



## Frankton Volunteer Fire Dept.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **FRANKTON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT AND LAFAYETTE TOWNSHIP IN MERGER TALKS**

#### **Rumors of Fire Department closure put to rest as FVFD prepares for a brighter future**

Rumors flew in Frankton this week after the Town of Frankton issued notice that it would cancel Frankton Volunteer Fire Department's contract in September of this year. This came after FVFD attempted to negotiate with all three of its contracted entities (the Town of Frankton, Lafayette Township and Jackson Township) in order to address ongoing budgetary concerns, and a subsequent decision by the department to pursue a merger with Lafayette Township.

Responding to the rumors in town, department spokesperson Debbie Gates said, "We're not sure how the rumors got started, but we're definitely not closing and we have no intention of 'abandoning' our neighbors in the Town of Frankton. It's business as usual for us, for as long as we're under contract to the town."

FVFD Board Chairman Tony Crum cited a need for financial stability as the primary motivation for the department in seeking the merger, which will provide improved fire and emergency services and a more stable financial foundation for the department. "This was a business decision that had to be made," said Crum. "Merging with Lafayette Township offers us the opportunity to provide even better fire and emergency protection services for our entire coverage area. If it wasn't for Steve Anderson and the Lafayette Township Advisory Board and their willingness to take over the fire department, then we would be looking at closing our doors for good."

After months of discussion with all the covered entities, Lafayette Township, already providing almost 60% of FVFD's contracted funding, was the only one to offer concrete solutions to the department's concerns, so FVFD notified the Town of Frankton and Jackson Township that it was seeking a merger with Lafayette Township. The town was also notified that the department, currently operating under an automatic one-year-extension of the 2013 contract, would not be signing the 2014 fire protection contract since the town would need to negotiate with Lafayette Township for services of the soon-to-be-merged department.

FVFD Chief Brandon Leisure stated, "One of the many duties of being Fire Chief is to provide the tools,

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equipment, and training to deliver a service in a safe and effective manner. This merger will give the fire department the financial stability to be able to provide a better service to the entities that we serve.”

“We want to reassure the residents of Frankton that our commitment to the town remains strong,” said Gates, “and FVFD continues to be ready and willing to respond to incidents anywhere in our coverage area.”

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NOTE: FVFD has prepared an info sheet to help clarify the current situation for town residents. That info sheet is attached to this press release. For additional information, feel free to contact the following:

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