



April 2, 2014

Richard T. Colella, President  
Forest Hills Volunteer Fire Department  
2071 Ardmore Blvd.  
Pittsburgh, PA 15221

Dear Mr. Colella:

Council again requests a meeting with two representatives from the Forest Hills Volunteer Fire Department in an effort to resolve the concerns raised by each party including first the merger issue. Council asks that you contact me or, in my absence, Mr. Tomasic, on possible dates and times when he and Mr. Erbeldinger can meet with your two representatives.

In a Public Safety Committee meeting held April 1, members again expressed their concern over general merger discussions. While they appreciate the letter you sent on March 26, 2014 indicating there will be no merger with Braddock Hills VFD, council asked that I remind you that their concerns encompass not only the originally declared merger in the letter from your attorney Mr. Dilucente but also his declaration that council does not have standing re: any merger/consolidation discussions. Because of the significant dollars that the borough has invested in the department, council disagrees that any such discussions would come without their participation as they have a fiduciary responsibility when it involves use of borough funds.

Council asked that I remind you of suggested language for a letter to resolve this issue provided by our solicitor, Steve Korbel:

The Forest Hills Volunteer Fire Company has no current or future intention of merging or consolidating with the Braddock Hills Volunteer Fire Department or any other municipal or volunteer fire department. However, to the extent that a merger, consolidation or shared or contracted fire protection services becomes a viable or necessary option in the future, the Forest Hills Volunteer Fire Company will not consider or engage in any formal discussions regarding any merger, consolidation or shared or contracted fire protection services without first discussing it with Borough Council. Any response to a municipality or a volunteer fire department regarding a merger, consolidation or shared or contracted fire protection service will be made mutually by Borough Council and the Forest Hill Volunteer Fire Company or solely by the Forest Hills Volunteer Fire Company with the prior consent of Borough Council.

This language can be the basis for a discussion at the proposed meeting to resolve the merger concern or the basis for an official letter from the department in advance of a meeting.

Regardless, council reiterates its desire to meet and continue to meet until the complete merger issue is resolved. Once that issue is fully resolved council is open to continued discussion of other department concerns in an effort to establish a good working relationship between council and the Forest Hills Volunteer Fire Department.

Council looks forward to meeting soon and awaits your response. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,



Steven J. Morus  
Borough Manager/Secretary

Cc: Markus Erbedinger, President  
William Tomasic, Chair – Public Safety Committee