop in every day.

17 days ago

I used to like everyone working together and feeling like a family.

19 days ago

Working with other members

19 days ago

Being able to be a part of the community and having a fun work environment. Even with the fun work environment, we still get our job done. I also really like that the fire guys go on EMS calls. I feel 10x safer and the help goes along ways.

19 days ago

The rush! Helping people and the bond you have with the other members.

19 days ago

The hours and benefits. Working with staff that strive to be the best they can be.

19 days ago

I love the EMS and Fire Crews. I love the family feeling that we all keep in-between each other even when times are tough.

20 days ago

I like being able to help people in troubled times

20 days ago

this has been my life for 41 years i love the EMS and the firemen we all work together and try to make it better.

Seeing people look up to you when out in the community

20 days ago

Being able to help people

20 days ago

I love learning more about firefighting and emergency medicine, and the people I work with are great to learn from.

20 days ago

I like helping people at there time of need. I use to like the comradery we all had but I feel like that's gone.

20 days ago

Being able to assist the community when in time of need.

20 days ago

I like that the members on the department treat you as family and that they are big in the community

20 days ago

Helping the community

20 days ago

Department has a strong system of training. The officers/leadership provide the support,resources and equipment to do the job safely.

20 days ago

the brother hood

20 days ago

Teaches life saving strategies

20 days ago

The brotherhood that comes with being a member, friendships that have developed because of membership, and again, serving the community and hopefully making a difference

20 days ago

Being able to help save life's.
20 days ago

The brotherhood of fellow firefighters
20 days ago

3

What are the areas that need the most improvement in the department?

25 respondents

Word Cloud

The largest part that needs improvement is management. I feel like I can approach management with issues that may arise, but I also feel that not much gets done after doing so. I feel as if some decisions are made based on poor knowledge of the subject and staff suggestions/ideas get taken into consideration very little. I also feel as if things such as education, scheduling, and general morale is not kept on top of as it should be.

15 days ago

I feel that we could all use some improvement but feel like I am just stuck in a rut. I feel like I'm just putting in my time.

19 days ago

Don't know

19 days ago

The maturity as a whole department. It is a fun environment but at times the maturity is low. After running calls, people will send out snap chats essentially judging you for how you ran a call even when they are at a lower level. If someone doesn't like something that you did, instead of coming to you, emails get sent out. Attitudes as well seem to be an issue or uncalled for comments. Also, there is a lot of inconsistencies. One day you get yelled at for doing something, the next you get yelled at for not doing that exact same thing. Things that need to be handled don't get handled but stuff that doesn't matter are an issue. You'll be told to do something, but later get told not to do that or get in trouble for doing it. Leadership, everyone seems like they are or want to be a leader and always have an opinion when it is not needed. Micromanaging from everyone. Overstepping on calls from personnel that are not EMS certified are also becoming an issue. I will always appreciate the help but do not appreciate being undermined on a call.

19 days ago

The moral because of the way situation are dealt with.

19 days ago

Communication that does not involve fit throwing. Holding individuals accountable for their actions and not punish the whole group for one persons actions.

19 days ago

Leadership.

The moral at our department is at a all time low.

20 days ago

The number of people that show up to calls and do something while they are there

20 days ago

Needing new members

20 days ago

Compassion. On the EMS side I feel sometimes providers are not very compassionate with patients during and after calls, especially psych and behavioral.

People need to be held accountable for their actions whether it be fire or EMS.

on a fire scene during the day.

Morale seems to be low, we need more department events that aren't just trainings. We also need more public relations, going out in the community more and being involved.

I don't know how to fix it but there are clicks within the department that tend to focus on petty small things that just make drama. Not a big problem just a nuisance and tends to be bad for overall morale. People also need to understand we are an employee of the city when at the department and act accordingly. We have a good boss/chief that has a job to do and we should respect that not try to undermine his decisions and vision.

Leadership

Load more answers

4

How would you rate your engagement and involvement in the department?
1 as minimum involvement to 10 as maximum involvement

25 respondents

Min : 2 Max : 10 Mean: 6.44 Median : 7

2	1 votes
3	3 votes
4	3 votes
5	2 votes
6	3 votes
7	4 votes
8	2 votes
9	4 votes
10	3 votes

9 7 days ago	4 15 days ago	4 17 days ago	3 19 days ago	6 19 days ago	7 19 days ago	8 19 days ago	7 19 days ago	8 20 days ago	9 20 days ago	10 20 days ago	9 20 days ago
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5 20 days ago 7 20 days ago 3 20 days ago 6 20 days ago 6 20 days ago 7 20 days ago 4 20 days ago 5 20 days ago 2 20 days ago 10 20 days ago 3 20 days ago

20 days ago 20 days ago

No more answers.

5

What ideas do you have to recruit new members to the department?

25 respondents

Word Cloud

I think there needs to be more interaction with the community. During events such as Pancake Day we should be on the square with an area set up for fire safety and recruitment. This could be done on most all events that happen in town. Also, more interaction on things like Facebook and snapchat. There doesn't seem to be much interaction on things like that. These are just two forms of social media that could be utilized. We could interact with people allowing them to see some of the things we do as well as letting it be known that more assistance is needed. We could also go to the High School and look into an explorer type program and/or with the college as well. We could team with either one or both of these and do firefighter 1 classes or something similar to at least get some training.

7 days ago

To recruit new staff you would have to advertise there is openings. We collectively do ZERO advertising for EMS or volunteer firefighting, and when applications do come in based off staff encouragement to outside people, the applications do not get pushed through and we remain low on staff. It has been difficult to find PRN staff who are willing to cover shifts with the roster we have now.

15 days ago

At this time the with all the tension I would not encourage anyone to come on.

19 days ago

Sign out front

19 days ago

Better pay, and no call.

19 days ago

High school career days. Facebook. Job fairs. Info. Booths at different functions and not have a bad reputation for not getting along.

19 days ago

Host an EMT class at the station. Open house for the public with applications set out for interested people.

19 days ago

I personally believe until there is change in moral we will struggle to obtain and keep members

20 days ago

Try to get kids interested And try to flow through with it And show what it's all about.

20 days ago

None

20 days ago

Be more transparent in the community. Do more community activities, have a truck at a fun event for an hour, for example, or have get togethers with members for fun in public spaces like going out to dinner.

20 days ago

I feel like we should get our members we have involved more before we worry about trying to bring in new members. When an if we got new members then the executive committee should be involved with background checks an so on.

20 days ago

I guess the only thing I can think is to try advertise that the department needs volunteers.

20 days ago

Just being more involved in the community and schools to try and grow interest in younger people. Higher wages and benefits are going to bring current professionals.

20 days ago

Possibly offer an open house. Spend a day with a firefighter/emt/paramedic. Junior firefight program. In the end people have to want to volunteer. This problem is bigger than a centerville problem

20 days ago

There's no question there's a nationwide shortage of volunteers, and stricter training requirements (state/federal, not just CFR) have made it tougher with the time commitment required. For us, I think a recruitment video, segments on Appanoose AM/ads in Appanoose weekly would be a start. Let the members tell their story in their own words. It's certainly not for the faint of heart. We see things that no one should ever see, and carry those with us each day, so it does take a special person to step up and volunteer their time.

20 days ago

Load more answers

6

Do you feel there is a clearly defined chain of command within the department?

25 respondents

Yes	48.0%	12 votes
No	52.0%	13 votes



7

If you were Fire Chief for a week, what would you change/implement about the department?

25 respondents

Word Cloud

I think I would put officers in charge of things to spread out responsibility among all the officers. Something like saying Capt. Hudson is in charge of bunker gear issues. Then have everyone address any issues with their gear and allow him to attempt to resolve issues. Sit down and break down the everyday type tasks and issues similar to this and assign them to other officers. Allow them to be utilized as well as giving members someone specific to take issues to other than having to go to the chief. I would also ask for the training committee to set up three months of training and have a schedule made of said trainings. I would have the assistant chief attend as many of my meetings as possible. If that couldn't be done I would ensure that the Asst. Chief and I had a meeting to go over what was discussed at said meetings. The Asst. Chief should have the same or at least most of the same information available as the Chief. There could be a meeting with all officers even once a month to address any issues that have been presented to them throughout the month. I would also make an attempt to set up a recruiting opportunity following what I stated above.

7 days ago

First I would start by advertising open PRN positions at all times and hire some staff who have already applied. Second I would start encouraging more community involvement and engagement with EMS. I would also delegate more tasks to Assistant chief and hire an EMS captain

15 days ago

Have to start with finding a way to get the current members engaged again first.

17 days ago

I would look at all aspects of the job and allow others to be part of the group. Delegation would be a big part I would like to see. Let others be involved and work basically using span of control.

19 days ago

Idk
19 days ago

handles call and normal schedule for EMS. Instead of having 4 hands in the schedule, it should be mainly one person [REDACTED]. Also being able to delegate task to others.

19 days ago

Not throw fits, pout and throw things across the room. Treat people with respect.

19 days ago

Involve the staff in hiring and recruiting. More one on one communication on job performance (strengths and areas that need improvement). Communicate with less anger and more productive communication.

19 days ago

First I would try to get back the trust and respect from all the fire and EMS Members of the department. Three years ago you would find several members up at the station at any given time of the day. During the week you would find many members down at the Jr. High playing basketball or volleyball. You would see everyone laughing and smiling having a good time. You would see everyone happy during fire calls. During clean up after the calls people would be happy. Our meetings nights were full of members and people who wanting to train. Trucks would be out the door in a matter of minutes on a call and the trucks would all be full. Now you don't see anyone visiting the department, no laughing or smiling. People do not want to attend calls or trainings. This is the first thing I would fix. I would also go to the city council and apologize to them and show my appreciation for all they do for the department. [REDACTED] I would give members responsibilities in which they feel they would be capable of maintaining. I would get with all members and allow them to tell me in what they want to see best happen to our department. I would do community PR and outreach. I would reach out to the community and show our appreciation to them. I would encourage people to be involved with the departments and plan a day involved with the community. Finally I would go to the fellow departments of our community and restore all relationships. I would ensure them of our ONE Team and show our appreciation for them.

20 days ago

I would allow my employees and volunteers to be heard without attitude. I would treat my employees and volunteers with respect and acknowledge them as they are equal to me.

20 days ago

The way the employees are treated. i was a supervisor for the City for 26 years. when i retired they all still remain friends today. i treated them the way i wanted to be treated. not 1 time did i raise my voice to them if there was a problem we discussed it as a group or individual.

20 days ago

Do something to get people more involved.

20 days ago

Delegate more jobs to the next in line people

20 days ago

Meetings should be more organized and follow the state rules for 501c3 status.

20 days ago

I'm not exactly sure what the chiefs duties are [REDACTED] I would make the rules and consequences known be more involved with trainings treat everyone equally. Be approachable have a open door policy. Ask the departments opinion on more things

20 days ago

I would be approachable. Make sure staff/volunteers can approach me at any time with any ideas or concerns. Let the staff/volunteers make more of the day to day operations decisions. Support their action, right or wrong. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I would encourage the staff to make decisions and if was wrong, fix it and learn from it versus the blow up approach going on right now.

20 days ago

I guess I don't know what I would change for that week that would make much of a difference.

20 days ago

I would delegate tasks clearly, set a standard so the department knew what to do and what not to do. It seems people walk around not knowing if they will be in trouble for doing something that they just did last shift and it was fine. Also decisions regarding EMS should not be made without consulting someone in EMS.

20 days ago

Employee review system where the employee sets personel goals for development I.e. training skill development, leadership, process improvement. Give the employee feedback back on performance. X absences in past x months. Opportunities to improve personal behavior attitude etc

20 days ago

i would pull every one together and find out the big problems going on in the fire station and try and figure the best way to fix the problem .

20 days ago

[REDACTED] I would also limit the amount of comp time an employee could bank and make the rest be paid out. I would put a policy in place that states you will not be paid or receive comp time unless you are called or paged to come in

20 days ago

I'd engage with members and the community more often, and provide events to teach people the safety of fires, and seatbelts more often.

20 days ago

Nothing off the top of my head. Being an 'old-dog', I've been around for a while and fully grasp the chain of command, and inner workings of the department. I guess one thing that might help would be to try to work with newer members to try to stop some of the gossip/in-fighting. That does nothing but lower morale for all, and could potentially drive members or potential members away.

20 days ago

Make sure to get 2 sides of the story [REDACTED]

20 days ago

8 How satisfied are you with being a member of the department?
1 as not satisfied and 10 as very satisfied 24 respondents

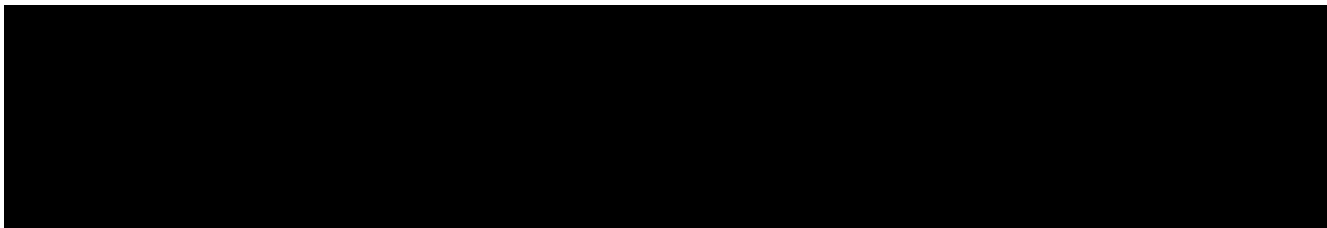
Min : 2 Max : 10 Mean: 5.67 Median : 5.5

2	2 votes											
3	2 votes											
4	5 votes											
5	3 votes											
6	4 votes											
7	2 votes											
8	3 votes											
9	1 votes											
10	2 votes											
6	6	4	7	6	4	9	3	4	5	5	10	
7 days ago	15 days ago	17 days ago	19 days ago	19 days ago	19 days ago	19 days ago	20 days ago	20 days ago	20 days ago	20 days ago	20 days ago	
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20 days ago	20 days ago	20 days ago	20 days ago	20 days ago	20 days ago	20 days ago	20 days ago	20 days ago	20 days ago	20 days ago	20 days ago	

Load more answers

9 Are there any obstacles that keep you from being able to do your job? 23 respondents

Word Cloud



The biggest obstacle is leadership. Some are not knowledgeable in the area they are in charge of. Some are lazy and do not address major issues. There has also been a feeling of animosity among some leadership members from the beginning which I feel makes it hard for them to work together for the best interest of the staff/service.
15 days ago

Not that I don't have the tools to do the job. But the constant fear of being yelled at for something you were told to do doesn't help any.
17 days ago

[redacted]
19 days ago

No	Not at this time	No	[redacted]
19 days ago	19 days ago	19 days ago	

There are certain things that have been done in this department that are "okay" one day and the next day "wrong." No one knows what they can or can't do on each given day. It gives a feeling of uneasiness and worrisome when you are doing something and not knowing if it is going to be right or wrong that day.

20 days ago

No

There is one person that keeps trying to bring drama in to the work place.

20 days ago

My other jobs.

20 days ago

[REDACTED] I feel this survey is like everything else nothing is going to change an nobody is going to be held accountable for it so why fight it all when nothing changes or happens

20 days ago

No I wouldn't say there is

20 days ago

No

20 days ago

I travel almost 80% of the time for work. When I get home it is important for me to spend time with family. This is personal issue not department. Within the department no barrier's.

20 days ago

no

20 days ago

No

20 days ago

Department specific--no. Ability to make meetings/calls--yes, job, kids, ect, most of the obstacles that we face for recruitment of new members.

20 days ago

[Load more answers](#)

10

Any other comments you would like to make about the department?

22 respondents

Word Cloud

I love the fire service which is why I have been doing this for over 20 years.

17 days ago

We used to have a department where we worked together and got the job done. Now its just another day at work. Tired of walking on egg shells

19 days ago

You need to interview the other chiefs in the county

19 days ago

I would like to see a hiring committee and a disciplinary committee.

19 days ago

I want to see the department back as a whole and to a way we use to be. I want to see people excited to come to work or come on calls. Members who are happy and love doing what they are do for the community. I want people in the community to see us as a place anyone would love to work or be. Involvement in the schools and community most importantly.

We are told how much we are appreciated but actions speak much louder than words. When there is an issue in the department and or with

certain people, the issues should be brought to them. When being brought to them, the conversations should remain professional and not feel like you are constantly belittled or a disgrace to the department. When issues with certain members in leadership roles be brought up by several members over a long period of time. these should be taken care of and not tell the staff you will get to it and never do so.

As a long standing member I still love Centerville fire and enjoy helping people in our community. I do believe big changes need to be made before we lose good people.

20 days ago

From what I can see there is one person that keeps trying to cause drama in the work place. If that would stop I think everyone would be happy

20 days ago

I really like being a member of the department on both EMS and fire side. I love learning more about fire operations and firefighting, and gaining more experience with 911.

20 days ago

I feel even if there was it to would get swept under the rug like much other things so what's the point Maybe ask other departments there opinions I'm sure ull be surprised the answers u get.

20 days ago

I feel there is great pride among the staff/volunteers however w

20 days ago

This department has the potential to be one of the best in the state of Iowa, I'm proud to wear the uniform. Just need to get some things worked out.

20 days ago

Cfd is a great department I don't think people appreciate the complexities of budgeting, scheduling, reporting, planning for the future and the stress this creates.

20 days ago

20 days ago

20 days ago

We need more engagement

20 days ago

While I'm not as involved as I used to be, and want to be, it's still an honor to serve with the men and women of CFR, and we should be proud of the department we have and the full time staff that we have on board.

20 days ago

Hope something actually changes and stuff to get done. And don't just keep putting everything under the table and acting like nothing happened/happens

20 days ago

No more answers.