



## TEXAS STATE ASSOCIATION of FIRE FIGHTERS

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### **TSAFF Urges Delay and Public Review of Fire Service Changes in Sulphur Springs**

*State association is 'deeply concerned' as city mulls new public safety plans*

AUSTIN, Texas, Nov. 6, 2017 –The Texas State Association of Fire Fighters (TSAFF) today urged the City of Sulphur Springs to publicly disclose its plans for the fire department and to allow public comment before finalizing them.

In a letter sent to Sulphur Springs City Manager Marc Maxwell, TSAFF President John Riddle said, “Our Association and firefighters throughout Texas are deeply concerned about developments regarding the fire service in Sulphur Springs. We are troubled by the elimination of the fire chief position, the city’s mixed signals and lack of transparency regarding a possible merger of the fire and police departments, mischaracterizations of fire department staffing levels, and your previous reaction to the firefighters’ requests for competitive wages.”

Riddle continued, “Like you, Sulphur Springs firefighters and our Association want to ensure that the people you serve in the city and in Hopkins County will receive excellent, cost-effective service going forward in compliance with national fire service organizational and deployment standards.”

TSAFF urges the city to delay any vote on a merger of and/or reorganization involving the fire department until such time that local, state and national firefighting experts and Sulphur Springs and Hopkins County citizens can comment on any proposals. “To not do so,” Riddle wrote, “would put at risk the fire service and reputation of the City of Sulphur Springs – and the safety of the public and firefighters.”

TSAFF District 2 Vice President Steve Dorris said, “Sulphur Springs firefighters have earned a place at the table as the city determines the future of its fire service. We hope the city manager will invite experienced firefighters to help determine a sensible path forward.”

Dorris added that TSAFF has offered operational analysis of the Sulphur Springs fire department – at no cost to the city – by the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), and that many cities have found this resource to be useful.

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