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November 14, 2016
Blenheim-Gilboa Pumped Storage Power Project
1378 NY-30
P-2685-26
North Blenheim, NY 12131
Subject: Fire/Emergency Medical Service Safety (Rebuttal)

Social-Economic Completed Study Rebuttal

During the social-economic study review completed by third party failed to identify Fire/EMS study completed at the NYPA BG plant in 2014. The study that was conducted did identify deficiencies such as ensuring appropriate resources were available to handle any situation at the BG plant such as a 100ft ladder truck. Specialized teams were trained to a level to handle any situation from incidents at the BG plant such as technical rescue, swift water rescue, ice water rescue, low and high angle rope rescue, and confined space rescue. Due to below national fire and EMS budgets which were also addressed in this study Blenheim-Gilboa Pump Storage Power Project knows help is much needed to have a successful outcome for any incidents that may arise at the BG Plant. Also, the Social-Economic study did discuss donations over the last 10 years or so and newly established contracts with mutual aid departments but however, failed to address (CPI) customer price index on inflation for this service and no increase above and beyond of said donation for service for the 50 year relicense to operate.

None of the following was even mentioned in any study:

Public Safety/Fire and EMS/Our Dedicated Volunteers

As the Villages, Towns, Fire Districts Fire and EMS departments of Schoharie County prepare for their future; most things are easily pre-planned and prepared for. One unknown factor is the number of volunteers diminishing from these most professional departments. Recruitment programs are financed from F.A.S.N.Y. (Firemen's Associate of State of NY), for the departments advertising cost. However, retention programs such as Low-SAPP and retirement packages are way out of financial range for most departments to keep talented trained personnel from leaving these organizations. These programs are essential for retaining personnel, the departments ensure it and it enables them to enforce mandatory annual training requirements.

Overall, starting retention programs among the county and maintaining it for the 50 years is essential for each individual devoting their time to volunteer but also having saved tax payers millions of dollars over a 50 year period. We would like NYPA to take a hard look at helping in this field and setting examples to be a key in holding on to our great loyal volunteer base personnel.

Public Safety Buildings/ Fire EMS Apparatus, Equipment, and Training Building/renovating public safety building is essential to lowering I.S.O. ratings and maintaining a low fire protection tax. Many public safety fire/emergency medical service buildings have expired over time and do not have that financial backing to build new. To those departments who have recently replaced existing buildings, can't keep up

with their operating equipment cost. The departments have to sacrifice one thing for another as in paying for their new building and holding off for 25-30 years for replacement of equipment. In the public safety field we can't continue to do this due to the entire standards placed on our field. Fire and emergency medical service (EMS) departments must always be 100% compliant with NFPA, OSHA, and PESH.

Over the last 10 years fire and ems apparatus has skyrocketed so fast that most fire departments especially in Schoharie County have not had the time to keep up with the demanding cost due to not being allowed to go over 2.3% cap for raising fire tax on annual basis. A standard fire engine and EMS apparatus has to meet standards set by NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) before that new apparatus leaves the manufacturer. Just to meet the standards for these manufactures the cost now varies \$120k - \$150k which drives the overall cost of a standard fire engine to \$620k-\$750k. A standard ambulance now can range from \$220k-\$300k.

With not only apparatus cost skyrocketing, fire and EMS equipment cost for example simple Scott Air Pack over the last 10 years has risen from \$2300.00 to over \$4500.00. Turnout gear in which a NFPA standard reads all interior firefighter must have new turnout gear in place no longer than 10 years. Cost of turnout gear for just a coat and pants is over \$5000.00. Still needed would be a helmet, gloves, nomex hood, and boots in which is recommended these items should be replaced annually. Personal DRD/belay devices can drive the cost up another 1k. Most fire departments in Schoharie County still don't have a thermal imaging camera that generally cost about 8k. An EMS standardize sketcher is well over 5k. AED have stayed around the 1500k mark. Thumper machines range about 10k. These astronomical rates continue to go up on an annual basis with no ceiling caps in which most communities can't keep up.

Training cost for EMS takes a toll on departments such as an EMT has to pay over \$1500.00 and the cost goes up after individual moves on to paramedic or higher. Fire departments are in search of funding for specialized training and equipment which is not covered by the state. Such as advance swift water, confine space rescue and all technical rescues course.

FIRE/EMS Communications

One essential part of operations for fire/EMS is that they must have strong clear communication system. One thing we have learned during the last several disasters we had in Schoharie County is that we don't have adequate communications system. Also, Water System (Dry Hydrants) to help lower all I.S.O. Ratings and technical rescue training.

Overall New York Power Authority can not only help them-selves but help their local communities and take stand as a great neighbor by helping reduce operating cost of public safety departments for next 50 years. We know of their small donations and are thankful.

Document Content(s)

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