



Palm Beach County
Fire Rescue

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PALM BEACH COUNTY FIRE RESCUE

Inter-Office Memorandum

DATE: October 13, 2023

TO: All Personnel

FROM: Patrick J. Kennedy, Fire Chief

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pat J. Kennedy".

I want to express my deep pride and gratitude for the dedication and focus every one of you has displayed in serving and protecting our community. The impacts of global, national, state, and local events have never changed how you care for and protect our entire community. I recently visited fire stations where I was again reminded of just how much goes into maintaining the skills firefighters possess. On this day, units provided zone coverage, attended countywide on-duty training, and responded to emergency calls. One thing that never stops is PBCFR's commitment to training and being innovative. I find comfort in knowing that we are uniquely prepared to meet the needs of the communities we serve and to be the essential force multiplier for others with our All Hazards Response.

One of the communities which we have had the privilege to serve is the Town of Jupiter. I know how much we all care about the Jupiter Town Council's decision to abruptly terminate our Interlocal Agreement to provide fire rescue services to the residents of Jupiter. Despite the circumstances, you have prioritized your duties and placed our residents' well-being first. You are a beacon of strength and reliability. Your professionalism and resilience are truly inspiring!

I recognize that the Town's announcement impacts everyone in our department. Jupiter residents are *our* friends, *our* neighbors, and *our* family. We do not take lightly separating from a community we have served for nearly 40 years. Everyone must know that the Town of Jupiter has never once complained about your excellent service or compassionate care. The Council has publicly stated that their decision is based on dollars and cents. The Town of Jupiter has conveyed much information regarding the separation. I know that it is essential that we provide you with the facts. In line with my previous communications, I will release shareable information that is deemed factual.

Interlocal Agreement/Contract:

- The TOJ Council moved to start its own Fire Department on August 15, 2023.
- The Town acknowledged that the 36-month cancellation period started on October 1, 2023.

Chief's comments to the media:

"PBCFR has a 99% satisfaction rating in Jupiter. We believe that our experience in working to meet the community's needs and proven affirmative record make us uniquely suited to provide the best protection services. It would be and always has been our desire to continue providing all-hazards fire rescue services to this long-served community. We are not in support of this change and do not believe the comparison presented before the Jupiter Town Council was truly representative of the challenges in creating another fire rescue department and certainly not an equal. We appreciate all of the support from the citizens."

Service Delivery:

- As trusted servants, we will work on plans to ensure the professional service continues to the Jupiter community over the 36-month cancellation period. Understandably, PBCFR has existing service areas in unincorporated areas and nearby municipalities. We will be working on our service delivery model to ensure the highest degree of service to our citizens and visitors, as well as the safety of our firefighters in those areas. We will work to solidify those plans and ensure they meet the high standards of excellence representing Palm Beach County Fire Rescue.

PBCFR Fire Stations:

- FS 18 & FS 19 - PBCFR has not entered into or considered any negotiations regarding these stations. PBCFR has every intention to continue operating from those facilities.
- FS 16 - PBCFR will continue to work with the County Attorney's office regarding PBCFR's rights and obligations regarding this fire station.

We must realize that many community residents were caught off guard by the Town's intent to cancel a contract before the agreement was in force. I have heard stories of overwhelming support from neighborhoods and communities rallying to keep PBCFR as their fire rescue department. I will remain encouraged because of the PBCFR employees who love and care for all of their communities, as well as the support we receive from those who trust us to stay ready to serve them in their time of need.

I realize that false or inaccurate information can be used to divide or discourage our members. Please remain steadfast and united as we work through this developing period in our department's history. Together, we can overcome any obstacle as we aim for the best possible outcome for everyone. We are all working together for the present and the future. The Town of Jupiter service contract does not define PBCFR; our people do.