



## **Leavenworth County Fire District #1**

**111 East Kansas Street, Lansing, KS 66043**

**August 1, 2024**

**To: Administrator, City of Lansing  
Trustee, Delaware Township  
Trustee, High Prairie Township**

**Subject: Transition Guidelines (FD#1 Personnel)**

Leaders of Lansing, Delaware Township, and High Prairie Township: greetings!

We requested—and you gave us—a little breathing room to tend to some legal and procedural issues related to ILA dissolution. Thank you for that. It's time to turn to some transition issues affecting personnel.

A bottom line for FD#1 is that we must provide our fire- and emergency-services support to the community through December 31, 2024. At the same time, we want to look after our employees in ways that facilitate the future without compromising our no-fail mission. Attached is a copy of a transition letter that we have given to each of our employees to help them navigate coming changes. We hope you find it both helpful and uncontroversial.

Some key points:

- Our employees are permitted to interact with you in terms of negotiating and committing to employment. It's vital that such employment does not start until January 1, 2025.
- Please do not ask our employees directly to support your planning and preparations. Instead, contact the Chairman or Acting Chief. We will try to find ways to support you as best we can—while preserving our ability to accomplish our mission. Contacting them directly would, at a minimum, undermine our chain-of-command, place these employees in compromising positions, and possibly threaten our ability to support you in an emergency.
- Keep us posted on job offerings, job acceptances, etc. The more we know, the better we can support our employees and potentially help you. We can also assist you with developing the criteria and processes for hiring—especially the ones that go deeper than simple job descriptions.
- FD#1 will be paying all accrued compensatory and vacation time. (None of our employees are retirement-eligible, so there will be no 30% sick-time payments. Also, any potential annuities under the Firefighters Relief Association are not the responsibility of FD#1, but instead are the responsibility of the individual and the FRA to discuss and manage.)

## Transition Guidelines (FD#1 Personnel) - continued

- Recognize that the world of firefighting has changed in recent years such that fewer are entering the profession and far fewer are volunteering for same. This means that competition for prospective hires can be intense. Beyond basic pay and benefits, our experience tells us that firefighters value: high-caliber and professional leadership, good equipment, realistic training, and the chance to practice their profession. Leader selection, training, and mentoring have all taken hits in recent years—meaning that true leadership talent in the profession is increasingly scarce and is worth finding and cultivating. At the management level, firefighters serving in inspector roles experience inherent friction with businesses and local political leaders because their duties require them to uphold safety standards and the law. They require and deserve top-cover, and a good chief can provide much support.
- Chief Stackhouse's last duty day as Chief will be August 2, 2024. After that, he will be providing remote administrative support to the District as a part-time employee through December 31st. FD#1 will be announcing an interim chief shortly.

We will do our very best to assist you—subject to the limits of available manhours. Please let us know how we can help during this transition.



Rob Gaslin  
Chairman, Board of Trustees



Michael Stackhouse  
Chief

Attachment:  
Letter to FD#1 Employees