

Formal Request to PPVFD & EMS Board Members October 22, 2007

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Board:

First, I would like to apologize to any Board members that may have been offended by the recent petition for the PPOA membership to amend the PPOA By-Laws to allow for a \$10 assessment, dedicated to the PPVFD & EMS. The intent was never to offend anyone.

After 13 years of serving as Fire Chief, I took the initiative on my own for several reasons. First, we cannot continue to operate in the current unstable financial condition, which has been communicated numerous times to the PPOA membership. Secondly, we now have momentum from the publicity and calling campaigns during the past year for monthly donations. Thirdly, it is readily apparent from meetings held with PPOA leadership, that the only option left to secure our financial future is to seek financial commitment from every PPOA member. Fourth, a formal vote was taken and unanimously passed by the members present at our October 9th meeting, to petition the PPOA membership and place this on the Ballot for the March 2008 election. Shortly after this vote, PPOA quietly announced that they would seek a dues increase next spring. With no other changes considered, some of us have now apparently decided we should defer our petition, since the PPOA will also be seeking an increase. Our decision making process absolutely should not be influenced by the PPOA Board, but rather by our needs, which have been communicated to so many PPOA members.

Timing! I strongly believe that if we wait 17 months until March 2009 to place this on the Ballot, we will have lost our momentum with all the members of the PPOA to whom we have just communicated our urgent sense of financial need. Based on history, it is likely that this initial PPOA dues increase initiative will not pass in March of 2008 and will subsequently be placed on the March 2009 Ballot for a second try.

The PPOA By-Laws state that the By-Laws Committee needs up to 45 days to review requests for By-Laws changes prior to sending their recommendation to the PPOA Board. The PPOA Board would then have to review and vote on it in a December or January open Board meeting, as to

whether or not they support placing the initiative on the March Ballot. As well over the required 50 signatures, which were easily obtained in a couple of hours, whether the Board supports placement of the initiative or not, they will not be able to stop it from going forward, under Article 16 of the By-laws. I concluded that time was of the essence in getting this done in time to ensure it gets it on the Ballot for the March 2008.

Competition? We are not in competition with the PPOA for an increase in dues! We are simply requesting that each PPOA member be given the opportunity to vote on a \$10 per month dedicated assessment. Most of the PPOA members who actually vote are already giving \$10 per month or more. They will be voting to have the people who may not vote and are not donating to give a \$10 contribution to share in the financial burden. For many voters who are giving more than \$10 per month, they may actually have a decrease in monthly expense. Remember, a significant majority of the members who vote are currently donating \$10 per month. This is their opportunity to require that everyone share in the expense of Emergency Services. The PPOA dues increase plan is a separate issue, complete with its own complexities, and should not be confused with our requirements. This difference will be readily visible to the rank and file PPOA members. Clearly Emergency Services benefit ALL PPOA members, not just special interest groups that may derive more personal benefits from a PPOA dues increase. As members of the PPVFD/EMS Board, we cannot make decisions based upon what the PPOA is doing, or wants us to do. We must make decisions that are in the best interests of the PPVFD & EMS.

We cannot allow the PPOA to influence and control our business or destiny. We already allowed a PPOA Ad-hoc group to go through our books and review our operations without prior discussion with us as to their purpose. PPOA would never allow this to be done with their books and operations. Remember, the PPOA Board and Management eliminated Security Dispatch, knowing full well the financial impact it would place on the PPVFD & EMS, Inc. They did it because it was in their best interest to do so and published an annual savings of \$117,000! Now it is time to do what is in the best interest of the PPVFD & EMS to secure our financial future!

On October 17th, under the provisions of Article 9, Section 4 of the PPOA By-Laws, I formally submitted to the By-Laws committee Chairman, a Petition with 130 signatures, By-Laws amendment and accompanying

assessment language to amend the By-Laws to include a \$10 dedicated assessment for the PPVFD & EMS.

Tonight, the PPVFD & EMS Board of Directors must make an important decision, with far reaching consequences! There are basically three alternatives. Careful and thoughtful consideration is needed.

1. Rescind the vote and not support the placement of the initiative on the March 2008 Ballot! This decision will alienate many members of the PPVFD & EMS, Auxiliary and PPOA who already support us! They will want to know why this Board is allowing the PPOA Board to control our decision making process and question our real need for funding! We may even lose some of our funding! They will never understand why we would not want all PPOA members to contribute. In the end, we will lose the confidence and trust of many members of the PPVFD & EMS and Auxiliary and the community as a whole.

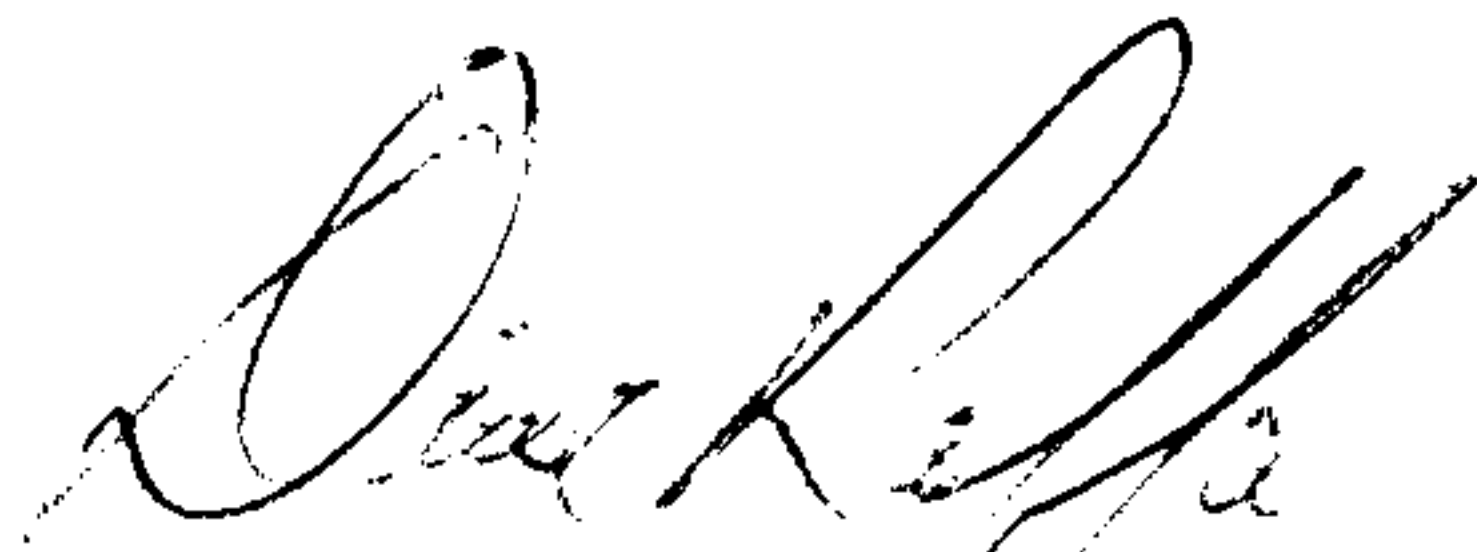
2. Do Nothing! The initiative to get on the ballot is done. Do not change anything and let the process take its course. If this Ballot is successful, we have secured our financial future. If not, you can blame the Fire Chief. Worst case scenario, we can do what the PPOA does with their initiatives, and place it on the 2009 Ballot, likely along with another attempted PPOA dues increase. The consequence of doing nothing is that it reduces the likelihood of the initiative passing. If our board does nothing, it will also serve to confuse many members of the PPVFD & EMS and Auxiliary and the community as a whole, again impacting our credibility.

3. Endorse the initiative to place this amendment on the March 2008 Ballot! The campaign is to promote the sharing of the savings from homeowners insurance and spread the funding of the PPVFD & EMS to all members we serve. This \$10, currently the average monthly contribution, will secure our financial future. Remember, this is NOT actually a dues increase to a significant majority of those members who vote! Your support WILL make a difference in our success. **It is my fervent desire and strong recommendation that you will choose to take this approach and support the initiative as a group!**

In closing, think back to when we had the same Board members, Security Dispatch and were financially stable. Our Board meetings went smoothly and we were making progress. We now have numerous disagreements and

we spend most of the time in our meetings discussing funding and the impact the PPOA has had on our corporation. The volunteer members of the PPVFD & EMS and part-time paid Paramedics are waiting for our decision tonight to determine if we will do what is right for our corporation and membership. If we rescind the vote of October 9th and back down to the PPOA, I am afraid you will have lost the credibility and respect of many members of the PPVFD & EMS and Auxiliary and the community as a whole. Everyone within our operation is well aware of what has taken place recently. Word is also out within the community and they will likely soon become more aware of the same issues. Many of the PPVFD members have requested a meeting with our Board to voice their concerns. I have updated the members of the PPVFD and leadership of the Auxiliary on my actions and they agree that the time to place this on the ballot is now. They will endorse my proposed Amendment to the PPOA By-Laws and support me in the coming months. Also, I have secured key support from many diverse factions within the community. I firmly believe the community as a whole will support passage of this critically important initiative. The only remaining question to answer tonight is, will you?

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Dave Raffa".

Dave Raffa

Pecan Plantation Fire Chief