

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who gets to vote in the Special election?

Only registered voters who live in the BLFD coverage area are allowed to vote.

Do all members of the BLFD get to vote?

No. Only parcel owners with structures that can be occupied pay the annual dues, and they must reside in the coverage area and be registered voters in Benton County. This mostly affects landlords who hold their voter registration at their primary address. However, the tenants who are registered voters may vote.

When will the due increase (\$120,000) be available if approved?

Since Benton County Collector collects dues on behalf of the BLFD, it will take approximately 1 year (April 2024) before the additional revenue will be available.

What happened to the Fee (Due) Fairness Plan being proposed by new board members?

Work is still under way to complete a due fairness plan and present options soon to the membership for review, feedback, and eventually a vote. The intent is to have dues based on property values which should be fair to all members. Look for updates soon.

What Fire Coverage do our current dues provide?

The BLFD has coverage every day and 1/3 of the nights. BLFD is staffed with a part time fire chief, one full time FF who works 48/96, 17 part time FF who cover the remaining 2/3's of the day shifts from 8AM - 8PM, and 2 live-in FFs. Most shifts are staffed with 1 qualified FF capable of responding to an incident.

Is 1 FF per shift adequate coverage?

1 qualified FF can respond to calls with the best choice of available equipment and help as the situation dictates. The FF can evaluate and begin to prepare for operations until mutual aid arrives. The FF has discretion to act as the situation dictates.

How does the Live-in Fire fighter program?

A Live-in is a qualified FF who receives living space in BLFD facilities. In return, the Live-in FF provides the following. They are required to work a minimum of 24 hours per month and respond to a minimum of 30% of calls. Live-in's assist with EMS response, fire response, station responsibilities such as maintenance and station upkeep, and training requirements, etc. This program is beneficial for the community by having responders during the day and night readily available.

Do we have Mutual Aid coverage?

BLFD has mutual aid readily available within 4-8 minutes of BLFD being notified. Depending on the acuity of the call placed to 911, local neighboring fire departments will respond accordingly. We currently partner with Piney Point, Rocky Branch, Hwy 94 E, Avoca, Hickory Creek, Pleasure Heights, and Rogers.

Does BLFD use Volunteer Fire Fighters?

We currently do not have any volunteers on our roster. However, we are accepting qualified applications.

How much revenue does the BLFD receive annually?

The annual revenue for the BLFD (not including EMS) is approx. \$375,000. Budgets and P&L are available at every monthly board meeting.

When was the last time BLFD dues were raised and by how much?

They were raised in 2017 from \$75.00 - \$150.00.

Does Fire Coverage include EMS services?

No. EMS service is staffed separately than fire coverage. EMS is staffed with 2 people consisting of one paramedic employed by Mercy and 1 FF/EMT employed by BLFD. Even though some people may be both EMT and FF qualified, they are staffed for the EMS vehicle only.

How is EMS coverage provided in our area?

Currently, there is a contract with Mercy Health to provide EMS service with ambulance and personnel based in the main fire house on Cypress Lane. The contract is paid by Benton County and is set to expire at end of 2023. Work is being done with Benton County and BLFD Board representation to determine future coverage. The dues collected from BLFD members are NOT used for EMS coverage.



YOUR VOTE.YOUR VOICE.

LEARN MORE

