



1399 Dean Forest Road
Savannah, GA 31405

Dispatch Phone: (912) 355-6688
Business Office: (912) 354-1011

May 25, 2023

Michael Kaigler, County Manager
Chatham County, GA
P.O. Box 8161
Savannah, GA 31412

Dear Mr. ~~Kaigler~~ ^{Michael}:

Chatham Emergency Services' (CES) Board of Directors met May 17, 2023. They instructed me to write this letter to you in response to your budget letter dated April 5, 2023 and your May 1, 2023 letter with Attorney Pretorius' attached letter, dated April 26, 2023. Attorney Pretorius is incorrect in stating that there is no dispute as he is referring to the upcoming budget approval process. CES is not.

CES continues to have a serious dispute in our current Fire Protection Services Agreement over current year funding and how it relates to your letter of April 5, 2023. CES has complied with all terms of the agreement and in good faith invoked Article III, Section 7., of the existing Fire Protection Services Agreement - Dispute Resolution for this, current year as a result of your April 5th letter. The reasons were outlined in an email to Ms. Linda Cramer on April 21, 2023 at 1:28pm. Although CES did meet with you and some staff members recently to discuss the next fiscal year budget, it was not the meeting that CES' Board of Directors requested in CES' April 20, 2023 correspondence.

CES' Board continues to assert that CES wants the meeting(s) as previously requested. Frankly, CES is mystified that all but two of the County Commissioners refuse to meet with their public safety partners at one of our Fire Stations. CES has made numerous requests for such meetings. CES reiterates that the Board President Tim Blanco, three other CES Board Members and I would like to meet with Chairman Ellis, Commissioners Farrell, Kicklighter, and Milton who have Unincorporated Areas in their Districts, along with you. We will offer a second meeting with the Chairman and the remaining County Commissioners, except for Commissioner Whitely who has told us that he does not need to be present as he is well educated on the dispute. We are not available to meet prior to June 7, 2023.

In the meeting with you on Monday, May 15th and again on Wednesday, May 17th, CES did not get to speak about the dispute we claim. You said in the first meeting "We're not talking about anything in the past. We are only talking about things in the future," and the talk was all about the upcoming budget approval process. Again, our dispute is with the current Fire Protection contract and the three points contained in your April 5th letter.

We do however expect an addition dispute over the amount you will propose for next year's fire budget.



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We will be moving to the next step outlined in the agreement and choosing a mediator according to Article III, Paragraph 7., of the current existing Fire Protection Services Agreement, Dispute Resolution. As we move to the next step of dispute resolution, CES is submitting the name of Susan Cox as a mediator. CES would much prefer to have the face-to-face meetings with Commissioners we have been requesting as we hope the parties will be able to come to an amicable resolution once they share their relevant information.

We will be happy to host the meeting at Fire Station 10, 48 Heathcoat Circle, just off of Ogeechee Road. Parking is in the rear or along the street. We look forward to your reply.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Best Regards,

Conrad T. Kearns, MBA, Paramedic, CEMSO
CEO, Chatham Emergency Services
Board Member, American Ambulance Association
Secretary, Georgia Ambulance Providers Association
Past President, National Association of EMTs
(912) 354-1011 – O
(727) 480-1111 – C
ckearns@chathames.org

cc: Chairman Ellis
Commissioner Helen Stone
Commissioner Jean Rivers
Commissioner Bobby Lockett
Commissioner Patrick Farrell
Commissioner Tanya Milton

Commissioner Aaron Whitely
Commissioner Dean Kicklighter
Commissioner Kenneth Adams
Linda Cramer
CES Board of Directors

Attachment