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HIAWATHA FIRE-RESCUE

MEMORANDUM

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR, HIAWATHA CITY COUNCIL

FROM: MIKE NESSLAGE, FIRE CHIEF

SUBJECT: 28E AGREEMENT WITH MONROE TOWNSHIP AND CITY OF ROBINS

DATE: 5/9/2019

Before you on the agenda are two separate but nearly identical items. 28E agreements for closest unit response, or Automatic Mutual Aid. As Fire Departments, it is our desire to provide the best possible response to fires, without regard to boundaries or political areas. Under our present situation, when we have a fire, we must specifically get on radio and request each agency that we want to respond. This can be time-consuming and effectively delay the arrival of additional help. With this automatic aid agreement, we are forming a standing mutual aid request, and all three departments will be simultaneously dispatched to any structure fire occurring within Hiawatha, Robins, or Monroe Township. These agreements were approved by Robins and Monroe on May 6th.

This provides many benefits. First, it will remove any delay in having to "manually" request assistance. Second, it will place additional resources on the scene of an emergency faster. Thirdly, if an agency is delayed in responding to their own emergency for some reason, two other agencies have already been dispatched. Finally, it allows us to take advantage of the combined resources and staff of 3 agencies.

The system should work as follows. Upon receipt of a call regarding a structure fire in any of the three jurisdictions, Linn County should page all three departments at the same time. The primary agency will make their normal response. The assisting agencies will send an engine, a tanker, or both depending on where the incident is. Each agency has established zones that determine what the response is. Our zones are simply city and rural.

I met with the Cedar Rapids Fire Chief on Tuesday and we discussed a similar agreement. As you know, we are already responding frequently into Cedar Rapids for fires and he and I both believe that will continue and most likely increase.

The fire service is changing. There are fewer people volunteering at small departments. Staffing is a concern even at larger departments. There is greater demand placed on departments and it is critical that we are able to put an effective firefighting force at an incident to ensure both public and responder safety. Forming regionally coalitions that can improve the delivery of fire services to the community is a path that we can take to improve that response.

Upon execution of the agreements, we will be working with Linn County Dispatch to execute that portion of the program.