

**BEREA, BROOKLYN, BROOK PARK, MIDDLEBURG
HEIGHTS, OLMSTED FALLS, PARMA, PARMA HEIGHTS**

FIRE SERVICE

REGIONALIZATION



Fire District Update for Firefighters

- Discussion and planning continues toward the creation of a proposed fire district. The district, as you know, would consist of existing fire departments in Berea, Middleburg Heights, Brook Park, Brooklyn, Olmsted Falls, Parma and Parma Heights.
- All seven communities involved in this effort seem to be under budget pressures. If we can find a way in the long-term to furnish quality firefighting services in a more efficient manner that will help to contain cost increases, we owe it to our communities to examine it.
- Firefighters are vital, but operating a fire department is expensive. There are signs on the horizon that should not be ignored – stagnant population, lagging tax revenues, rising costs needed to provide quality fire service, etc. It is better to address these problems now, before they get to a crisis stage.

UPDATE:

A law firm will soon be hired to review the legal aspects of forming the fire district.

Efforts are being made to try to solicit money from foundations and local, state and federal governments to help pay for this in-depth effort.

There are a continuing series of meetings to discuss this plan. Firefighters have been at the table since the inception, and are welcome to participate. If you are interested in attending a meeting, you can contact your local union leadership for upcoming meeting dates.

FACTS:

No decision has been made to proceed with the fire district. City councils in each community will be required to approve of the measure before it can go forward.

The fire district will continue to be examined this year. City councils could be asked to approve of it by early 2008. If that happens, the fire district could be implemented by 2009.

If the fire district goes forward, a central dispatching network will be considered.

No decision has been made about how pay grades – which differ now from city to city – will be made uniform in a fire district. All seven fire unions are meeting on a regular basis to develop a contract for the proposed district.

There are approximately 261 full-time, uniformed firefighters in the seven communities.

In fire administration, there are 7 chiefs, 6 assistant chiefs and 5 fire prevention personnel.

In fire suppression, there are approximately 11 captains, 35 lieutenants, 157 firefighter/paramedics and 34 firefighter/EMTs in the seven communities

The seven communities have a total population of 182,592 and have 78,378 housing units.

If the fire district is formed, there would be standardized training for firefighters throughout the district.

A reduction in administrative personnel is expected if the fire district goes forward. That is part of the mission – to reduce administrative costs.

Firefighters in a fire district would continue to maintain the status of classified civil servant.

We hope to continue to issue periodic updates like this to fire houses in the proposed fire district throughout 2007.

website at:

<http://homepages.bw.edu/~fire/>



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