



McLENDON-CHISHOLM FIRE DEPARTMENT

**Emergency: Dial 911
Station 1: 469-338-0214
1250 South Highway 205**

Press Release

For Immediate Release

Chief Robert Jones, Chief, McLendon-Chisholm Fire Department, 214-529-6915 (cell) or rjones@mcvfd.net

City of McLendon-Chisholm Fails to Reach Agreement with the McLendon-Chisholm Volunteer Fire Department for Fire and Emergency Services

(March 21, 2018 — Rockwall County, Texas) Negotiators for the City of McLendon-Chisholm and the McLendon-Chisholm Volunteer Fire Department (MCVFD) failed to agree on a comprehensive framework to provide fire and emergency service coverage for McLendon-Chisholm for the remainder of 2018.

Major milestones in the failed negotiation are shown below:

- The City of McLendon-Chisholm turned-down an offer made by the MCVFD that could have created a city-owned fire department at virtually no cost to the city or its taxpayers by offering to allow the city to absorb in total the department's \$1.4M in assets and personnel, including two fire stations, four fire apparatus and all associated firefighting equipment. In return the city would guarantee to maintain a combined department for two years, transition the existing firefighters, and maintain the four full time certified firefighters who man the station daily from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM.
- The City proposed a contract that was not fully coordinated with the MCVFD negotiators and focused on the City taking near-immediate control of the MCVFD's assets with no guarantees for the existing dedicated firefighters and an highly ambiguous leadership transition process.

- Both negotiating teams agreed in their first meeting that all negotiated items would be vetted by both sides, updated as required and then presented to each organizations (City Council and the MCVFD membership) for final approval. By altering the agreed negotiating process, the City established conditions whereby the negotiation process was truncated resulting in misunderstanding and failure.
- The next step was for the negotiators to return to the table to see if an “all-volunteer” contract could be agreed upon to provide City coverage for the remainder of this year. However, the last “face-to-face” meeting was March 5, 2018 and since that date, the City negotiators have refused to meet.
- On March 20, 2018, the City submitted an uncoordinated contract to MCVFD that offered funding levels well below the documented costs the MCVFD provided to the city to operate an all volunteer department.
- In addition, on Friday, March 16, 2018, the MCVFD received a letter from the City Attorney, David Paschall, stipulating the City concluded its long standing relationship with the MCVFD stating *“the city has not requested MCVFD to provide any services until such a time a new contract is agreed.”* To be clear, the City of McLendon-Chisholm directed it is ending the contractual relationship with the MCVFD that began in the 1970’s and requested the MCVFD stop service to the City and its residents, churches and businesses. The MCVFD acknowledges the City’s stance, but it also hears the pleas of many citizens to maintain service while working to achieve an agreement.

With the stroke of a pen, the city could have created a new fire department without the requirement to amend its current budget, increase the current tax rate or incur any new debt, while at the same time continuing to provide the same level of high quality fire and emergency services to the residents of McLendon-Chisholm over the next two years.

MCVFD’s Chief Robert Jones, said "As long as financially viable, we will maintain the current level of operations because it is the right thing to do. The members of this department care deeply about the families we serve are committed to ensure their

safety. Our focus is on people, not politics. We are ready to meet with the City negotiators and the firefighters have complete confidence and faith in our negotiating team.”

Incorporated in 1974, the McLendon-Chisholm Volunteer Fire Department (MCVFD), is a 501(c)(4) non-profit corporation committed to providing the highest levels of fire safety, and first response emergency medical services to the people and property within the City of McLendon-Chisholm and Southern Rockwall County. The MCVFD’s district covers 32.3 square miles of Rockwall County, which makes it the largest district by area of the five fire departments covering Rockwall County. By agreement, The MCVFD responds to all emergency dispatch response calls by the Rockwall County Sheriff’s Department that centrally manages emergency response calls. The MCVFD also provides mutual aid to the surrounding fire departments of Rockwall, Heath, Fate, Royse City, Forney, Terrell and Union Valley. The MCVFD is under contract with Rockwall County to provide fire and emergency services in the unincorporated areas of the southern portion of Rockwall County.