

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – LANSING AND LEAVENWORTH COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT #1

- Will my property in Lansing still have fire protection? Yes, your property will still have fire protection. Beginning January 1, 2020, fire protection will be through the Lansing Fire Department, rather than Leavenworth County Fire District #1. We will strive to keep everything else the same. From a taxing and financial perspective, this will not change anything for Lansing citizens.
- What will happen to Delaware and High Prairie Township's Fire Protection? The City will attempt to work with both townships on a contractual basis. Currently, the townships pay nine mills to LCFD#1. The City currently is working to achieve a contractual agreement with both townships to continue to provide fire protection.
- Will anyone lose their jobs? No, the City intends to keep people in their current positions if at all possible. The City is also hopeful that volunteers will continue. The Lansing area has wonderful first responders and the City has a deep appreciation for all people who work and volunteer for the Fire Department.
- Was this action taken illegally? No. On April 6 of 2017, the City formed a committee to study the Fire District. This committee was formed in an open meeting and is reflected in the minutes. On June 21<sup>st</sup>, the Council took action in an open meeting to begin drafting documents relating to LCFD#1. Our meetings are public, online, and show on Channel 2. Representatives from the Leavenworth Times attend all City meetings. Finally, after publicly stating a desire to draft the documents on June 21, on June 28<sup>th</sup>, the City Council took action to deliver the signed documents to LCFD#1. This action was taken in open session at a special meeting, with notice of the meeting being sent out to Chief Huhn and all citizens who request this service.
- Is this move fiscally responsible? Over the last few years, **the City of Lansing has lowered its property tax rate**. During this same time period, despite increases in valuation, **LCFD#1 has increased their property tax rate 17% from 7.6 mills to 8.99 mills**. The City takes fiscal responsibility seriously and believes efficiencies will be gained and all parties will benefit from this reorganization.
- Will the City have to buy new fire equipment? Based on the Interlocal agreement, which was signed by all three parties, assets owned by the Fire District will be disbursed to the entities based on their percentage of the valuation. Based on current valuations, the City anticipates receiving 66% of the assets of the Fire District. High Prairie Township and Delaware Township will also receive a portion of the assets based on their valuation.
- Doesn't the City have any control over the Fire Department now? Currently, the Fire District is an entirely independent taxing entity with authority to levy taxes, and taxes have been raised the last two years. This action will put the new Lansing Fire Department under the City's umbrella, reducing the level of bureaucracy, creating more accountability and a simpler chain of command. The Fire Department's structure will be similar to the Lansing Police Department. It is not uncommon for a community to have its own fire department, with even smaller communities having their own department, such as Tonganoxie, Bonner Springs, and Edwardsville.

- Why did the City wait one day to put out a news release after sending email to the Fire District Board and others? Out of respect for the Fire Board and township officials involved with this issue, the City waited to put out the news release, so the Fire Board and others wouldn't first hear about the news on social media. Emails were sent to the Board and in some cases, letters were personally delivered to make sure the information was received before being released to the general public.