

January 27, 2018

Mike Bailey
Robin Buxar
Frank Ferriolo
John Giannangeli
Jeanne Langlois
Lana Mangiapane
Karen Reilly

Oakland Township Emergency Response Deficiencies

I am writing to all members of Oakland Township's Board of Trustees in hopes of receiving a response and immediate action on what I consider to be a critical public safety issue for the residents of the township and our dedicated first responders. The township needs a courageous Trustee to standup for our first responders and residents' life and property protection. I wrote a letter to Mr. Mike Bailey, Oakland Township Supervisor, on December 10, 2017 detailing my concern relative to the on-going non-compliant staffing of Oakland Township's Advanced Life Support EMS units and understaffed fire protection services. I believe the staffing non-compliance has been known at a minimum to the Fire Subcommittee, Township Manager and Fire Chief since at least 2015, if not before. I was disappointed that Mr. Bailey did not consider to provide a response to me given the importance and criticality of this issue. The feedback provided to the public since the writing of my December 10, 2017 letter on this issue has been one of Mr. Stuart advising he and Chief Strelchuk are working on the issue, Mr. Ferriolo and Ms. Buxar suggesting their "hands have been tied" by the recent union negotiations, Mr. Ferriolo advising Mr. Stuart April or May is OK to provide a plan/recommendation if that is the time he requires, Mr. Ferriolo commenting that the Fire Subcommittee "is engaged and ready to serve" although no substantive action has been taken since the committee was formed in 2015, and Mr. Bailey acknowledged to Mr. Stuart that it is a difficult task to get your arms around, however, the Board is staying out of it so there are not "too many cooks in the kitchen".

Please understand my impatience to want Oakland Township to adequately staff our ALS units, to be in compliance with the State of Michigan and Oakland County Medical Control Authority (OCMCA) rules and protocols to operate an ALS ambulance, and to provide emergency medical and fire fighting services that have the required capability to save lives, property and minimize risks to our first responders. I believe 2+ years of inaction on such an important public safety issue is reprehensible and is without any legitimate justification. I have heard members of the Board say public safety is their first priority, however, the collective actions of this Board and Township leadership over the past 2+ years suggests otherwise.

I watched the video of the January 23, 2018 BOT meeting and found many of the comments from Board members on this issue quite remarkable and disingenuous. Are you as an elected official of Oakland Township suggesting that the Board's " hands have been tied" since 2015

when the issues were formally identified and a Fire Subcommittee was formed of Trustees Buxar, Ferriolo and Giannangeli to address Oakland Township Fire Department (OTFD) issues? Are you suggesting that taking no substantive action since 2015 reflects public safety is your first priority? Are you suggesting that Oakland Township's union negotiation is a predetermining and legitimate reason to not comply with the OCMCA license requirements to operate ALS units in the township and for this Board to take no corrective action for over 2+ years? Are you suggesting that it is appropriate for the Board to not become involved in resolving this issue since 2015 because you do not want to distract the Township Manager from making a plan and recommendation? Are you suggesting as Trustee Buxar remarked that we'll "keep asking" in reference to Mr. Stuart developing a plan is sufficient action by this Board on such a critical issue? This Board of Trustees has failed Oakland Township's residents and first responders, and is complicit in operating our ALS units illegally. This is not a personal attack, but a recognition of what has occurred between 2015 and 2018.

Based upon your inability to legally staff our ALS units, I strongly encourage you to seek assistance from the Oakland County Medical Control Authority to resolve any questions you may have relative to the requirements to operate ALS units in Oakland County so that they can clarify any issue that may be impeding your ability to take action. I'm confident they will be very responsive to your questions and provide very clear direction. I believe the OCMCA will advise you to either staff the ALS units with 1 paramedic + 1 EMT at all times or do not operate as an ALS service provider in Oakland County. I suggest that if you do not want to provide compliant ALS service to the residents, that you explain this position in detail to the community so residents have an opportunity to provide feedback on how they feel about having advanced life support emergency capabilities in Oakland Township that meets State and Oakland County requirements. Additionally, if the Township decides not to staff to legally operate ALS units, the OTFD will continue to be in an understaffed position to adequately respond to fires and execute home entry/rescue operations. Today, most residents assume their elected leaders are following the law and providing ALS emergency services according to the license requirements and fire protection in line with NFPA guidelines. It is not optional to operate ALS units in Oakland County with only 1 paramedic on-board and hope additional personnel will arrive on the scene in time. It is misleading to represent that the OTFD can protect residents' lives and property in fire situations where timely home entry/rescue is required.

In my opinion, the time for this Board to "keep asking" expired long ago. It is time to stop asking and being complacent with public safety and to start taking immediate action. I recommend a Special Meeting be called immediately to direct the Township Manager and Fire Chief to schedule Paid-On-Call EMT's in combination with contract personnel to fill any schedule gaps to staff Station #1 and #2 ALS units with 1 paramedic and 1 EMT on a 24/7 schedule. This is the minimum ALS operating license requirement. I further recommend that you direct the Township Manager and Fire Chief Strelchuk to begin to hire 6 additional FTE's to sustainably staff both ALS units, 24/7, with a minimum qualification of an EMT certification with a plan to upgrade the training and certification of these individuals to paramedic/firefighters over the next 12 months. In my opinion, operating with volunteers and contract personnel is not

a long term reliable staffing strategy. The time for excuses and indecision has run out. It is time to stop putting Oakland Township lives and first responders at risk. Please protect the community you were elected to serve.

Sincerely,

Marty McQuade
Hills of Oakland
Oakland Township

cc: Paul Strelchuk
Dan Kelly