

December 10, 2017

Mr. Mike Bailey  
Oakland Township Supervisor  
4393 Collins Rd.  
Rochester, Michigan 48306

Dear Mr. Bailey,

Oakland Township Emergency Response Deficiencies

I'm writing to you as a concerned resident. In my opinion, the Oakland Township Manager and Board of Trustees continue to put Oakland Township residents and first responders at significant risk regarding emergency services. Their collective failure to provide minimum acceptable levels of qualified staffing for fire and emergency medical responses puts all residents and first responders at risk of life and property.

As you are aware, I provided a significant amount of volunteer consulting services to the Oakland Township Fire Department in support of developing a 10-year Strategic Operating Plan (SOP) in 2015. The SOP highlighted key deficiencies in required emergency services manpower levels and response times. The deficiencies are measured against the required Oakland County Medical Control Authority (OCMCA) staffing levels to operate Advanced Life Support (ALS) units within Oakland County and standards from the National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) for firefighting. In addition to these standards, the SOP benchmarking data of comparable surrounding communities highlighted Oakland Township's emergency services staffing deficiencies.

The SOP was reviewed with the Board of Trustees' Fire Sub-Committee consisting of Ms. Buxar, Mr. Ferriolo, and Mr. Giannangeli, and the Township Manager, Mr. Stuart, during 2015. Additionally, residents and a consultant have recently highlighted the same deficiencies. Unfortunately, Oakland Township management and leadership have seemingly ignored the required emergency services staffing requirements and the many warnings of staffing/response time deficiencies provided since at least 2015, if not before then.

The OCMCA standard requires licensed communities providing ALS service to staff **each ALS unit at a minimum** with 1 paramedic and 1 emergency medical technician (EMT) at all times. Oakland Township's ALS staffing fails to meet these standards and as a consequence significantly impacts response time and capabilities negatively. The lack of having at least 2 qualified medical/firefighters on duty 24/7 at each station to operate each ALS unit and firefighting equipment places the first responders, distressed resident(s) and property at risk.

The approval and construction of the new Blossom Ridge and Carillon Creek developments, which we have been told will be predominantly occupied by the disabled, will create additional emergency services demand. Based upon the designed demographics of these new housing developments, the demand for emergency medical services will likely be at a higher frequency than the current Township average. Considering this increasing demand for emergency services in the southwest district of the Township, please recognize that under the current staffing and locations of Station #1 and #2, it will not be sufficient to provide the required “90% Fractile” response times for these residents. Perhaps Mr. Mocerri recognized this response time deficiency for District #7 and therefore offered the land and building to place an ALS unit on the Carillon Creek property. From a marketing perspective, Blossom Ridge and Carillon Creek developments do not need a cloud of inadequate emergency services hanging over the selling and leasing of these units. From a common-sense perspective, these new developments of 300+ units primarily designed for the disabled require capable emergency services that are in compliance.

Oakland Township is not immune to the growing opioid crisis, medical emergencies in general, fires or vehicular accidents. It is my opinion that it is only a matter of time until a fatal event happens in Oakland Township that may be viewed as preventable if the Township emergency response was staffed as required by the ALS operating license and NFPA guidelines. A detailed discovery process as a part of a lawsuit likely would reveal the staffing/response time deficiencies, the significant paper trail highlighting these deficiencies, the knowledge of these deficiencies by Township leadership and witnesses to confirm these known deficiencies. I encourage you to seek legal guidance on the risk of a negligence finding against Oakland Township in the event of a wrongful death lawsuit, and the exposure to its’ taxpayers.

Mr. Bailey, as a resident with knowledge of the on-going staffing and response time deficiencies, I find it very concerning that management and leadership have failed to take the appropriate actions during the past 2+ years to adequately staff the Oakland Township Fire Department. Excuses of the past, not wanting to place an increased millage on the ballot due to political concerns to fund the needed staffing, feigned calls of lack of knowledge of the standards, a view of immunity to law suits, or a position that Paid-On-Call (POC) staffing models as a component of the core staffing required to meet the OCMCA standards are all unacceptable. Oakland Township first responders and residents deserve an emergency response service capable of providing at least minimum acceptable performance, and more appropriately, service and capability at least on par with other Oakland County communities. Please stop ignoring the need to provide the staffing at each station with a minimum of 2 full time qualified employees 24/7 so that each ALS unit can respond to medical emergencies with the required staffing and our fire engines can respond immediately rather than waiting for POC members to arrive at the station before the units can proceed to the fire. Oakland Township first responders want to save lives and properties. Provide them with the resources so they can do their important public service safely and with the full capabilities to save lives. Oakland Township residents and first responders rely on their elected officials to follow the laws, comply with emergency service standards and to provide the capability to adequately respond when the situation demands. It’s time to take immediate action Mr. Bailey.

Sincerely,

Marty McQuade  
Hills of Oakland  
Oakland Township

cc:

Ms. Robin Buxar - Trustee  
Mr. Frank Ferriolo - Trustee  
Mr. John Giannangeli - Trustee  
Mrs. Jeanne Langlois - Treasurer  
Ms. Lana Mangiapane - Trustee  
Mrs. Karen Reilly - Clerk  
Mr. Dale Stuart - Township Manager  
Mr. Paul Strelchuk - Fire Chief and Emergency Manager  
Mr. Dan Kelly - Township Attorney