



ROCHESTER FIRE FIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

LOCAL 1071 IAFF, AFL-CIO, INC.

1425 Mt. Read Blvd., Suite 245 • Rochester, NY 14606

Phone: 585.458.9250 • Fax: 585.458.9259

WWW.IAFF1071.ORG

January 30, 2012

Dear Council Member,

On January 26, 2012, the Rochester Fire Department was dispatched to 105 Locust Street for multiple calls reporting a house fire with people trapped inside. At the time of dispatch, Engine 2 (Clinton Avenue), Engine 5 (Lyell Avenue), and Engine 8 (South Avenue) were all out of service at the Public Safety Training Center on Scottsville Road for EMS training. Further, Rescue 11 (Andrews Street) was out of service in Henrietta for annual physical examinations. This Locust Street address falls within Engine 5's first-due response district and, because Engine 5 was out of service, a more distant engine company had to be sent in their place. In addition, because Rescue 11, which is dispatched to every report of a house fire, was out of service, another engine company had to be sent in their place. Such changes in the typical dispatch flow increase response times and affect the overall outcome of the incident.

Also, at the time of dispatch, the Battalion 2 Chief (Allen Street) had to respond to the Locust Street fire from the South Avenue firehouse, where he was meeting with Truck 3 personnel. The reason for this long response is that Chief Caulfield's recent elimination of the Battalion 3 Chief now requires the Battalion 2 Chief to cover the far southern portion of the city that was once covered by the 3rd Battalion Chief. Since the Battalion Chief's response was delayed, Car 99, the on-duty Group Safety Officer (Allen Street), had to take command of the incident in the Battalion Chief's absence. This required action prevented the Group Safety Officer from focusing solely on his typical scene safety tasks and concerns. It is important to note that, on November 1, 2011, Chief Caulfield eliminated Car 99 / the Group Safety Officer position, and this position is now only occasionally staffed when members of the RFD administration deem that personnel numbers are sufficient to do so. Had the Safety Officer position not been filled during this particular shift, command responsibilities would have fallen on the next senior officer arriving on scene, further stretching the resources available to fight the fire and search for any occupants.

You may also be interested in knowing that Chief Caulfield insists on dispatching only one Truck company to house fires, despite his own rank-and-file personnel repeatedly urging him to have two Truck companies dispatched in order to ensure that all required tasks are completed as efficiently as possible. At an incident like Locust St. that means Truck companies, simultaneously begin search and rescue operations, ventilation and the laddering of the building for safety reasons and to assist in the rescue. The Locust Street fire had only Truck 2 (Dewey Avenue) dispatched on this incident. Luckily, the officer of Truck 10 (Allen Street) happened to be conducting some in-service training on Sherman Street at the time of the initial dispatch, and he took it upon himself to have the dispatcher add Truck 10 to the initial response. He knew he was the closest fire company to the Locust Street address and he knew that the additional personnel and equipment would be useful at the scene.

While searching for people reportedly trapped in the burning house, one firefighter received serious 2nd degree burns to his hands and 1st degree burns on his neck and back, he faces several weeks of recovery before returning to duty. Several other firefighters were treated for their injuries and released.

Engine 17 was damaged and removed from service at the scene as its driver attempted to maneuver it to obtain a water supply for the operation. The maneuver, a mid-street turn necessitated by the unique geography of Locust Street, is a task typically reserved for Midis, but, as of January 18, 2012, all remaining Midis were have been eliminated by Chief Caufield.

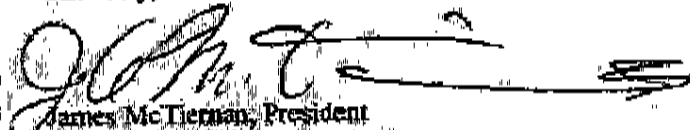
Our members will continue to do their best to overcome the problems created by Chief Caufield's repeated reductions and operational changes, but we are limited by circumstances beyond our control. This incident is but one example of how some of Chief Caufield's radical and unjustified modifications are jeopardizing the safety of both the citizens of Rochester and our members.

As always, if you have any questions or would like to set up a meeting please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

James A. McTiernan III, President
Rochester Fire Fighters Association
Local 1071, IAFF, AFL-CIO, INC.

Sincerely,



James McTiernan, President
Rochester Fire Fighters Association
Local 1071, IAFF, AFL-CIO, Inc.

CC: Larry Andolino, Esq.
Glenn Pezulo, Esq.
Mayor Thomas Richards
Local 1071 Executive Board



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January 23, 2012

Dear Council Member,

On January 18, 2012 the Rochester Fire Department completed the "Revised" 4 Year Reorganization Plan. The original reorganization 4 year plan presented to City Council in 2008 by Fire Chief John Caufield is not what has been implemented. In 2008 Rochester Fire Fighters Association IAFF Local 1071 sent each City Council member, in writing, concerns we had of the Proposed RFD 4 year plan. Local 1071 is also on Record at City Council meetings explaining our concerns with the 4 Year Plan. Due to the implemented Revised 4 Year Plan our concerns have now elevated.

The Revised 4 Year Plan implemented by Chief Caufield has had several changes not publicized in the original 4 Year Plan. The Revised Plan has far less personnel and equipment than originally presented in 2008. Chief Caufield has eliminated a Battalion Chief resulting in 2 Battalion Chiefs on duty. Eliminated the Line Scene Safety Officer and eliminated a firefighter at the Charlotte Station resulting in 4 firefighters on duty in Charlotte down from 6. Also altered in the Revised Plan is the addition of a Civilian Fire Director position at an estimated annual cost of \$117,000 plus benefits.

The original 4 Year Plan projected 89 firefighters on duty per shift compared to 99 on duty prior to the RFD Reorganization Plan. The Revised 4 Year Plan has 86 firefighters on duty. These cuts have resulted RFD personnel to decrease from 511 Uniformed in 2007 to 475 Uniformed as of today. Specialty Teams also operate with less firefighters. (High Rise, Confine Space, Trench Rescue, Swift Water, Hurst Tool and Haz-Mat are all Specialty Teams) Today there are 3 less ladder trucks operating in the City of Rochester compared to 2007. Overall there has been a 27% reduction in fire apparatus in the RFD.

In addition to the severe reduction in Suppression the RFD Exposure Control Plan is outdated. The Respiratory Control Plan is outdated. The RFD Hazard Communication Program is outdated. As you are also aware, The City of Rochester Comprehensive Emergency Plan has been outdated since 2002. The RFD Standard Operating Guidelines do not reflect the above mentioned cuts and reductions.

The position of Rochester Fire Fighters IAFF Local 1071 has never been considered in the implementation of the 4 Year Plan. Local 1071 has requested a Study for the reorganization of the RFD and to date one has yet to be commissioned. The IAFF has provided a GIS Study for the reductions and it was dismissed by the Administration.

As City Council members you have chosen to approve the City Budgets that have reduced the RFD every year for the last four years. By approving such Budgets you have essentially approved the RFD 4 Year Reorganization Plan and the Revised 4 Year Plan.

With the implementation of the final stage of reorganization of the RFD, it is our belief that a tragedy to one or more of our members and one or more citizens is imminent. Rochester Fire Fighters IAFF Local 1071 is sending you this letter so that should a tragic event take place we have once again formally stated we oppose all reductions that have occurred in the RFD and oppose the current Fire/Rescue Operations established by Chief Caufield under your Authority. The safety of Rochester Fire Fighters and the community are our single concern and the reductions under the Revised 4 Year Plan is impacting everyone's safety.

As always, please feel free to contact me if you wish to discuss any of IAFF Local 1071's concerns outlined herein and/or more. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



James A. McTiernan III, President
Rochester Fire Fighters Association
Local 1071, IAFF, AFL-CIO, INC.

CC: Larry Andolino, Esq.
Glenn Pezulo, Esq.
Harold Schaitberger, IAFF General President
Michael McManus, NYSPFFA President
Mayor Thomas Richards