



To the Mayor and Council of the City of Filer,

The Filer City Fire Department is submitting this letter to you today to inform you that, as a Department, we are extremely displeased with the actions of the Council. It is our opinion that, during the past few years, the Council has shown contempt and personal bias towards specific members of our 1st responder family. We feel that the councils' action against one of our brothers is, in fact, an action against the whole department. The actions that have been taken against our Fulltime Police Officers, Police Reserves and our City Fire Department has proven only to have stifled volunteerism amongst the businesses of Filer and the citizens who volunteer their time to keep this community safe.

As a direct result of your decisions regarding City direction and personnel issues, some department members associated with our volunteer city emergency organizations are contemplating resignation. By recently firing Police Chief Reeves, one of our Firefighters & Scene Safety Officers, and doing so without even consulting with our Fire Department, has diminished morale, made our fire scenes less safe and have taken from us a trained and valuable member of our department. His firing, for failing to cut his budget by 10%, should have had no bearing on the Fire Dept., but Mayor Rick Dunn stated that his employment was to be terminated with the City, thereby relieving him of his affiliation with the Fire Dept. as well. Reality is that Chief Reeves was not the only Department Head who did not reduce their budget by the proposed amount. All Departments were asked to submit their new budgets with these cuts in mind.

Trying to institute a 10% cut means attempting to make cuts across the board to items such as Fire and Rescue Equipment, Personal Protective Equipment, Training, Compensation (wages), and many other categories. This places members of the community and the 1st responders themselves at greater risk during a time when there is no budget crisis.

As a Department, we do not wish to be drug into the turmoil of City politics. We only want to serve our community and provide the citizens of Filer with the best fire protection possible. We currently have 30 Firefighters and EMS personnel, who are on call 24/7/365. In the past, when circumstances such as new jobs or housing changes have taken firefighters from our ranks, we have had no problems getting new firefighters to take their place. This is something that we feel is becoming increasingly difficult to do with all of the political chaos that is being placed upon the departments.

We understand that the City Council has the final say in how our city is to be run and we are prepared to abide by those decisions. However, we feel that in the essence of transparency and

department morale, it is our obligation to inform the Council as to how those decisions are affecting the city's 1st Responders. Over the past 2 years, many of your decisions have and are continuing to affect the morale and capability of our department.

When it comes to volunteerism, local businesses are a large pool of capable individuals that our departments rely upon for recruitment to our ranks of local 1st Responders. These people support our schools, parks, Police, water, sewer, streets, Fire, etc. Due to work schedules, a large percentage of our members are only available during nighttime hours to respond to emergency 911 calls and therefore we see a significant drop-off in members who are available to respond to calls during daylight hours. For this reason, it is imperative that all 1st Responder units enlist local business persons into their ranks to act as the City's quick reaction force. Without this, the citizens of Filer would be left without coverage and may be forced to rely upon Mutual Aid from surrounding cities. This in turn, could increase our ISO rating which could drastically affect the property insurance of our local businesses and community home owners.

Last year, the council made a ruling that if you are a local business person and are also a volunteer member of any of our 1st Responder organizations, then the city is not allowed to "do business" with that company. This decision has left local business owners with the dilemma of choosing between what is best for their business and family (i.e., not volunteering so that they are eligible to sell to the city) or by diminishing their potential sales and doing their civic duty in helping to protect their community.

It is the opinion of the Filer Fire Department that, unless these individuals are Department Heads (i.e., Fire Chief, Police Chief, Public Works Directors, etc.), who may have check writing or purchase order capabilities (of which none currently have), then there should not be a conflict. In the future, if a conflict is to present itself, then there can be rules established to create a bidding situation, if purchases are to exceed a certain dollar amount. However, none of these options were even considered by this council. The Mayor and his Council simply decided that it was better for the community to not have the risk of "conflict of interest" than it was to lose volunteer emergency coverage. As a Fire Dept., this has put us at a severe disadvantage and we will soon be experiencing the loss of several city firefighters and Police Reserve members due to this policy and the many other unfortunate decisions that are being made by our City Leaders.

For these reasons, slowly but surely we are losing confidence in the city council and mayor.

Attached, please find a copy of a letter that was written by a daughter of one of our fine Firefighters.

Sincerely,

Filer City Fire Department