



## **LA CROSSE AREA PROFESSIONAL FIREFIGHTERS LOCAL 127**

N1705 Lost Ridge Rd. La Crosse, WI 54601 (920)318-6934

Mayor Reynolds & HAFD Chair Barlow,

We write to express the concerns of IAFF Local 127 Firefighters in the possible shared services agreement that is currently being discussed between the City of La Crosse and the Holmen Area Fire Department.

This process to date has largely left out one of the most important pieces of this crucial agreement, Labor. As the firefighters that will be tasked with making sure this agreement is successful upon execution, the City and the Fire Board have kept the firefighters in the dark of expectations, processes, and most importantly, the new working conditions for both sets of firefighters.

Wages, hours and working conditions are mandatory subjects of bargaining according to MERA. Local 127 Leadership was finally contacted by Mr. Roemer on May 20th 2021. To date we have had only a few brief meetings to begin the process of discussing a transition to 24 hour shifts. This transition alone has many moving parts and directly affects the hours and working conditions of the Holmen Firefighters, which as stated above are mandatory subjects of bargaining. We were told that the MOU could be accessed by an open records request, which further shows the parties' unwillingness to engage with, utilize, and get "buy in" from the most important piece of this moving target, the firefighters.

The MOU referenced above is much more than a solution for Holmen Area Fire Departments Administrative needs. It will have a major impact on the City of La Crosse, La Crosse Fire Department, and Local 127 Firefighters that represent the City. As a result there will be mandatory subjects of bargaining that will affect members in La Crosse as well. We have not been contacted to discuss any of these issues.

Local 127 wants a staffing model for HAFD to succeed more than anyone, not only for the safety of the community, but also for the safety of our members. We have been stating this since the first HAFD contract was bargained many years ago and stand ready to assist in raising the level of service of the HAFD to what it needs to be and what the citizens deserve.



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That being said, this isn't as quick and simple as renting firefighters from La Crosse to Holmen. The members of both bargaining groups in Local 127 hold an important role and deserve a seat at the table for these discussions. As time seems to be an important factor for this transition, we are requesting a meeting of ALL parties involved in the same room to hear what the issues are, what the offered solutions are, and how this will ultimately affect the members of Local 127. Only then can we be ready to properly bargain the impact of these changes as required by Wisconsin State Statute 111.70.

Regards,

Local 127 Executive Board