



## FIRE DEPARTMENT

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July 20, 2016

Mr. Joe Pieper, Chairman  
Finance Committee  
1011 W. Glenn Drive  
Waukesha, WI 53188

**SUBJECT: DONATION OF 1934 PIRSCH FIRE ENGINE  
FORMERLY OWNED BY THE CITY OF WAUKESHA**

Dear Chairman Pieper:

The Fire Department is seeking approval from the Finance Committee and Common Council to accept the donation of a 1934 Pirsch fire engine, originally purchased by the City of Waukesha. The truck has additional significance to the Department, as it is the fire engine that Firefighters Bernard McCaffery and Frank O'Brien were riding in when they lost their lives while responding to a fire after the vehicle was struck by a train on May 11, 1934.

The vehicle was acquired by the Waukesha Old Car Club 38 years ago. It is fully restored and has been very well maintained by the dedicated members of the Club. Over the past few months, representatives of the Department and the Old Car Club have been discussing transferring the ownership of the vehicle to the City of Waukesha Fire Department, so the vehicle can be preserved and displayed within the community. During the Club's July meeting, a motion was made to donate the vehicle to the City of Waukesha Fire Department. One stipulation of the donation is that if the city ever chooses to sell the vehicle in the future, the Club will retain the right of first refusal to obtain the vehicle back from the city.

It is the Club's desire to donate the engine to the City of Waukesha Fire Department on August 14, 2016, as part of the Club's annual car show at Frame Park. Representatives of the City of Waukesha Fire Department and the Waukesha Old Car Club are currently formulating the language of the donation agreement with the assistance of the Waukesha City Attorney's Office. The donation agreement will be very similar to the language contained in the agreement drawn up when the Department accepted the 1931 Pirsch fire engine earlier this year. The only additional clause we anticipate to be added is one stating the City of Waukesha Fire Department will make every reasonable effort to ensure the engine is available for events held by the Old Car Club, such as their annual car show.

It is very difficult to place a value on the vehicle; however, a rough estimate of the vehicle's value in its current condition is estimated between \$10,000 and \$15,000. The Department has recently spoken with our insurance company representatives and have been advised that accepting the donation will have limited or no impact on our current insurance rates.



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The Common Council and Fire Department recently approved and established the Historic Preservation Fund. The maintenance of this vehicle will be funded using donated funds from this account. No taxpayer or operational monies will be used for the maintenance of this vehicle.

The acceptance of this donation will not impact Fire Department operations or the level of service being provided to the community. The Fire Department has recently established a Historic Preservation Committee and has volunteers who are very excited about the opportunity to work on and preserve this vehicle.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. I will be present the evening of the Finance Committee Meeting to answer any additional questions.

Sincerely,

Steve Howard, Acting Chief

