



FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP
POLICEMEN'S BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION
LOCAL 154
Post Office Box 154 * Somerset, NJ 08875
www.pba154.com

Sammy Hernandez
President

Kenneth Daly
SOA President

May 31, 2024

Commissioners, Franklin Township Fire District No. 3
138 Shevchenko Avenue
Somerset, NJ 08873

Dear Commissioners,

It has come to our attention that there is currently a contract dispute over fire protection services between Fire District 3 and the East Franklin Volunteer Fire Company. As you know, Franklin Township PBA and Supervisory Officers Local 154 represents the men and women of the Franklin Township Police Department.

Our members are dispatched to virtually every fire call throughout the Township. We are extremely concerned that with the declining membership in the volunteer fire service there is a possibility that even less volunteers will be responding to calls in District 3. We don't have to remind you that volunteer response during the day is already at a critical and dangerous level in a very busy fire district.

We wish the dispute was over some egregious fire safety issue, but it is our understanding that it is not. We were also advised that there was an attempt to negotiate the issues in dispute by the fire company, but that the attempt was rebuffed. It is difficult enough to get volunteers to risk their lives for free, we are at a loss as to why simple negotiations are being ignored.

Any decrease in fire call response will place our members, your brother and sister firefighters throughout the entire region, and most importantly the public we all serve in extreme and immediate danger! We would implore you all to amicably resolve this issue as quickly and expeditiously as possible.

The fire contract is your responsibility, but the preservation of life and property is a responsibility that we *all* share.

Sincerely,

Sammy Hernandez
President, PBA Local #154

Kenneth W. Daly
President, Supervisory Officers Association

Cc: Robert Vornlocker, Twp. Mgr.
Phillip Kramer, Mayor
John J. Hauss, Franklin Twp. Director of Fire Prevention
Jacquelyn A. Suarez, NJ Dept. of Community Affairs Commissioner
Richard Mikutsky, NJ Div. of Fire Safety Director