

A review of 2004 myth and 2009 reality

In 2004, the then Board of Directors, administration and the majority of employees of Mehlville Fire District believed the District was broke and desperately needed a 33-cent, or 36% tax increase in order for the district to continue operations at the level residents are accustomed to receiving.

A public focus group known

as the Fire District Advisory Committee For Tomorrow's Emergency Service, or FACTS, convened to review Mehlville's needs and recommended the tax increase be placed before voters.

Without knowledge to the contrary, voters approved the tax increase.

Since that time, residents

have elected a new Board which in the last four years has discovered that many of the statements made at that time were incorrect.

The chart below outlines many of the misconceptions perpetuated in 2004.

The District placed Prop 1 & 2 on the ballot to rectify those myths and restore public trust.

How much have residents saved in the last 4 years by the district not levying Prop S?

	Tax Ceiling	Amount Levied	Amount Not Levied
2005	\$1.22	\$.87	\$.35
2006	1.22	.70	.52
2007	1.05	.61	.44
2008	1.05	.56	.49
Total Amount Not Levied			\$1.80

2004 Myth

Board of Directors
Chairman Thomas O'Driscoll
Treasurer Dan Ottoline
Secretary Dave Gralike

2009 Reality

Board of Directors
Chairman Aaron Hilmer
Treasurer Bonnie Stegman
Secretary Ed Ryan

It was estimated health insurance premiums would be \$4,036,000 annually by the year 2009.

In reality, insurance premiums at Mehlville Fire Protection District will cost \$1,083,000 in 2009.

In 2004, the administration estimated workers compensation premiums for 2009 at \$1,890,000.

In reality, the Board of Directors expects to pay less than \$725,000 for workers comp premiums in 2009.

In 2004 former Board member David Gralike's response to a question about the consequences of the failure of Proposition S posed by Call Newspapers was:

"Bottom line, you're going to mitigate services."

In 2009 when asked to reflect on the new attitude about spending reflected by a new Board of Directors, President Aaron Hilmer said:

"Proposition S was the greatest sham ever laid on voters of South County. Propositions 1 and 2 give residents the opportunity to undo the affects of Proposition S."

The District claimed that if Prop S was not approved a fifth ambulance that ran part-time would be shut down.

In 2009 ambulance #5 is fully staffed and runs full-time.

The District claimed that if Prop S is not approved a heavy duty rescue squad would not be able to be staffed.

MFPD is the only district in Eastern Missouri that runs a medic equipped heavy rescue squad full-time.

In 2004 former Board President Tom O'Driscoll said that if Proposition S was not approved ...

"We're taking the fifth ambulance off the street, not because we want to, but because we can't afford to staff it anymore."

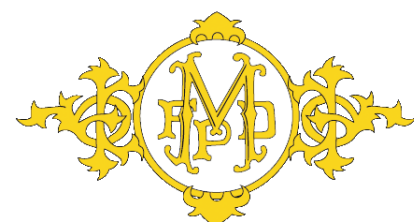
Board Treasurer Bonnie Stegman said that ...

"Since 2005 we have doubled treatment and paramedic options for the district and improved medical coverage by 270%."

In 2004 the Mehlville Fire District and its taxpayers paid \$161,000 to distribute information to the public.

Mehlville Fire District has spent \$32,000 to mail information about Prop 1 and 2 to the same households.

- How much have you saved?
- Over the last 4 years the owner of a \$150,000 house has saved \$573 in real estate taxes. The owner of a \$300,000 house has saved \$1,026.
- This does not include savings on personal property such as autos, boats and other personal property.
- If Prop 1 & 2 are approved these savings will be permanent.



The Mehlville Fire Protection District is a political subdivision of the State of Missouri similar to a school district or library district. As a subdivision of the State of Missouri, the Fire District operates under the guidelines set forth in the Missouri Revised Statutes, Chapter 321.

The Fire District is operated by a three-member Board of Directors that is elected by the voters, per state statutes, of the Fire Protection District. The current Board of Directors are as follows:

Board of Directors

Aaron Hilmer

Director - Chairman

Bonnie C. Stegman

Director - Treasurer

Ed Ryan

Director - Secretary

James J. Silvernail

Fire Chief

The Board oversees the Fire District operations and appoints the fire chief. The fire chief supervises a staff, authorized by the Board, to carry out the essential operations of the Fire District. Among this staff are officers who assist the fire chief in the day to day management of the Fire District.