

Falls City considering fire truck purchase

(KLZA)-- The Falls City Council has agreed to have a third party inspect a 2003 ladder truck in Burlington, Vermont for possible purchase.

If the report is favorable, the Council approved Council members Lucas Froeschl and Mitch Merz negotiating a price for the truck which has a list price of \$70-thousand.

Longtime Falls City Volunteer Firefighter Jon McQueen told the Council the current truck, purchased in 1981 has been a valuable tool in fighting fires even though it is not needed on a regular basis. He said even with hydraulic problems during the Mexican restaurant fire in the 1500 block of Stone Street it helped save buildings.

McQueen says unfortunately, it is likely there will be more needs for a ladder truck in the future. He noted that ladder trucks in Auburn and Hiawatha also have issues and may not be able to respond to a fire in Falls City.

McQueen noted the current fire trucks are reaching the end of their expected length of reliable service. The current ladder truck is going on its 40th year of service in Falls City while the second pumper is coming up on 28 years of service. Industry standards suggest replacing trucks every 30 years.

The current ladder truck has not been able to be certified since 2014 with 88 citations issued for various problems including the extension lift cylinder.

In 2018 a demonstrator truck was brought to Falls City, it had a price tag of more than \$900-thousand and would likely be more than a million dollars now.

The truck being considered for purchase is a 2003 Emergency 1 with a 95 foot-ladder. The truck has 73-thousand miles on it, but McQueen feels with anticipated limited usage, it could serve the department for 10 – 15 years. The list price is \$69-thousand and the current ladder is certified.

Once the city receives information from the inspection, they will decide whether to move forward with negotiations to purchase the truck.