



SEDGWICK COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Pete Meitzner • Jeff Blubaugh • Stephanie Wise • Ryan Baty • Jim Howell

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SEDGWICKCOUNTY.ORG

Dear Sedgwick County residents,

Public safety – and the protection of our Sedgwick County Fire District 1 firefighters – is our top priority.

Since 1955, SCFD1 has provided fire prevention and protection to your families in cities and townships across Sedgwick County. Fire District 1 crews provide medical care, fire suppression, rescue, hazmat response and other services that make them one of the area's premier fire resources.

For decades, cities across Sedgwick County have retained Fire District 1 as their fire department to ensure public safety and protect businesses and properties. With the best interests of the entire County in mind, multiple cities have received assistance from Fire District 1 through mutual and automatic aid agreements – without the security and benefit of joining SCFD1.

The Governing Body of Fire District 1, and more recently the Fire District 1 Steering Council, have heard concerns related to safety and operations within these agreements for years. The most recent updates were made in 2011, with portions of some agreements dating back decades. Over the past year, the strain these agreements place on safety has become more urgent.

SCFD1 Chief Doug Williams, along with the operational leaders of Fire District 1, made it clear; the risks associated with these agreements have reached an unsafe level. Fire District 1's highly trained crews are routinely placed in vulnerable and harmful situations when providing aid in cities or with departments that are understaffed. Operating at scenes with insufficient volunteer turnout, or without adequate incident command and safety officers, jeopardizes both firefighter and public safety. Fire District 1 strives to meet national operational safety standards, but that isn't always the case for departments they work and respond alongside.

When SCFD1 responds to calls outside of the 30-plus services areas, Fire District 1 taxpayers who depend on those services are left without the assurance that timely service will be available to them. These residents pay for Fire District 1, which supplies 24/7 readiness with personnel, equipment, supplies and facilities to ensure that security. They deserve that level of protection.

On May 6, 2026, the Sedgwick County Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to terminate the agreements with five cities: Cheney, Clearwater, Colwich, Mount Hope and Valley Center. This decision follows meetings to address these concerns between city

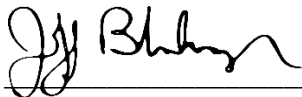
leaders, County officials, staff and commissioners. Each city was informed by the County Manager of this decision on May 1.

This decision isn't intended to end SCFD1's collaboration with these communities. Termination letters were issued May 8, and mutual and automatic aid agreements will remain in effect for 90 days. These 90 days provide community and fire leaders with time to develop plans that optimize fire protection in the region. The leaders in these cities have three options:

- Accept an open invitation to join Fire District 1.
- Provide adequate, consistent staffing and quality control measures to meet minimum scene safety standards.
- Allow the agreements to expire after 90 days.

Our mission as the County Commission is to provide safe communities to all Sedgwick County residents through prevention, preparedness and effective emergency response. To achieve that goal, we must prioritize the safety of Fire District 1 crews who serve with bravery, dedication and professionalism.

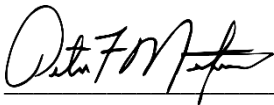
Sincerely,



JEFF BLUBAUGH, Chairman
Commissioner, Second District



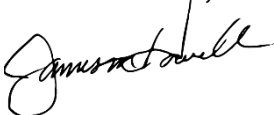
STEPHANIE WISE, Chair Pro Tem
Commissioner, Third District



PETER F. MEITZNER
Commissioner, First District



RYAN BATY
Commissioner, Fourth District



JAMES M. HOWELL
Commissioner, Fifth District