

Town of Holland

Sheboygan County, Wisconsin

April 27, 2009

Gene Jentink
President, Village of Cedar Grove
Village of Cedar Grove
22 Willow Avenue
Cedar Grove, WI 53013

Re: Renegotiation of the Fire Department Agreement

Gene Jentink:

Our entire Town Board must admit that we are baffled by the Village Board's letter sent to me by e-mail on April 13 at 10:15 PM (marked "Draft"). I was equally perplexed by your opening comments to our third negotiation meeting in which you stated that we had made no progress and questioned the Town Board's intentions in the negotiations. We had actually achieved general consensus on many smaller points in the first two meetings, and identified specific data needs that both the Town and Village board members wanted for our next meeting (3rd meeting). In fact, the 3rd meeting led to agreement on virtually all matters, even the cost of water and hook-ups, which we understand is the key issue for the Village. It was the Village Board that asked for more time to develop a different and simpler approach to the agreement we had arrived at.

Following that meeting, I provided possible meeting dates and asked for the Village Board to select what would work best for you. Instead of selecting a meeting date, I received the letter from the Village Board stating your intention to dissolve the joint fire department. You asked for our comments on a decision that is entirely within your right to make unilaterally.

We can see no scenario in which the Town and/or the Village would be providing our citizens a more cost-efficient or technically proficient fire protection service by each of us working independently. With that said, it is clearly not in our jurisdiction to tell you what you should or should not do for your constituents. You and the Village Board need to make this decision for yourselves. If dissolution is your decision, as you clearly have the right to do, then we will begin negotiations with you to equitably divide the assets of

the department, just as we have been diligently working on the renewal of our current agreement.

The Town Board has referred the question of the end date of our current agreement to our attorney, Gerry Antoine. You should anticipate a letter from him explaining the Town's legal position on that issue.

Today we heard through Karen Otte that you have suggested three meeting dates. May 5 seems to work the best. We tentatively penciled in this meeting for 7:30 PM at the library. We will need two things to verify this meeting:

- Confirmation from you that this time and location works for you, and
- The topic of discussion so we can properly post the notice for this meeting – negotiations on the dissolution of the joint fire department, or continuing negotiations on a new agreement to operate a joint fire department.

If you are concerned about a potentially larger public audience, we would like to offer the use of the town hall for this meeting. The hall will handle a larger audience and is equipped with a sound system that will allow everyone to hear the comments from all board members.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Don Becker".

Donald W. Becker
Chairman, Town of Holland