

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Ozark Fire Protection District Announces \$10.5 Million General Obligation Bond Election with a Zero Tax Rate Change in Property Taxes**

Ozark, MO – February 24, 2025—The Ozark Fire Protection District (OFPD) has announced a general obligation bond election set for April 8, 2025. OFPD is seeking voter approval for a \$10.5 million bond to improve emergency services and meet current safety standards. Importantly, this bond is expected to be a zero tax rate change to property tax rates, as it will be structured within OFPD's existing financial framework.

### **Purpose of the Bond**

The proposed bond will fund critical improvements to emergency services, including:

- **Fire Station Upgrades:** Construction, renovation, and improvement of fire stations to enhance operational efficiency and response times.
- **Training Center:** Development of a dedicated training facility to ensure firefighters are prepared for evolving emergency scenarios.
- **Equipment & Vehicles:** Acquisition, replacement, and repair of essential fire trucks, ambulances, firefighting gear, emergency medical and rescue equipment, and auxiliary apparatus.
- **Land Acquisition:** Procurement of real property necessary to support these enhancements.

### **Ballot Language**

Voters will decide on the following ballot measure:

*"Shall the Ozark Fire Protection District issue its general obligation bonds in the amount of Ten Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$10,500,000) for the purpose of improving emergency services and meeting current safety standards by constructing, renovating, improving, equipping, and furnishing fire stations, a training center, and related facilities, acquiring real property necessary therefor, and acquiring, replacing, or repairing vehicles, emergency medical and rescue equipment, fire protection and firefighting gear, apparatus, and auxiliary equipment?"*

*The authorization of the bonds will authorize the levy and collection of an annual tax in addition to the other taxes provided for by law on all taxable tangible property in the District sufficient to pay the principal of and interest on the bonds as they fall due and to retire the same within twenty years from the date thereof."*

### **Zero Tax Rate Change to Property Tax Rates**

Although the ballot language references the levy of an annual tax, **the bonds have been structured to be payable from the current property tax rates and are anticipated to require a zero-rate change to property tax rates.** This is made possible through the scheduled retirement of existing debt, allowing OFPD to fund these essential improvements without additional tax burden on residents.

### **Commitment to Public Safety & Fiscal Responsibility**

The Ozark Fire Protection District is committed to enhancing public safety while maintaining fiscal responsibility. These strategic investments will ensure that firefighters have the facilities,

equipment, and training needed to continue providing high-quality emergency services to the community.

## **Community Engagement & Voter Information**

OFPD encourages citizens to learn more about the bond proposal by visiting Ozark Fire District website: [www.ozarkfire.org](http://www.ozarkfire.org) for information and details of upcoming public information events that will take place. Questions may also be directed to Fire Chief, Jarett Metheny at [jmetheny@ozarkfire.org](mailto:jmetheny@ozarkfire.org) or by calling District Headquarters at 417-581-4436.

The election will take place on April 8, 2025. All registered voters within OFPD are encouraged to participate. For more information on voter registration, polling locations, and absentee voting, visit [www.christiancountymo.gov](http://www.christiancountymo.gov) or contact 417-582-4340.