SAFER FIRE DISTRICT

STRATEGIC PLAN

2022-2026



PROFESSIONALISM-RESPECT-INTEGRITY-DEDICATION-EXCELLENCE

I am pleased to present the five-year strategic plan for the SAFER Fire District. I would like to thank the members of the strategic planning group that went above and beyond to provide input on this project. The dedication of our members shows not only the honor they have to work for the fire district but also the dedication they have to our communities. I would also like to thank the communities that support us and allow us to provide service to their citizens. Thank you for taking the time to review our plan for the upcoming five years.

Respectfully,

Joshua J Finke

Joshua J. Finke

Fire Chief



Table of Contents

Topic	Page
Executive Summary, Overview	4
Mission, Vision Values	5
Finance Data	6-8
Goals and Strategies	9-11
Employee Survey	12-20



Executive Summary

The SAFER District conducted its first strategic plan in 2016 following the district's formation in 2014. Many of the goals outlined in that plan have been reached, some fell short. One of our major issues continues to be adequate staffing as well as recruitment and retention of employees. This is an issue that the entire fire service is facing, as well as others in public service. Our strategic planning group met several times, reviewed our previous plan, conducted a SWOC analysis, and developed topics to focus on over the next five years. At the end of our planning process, we also developed a survey that was sent to all employees to gather input. Our district has experienced unprecedented change during its short existence. SAFER has had four fire chiefs in its first eight years. This lack of consistency alone can make growth and development difficult. The district has a strong leadership group that along with supportive communities will continue to grow SAFER into what it has the potential to be. This strategic plan along with further employee input will be a road map to the success and growth of our district.

Overview of the District

The SAFER Fire District is one of the largest combination fire and EMS agencies in the state and is the second-largest provider in the county. The district employs 13 full-time and approximately 40 part-time staff. Operating out of two stations the district provides service to nearly 300 square miles and a population of nearly 30,000 residents. Our coverage area ranges from populated urban areas to very rural farm and forest regions. The call volume of the district continues to increase year over year with more than a 1000 call increase in the past five years. The communities we serve continue to grow with new housing developments in both Rib Mountain and Weston as well as significant commercial growth in the Village of Weston. The district is one of only two fire-based paramedic providers in the region. SAFER provides paramedic intercept services to Marathon, Shawano, and Clark County EMS agencies. With two large hospitals located in the metro area we continue to offer patient transport services to both major health systems.

MISSION

Serving our communities with experience, dedication and integrity

VISION

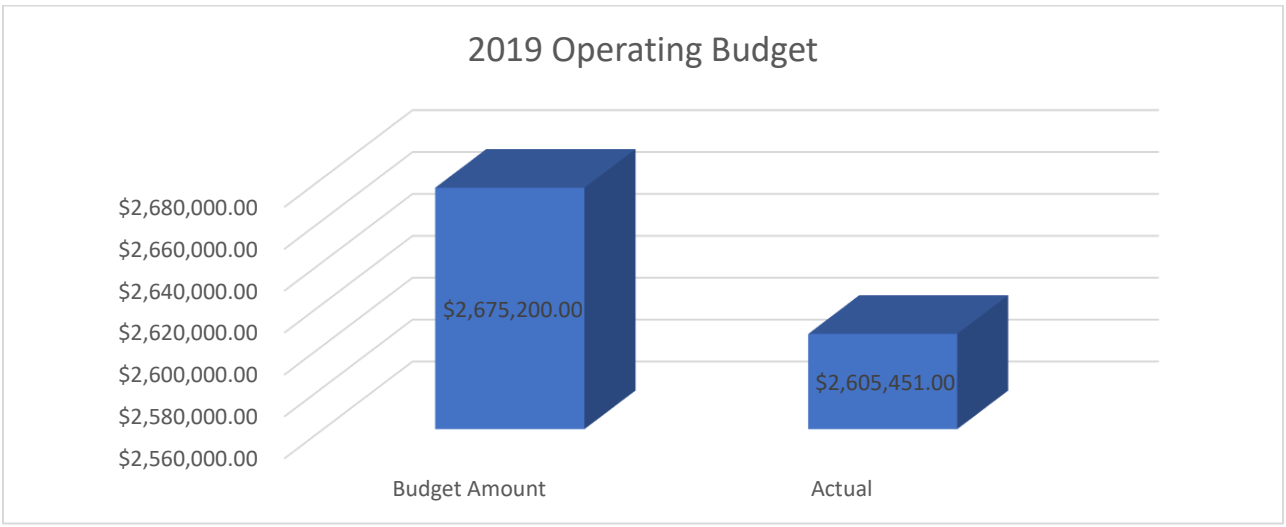
SAFER District leading the way in public safety, community involvement, technology and fiscal responsibility

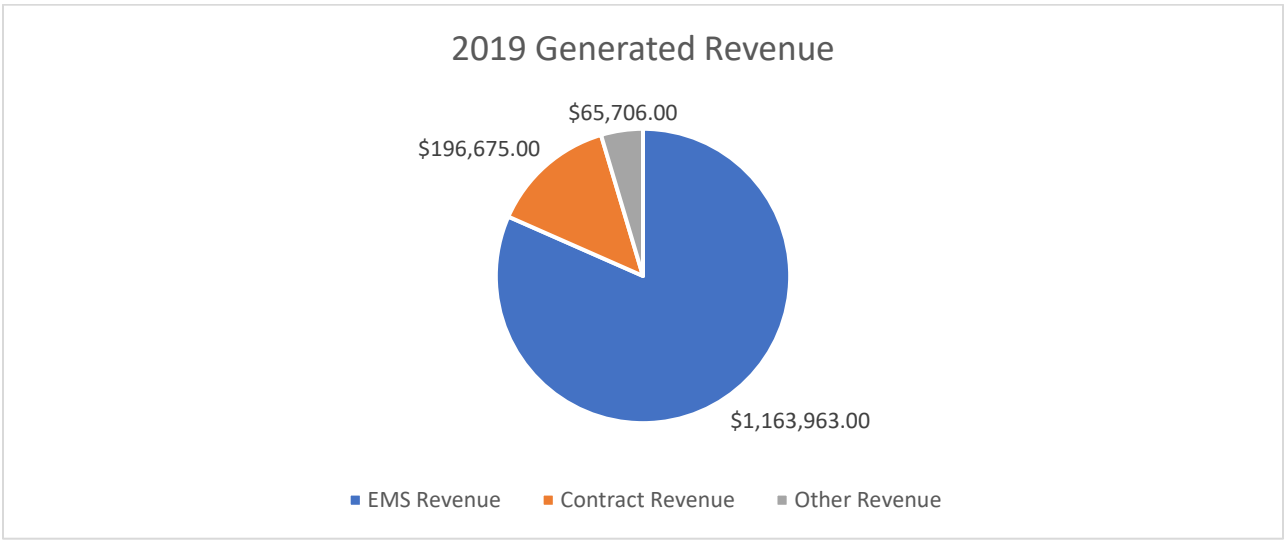
CORE VALUES

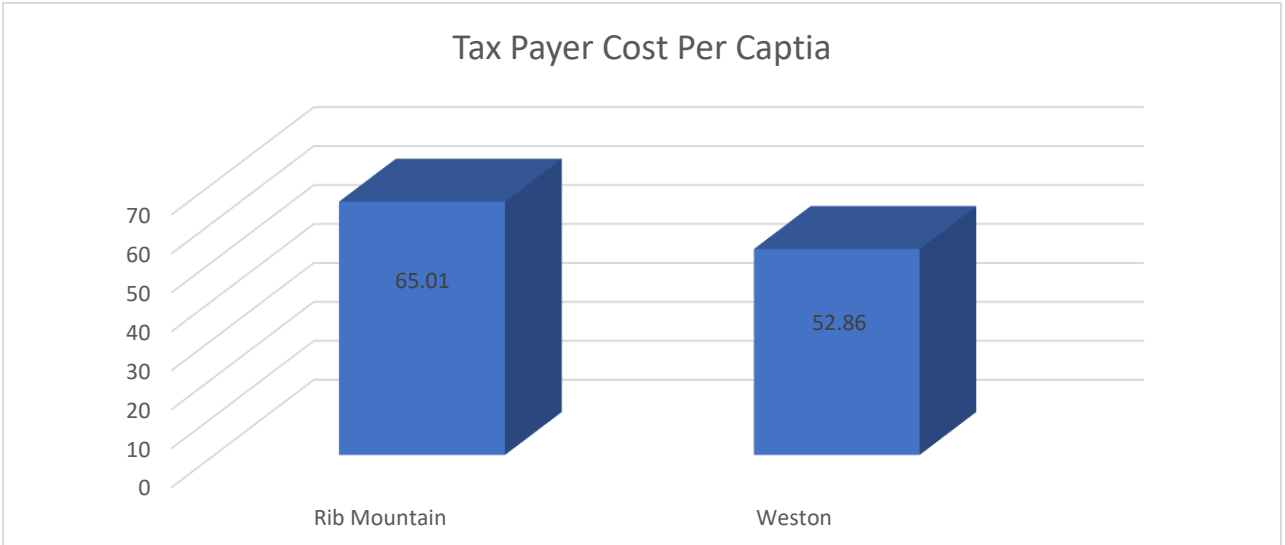
PROFESSIONALISM-RESPECT-INTEGRITY-DEDICATION-EXCELLENCE

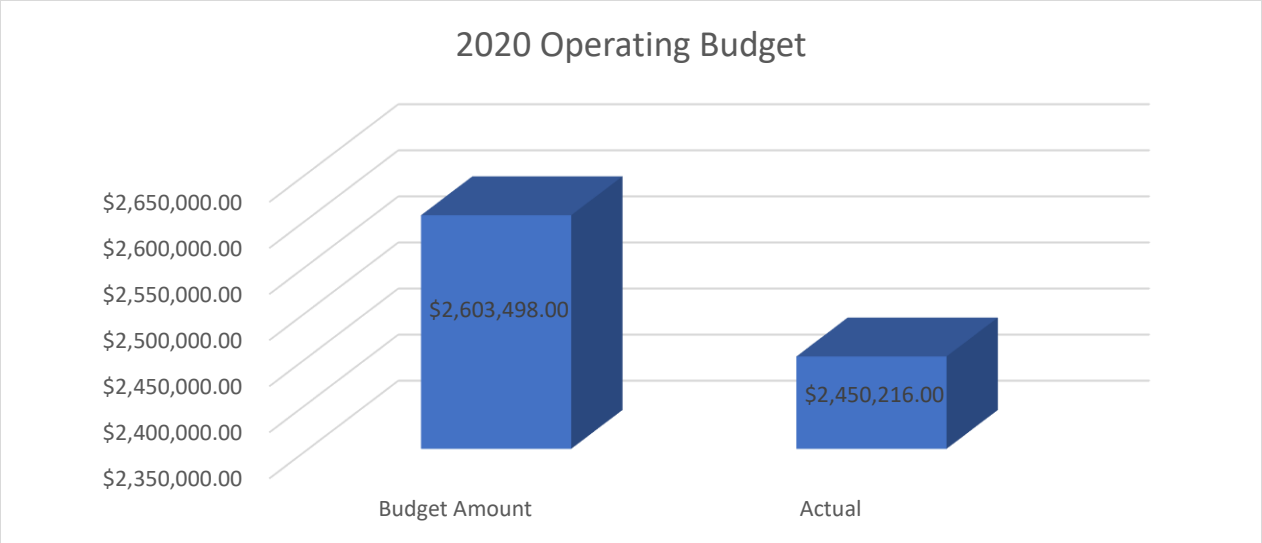


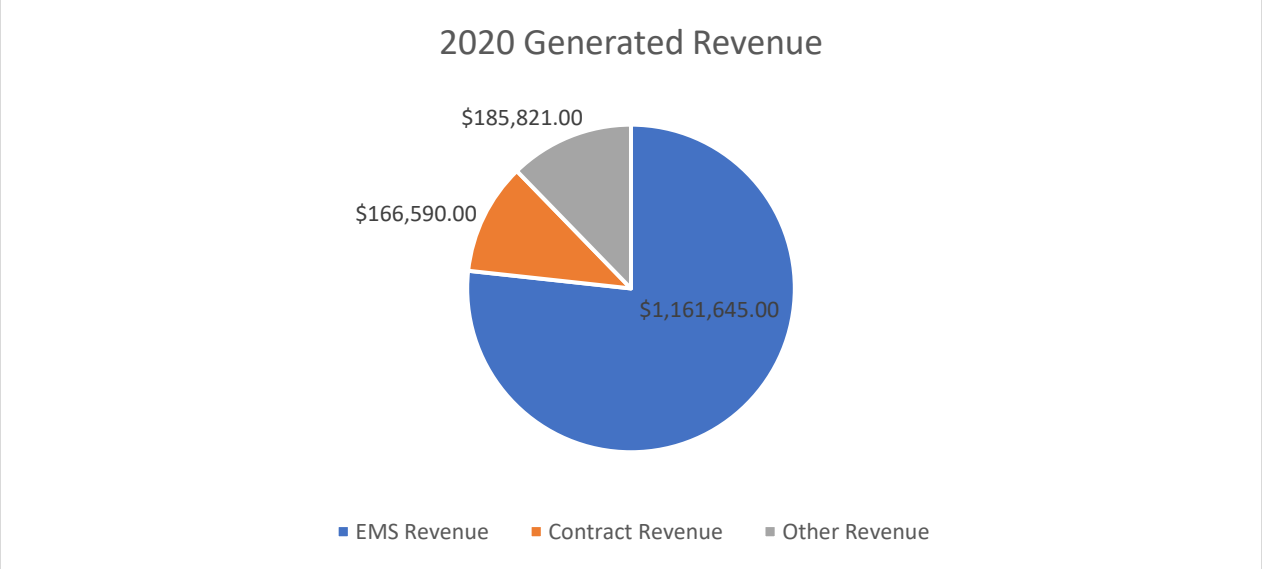
Financial Information

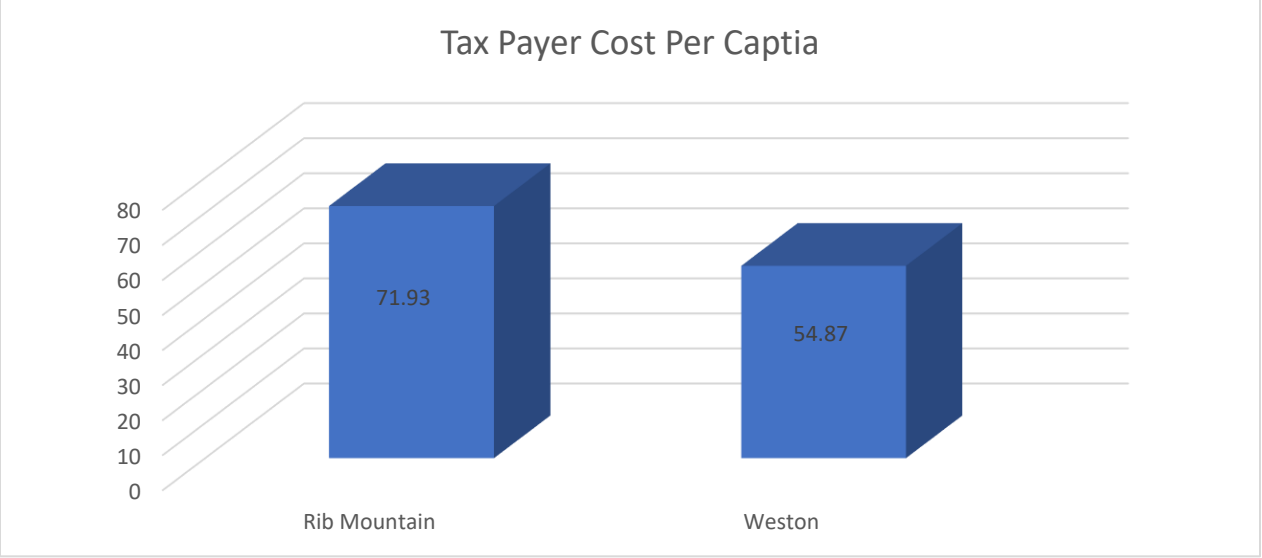


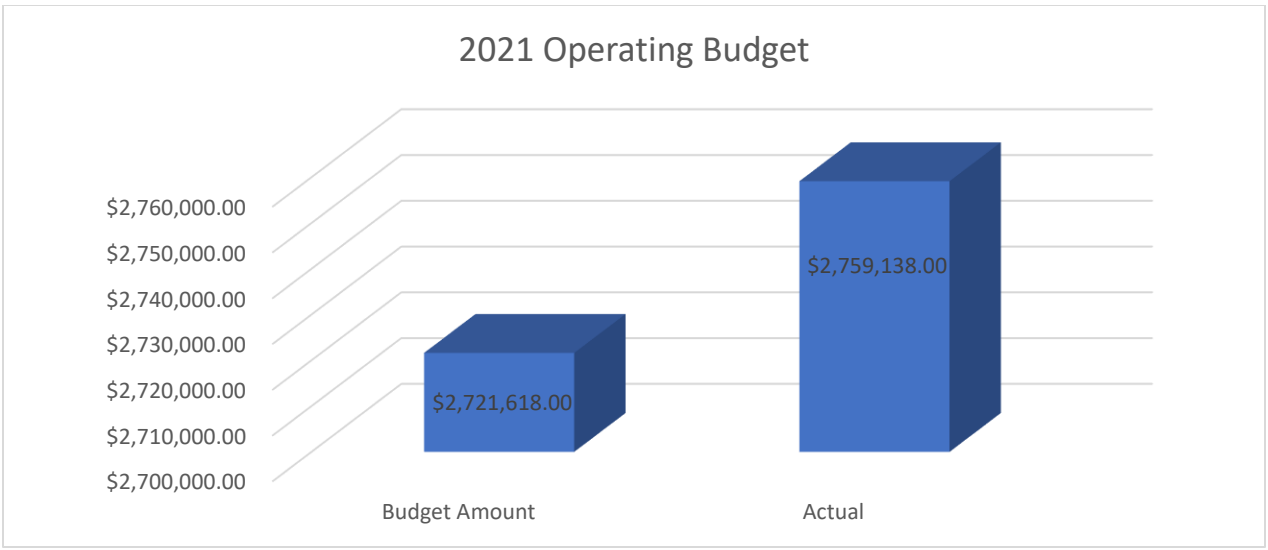


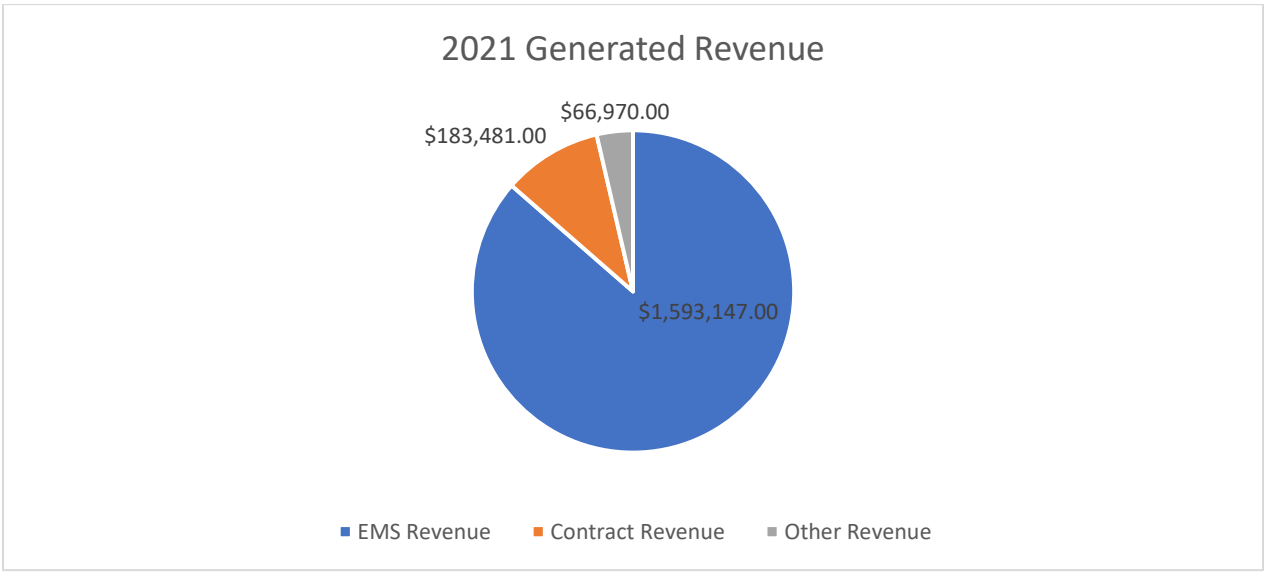


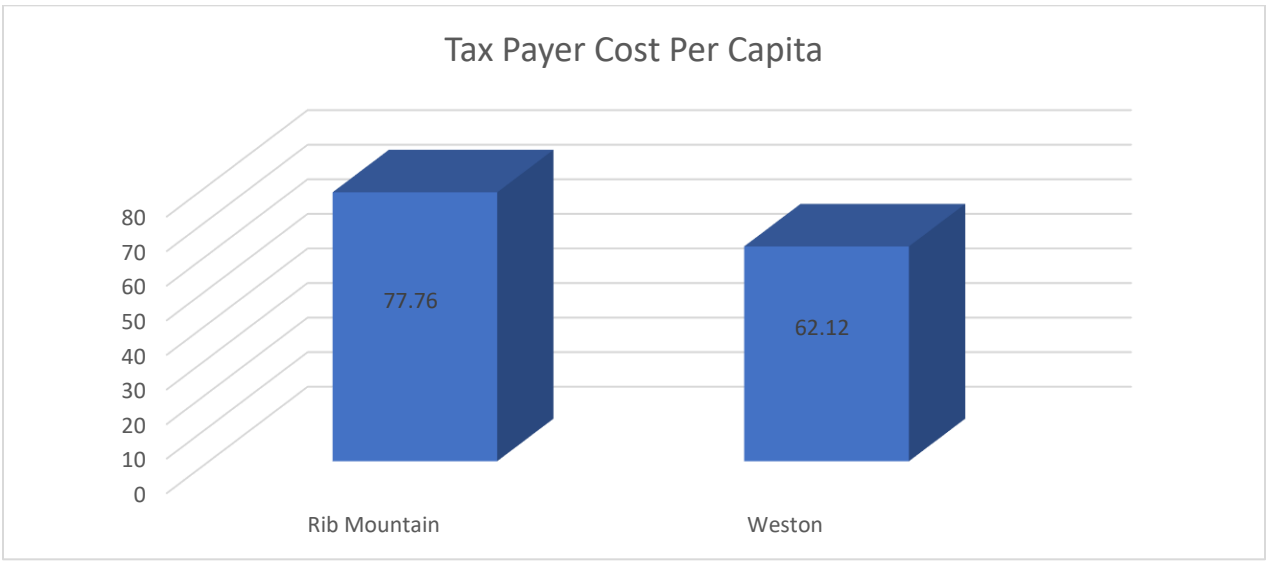

2020 Operating Budget
$2,650,000.00
$2,600,000.00
$2,550,000.00
$2,500,000.00
$2,450,000.00
$2,400,000.00
$2,350,000.00
$2,603,498.00
$2,450,216.00
Budget Amount
Actual


2020 Generated Revenue
$185,821.00
$166,590.00
$1,161,645.00
EMS Revenue
Contract Revenue
Other Revenue


Tax Payer Cost Per Captia
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
71.93
54.87
Rib Mountain
Weston


2021 Operating Budget
$2,760,000.00
$2,750,000.00
$2,740,000.00
$2,730,000.00
$2,720,000.00
$2,710,000.00
$2,700,000.00
$2,721,618.00
$2,759,138.00
Budget Amount
Actual


2021 Generated Revenue
$66,970.00
$183,481.00
$1,593,147.00
EMS Revenue
Contract Revenue
Other Revenue


Tax Payer Cost Per Capita
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
77.76
62.12
Rib Mountain
Weston

5 Year Goals and Strategies

1. Robust IT Development and Management

Statement of Need: As IT continues to grow and develop in the field of fire and EMS the need for a strong IT system and IT support has become evident. In the past, SAFER has relied heavily on internal support for the maintenance of our IT system. When a project or repair was too large for our internal individual an external company was used. Moving forward the district needs to develop a plan for long-term IT growth and sustainability.

Strategies

1. Develop a contract with an outside agency for IT development and support or develop a shared IT position.
2. Develop a long-term replacement schedule for current equipment and begin to plan for future needs.
3. Develop smart classrooms so lectures can be shared between stations and meetings can be broadcast to the public.

2. Physical and Mental Health

Statement of Need: Physical fitness and health have always been a core need of the fire service. Continued development and support of a physical fitness plan must continue to assure the health of our members. A topic that has become a more recent focus in fire and EMS is mental health. Fire and EMS employees are subject to years of traumatic events and studies have shown that the cumulative effect has a drastic negative impact on the mental health of our employees. This is not only a concern for the overall wellbeing of our employees but also plays a role in the retention of staff.

Strategies

1. Work with local fitness facilities for discounts and/or memberships.
2. Continue to maintain equipment at each station and encourage daily exercise.
3. Develop a peer support group to assist employees
4. Work to develop a program for a district chaplain

3. Officer Development

Statement of Need: Recently, as the number of applicants for firefighter/EMT positions has decreased, there has also been a decrease in the number of those qualified for officer positions. It is our desire to promote those from within the department to leadership positions. This attracts applicants for entry-level positions and allows us an opportunity to retain our best

employees. Internal applications also typically require less training and development than outside applicants.

Strategies

1. Offer internal leadership classes and identify those that are good candidates to attend outside leadership courses.
2. Development of knowledge for middle management regarding employment law and discipline procedures.
3. Develop training labs to be used for scene management and critical thinking development.

4. Employee Retention

Statement of Need: Over the past several years the district has lost several good part-time employees. Typically, this is due to an employee seeking a benefits package, and better pay for more predictable hours.

Strategies

1. Conduct a pay study, increase third shift pay
2. Recognize employee effort, and reward employees.
3. Promote benefits the district does offer such as retirement, flexible schedule, and professional development

5. Community Risk Reduction

Statement of Need: For the fire district to deliver a high-level service and continue to remain fiscally responsible it is important to understand the needs of the communities. To date, there has not been a comprehensive needs assessment set forth by the district or the communities we serve. This assessment will serve as a road map to the development of our district. It is also important that the district begins to engage with the community and become part of the communities that we serve.

Strategies

1. Develop a standard of cover
2. Deliver community-based CPR programs
3. Visit local elderly housing communities
4. Participate in community block parties.

6. Staffing Shortages

Statement of Need: The district experiences staffing shortages on a regular basis. Unfortunately, we do not see this trend improving in the near future. As call volumes continue to rise and the workforce gets smaller, we must look at options for improved coverage.

Strategies

1. Continue to offer ride alongs to local technical colleges
2. Visit EMT and Paramedic courses at local colleges to promote our service as a potential employer
3. Participate in job fairs and career days at local high schools and technical colleges.
4. Discuss the possibility of live-in interns to augment current staffing

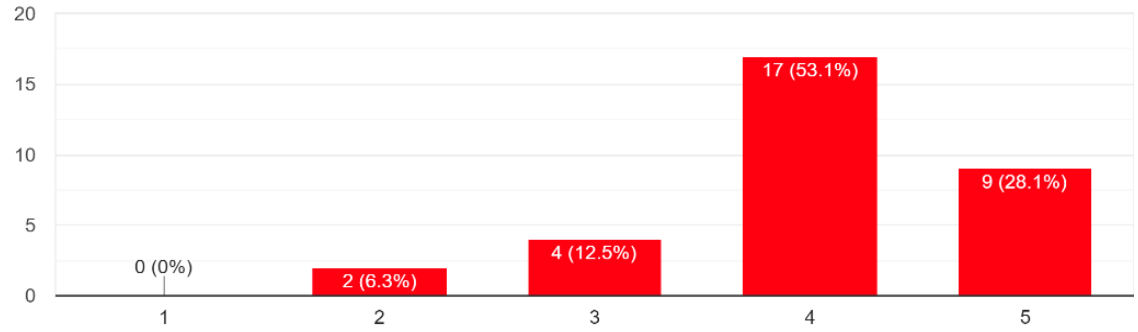


Employee Survey

As part of the strategic planning process, the district sent an employee evaluation to all employees. Everyone was asked to answer 23 questions on overall employee satisfaction and the direction of the district. The survey had a good response with 75% of the members of the district completing the survey. Employees were asked to rank the questions on a 1-5 scale with 1 being the lowest score and 5 being the highest. A similar survey was sent in 2016 during the last strategic planning process. The overall satisfaction and direction of the district seems to be much more positive based on this survey. There are a couple of areas that have been identified that we need to focus on during the next few years and some other areas of success that we need to continue to build upon.

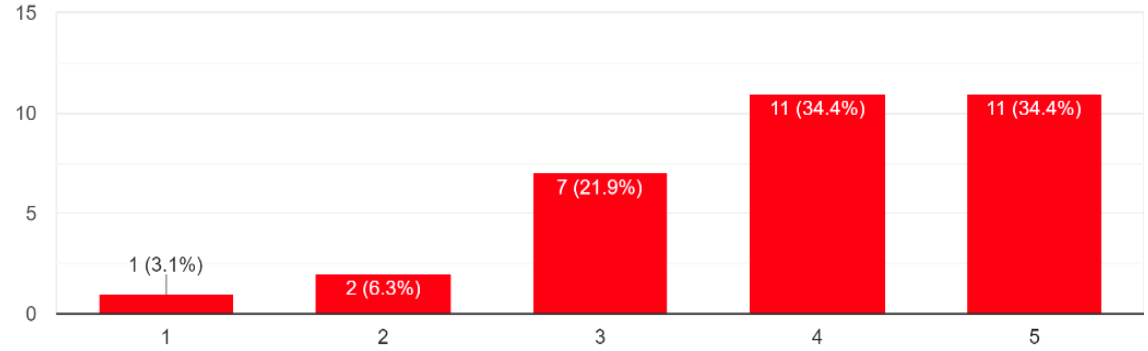
I look forward to coming to work most of the time.

32 responses



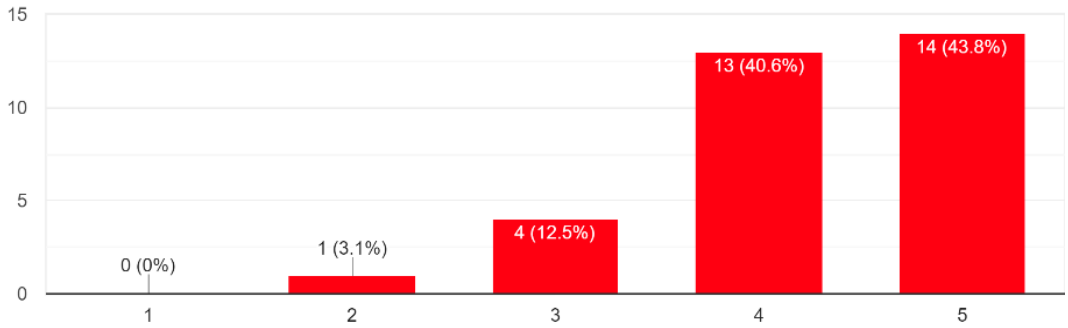
I feel like I fit in here.

32 responses



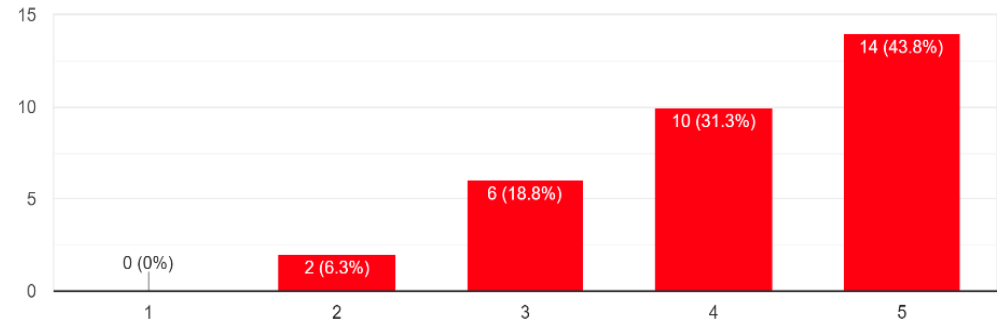
I'm proud to work for this department.

32 responses



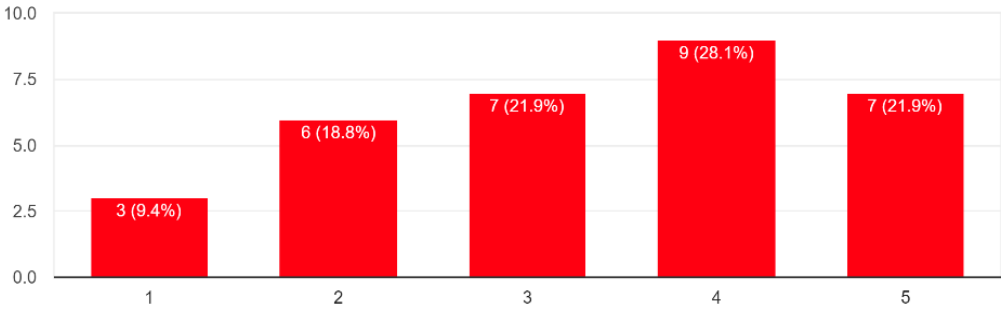
I would recommend this job to others.

32 responses



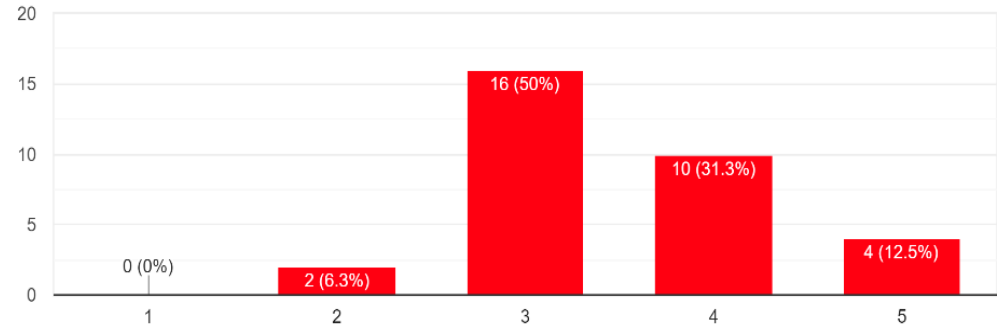
I'm compensated appropriately for my job duties.

32 responses



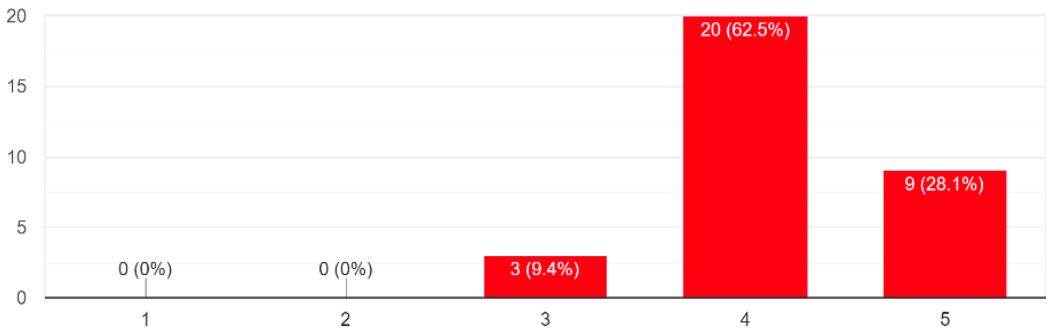
The officers treat the employees fairly.

32 responses



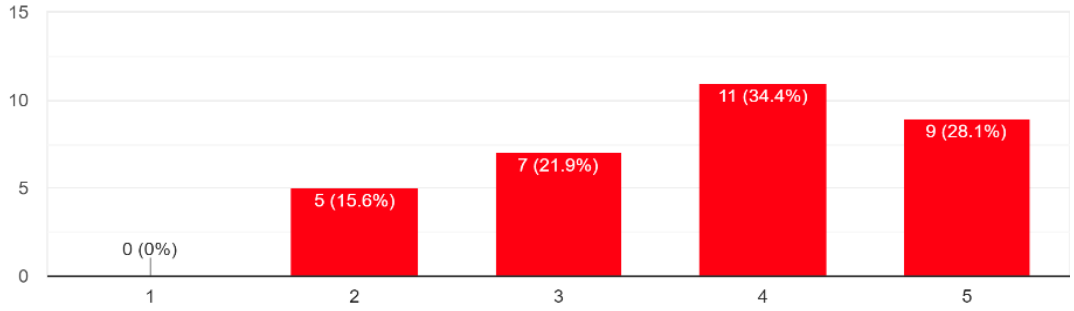
I have the tools I need to complete my job.

32 responses



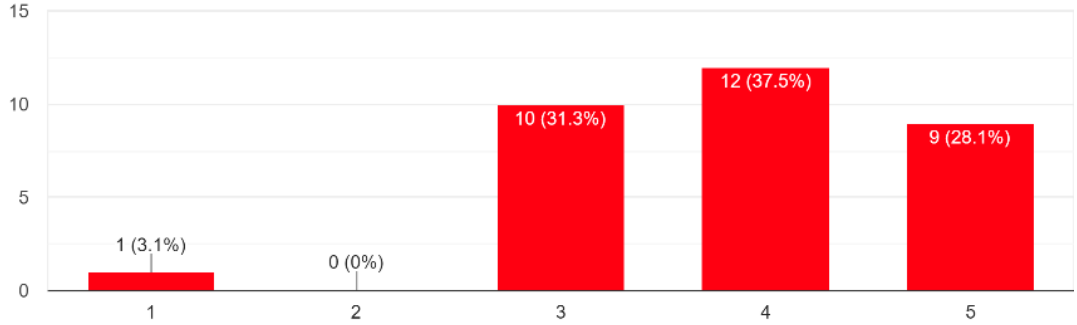
I feel like management values my contributions.

32 responses



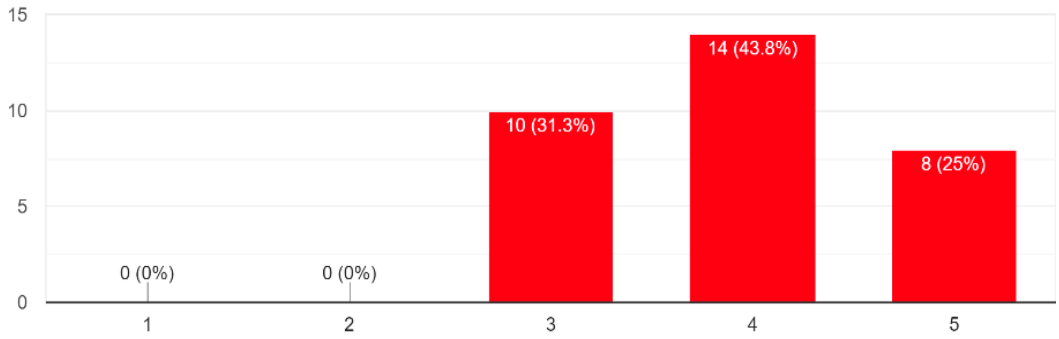
I feel there is opportunity for individual career and professional development within the department.

32 responses



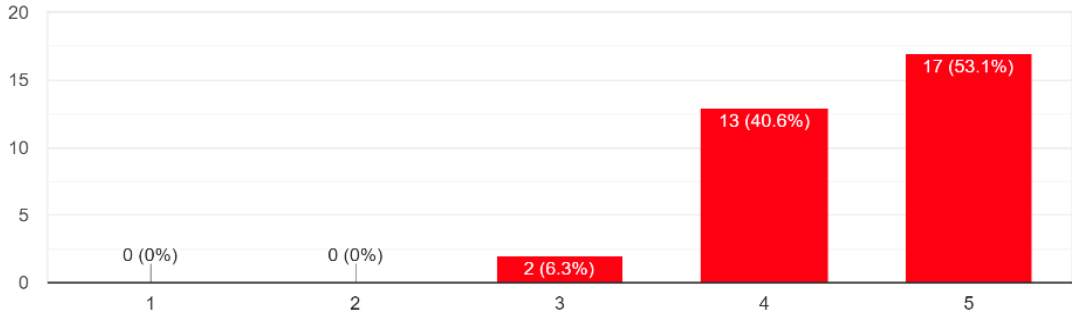
I'm satisfied in my job overall.

32 responses



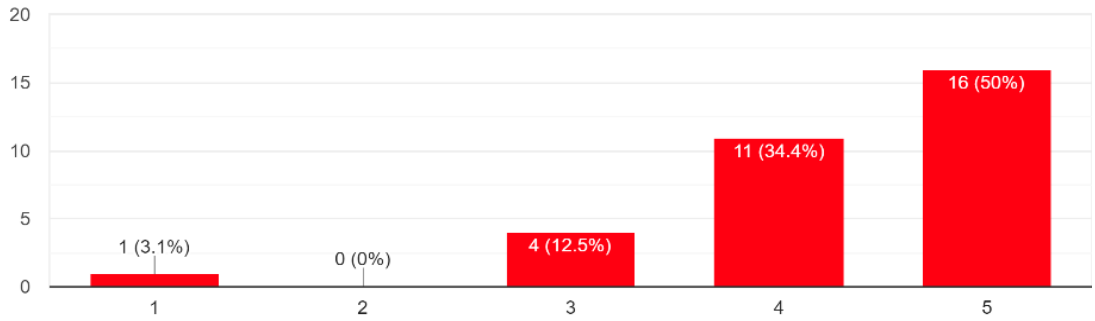
I feel that my job makes a positive difference in other's lives.

32 responses



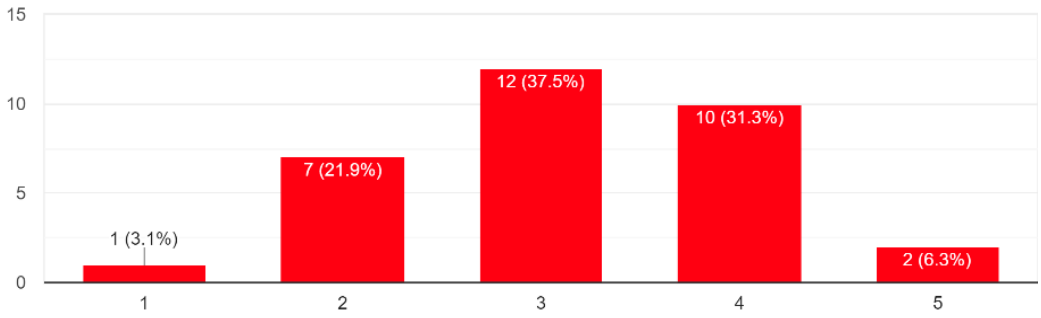
I feel safe at work.

32 responses



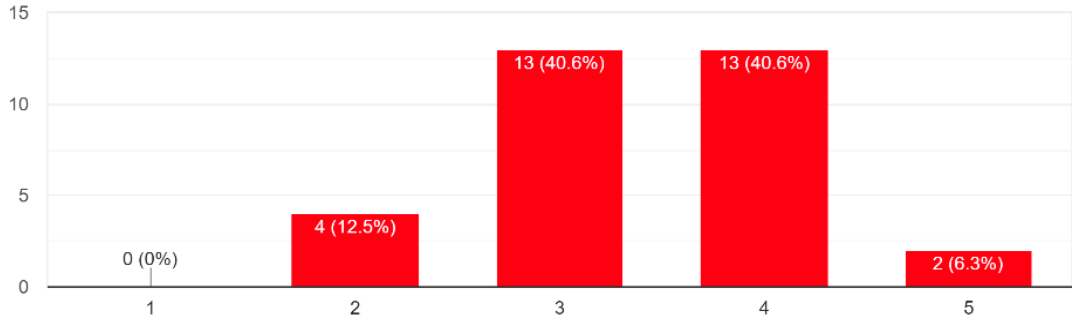
I receive recognition for my achievements at work.

32 responses



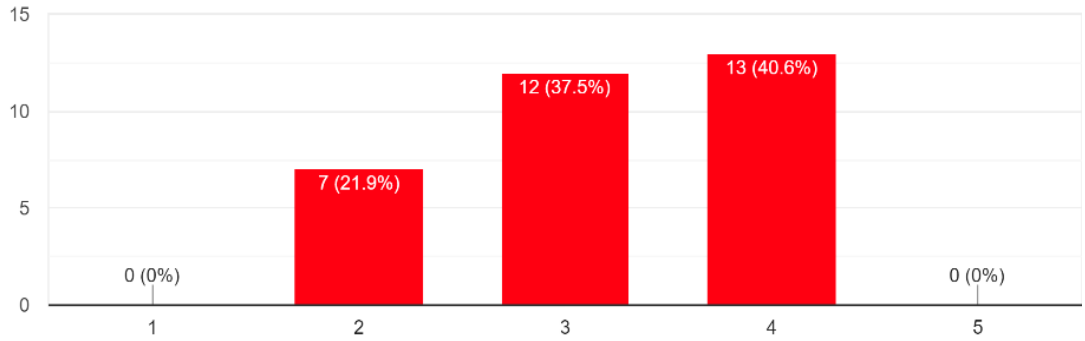
I receive constructive feedback from my officer(s).

32 responses



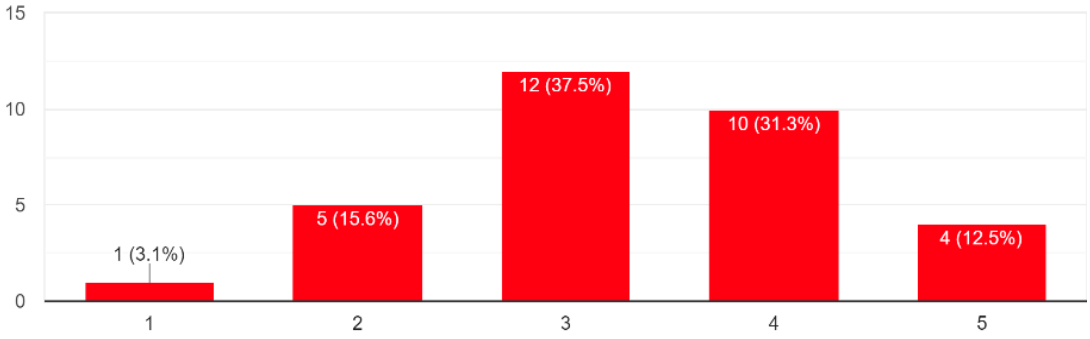
My officer(s) praise me when I have done a good job.

32 responses



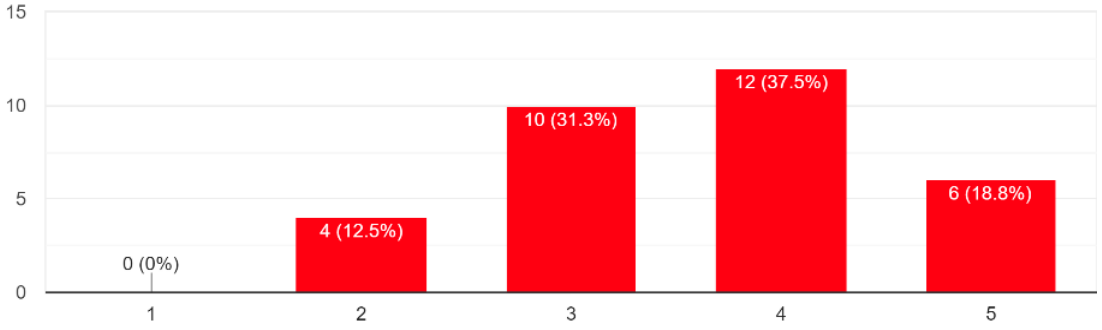
I enjoy the department's culture.

32 responses



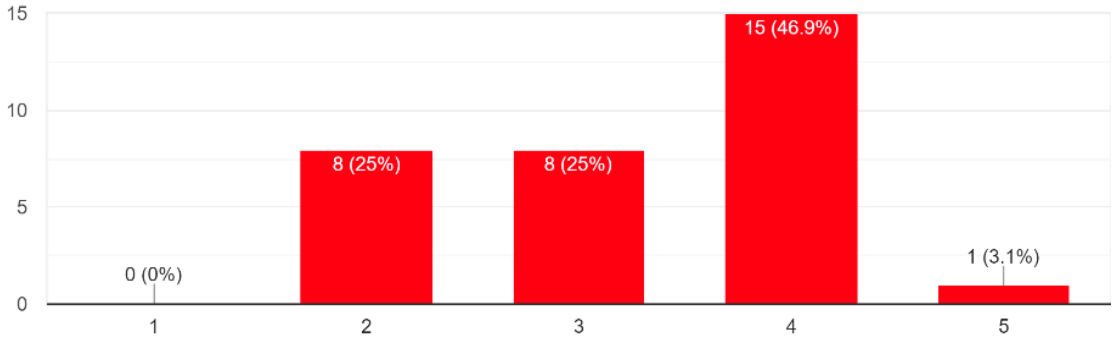
My officer(s) value my feedback.

32 responses



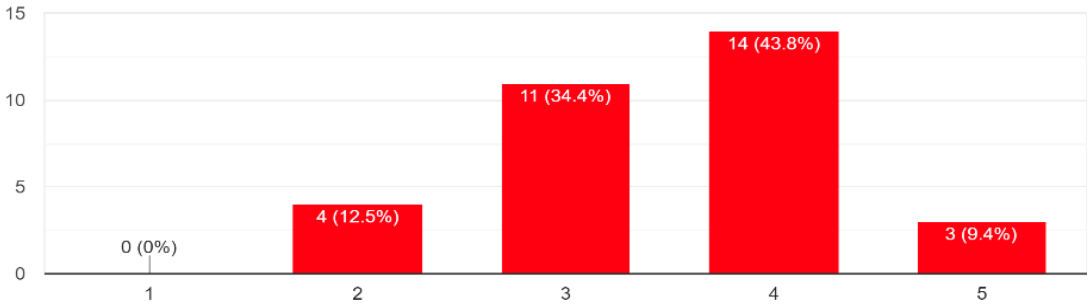
My officer(s) communicate in an effective and timely manner.

32 responses



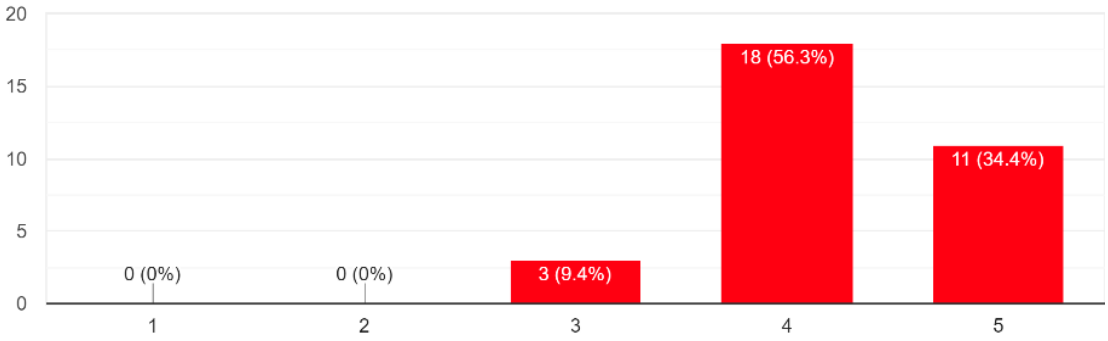
The officers seem invested in the success of the team.

32 responses



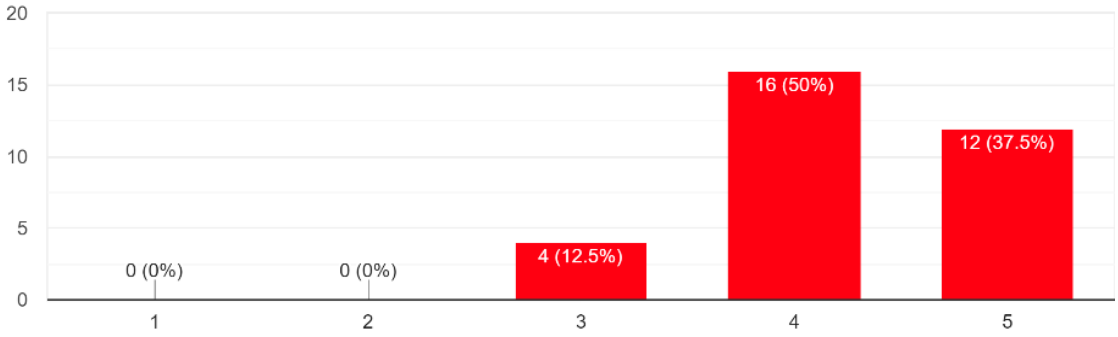
I find my work meaningful.

32 responses



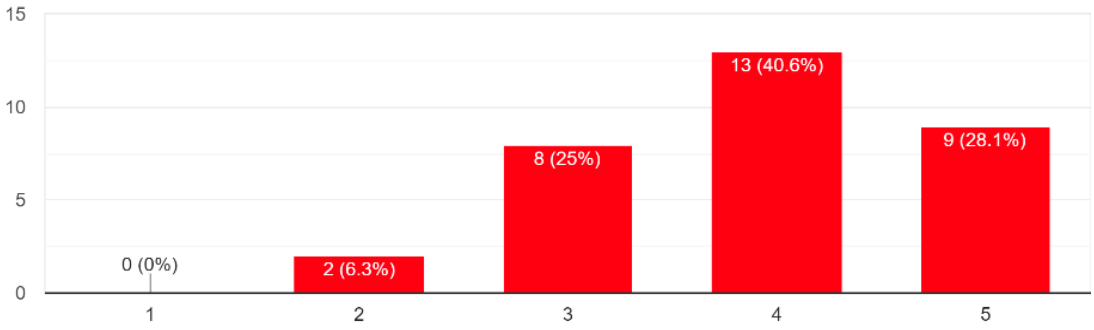
I feel that my work contributes to the fulfillment of the department's mission and vision.

32 responses



I am happy when I'm at work.

32 responses



I feel that my job responsibilities are clearly defined.

32 responses

