

Dear Residents,

On March 22, 2017, Braddock Hills Borough Council decertified the Braddock Hills Volunteer Fire Department as the officially recognized fire department for the Borough to provide fire protection and related services. The Borough has entered into a Fire Services Agreement with the North Braddock Volunteer Fire Department that was effective April 12, 2017. Although the matter was discussed at previous council meetings, we feel that it is necessary inform the Borough's residents of this change and the reasons for the change as well.

This was an extremely difficult decision for Borough Council, but was a necessary one. It is Council's responsibility to provide adequate police, ambulance, and fire service to the Borough's residents and businesses. In June of 2013, Borough Council held a public meeting to discuss the staffing of the Borough's Fire Department. The members of the Fire Department at that time committed to making an effort to actively seek additional volunteers to ensure that the Fire Department was staffed to provide adequate fire protection services in the Borough. Unfortunately, the Fire Department did not obtain a sufficient number of volunteers since the public meeting in June 2013 to adequately staff the Fire Department. Council even made efforts to assist them by providing applications for volunteers at the Borough's municipal office and posted requests for community support on the community sign outside the Borough's Municipal Building. In Council's considered judgment, there now existed an insufficient number of volunteers to respond to emergency situations. The lack of staffing of the Fire Department was more critical especially during daylight hours when most of the members of the Fire Department were employed outside of Braddock Hills and could not respond to a call. Therefore, the decision was made to ensure the safety of the community by seeking an alternative source to provide fire protection services.

The North Braddock Volunteer Fire Department has been responding to fire and emergency calls in the Borough for the past several years under a Mutual Aid Agreement. In most call instances, because of the proximity to the Borough, they were the first fire department on the scene. They are familiar with the Borough's streets and locations of fire hydrants. They are extremely well staffed and trained. They have a sufficient amount of equipment to respond to fires and can do so quickly because of their close location to the Borough. Moreover; although certainly not the paramount consideration for the change, their cost for fire protection services is \$15,000.00 annually. It is anticipated that the cost for their services will result in a savings to the Borough who has been responsible for vehicle, liability and workman's compensation insurances and fuel costs associated with the Borough's Fire Department.

Council and the Mayor are extremely appreciative and grateful for those volunteers, present and past, who have risk their lives for the community and served in our Fire Department. Not only did they risk their lives, but they spent countless hours away from their families fighting fires and training. They have served this community well for decades. We are forever grateful for their service.

We ask our residents to welcome the new fire department, which we feel will be better suited to effectively serve our municipality. We sincerely hope this statement has been helpful to answer any questions that you may have regarding this matter. Again, council made this decision with great sadness and a heavy heart, but knew it was necessary for the safety of our residents.

Sincerely,

Charles Arthrell
Council President