

BURLINGTON FIRE COMMISSION
Minutes of the Meeting
August 13, 2024

These are the minutes of the August 13, 2024, Meeting of the Burlington Fire Commission. The meeting convened at 08:30 hours via Zoom and in person with Commissioners Bond, Perkinson, Chapman, Sheehey, and McLaughlin. Chief LaChance, Deputy Chief Curtin, and Administrative Assistant Meghan Sweeney were also present.

Call to Order

Commissioner Bond called the meeting to order at 08:30.

Motion to Adopt Agenda

Commissioner Bond made a motion to add agenda items:

Old Business:

- Discuss the bonding vs. budgeting for vehicle replacement
- Reappointment of Commissioner Perkinson

New Business:

- Commissions being held for the awards ceremony
- New mental health facility at 1 South Prospect Street
- Discuss the Chair position of the commission.

Agenda changes approved by movement of Commissioner McLaughlin and seconded by Commissioner Sheehey.

Public Comment

No members of the public were present.

Review and Accept Minutes from the June Meetings

Commissioner Bond asked if there were any questions or comments on the minutes submitted for June's meetings. With no changes, Commissioner McLaughlin moved to accept the minutes, which Commissioner Sheehey seconded.

Chief's Oral Report

Chief Lachance's report (attached) was previously emailed. Additional discussion of topics included:

Personnel—Chief LaChance updated that the City Council approved the lateral transfer process at the 08/12/2024 meeting. This will allow us to post positions in October and schedule interviews in January. The lateral recruit class will be four to six weeks.

Battalion Chief Valyou oversees the Fit 4 Fire committee and has been given additional money for mental health initiatives. The committee plans to offer a seminar similar to the Lessons Learned seminar supporting the Rainy-Day Fund. More information will be available in October.

Buildings – The generator at Station 2 has been replaced. The RFP for the Station 2 apparatus floor has been posted. The floor replacement project is expected to start in October.

Commissioner Chapman asked if there was any data about the residency of the people we are responding to who are suffering from OUD. Chief LaChance looked at this data a year ago; the data found that most identified as being from Burlington. Often, accurate demographics are difficult to assess from this population.

Commissioner Perkinson asked why lift assists were not included in the non-transport charges. Chief LaChance doesn't want people who need help off the floor to feel that they can't call because of a fee. This may need to be re-evaluated later, but at this time, he feels it should not be charged. He is considering charging lift assists at residential facilities with staff for these services.

Chief LaChance identified that the fire department received a grant award from AFG for firefighter training, including live fire training. This grant has a two-year performance period. Commissioner Perkinson thinks grant funding is something we will need to rely on for the foreseeable future to cover unique training opportunities. Chief LaChance said some of the previous purchases we relied on grant funds for (air packs) are now being built into the capital plan and will have budgeted funds for the future.

Old Business/New Business

- Fleet purchasing was discussed. The issue of bonding vs. budgeting for these purchases requires more study. Currently, there is no plan to purchase future fleet vehicles. With the expanded delivery times (3-5 years), a fleet plan is necessary to ensure department functions are not sacrificed. The Commission views this as a priority and would like a presentation from the city administration on how the city plans to purchase fire department fleet into the future. Commissioner Chair Bond will draft a letter for this request.
- Commissioner Perkinson has been renewed for another term on the Commission.
- Commissioner Bond updated the commission that there has been a proposal to do the commissions for officers in the department at the awards ceremony night instead of during regular meetings throughout the year. She thinks this is a great idea and supports this plan. No commissioners disagreed with this decision.
- Commissioner Bond spoke about the new mental health facility at the UHC campus, which will begin services on November 1, 2024. Commissioner Bond is involved with the startup of this program and is happy to answer any questions she can about it. She explained that the program would not be for the ambulance to drop off, but the CRT could assist someone there, or if on the scene with street outreach, they could coordinate transport to someone who needs services.
- Commissioner Bond asked if anyone else was interested in acting as commission chair. No one else showed interest, so Commissioner Bond remains Chair.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by motion from Commissioner McLaughlin and seconded by Commissioner Sheehey at 09:45.



Burlington Fire Department



136 South Winooski Avenue
Burlington, Vermont 05401-8378

(802) 864-4554 • (802) 658-2700 (TTY)

Business Fax (802) 864-5945 • Central Station Fax (802) 865-5387

August 13, 2024

Chief's Report to the Burlington Fire Commission

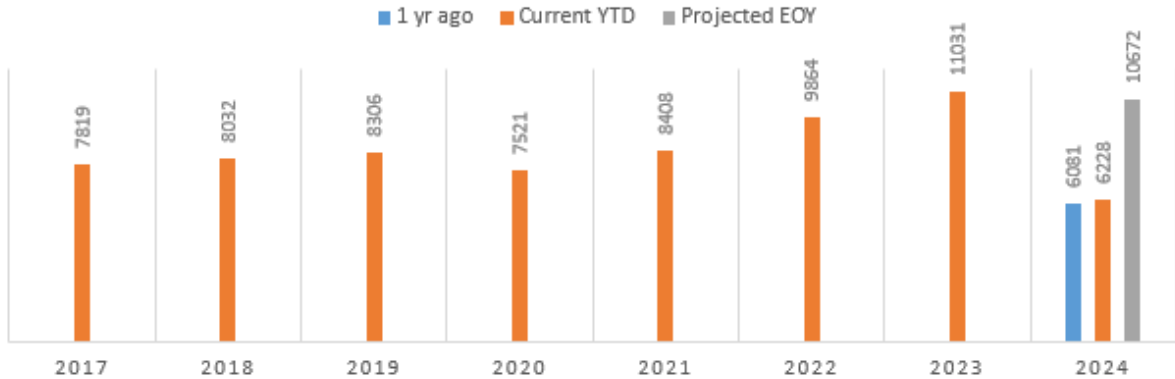
Personnel: We currently hold two vacancies. DC Derek Libby has retired. His last duty day was August 11. He is moving to Montpelier to serve as their new Fire Chief. Recruit Benjamin Collier submitted his letter of resignation in July.

Michael Curtin was promoted to Deputy Chief of Operations and will begin his new position on Monday, July 12. We will interview candidates for Battalion Chief-Shift Commander on Friday, August 23. Once that vacancy is filled, we expect to promote one Captain and one Lieutenant to fill the remaining vacancies. Our lateral hiring process is working through Board of Finance and City Council approvals. Once approved, we will release a recruitment video ahead of an October job posting for lateral FF positions. BOF approval was received on 08/05; C.C. is expected to review it at their 08/12 meeting. Our Fit 4 Fire committee meets quarterly to discuss new ideas and programs. Some ideas the group is working on:

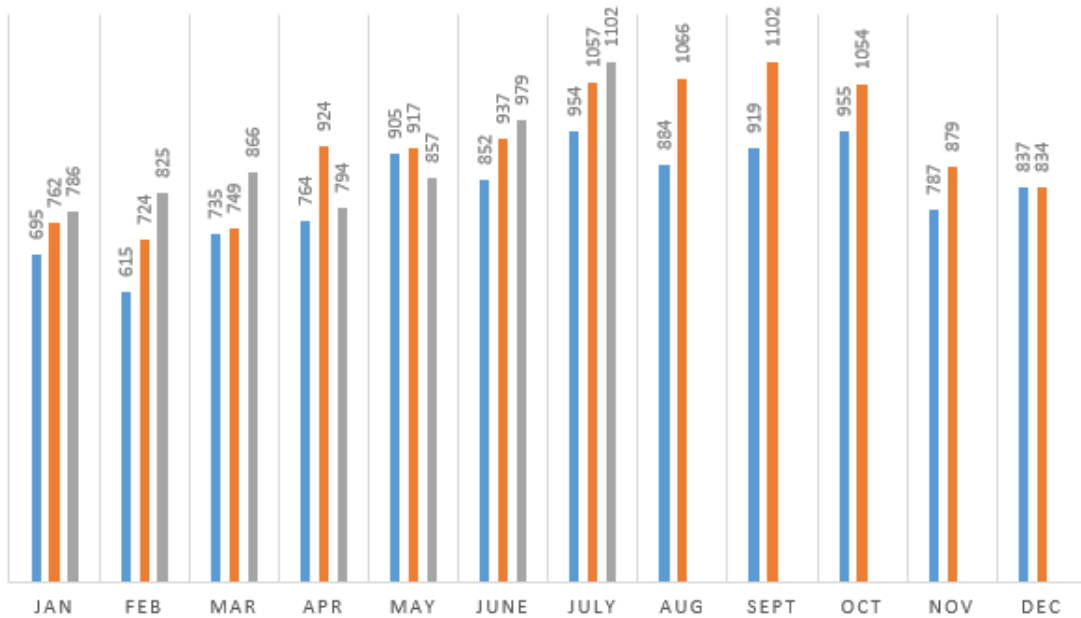
- Movement clinic
- Physical Assessments and obstacle course
- Behavioral Health
- Standardized equipment for each station and Maintenance
- Website design (For Fit4Fire)
- Deep end fitness
- IHMS increase
- Support members athletic organizations (Softball/hockey)
- Peer fitness instructors
- Peer Support Training with a class scheduled for December.

Responses: As of July 31, 2024, the fire department had reached incident number 6,228. During the same period in 2023, we reached incident number 6,081, a 2.41% increase over the same time last year.

FIRE DEPARTMENT RESPONSE TOTALS CALENDAR YEAR UPDATED THROUGH 07/31/2024



2022 - 2024 RESPONSES BY MONTH



Overtime: June 01, 2024 – July 31

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
• Minimum Staffing Overtime:	2150 hrs	1170 hrs
• Mandatory Minimum Staffing Overtime:	210.25 hrs	145.5 hrs

The above data shows a 45.58% decrease in Minimum Staffing Overtime and a 30.80% decrease in Mandatory Minimum Staffing Overtime during the same period last year. Overall, the minimum staffing overtime burden on the employees and city budget decreased by 44.26%.

Note: The above overtime burden on the staff accounts for Minimum Staffing Overtime, giving us the 22 people required to meet minimum staffing levels. This does not account for extra duty jobs, dispatch extra duty or CRT overtime. In the same period, our staff committed to the following extra duty, dispatch extra duty, and CRT overtime:

- Extra Duty: 239 hrs
- Dispatch Extra Duty: 483 hrs
- CRT Overtime: 271 hrs

In a full fiscal year review, in a year-over-year comparison between FY23 and FY24, we see the following:

	<u>FY23</u>	<u>FY24</u>
• Minimum Staffing Overtime:	11,139 hrs	8,400.5 hrs
• Mandatory Min Staffing Overtime:	1,287.75 hrs	1,497.25hrs

The above data shows a 24.59% decrease in Minimum Staffing Overtime and a 16.27% increase in Mandatory Minimum Staffing Overtime during the same period last year. Overall, the minimum staffing overtime burden on the employees and city budget decreased by 20.35% in FY24.

FY25 Budget: The Fire Department's FY25 budget has been approved and is in operation. This budget significantly increases our operational functions, including EMS, training, and building maintenance. It also adds new funding to our Fit 4 Fire committee in the area of mental health care. We thank the citizens of Burlington for their continued support of the fire department.

The Board of Finance and City Council have approved a new cost structure for ambulance services. This includes implementing billing for calls that do not result in transport. At this time, we will not be billing for lift assists. This new fee structure will

reduce the liability on the City’s general fund to fund the Fire Department's operations. The approved fee structure is below.

Charge Description	Current Charge	Proposed Increase \$	Proposed Increase %	New Charge
BLS – Emergency	\$900.00	\$75.00	8.4%	\$975.00
ALS 1 – Emergency	\$1,150.00	\$100.00	8.7%	\$1,250.00
EKG	\$50.00	\$25.00	50%	\$75.00
ALS 2 – Emergency	\$1,550.00	\$130.00	8.4%	\$1,680.00
Mileage	\$20.00	\$3.00	15%	\$23.00
Treatment w/o Transport	\$0	\$275.00	All	\$275.00

Fleet: Funding for fleet replacement continues to be a priority for the city’s fleet committee. Ensuring fleet repair requests are addressed promptly and coordinated with the shift commanders to reduce response disruptions is a primary concern for the DC of Operations. New Ladder 4 is in service and operating well. The old L4 is now L6 and will be utilized as a spare ladder truck. It will also be available to the training division to train with and allow other frontline apparatus to remain in service during training sessions. A new A4 has arrived and is currently being fitted with equipment and radios. Old A4 will become A6 and serve as a 2nd reserve ambulance for out-of-service and extra-duty support needs. We expect delivery of two fire apparatus to the Fire Department in September. Four organization members will travel to Florida from August 19-21 for the final inspection. With the three-year build schedule for new ambulances and a five-year delivery timeline for new fire trucks, a priority should be placed on a sustainable fleet purchasing plan.

Buildings: We are working through the implementation of PM service contracts for our bay doors, Plymovent systems, drain systems at Central, and HVAC systems. PM contracts for these systems have not been possible due to a lack of funding. With new funding in our building maintenance account, we are doing our best to take care of systems to keep them in service and minimize costly emergency repairs. The RFP for the

Station 2 apparatus floor replacement has been posted with a due date of Aug.15. The best-case scenario is a project start date of Oct. 01.

Radio System Upgrade: We are tentatively planning final system testing by Autumn 2024. As City Place increases in height, the antenna currently placed on Burlington Square will need to be relocated to the roof of City Place. This will happen once the building is completed. Contingencies built into the project will cover the costs of this move.

Community Response Team Pilot: Staffing of the CRT in June and July has decreased from prior months. Over the last two months, our average in-service time has been about 15 hours per week. Staffing the unit is challenging in the summer due to coverage of regular overtime and typically scheduled vacation leave time. I have also received feedback that the service is a challenge, and employees aren't feeling like they are making a difference. Many people we interact with remain in the same situation, week after week, month after month. Many needed services are missing from our system; I believe they are inpatient services. I also think those who deny services repeatedly should be compelled to move in a productive direction for the good of the community. The month of July is the first month since the implementation of the CRT, where we are seeing an increase in overdoses from the previous year. The increase in July is significant, as noted in the chart below.

		2022	2023	% change 22/23	2024	% change 23/24
January		19	40	111%	25	-38%
February		20	29	45%	25	-14%
March		20	28	40%	23	-18%
April		26	43	65%	17	-60%
May		26	38	46%	37	-3%
June		38	56	47%	49	-13%
July		38	39	3%	59	51%
August		39	57	46%		
September		24	67	179%		
October		33	25	-24%		
November		31	24	-23%		
December		44	24	-45%		
			Implementation of CRT			

We are tracking data from the CRT deployment. Below are some metrics showing the program's impact. This data shows how many people the team has touched, the quantity

of wound care supplies handed out, comfort care supplies distributed, Narcan leave-behind kits distributed, the number of referrals, direct phone requests, and incidents where the team went above and beyond in their duties.

Total:	1934	2769	285	206	54	17	4
	# of Attendees	# of Wound Care Items Distributed	# of Comfort Care Supplies Distributed	# of NLB Kits Distributed	Total # Referrals/ Bridge to Service Providers	Total Request For CRT Members Via Phone	Total Above & Beyond Incidents

Fire Marshal’s Office: The Fire Marshal’s office is working toward increased community engagement in FY25. The significant budget increase in FY25 will allow for increased outreach and availability of training opportunities. This is in addition to their regular plan reviews, permitting, inspections, and other division responsibilities. The office is currently working on purchasing a fire extinguisher training system. This will be utilized to engage with area organizations and businesses and increase our outreach to the community.

Training Division:

- We are in week 11 of Recruit Academy. Recruits are doing Well.
- We have multiple members attending a variety of classes. NFA programs, Swift Water, Fire Inspector 1&2, Safety Survival, and ICS 300
- I am happy to report that we were awarded \$220,000 from AFGP for Live Fire Training for all members. These will be conducted over the next two years.
- The McNeil training site is being utilized regularly, and we have made additional updates. South Burlington, Williston & Rutland City Fire have all used the site this Summer.
- SBFD is having its new officers ride with our shift commanders to gain experience.
- We have been working with UVM Med Center on their Haz Mat Decon setup at the Emergency Department. Recruits will participate in a small drill on August 13th as part of their Haz Mat Training.
- We are part of a statewide committee evaluating the feasibility of a statewide Recruit program at the Fire Academy.

- Working on increasing our total number of members certified to instruct with the VFA. Two just recently were approved.

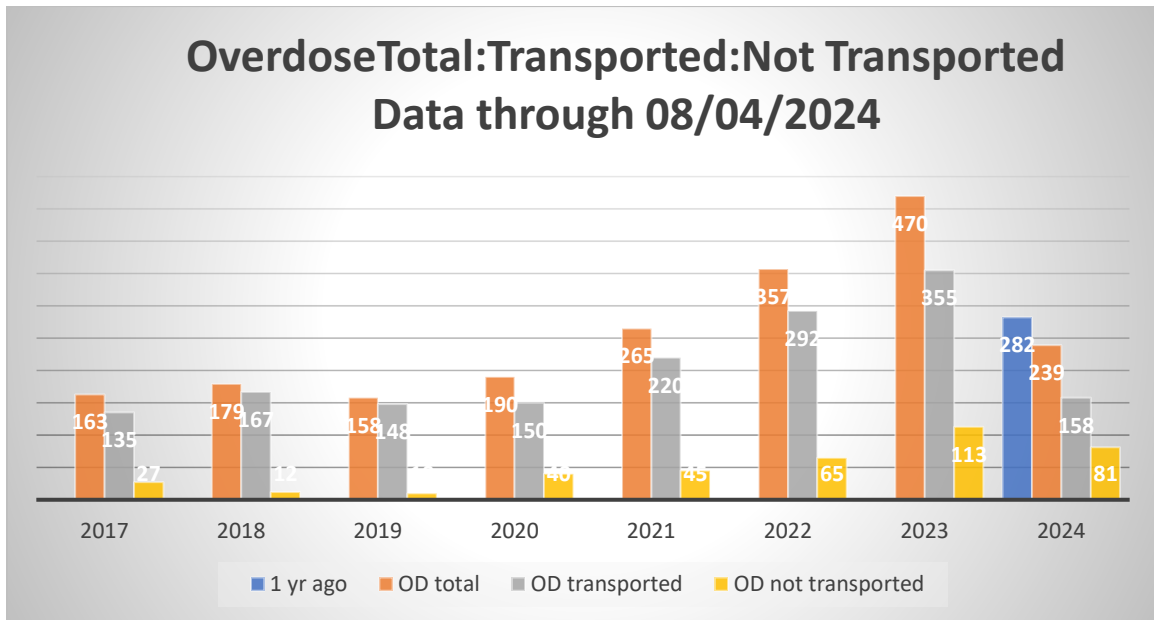
EMS Division: The EMS division is making significant strides toward the launch of the PREVENT Initiative. Our collaboration with CityLink partners continues to strengthen as we approach the launch date.

We are preparing our new ambulance (A-4) to go in-service, ensuring it meets all operational standards. We have also completed outfitting the reserve ladder with the necessary EMS equipment.

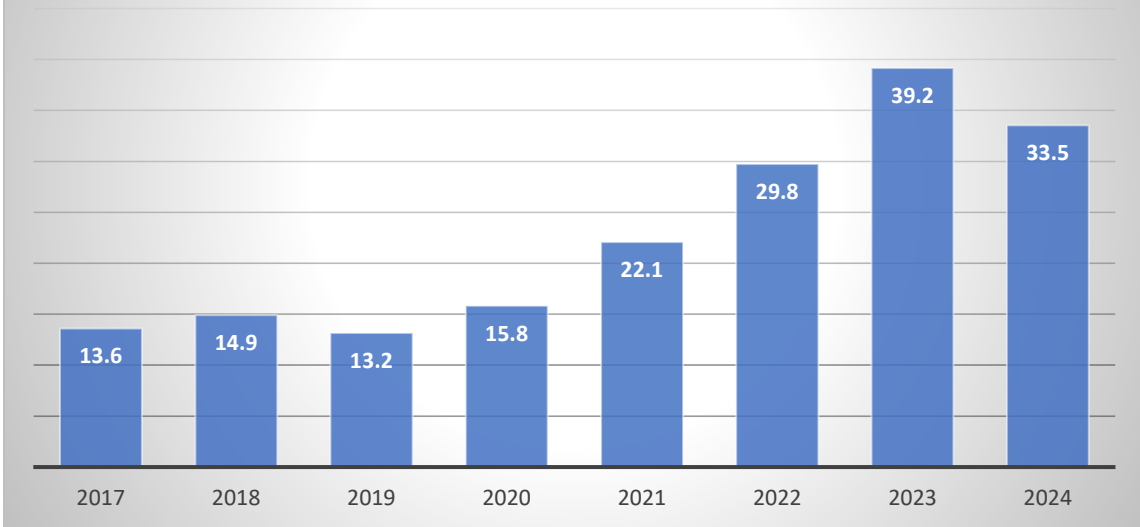
In our ongoing efforts to enhance efficiency, we optimize the EMS supply room and the equipment carried on our apparatus. This will ensure our teams have quick and reliable access to their needed resources.

We will begin working on a report due to Medicare at the end of November. We are also planning upcoming in-house refreshers for our medical providers to maintain and elevate our standards of care.

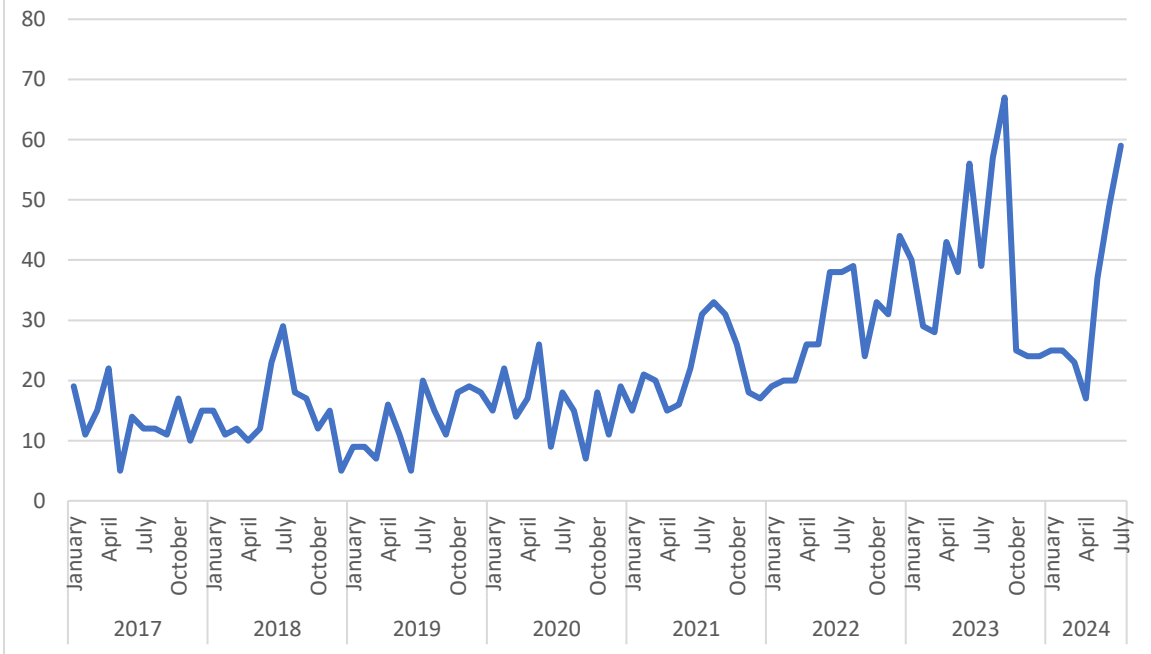
Latest EMS Response Data:



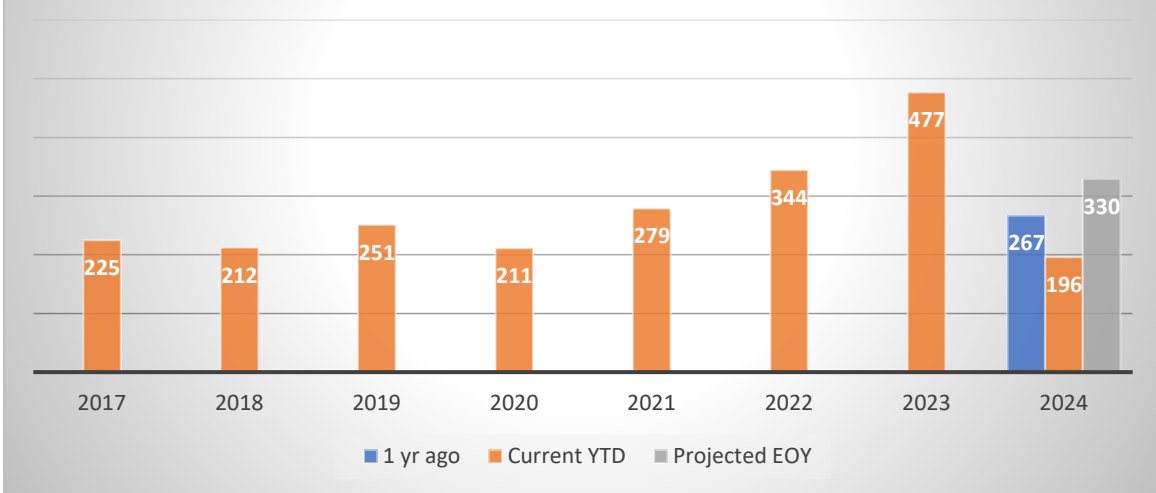
Average Overdose Responses per Month Data through 08/04/2024



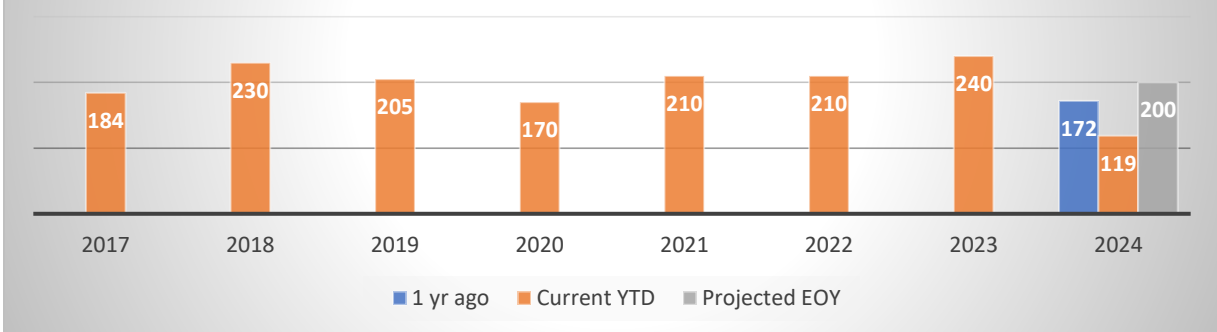
Monthly Fire Department Overdoses Updated through 07/31/2024



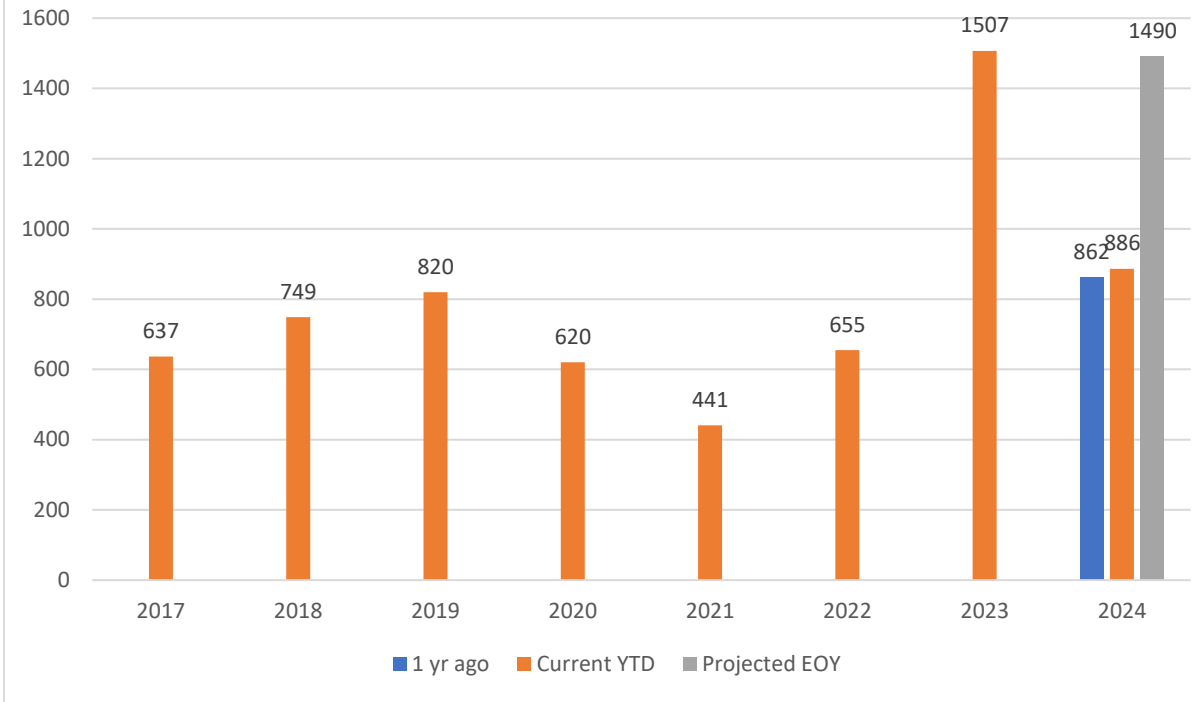
Dispatch Unknown Problem/Person Down Updated through 08/04/2024



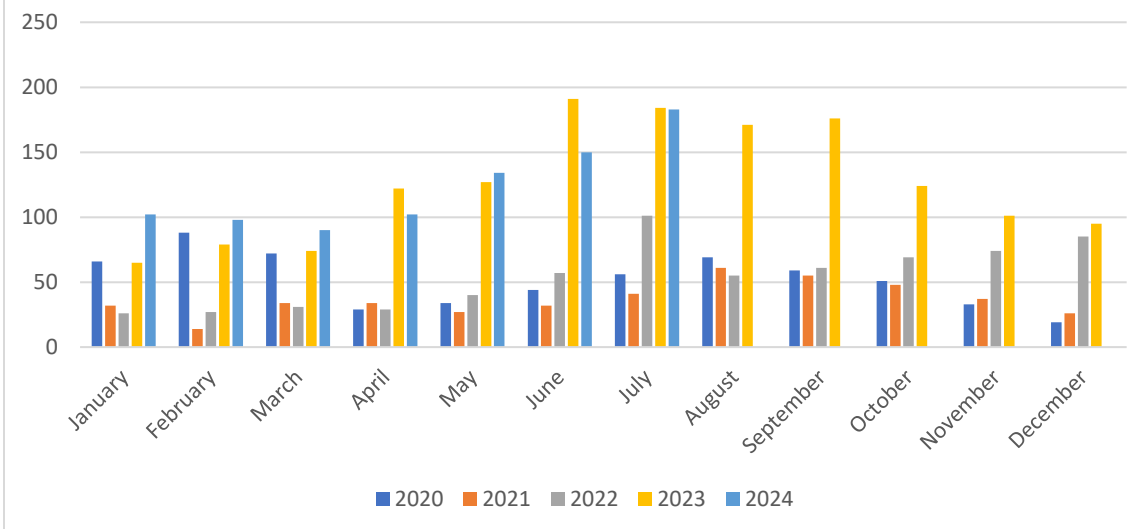
Dispatch Alcohol Intoxication Updated through 08/04/2024



**Annual
Fire Department EMS Responses to
Homeless/Houseless/Transient/
No Address Population
Updated through 08/04/2024**



**Monthly Fire Department EMS Responses to
Homeless/Houseless/Transient/No Address Population**



Monthly Fire Department EMS Responses to Homeless/Houseless/Transient/No Address Population Data Through 07/31/2024

