

Kiowa Fire Protection District

2020 Annual Report



Kiowa Fire Protection District

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Chief's Letter



Most of us will likely view 2020 with anything but fond memories. COVID-19 was an everyday concern. A presidential election like no other. Civil unrest. Yes, 2020 is a year we would all like to put to bed and never revisit again. However, to leave it at that would be myopic. The Kiowa Fire Protection District did some amazing things in 2020 despite all the challenges.

We responded to all requests for service with the same professionalism and dedication that our community expects. We continued with our regional and county meetings on a virtual platform, like nothing the fire service has seen in the past. We stumbled and fell, but we got right back up again. We were challenged to rethink our emergency response procedures. Nearly a third of our responders contracted COVID-19, leaving other members to pick up the slack. We continued to apply and be awarded numerous grants to purchase state of the art fire and medical equipment.

So, we do not need to look back on 2020 as a year of depressing news, pandemics and uncertainty. We can pride ourselves in knowing that the Kiowa Fire Protection District is strong — stronger than ever before. We will continue to serve our communities with commitment, dedication, passion and pride. We will overcome anything. We will refuse to allow outside forces deter us from our mission to protect the lives and property of the citizens of our District.

As the Fire Chief, I am proud and honored to have members that continually demonstrate what it means to be servants to the community, and show compassion to those who depend on our proficiencies in times of need.

While things may look a little different in the future, as we continue to adapt to an ever-changing situation, I have the utmost confidence in our firefighters, paramedics and EMT's to continue serving all of you professionally and responsibly. Remember, we are stronger together.

With Respect,

Gerry Lamansky



History



The Kiowa Fire Protection District covers a 324 square mile area of north central Elbert County and is comprised of approximately 95% undeveloped land, 4% residential properties, and 1% commercial properties. The district runs to the county line at County Road 194 on the North. The Eastern boundary is bordered by County Road 125, the Southern boundary is County Road 94 and the Western boundary is County Road 25.

The Kiowa Fire Protection District has a population of approximately 2,500 permanent residents with about two thirds of the population commuting out of the county for work. The district is mainly comprised of rural agricultural lands with low density mixed value housing on lots ranging from three acres up to 35 acres. While the fire district is primarily rural, it also encompasses a small downtown area of about a half of a square mile which includes single and multi-story commercial structures, small residential structures, a mobile home park, the Elbert County Justice Center, the Elbert County Administrative Building and the Elbert County Fairgrounds. It is anticipated that Elbert County will experience an annual growth rate of 3.63% or an overall growth rate of 191.1% from 2000-2030. This is expected to exceed the growth rate of neighboring Douglas County

The Fire District is covered by two fire stations. Station 221 is located at 403 County Road 45 in downtown Kiowa and Station 222 is located off of County Road 53 Road 53 approximately 1.5 miles North of County Road 166. Additionally the Fire District maintains an Auxiliary structure called the Annex adjacent to Hwy 86 immediately North East of Station 221, currently being transformed into a Training Facility.

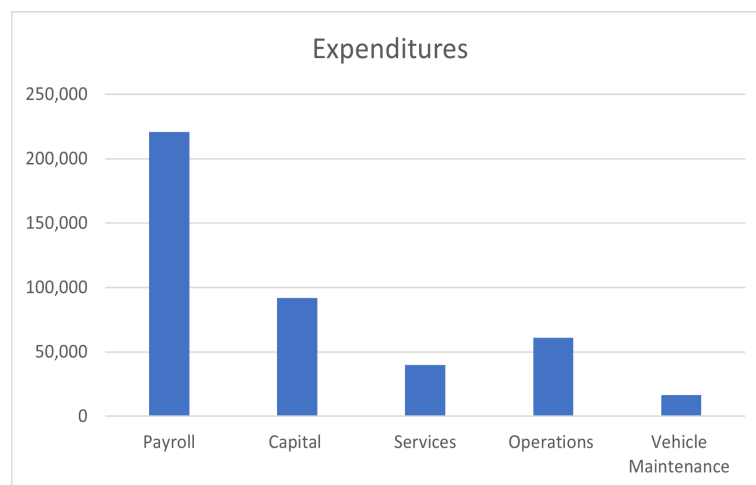


Budget Message

In addition to regular fire suppression, EMS, and Fire Code enforcement services, additional activities included ongoing yearly upkeep of firefighting equipment, communications and medical equipment and continuing education programs for paid and volunteer staff. The Kiowa Fire Protection District has a full time Fire Chief and Deputy Chief, a full-time EMT/ Lieutenant, 5 part-time paramedics, and a part-time Administrative/Finance Officer. The District is also served by approximately 25 dedicated volunteer firefighters and EMT's and continues to recruit additional volunteers to satisfy the needs of the District. The volunteers have an integrated shift work schedule to help provide a faster response to the community. In addition to paid and volunteer staff, the District has automatic and mutual aid agreements in place with surrounding agencies. All of these systems are the backbone of public safety services provided to the residents of the District.

The Kiowa Fire Protection District saw an increase in assessed valuation from 2019 to 2020 by \$7,226,131 which equates to \$62,788 in property tax revenue. The Kiowa Fire Protection District's mill levy remains at 8.689 mills where it has remained since the District was formed in 1983. For a number of reasons, the cost to provide nationally recognized public safety services has increased faster than taxes our community pays.

Revenue is an issue the District will have to continue addressing with strategic planning and management practices to enhance our efficiency and help our District meet today's priorities and tomorrow's challenges. Our transparency notice and the 2019 and 2020 budgets can be viewed at www.kiowafire.org.





Grants



Grants are a great way for our department to acquire additional funding for equipment and services that exceed our department's operational budget. Grants can help pay for safety equipment, new fire apparatus, EMS equipment or provide funding for additional staff. Securing proper funding allows us to provide a safe work environment for our firefighters and helps ensure public health and safety.

Accomplishing these goals at a time when it is imperative to capitalize on every expenditure and opportunity is challenging. What most people don't understand is the time and energy that is required to search and successfully write the grants, then in turn complete the process if the grant is awarded. Kiowa Fire is extremely proud of our grant seeking efforts and those that are awarded.

2020 GRANT AWARDS

- An \$1154.00 grant from FM Global Insurance to purchase new desktop computers for Station #1.
- A grant through Firehouse Subs Corporation in the amount of \$24,384.65 to purchase a new cascade air compressor system to fill firefighting self contained breathing bottles.
- \$4696.82 grant from the Volunteer Firefighters Assistance Grant. This was used to purchase fire hose to replace outdated hose.
- A \$2000.00 grant from the Wal-Mart Foundation to purchase structural Personal Protection Gear in the form of firefighting gloves and protective hoods.
- A \$5000.00 grant from the El Pomar Foundation to purchase wildland personal protective gear in the form of shirts, pants and leather gloves.
- A \$4,992.00 grant from Mountain View Electric to purchase 2 sets of structural firefighting personal protective gear in the form of coats, pants, and suspenders.
- A \$7985.75 grant from the Firefighter Safety and Disease Prevention Grant. This allowed us to purchase an extractor to wash and remove carcinogens from bunker and wildland gear.
- A \$17,563.43 grant through the Corona Virus Relief Fund which assisted in purchasing an abundance of Personal Protective Equipment, 4 ruggedized laptops, an ultraviolet sanitizer for equipment and 3 air purifiers for Station #1.



Operations

Our departments 2020 Operating budget was \$826,701. Revenue budgeted for ambulance user fees was \$65,000. Our apparatus include 2 Advanced Life Support equipped ambulances, 3 structural engines, 3 brush trucks, 1 water tender, 2 support vehicles, 2 command vehicles, 2 snow mobiles, and a Snowcat.

Highlights include:

- Lt. Garza completed his State Fire Officer I certification. All full time fire personnel now have Fire Officer State Certification.
- COVID Pandemic resulted in a change in community interactions and an increased awareness in personal protection equipment for our responders. One third of our department contracted COVID which resulted in a temporary staffing shortage.
- All garage door openers at Station #1 were replaced at a cost of \$5160.00.
- All department radios were replaced from Tait to Kenwood through assistance from the Elbert County Communications Authority.
- Annual hydrant testing was performed.
- All 73 businesses within the Fire District had annual fire inspections performed.
- All department fire hose underwent annual testing.
- The Volunteer Firefighters have developed a “Mechanics Division” which assists the part-time mechanic in maintaining the District’s vehicles.
- The District held a Firefighter 1 Academy. This 16 week academy prepared four recruits to take their State Firefighter I and Hazardous Materials exams. Upon successful completion , 24 of our 25 volunteers will have their Firefighter I or higher.
- The District formed a Wildland Deployment Team. The team, made up of Type 1 and Type 2 Firefighters, EMT’s, Paramedics, Sawyers, and Engine Bosses spent 59 days on the Grizzly Creek and Cameron Peak fires, providing fire suppression, mitigation work, and medical standby. The efforts made by these firefighters provided an additional \$53,224.00 in revenue to the District.
- The District purchased a new 2020 Ford Expedition Command Vehicle for the Deputy Chief. This replaces a 2007 Ford Expedition that had nearly 200k miles.
- The Administrative Office received a much needed makeover at a cost of less than \$200.00. All work was performed by District employees.
- The volunteer firefighters volunteered 19,850 hours of shift work in 2020. This equates to 54.3 hours a day and a minimal dollar value of \$297,750.00 to the residents of our District.



Responses

In 2020 The Kiowa Fire District ran 406 calls for service, down one call from 2019's call volume of 407 calls. The average response time was 8.58 minutes. For a rural agency that is 97% volunteer, the 8.58 average response time is something we are extremely proud of.

In 2020 we responded to...

7 Structure Fires

2 Car Fires

18 Wildland Fires

206 EMS calls resulting in
164 ambulance transports

12 Motor Vehicle Accidents

19 Police Assists

22 Fire Alarms

39 Citizen's Assists

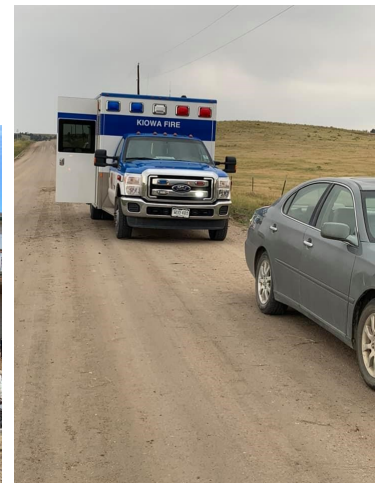
1 Animal Rescue

22 Lockouts

58 Other

Mutual Aid Given: 33

Mutual Aid Received: 38





Training

Our firefighters performed 2,400 man-hours of training in 2020. Trainings include both fire and medical aspects, which include search drills, hose management, vehicle fires, foam evolutions, wildland response, water supply, fire streams, live fire evolutions, hazmat, rope rescue, Basic Life Support, and Advanced Life Support skills. At this time 90% of our staff hold a Firefighter I, Hazardous Operations, EMT, or greater certification.

- Members attended two live-fire trainings at Aurora and Sable Altura.
- A Firefighter 1 Fire Academy was held, with 4 members obtaining their State Firefighter I certifications. This brings the total of 24/25 of our active volunteers having their Firefighter I or higher.
- 4 members successfully completed their EMT Basic course at Rattlesnake Fire. This brings a record total of 21 EMS providers to the agency.
- This year 100% of the active volunteers have obtained their basic wildland certifications.





Community Events

2020 brought an influx of challenges to the Community amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. With safety concerns we were forced to cancel many of our annual community events. This didn't stop the firefighters from working with our community. In 2020 our firefighters...

- Participated in multiple Birthday drive-by parades.
- Performed EMS standby at the Kiowa High School football games.
- Participated in a the Town of Kiowa's Fair parade.
- Conducted two fire alarm drills at the Kiowa Schools.
- Made multiple appearances to the Kiowa Elementary School to talk about fire safety with the students.
- Participated in the Town's Parade of Lights.
- In December we held a "Santa Ride-Along" to hand out treats to the children.





Training Center

In January 2020, the Kiowa Fire Protection District Volunteer Firefighter's Association received approximately \$8500.00 from a memorial fund on behalf of Colton Mason, one of our firefighters who passed away January 4, 2020. His family had requested that the volunteer firefighters earmark the fund for training.

It was determined that we would expand our already existing training facility located at 731 Comanche St, which is at the east end of the Town of Kiowa. This training prop will be the only one of its kind in the County and will be used by all County Fire agencies. Currently agencies must go to Aurora or Parker to use similar facilities. The facility will also be available to local law enforcement agencies for training purposes.

The training ground will consist of 4 Conx boxes ranging from 10' to 40' in length and 9' in height. They will be arranged in such a manner as to depict a one-story residence with a walkout basement. The structure will be certified by the state for training compliance.

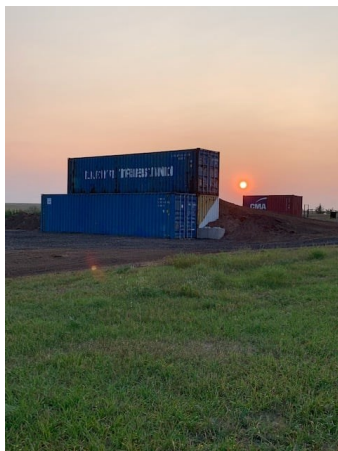
Windows and doors will be cut from the existing walls. The entire structure will be professionally painted grey in color. In addition, there will be a separate 20' conx box, also painted grey, which will act a storage container for all of the Fire Districts smaller training props and training gear.

Current training props are a designated forcible entry site, a wild land fire training area and a designated auto extrication pad. Future fire training props will be a 500 gallon propane tank and a vehicle fire site.

An all-weather surface of recycled asphalt will be placed on the west end of the burn prop for fire vehicle access.

In addition to the Memorial fund many community members rallied behind the project and have donated labor, supplies and expertise

Development of the project started in May 2020 and total completion is expected by the Spring of 2021.





2020 Wildland Season

The 2020 Wildfire season exploded in Colorado igniting three of the largest wildfires in Colorado history (Cameron Peak, East Troublesome, and Pine Gulch). This same year was the pilot season for the Kiowa Fire District Wildland Deployment Program. This team is made up of firefighter's specially trained to operate on large wildfires.

The Deployment team is made up of 8 members including Type 1 Firefighters, Type 2 Firefighters, EMTs, Paramedics, Sawyers (specialized chain saw operators), Firing Bosses, Engine Bosses, a deployable Ambulance, and a deployable Type 6 Brush Truck. The Wildland Team spent a total of 59 days on the Cameron Peak Fire with crews rotating out every two weeks. In the 59 days, the team members fulfilled a variety of roles including, fire suppression, mitigation work, structure protection, emergency medical response and medical standby. While they provided much needed aid in a variety of roles on these wildfires, they also proved to be a valuable revenue source for the District bringing in just over \$53,224 of unanticipated revenue.

The District intends to expand on the program in the years to come.





Personnel



Chris Albers-FF/EMT

Trevor Beutner-FF

Connor Burke- Paramedic/Lt.

Alex Burton-FF/EMT

Brandon Christensen-FF/AEMT

Steve Dillenbeck-FF/Paramedic

Ben Felts-FF/EMT

Max Fessler-FF

Jason Fisher-FF/Paramedic

Robert Fuller-FF/Paramedic

Austin Garza-EMT/Lt.

Aaron Harris-FF/Paramedic

Kory Knill-FF/EMT

Ethan Lamansky-FF

Gerry Lamansky-Chief/Paramedic

Aaron Lutter-FF/EMT

Mariah Majka-FF/EMT

Erik Moller -FF/Paramedic

Sidney Morrison-FF/EMT

Corey Nyholm-FF/EMT

Don Ogborn-Deputy Chief/Paramedic

Jenn Ogborn-EMT

Annie Petersen-FF/EMT

Chris Tatreau-FF

Tabitha Tatreau-EMT

Emma Taylor-FF

Gage Valdez -FF



Thank you's

The fire department appreciated all the warm messages,
and meals from too many to list.

"...I know the war against the Cameron Peak Fire is still being waged. I know that, right this very moment, battles are being fought with a primal foe. I know that homes were lost and that homes, even mine, might still be lost before the fire is truly extinguished. Thank you" -John Grose

"Outstanding! Thank you for all your hard work and quick attack. We all know resources are strained and limited right now and this quick containment and mobilization of resources knocked that fire out. Keep it up EC agencies "

"Thank you all for taking care of this fire, which is very close to our home, among so many others along CR 166!"

"Elbert County firefighters, you are the BEST!
Thank you for keeping all of us safe! "



The District's goals and purposes are to provide fire prevention, fire suppression, hazardous material response, rescue, disaster preparedness, ambulance and emergency medical services to it's citizens, property, and persons conducting business in or traveling through the District and areas outside the District, through the intergovernmental agreement, to the extent allowed by applicable law, including budgetary constraints.

By providing the foregoing services, the District will help preserve the human life and prevent human injury, suffering, or discomfort and the destruction of property from fire, medical crisis, hazardous incidents, storm, flood, or other natural or man-made disasters.



Apparatus



2018 Ford Expedition - Chief 220



2020 Ford Expedition—Chief 221



2008 Ford F-250 - Support 221



2008 Ford F-550 4x4 Brush Truck
400 Gallon water tank~ CAFS system



2008 Ford F-550 4x4 Brush Truck
400 Gallon water tank~ CAFS system



2015 Ford F-550 4x4 400 Gallon
Type 6 Brush Truck



2016 4x4 Ford F-350 ALS Ambulance



2012 4x4 Ford F-350 ALS Ambulance



2002 Sterling 3400 gallon water tender



2000 American LaFrance 800 Gallon
Water Tank/ 1500 GPM pump



2008 Pierce Velocity 750 gallon
water tank / 2000 GPM pump



1989 Beck 1000 gallon water tank
1500 GPM pump



2007 Ford Expedition— Support 222



Twin 550 Artic Cats— Snow Rescue