



# WESTERN LAKES FIRE DISTRICT REFERENDUM

## VOTE TUESDAY, AUGUST 9TH, 2022

Western Lakes Fire District (WLFD) has a critical need to increase staffing levels and recruit and retain staff by increasing wages to bring fire and EMS capabilities in line with national standards. On August 9, 2022, voters will be asked whether or not they support an increase in property tax levy to fund critical fire district needs.

### WHY DO WE NEED A REFERENDUM NOW?



With calls for service up 74% and local paid-on-call staffing down 69%, WLFD is challenged with increased response times that put residents, and their property, at risk.



Every year, WLFD loses an average of 40 part-time staff members as they obtain full-time employment or take higher-paying jobs, including with other fire departments. The majority of WLFD's part-time staff are paid just \$14 an hour.



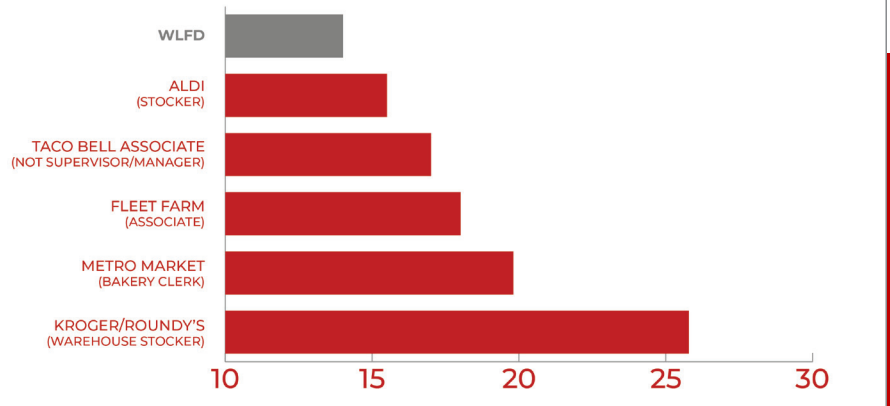
Because of state-imposed levy limits, municipalities within the District must receive approval from voters through a referendum to authorize an increase to the tax levy to fund the services.

### THE MAJORITY OF WLFD FIREFIGHTERS MAKE LESS THAN LOCAL CONVENIENCE STORE WORKERS

To meet the growing needs of the community, WLFD requires funding to increase wages to avoid staff departures, be competitive in the market and enhance staff recruitment and retention.

The majority of WLFD's part-time firefighter and EMS staff are paid **\$14 an hour**. For comparison, a part-time hourly salary at local convenience stores range from **\$15-\$20 an hour**.

#### COMPARISON OF AREA PART-TIME HOURLY WAGES



**Learn more and make an informed decision.**

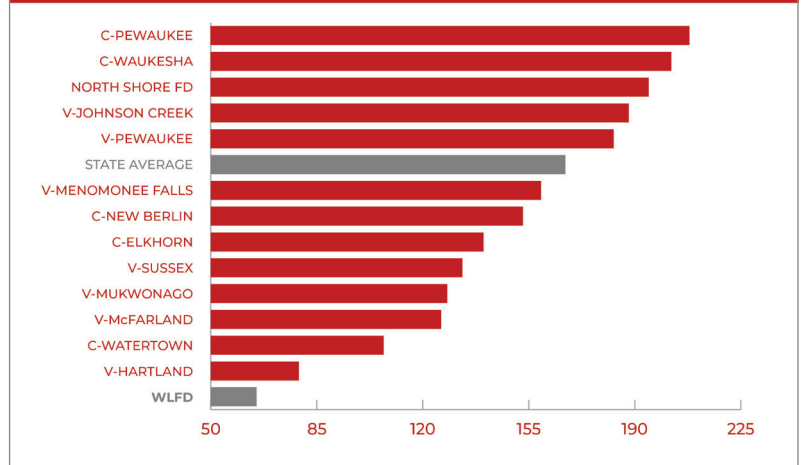
Visit [westernlakesfd.org/referendum](http://westernlakesfd.org/referendum) for FAQs and a calendar of upcoming information sessions.

Currently WLFD is one of the

# LOWEST PER CAPITA COSTS

when compared to peer communities. Even with the proposed increase WLFD's per capita rate will be lower than the State Average.

## 2019 FIRE/EMS SPENDING PER CAPITA



## CONSOLIDATION PROVIDED AN INTERIM SOLUTION

Consolidations achieved necessary and immediate cost savings and increased the District's ability to provide services, but were intended as an interim solution to provide time for a long-term funding solution to be identified and pursued. Today, WLFD faces a critical funding shortage for staffing that if unresolved will significantly negatively impact fire and EMS services.

## WLFD SAVES \$8M EVERY 20 YEARS

thanks to consolidation efforts that reduced capital spending without decreasing service levels.

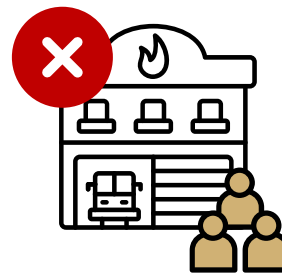
## IF A MAJORITY VOTE "YES"

If community referendums are approved by a majority of voters, WLFD will bolster staff and increase wages to bring fire and EMS capabilities in line with industry standards and best practices.

Voter approval will also enable increased wages to maintain current staff and avoid staff departures to other departments, be competitive in the market and enhance staff recruitment.

## VOTE AUGUST 9TH

Visit [myvote.wi.gov](http://myvote.wi.gov) to find your polling place and / or request an absentee ballot.



Today, stations are staffed with an average of **3-4 staff** — not enough to immediately respond to calls for service.

### AN IMMEDIATE FIRE RESPONSE REQUIRES FIVE IN-STATION STAFF



If additional funding is approved, all stations will have at least **5 in-station staff**, resulting in the ability to immediately respond to calls for fire service.