

Goshen Fire and EMS

2018 Levy

1. **Name of levy sponsor and primary Contact.**

Goshen Township, Steve Pegram, Chief

2. **Type of levy and general description of need for levy.**

4.5 Mill Replacement Levy for Fire and Ambulance operations and capital.

The levy proposed is in reality a renewal of an existing 3.5 mill levy approved in 2014 for a period of five years (2015 -2019) with an additional increase of 1 mill.

When the 2014 levy was approved it was to restore staffing back to 2002 levels. From 2007 - 2014 staffing in the Fire and EMS Department was reduced as we faced significant budget cuts, loss of revenue and rising cost of capital expenditures.

The 2014 3.5 mill levy restored staffing that had been lost back to the staffing levels approved by voters in 2002 when they passed a Safety Services Levy.

Without the 3.5 mills current being collected we would layoff ½ of our staff, close a fire station and only provide 1 ambulance for Goshen's growing population, which would have a negative impact not only on Goshen's residents and businesses but also on our mutual aid partners who would be called upon to handle calls for Goshen daily.

The additional 1 mill will allow us to increase the number of paramedics on duty which hasn't been done since 1998 (30-Years), as well as purchase the equipment necessary (cardiac monitor, EMS supplies, power cot, stair chair etc.) to staff a 3rd ambulances for Goshen Township.

Goshen has grown, since Fire and EMS were merged into a public/township agency in 1997. Since then our population has grown 32%, but we still staff the same number of fire engines and ambulances each day.

During the first 20 years of the public Goshen Township Fire and EMS Department only two levies were passed a 2002 Safety Service Levy (60% funds Police) and the 2014 Fire and EMS Levy, which we are proposing to replace.

Prior to that Goshen's last fire levy was in 1980 and the last ambulance levy was in 1986 when both entities were all volunteer.

Currently almost 450 new homes have been approved by Zoning to be built in Goshen in the next 5-years. Several new commercial developments or re-developments are in progress. Bryan Equipment relocation to Goshen, as well as the out lots they plan to develop there. A recent

enrollment study by the Goshen Local School district estimates Goshen's population to increase to over 19,000 residents by 2025 (29%).

To summarize the goal of this levy is to:

1. *Maintain the current level of staffing and service provided since 1997*
2. *Address the 38% growth that has already occurred since 1988*
3. *Address the 29% growth that is currently projected by 2025*

We plan to do this by:

1. *Hiring more full-time and part-time firefighter/paramedics*
2. *Place a third ALS ambulance in service 24/7*
3. *Purchase capitol items for this ambulance*

3. *Number of residents and/or businesses served each of the past 5 yrs. and projected for the next five years.*

2010 census data places Goshen at a population of 15,505. A recent enrollment study undertaken by the Goshen local School District estimates Goshen's population to swell to more than 20,000 by 2025.

Currently Goshen staffs 2 ambulances with Paramedics 24/7 and is the 4th largest community in Clermont County by population. Goshen is the busiest ambulance service in Clermont County when calculated by runs/per medic unit staffed as well as # medics staffed/per population.

Competitively Union Township staffs up to 6 Ambulances, Miami Township 4, Batavia (CJFED) 3, and Pierce Township 3. Stonelick, Bethel, Williamsburg, Monroe and Milford who are all less than half the population of Goshen staff the same number of medic units each day, 2.

Our Fire and EMS department not only protects and provides service to 100% of our residents and businesses, but we also frequently respond to and assist the City of Loveland, Miami Township, Stonelick Township, Wayne Township, Harlan Township and Hamilton Township under our automatic mutual aid agreements.

4. *Total number of employees for each of the past 5 years and projected for the next 5 years.*

Over the past 5 years we worked to return staffing to 2002 levels (14 FT/30-40 PT)

2018: Full-Time = 18 (2 Admin), 20-25 Part-time, 7 Volunteers

2017: Full-time = 13 (2 Admin), 25-30 Part-time, 1 Volunteer

2016: Full-time = 13 (2 Admin), 30-35 Part-time, 3 Volunteers

2015: Full-time = 13 (2 Admin), 35-40 Part-time, 3 Volunteers

2014: Full-time = 10 (1 Admin), 40+ Part-time, 3 Volunteers

When approved the levy will allow us to increase staffing in order to staff a third Ambulance
2020 - 2024: Full-Time = 23 (2 Admin), 25 - 35 Part-time, 5 - 10 Volunteers

5. Total expenses for each of the past 5 years and projected for the next 5 years.

Includes actual expenses, including capitol.

2018: \$2,655,129.30 (Approved Budget)

2017: \$2,777,556.40 (2017 Actual)

2016: \$2,685,352.10 (2016 Actual)

2015: \$2,452,263.40 (2015 Actual/ Includes New Levy Funds)

2014: \$1,668,030.00 (Actual 2014)

2019: \$2,726,876.6 (2019 Proposed/Last year of current Fire and EMS Levy funds)

2020: \$3,475,270.2 (2020 Estimated with 6 Addl FF/Medics and capitol)

2021: \$3,579,528.30 (3% Increase)

2022: \$3,686,914.10 (3% Increase)

2023: \$3,797,521.50 (3% Increase)

2024: \$3,911,447.10 (3% Increase)

6. When was your last levy request? How much was requested, what was the type of levy (new, renewal, replacement, additional) and did it pass/lose? At what rate?

Last levy was a new 3.5 Mill Fire and EMS levy in May 2014.

Levy was/is a 3.5 mill, this levy passed by 58.87% in 2014.

This is the levy we are proposing to replace in 2018 with revenue generated in 2020.

7. Please list specific belt-tightening measures instituted since your last levy request (Staff cuts, elimination/reductions, charging for service etc.).

Goshen has and continues to use part-time and volunteer personnel to conserve personnel cost, since 2015 we have increased the number of community based volunteers and plan to continue in the future.

Goshen has applied for and received over \$1,000,000 in grant funding for items like Radios, SCBA, Cardiac Monitors, Fire Truck, Power Lift Cots, Computers, Extrication tools.

We reduced the size of our fleet from 13 vehicles to 9. We sold and didn't replace a Ladder Truck, Engine and Rescue Truck.

We combined an old brush truck and an old ALS chase car into one new vehicle issued for both Fire Responses as well as EMS responses.

We purchased a used fire engine in 2018 rather than replace a 30 year old engine at a savings of more than \$500,000

We refurbished rather than replaced a fire engine at a cost of \$75,000 vs a new replacement truck at a cost of over \$500,000

From 2009 – 2017 the Fire Chief drove his own personnel vehicle for work and only received free gas, cost savings to the township of more than \$50,000.

There were no pay raises except for step raises for new employees in 2016 and 2017

There will be no pay raises except for step increases for new employees in 2019.

We have reduced our health care cost by increasing our deductible, converting to an HSA plan, as well as by incentivizing employees to opt out of healthcare.

We installed high efficiency lighting and motion sensors on all our interior and exterior lights saving \$1,000 a month on our utility bills.

Partnered with other area fire and EMS departments on training classes, annual testing of ladders and pumps as well as group purchasing of uniforms, turn-out gear and EMS supplies.

Goshen charges for ambulance transports and annual evaluates our rates to ensure we are keeping up with the market. EMS Billing generates a little more than \$400,000 (15% of revenue) a year in user fees, mostly from medical insurance companies, Medicare and Medicaid.

Although not exclusive to the Fire and EMS Department several department heads are dual role, Fire Chief/Township Administrator; Service Director/Zoning Inspector; HR Director/Finance Clerk saving annual on salaries, and especially pension and healthcare benefits.

8. Please provide the current millage and how that translates into dollars per \$100,000 of home value.

The 2014 levy we are replacing generates approximealty \$874,872 a year and costs the owner of a \$100,000 assessed property \$103.11 per year.

9. Proposed millage and what percentage increase and dollars per \$100,000 increase from current millage?

The new levy is estimated to generate \$1,307,322.09 a year

This represents an increase of \$432,450 in revenue or 16% of our total Fire and EMS Revenue.

The cost to the owner of a \$100,000 assessed property will be an additional \$54.39 per \$100,000.