

To: JH Council Members

From: Karen Bucy and Melissa Steffey

Fire Protection Liaisons

Re: GHVFC Recertification and Probation
Period (April 27, 2020)

Date: May 31, 2020

Presented: June 8, 2020 Public Agenda meeting

GHVFC Probationary Plan

April 27, 2020 to April 27, 2021



Definition of Probation

The definition of a probation period is as follows:

www.lawyers.com/legal-info/labor-employment-

law/...A probationary period is a stretch of time during which a new or existing employee receives extra supervision and coaching, either to learn a new job or to turn around performance.

Goals of the Probationary Plan

1. To ensure the successful reintroduction of the GHVFC back into the Jefferson Hills community.
2. To protect the safety of the residents, volunteer firemen, and JH Borough Council.
3. To prepare for the worst-case fire/rescue scenario with the following three components:



A. close, response time

B. competent, skilled fire fighters

C. cost-efficient for taxpayers

Phase I --- 90 days with starting April 27, 2020 and ending date July 25, 2020

I. Operational

A. The 2020 base line roster of the GHVFC with names, addresses, status, and **certifications**.



B. During this 3-month period, all fire truck and equipment will be assessed and proven to be in successfully working and operational condition by the GHVFC.





Phase I con't I. Operational

C. 5 out of 8 possible Thursday night training sessions will be attended and documented by each active member of the GHVFC with the JHFR members. GHVFC can practice runs, practice their own drills, and build a recruitment program. A recorded log of all members and their attendance for the training sessions will be provided to JH Council at regular meeting, on the 2nd Monday of the month.

Drills attended

- July 9, 2020 --- GHVFC held their own drill at their station. Introduction of trucks and equipment. 6 members in attendance.
- July 16, 2020 --- GHVFC went to Public works review and evaluation of overturned tractor incident. 3 members in attendance.
- July 23, 2020 --- GHVFC went to JHFR. Video of live fires and safety precautions when at a car accident scene. 3 members in attendance.
- July 30, 2020 --- JHFR closed. GHVFC held their own drill night.
7 members in attendance.
- August 6, 2020 --- JHFR closed. GHVFC practiced hydrant/hose drills at new street in Hunter's Field.

Phase I con't. II. Financial

A. Workman's compensation has been reactivated.

B. Starting on April 27, 2020 GHVFC will submit their utility bills i.e....water, electric, gas, sewage, garbage invoices to the Jefferson Hills Borough office and a check will be issued to them for the reimbursement of the payments. Cap for expenditures will be \$20,000.



Payment of Bills to Date

- Payment to Eckert & Seaman for having the solicitor ask two questions. Check of \$1560 sent directly to the law firm.
- Payment of bills for truck maintenance and utility expenses for the month of May, June, and July equals \$9,266.06 given to GHVFC in check payments.

Phase I Con't.

II. Financial

C. Truck maintenance invoices for 2003 Ferrara 77' Aerial Truck will be submitted for reimbursement to JHFR/EMS. Maintenance request must be submitted to JHFR/EMS prior to work being performed. This same procedure will be followed throughout the maintenance of the vehicle.

D. Truck maintenance invoices for other vehicles will be submitted to JH Council for reimbursement. Cap for total of all expenditures will not exceed \$20,000.

E. Audit will be conducted for the last 5 years until completed.





Phase I con't. III. Collaborative Partnership

A. The attitude, words, and behaviors by **all fire companies will exhibit professionalism** so that a trusting relationship will begin to emerge and be fostered with all members. Fire companies must show a professional working relationship among individuals that they are performing lifesaving tactics alongside.

B. GHVFC and JHFR will participate in the DCED mediation process until it is mutually agreed upon to be completed. Representatives from the departments will be selected using the criteria of being able to cooperatively and respectfully work with one another to achieve mutual goals. The DCED will establish the rules and guidelines for how the mediation process will be handled.

Mediation Dates

- **1st meeting, June 11, 2020---** introductions, Madra Clay and Floyd Wise mediators, function of the DCED, goals desired to be accomplished, what does each fire station want out of the process.
- **2nd meeting, June 24, 2020 ---** discussion of the legality of fire stations while in operation at a fire and or rescue. Discussion of possibility of the lowest level merger to occur. This would be an operational/equipment merger. Discussion of the liability of firehalls and JH Council in the event of an emergency.

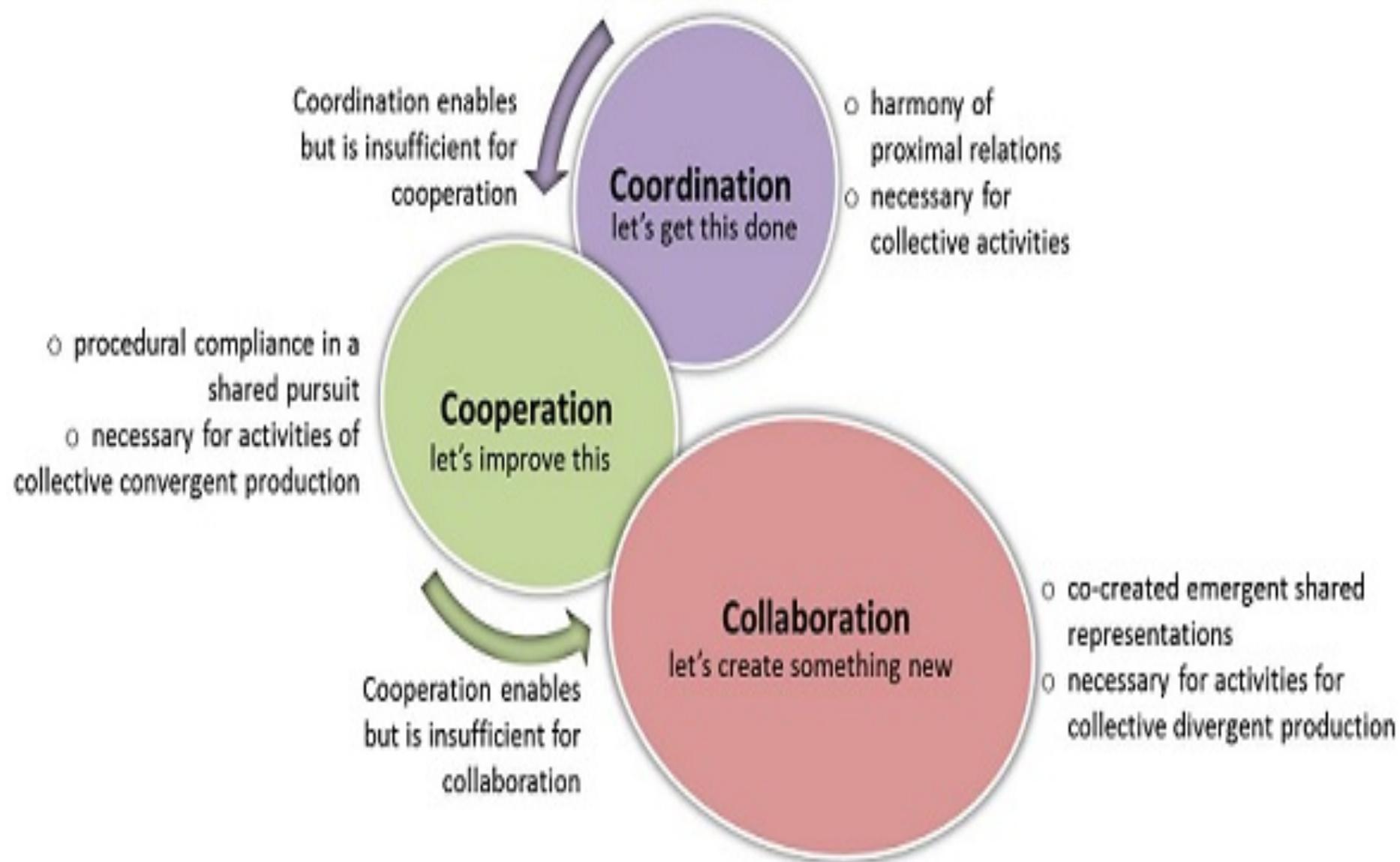
Mediation Dates Con't.

- **Comment from Floyd Wise, Battalion Chief of Harrisburg FD.**
- **He asked GHVFC, “Are you willing to have key fobs and open your doors to members of JHFR during emergencies, so they can drive trucks to the scene , especially if it was nearby?” The representative from GHVFC said, “No, GHVFC is not willing to give the members of JHFR access to their station, at the advice of their attorney.” Then the Chief Wise asked, “ Did you get that in writing from your attorney?” and the GHVFC rep said, “I am not sure whether we did...why?” Chief Wise responded, “ If there’s a fire emergency just two doors away from GHVFC, and a member of JHFR is nearby your station and can’t get into that building, and the delay in response time causes a fatality, everyone gets sued. If your attorney ultimately was the one that told GHVFC to deny JHFR driver/member access to your station, and you have it in writing, then that attorney and his or her law firm could very likely be held accountable for the fatality.”**

Mediation Dates Con't.

3rd meeting, July 7, 2020 --- Synopsis of past events, is their desire for conflict resolution and team building skills. How the role of fire companies across PA has changed.

4th meeting, July 14, 2020 --- final meeting The DCED did not feel that they could aid the three firehalls and JH Council because they were still at an impasse over the accessibility of the station. Mediation is concluded.



**Phase II --- 160 days with starting July 26, 2020 and ending date
December 31, 2020.**

I. Operational

A. GHVFC will be granted access to JHFR fire stations, Rte. 885 and Floreffe. JHFR stations, Rte. 885 and Floreffe, will be granted access to GHVFC via a key fob box. All fire stations key fob entry boxes will be made compatible and accessible to each other. The boxes will keep track virtually and record who enters and exits the premises. If a code must be changed for any reason, all members of all three companies will be notified immediately.



Additional Information

- **A garage has been made available to the JH Council for the possible storage of a firetruck or firetrucks.**
- **Previously owned by Matthews Bus Garage.**
- **Owner is willing to have a one-year lease for \$1.00.**
- **Cleaning and occupancy requirements will be determined if JH Council chooses to use the garage.**
- **Owner has also volunteered the use of the other structures on the property to be used in training exercises for fire and burn simulations.**

Options are Now Available

- In Phase II the obstacle is access to GHVFC for all JHFR personnel.
- Since the garage is now available, to gain access to GHVFC and improve the existing fire protection in the entire JH Community the following possibilities can be considered.
- **Option A.** GHVFC moves the 2003 firetruck in the lawsuit into the Matthews Garage. One key for admittance is given to them one is kept in the JH Borough Council Safe. This is a safe and secure facility.
- JH Council will pay for the insurance to protect the vehicle. GHVFC can then allow access to their fire station via key fobs to JHFR members to have better fire protection for the JH Community

Options Now Available

- **Option B.** The 2003 firetruck in the lawsuit remains in the garage at GHVFC.
- The GHVFC pumper truck acquired by federal funds through a FEMA grant by Chief Galas in 2017 be moved to the Matthews Garage. Key fobs and access is granted to all JH fireman.
- Therefore, no one unauthorized encounters the 2003 truck and the fire protection in the JH community is improved by quicker response time to the scene.

Options from the floor

- **Option C** Councilman Reynolds
- **If we keep Gill Hall differently than the other firehalls, and we keep pushing them until they go to bankruptcy, then they sell the building to the church, close up, and then we are going to be responsible to pay for everything.**
- **That's probably plan C.**
- **If we keep treating them the way that we are, I would expect that probably Gill Hall Fire Department would be fed up with this council. That's definitely an option we should be discussing.**

Options from the floor

- **Option D** Chief Withers from Floreffe Firehall
- Floreffe has a back up engine in my station that we could put in the garage. We have probably five or six guys in that area that could respond with that engine until the hearing has been finalized and a judgement regarding the truck has been given.

Options from the floor

- **Option E** Compromise --- is it possible in Jefferson Hills?
- 885 and Floreffe would consolidate and create the new JHFR.
- Gill Hall would remain separate and will have the complete authority and responsibility over their charter, grounds, and building.
- New JHFR is responsible for the total Jefferson Hills Borough Area and is the official fire department for Jefferson Hills. (Minutes 10/2019).
- Gill Hall will be placed on the active 911 and will be expected to respond to all fire/rescue emergency calls.
- New JHFR line officers are responsible for directing emergency response lead directions, and Gill Hall is an adjuvant and or auxiliary support organization that follows the directions of the JHFR until the probation period has ended and an evaluation has been completed.

Options from the floor

- **Option E continued.**
- **After the hearing for the 2003 fire truck has taken place and a ruling has been handed down, access to GHVFC will be granted immediately to all JHFR members in order to be able to use their vehicles and equipment. If this condition is not met within 7 days of the ruling, GHVFC will be taken off 911 calls and the agreement is null and void.**
- **GHVFC and JHFR mutual drill nights will be twice per month.**
- **In Phase IV, an evaluation of their roster, additional new recruits, additional training of personnel, and data collected from responses will be assessed.**

Options from the floor

Phase II con't II. Operational

B. GHVFC will answer calls in the JH borough, but will not be given a designated coverage area until it completes phase four of the probationary period. JH fire companies will not call off each other during the probation period.

C. GHVFC will be placed into the CAD system and added to dispatch on JHFR run cards which gives GHVFC the opportunity to service the entire JH borough if they choose to.



Phase II con't. II. Financial

A. GHVFC will continue to submit their utility bills ie...water, electric, gas, sewage, garbage to the Jefferson Hills Borough office and a check will be issued to them for the reimbursement of the payments. Cap for total expenditures will not exceed \$20,000.

B. Truck maintenance invoices for other vehicles will be submitted to JH Council for reimbursement. Cap for total expenditures will not exceed \$20,000.

C. Foreign Fire Tax money when received will be distributed according to the successful implementation of the probationary plan.

D. .335 mil tax money will be distributed to GHVFC with **50% of their allotted portion** which will be determined later according to the successful implementation of the probationary plan.

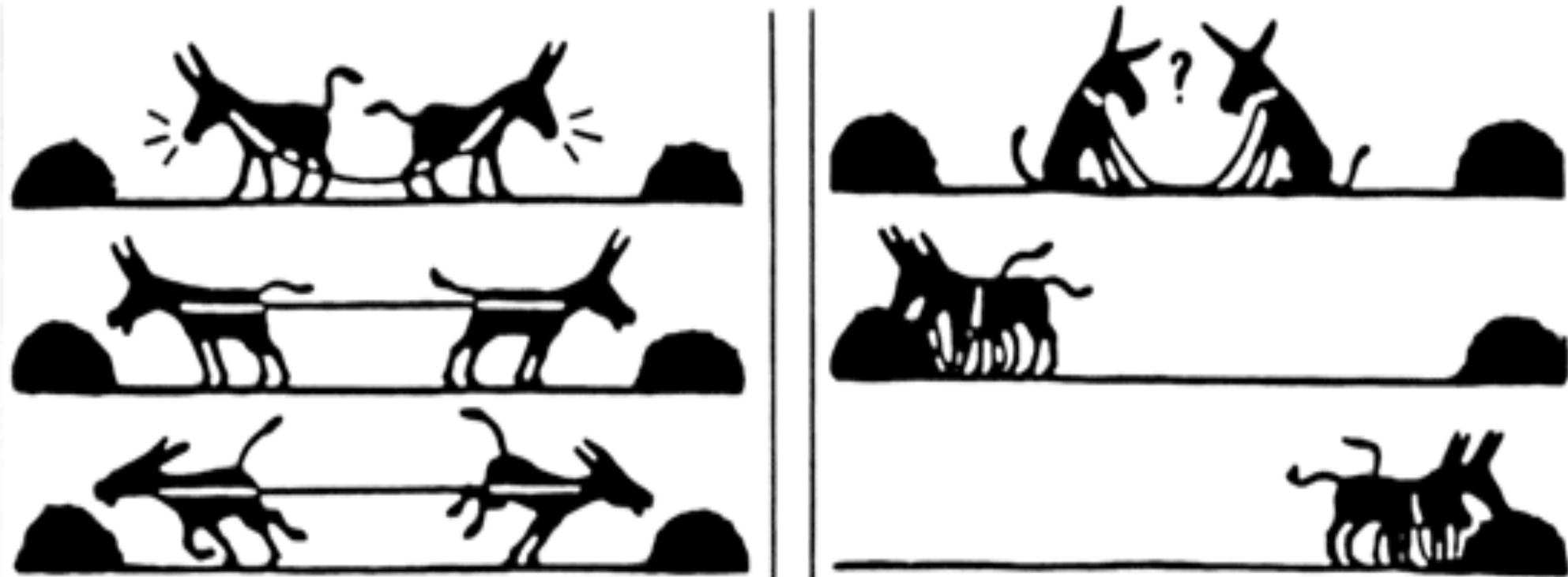
E. Audit will be conducted for the last 5 years until completed.

Phase II Con't.

III. Collaborative Partnership

A. The attitude, words, and behavior by all fire companies will continue to exhibit professionalism so that a trusting relationship will continue to emerge and be fostered with all members. Fire companies must show a professional working relationship among individuals that they are performing lifesaving tactics alongside.

B. GHVFC and JHFR will participate in the mediation process until it is mutually agreed upon to be completed. Representatives from the departments will be selected using the criteria of being able to cooperatively and respectfully work with one another to achieve mutual goals.



What is Cooperation?

Phase III --- 90 days with starting date January 1, 2021 and ending date March 31, 2021

I. Operational

A. GHVFC will be granted access to JHFR fire stations, Rte. 885 and Floreffe. JHFR stations, Rte. 885 and Floreffe, will be granted access to GHVFC. All members will have the lock box combinations to permit access. If a code must be changed for any reason, all members of all three companies will be notified immediately.

Phase III con't. I. Operational

B. GHVFC will answer calls in the JH borough. No fire company is permitted to call off another company until the safety of Jefferson Hills residents has been verified.

C. GHVFC will answer calls in the JH borough, but will not be **considered** for a designated coverage area until it completes phase three of the probationary period. JH fire companies will not call each other off during the probation period.



Phase III con't. I. Operational

4. GHVFC will display knowledge and competency in dealing with the fire/rescue event and the ability to collaborate with fellow fire department and mutual aid departments.



Phase III con't

II. Financial

A. GHVFC **will budget their own finances** and will be responsible for payment of their own utility bills i.e.. water, electricity gas, sewage, and communication.

B. .335 mil tax money will be distributed to GHVFC **with the remaining of their allotted portion** to be determined according to the successful implementation and final review of the probationary plan.

C. Audit will be conducted until completed.



Phase III Con't

III. Collaborative Partnership

A. The attitude, words, and behavior by **all fire companies will continue to exhibit professionalism** so that a trusting relationship will continue to emerge and be fostered with all members. Fire companies must show a professional working relationship among individuals that they are performing lifesaving tactics alongside.

B. GHVFC and JHFR will participate in the mediation process until it is mutually agreed upon to be completed. Representatives from the departments will be selected using the criteria of being able to cooperatively and respectfully work with one another to achieve mutual goals.

Phase IV --- 30 days starting on April 1, 2021 ending date
April 30, 2021

1. Evaluation to determine if additional probational time is need or if an additional 6 months to a year of probation time is needed.



GOALS ATTAINED ???

- 1. To ensure the successful reintroduction of the GHVFC back into the Jefferson Hills community.**
- 2. To protect the safety of the residents, volunteer firemen, and JH Borough Council.**
- 3. To prepare for the worst-case fire/rescue scenario with the following three components:**
 - A. close, fast response time**
 - B. competent, skilled fire fighters**
 - C. cost-efficient for taxpayers**

Criteria for Higher Ranking Positions within the GHVFC

I. Fire Chief

- Resident of Jefferson Hills
- 5 Consecutive years in a leadership position as a Fire Department Officer
- Current active member of any Jefferson Hills Fire Department
- Fire Fighter 1 Certified
- BVR Tech (Basic Vehicle Rescue)
- Hazardous Materials Training
- Experience in development of standard operating procedures & guidelines
- Experience in Budgeting practices
- Five years of direct personnel supervisory experience



II. Assistant Chief

Resident of Jefferson Hills

5 Consecutive years in a leadership position as a Fire Department Officer

Current active member of any Jefferson Hills Fire Department

Fire Fighter 1 Certified

BVR Tech (Basic Vehicle Rescue)

Hazardous Materials Training

III. Deputy Chief

Resident of Jefferson Hills

3 Consecutive years in a leadership position as a Fire Department Officer

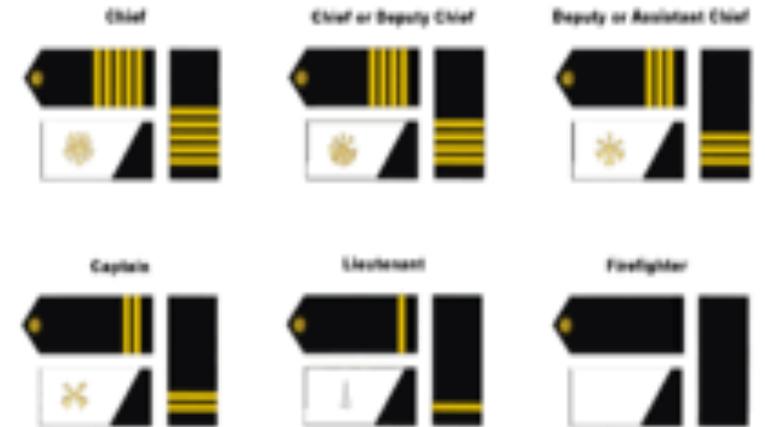
Current active member of any Jefferson Hills Fire Department

Fire Fighter 1 Certified or working toward the completion of the certificate

BVR Tech (Basic Vehicle Rescue)

Hazardous Materials Training

General Fire Department Rank Insignia



IV. Captain

Resident of Jefferson Hills or nearby community

Current active member of any Jefferson Hills Fire Department

Fire Fighter 1 Certified or working toward completion of the certificate

BVR Tech (Basic Vehicle Rescue)

Hazardous Materials Training



V. Lieutenant

Resident of Jefferson Hills or nearby community

Current active member of any Jefferson Hills Fire Department

Fire Fighter 1 Certified or working toward the completion of the certificate

BVR Tech (Basic Vehicle Rescue)

Hazardous Materials Training



VI. Engineer

Emergency Vehicle Drivers Training

Mechanical Aptitude

Experience scheduling and maintaining service records

I. Mediation Goals:



My objective is to turn your conflict into productive conversation.

A. Comprehend and accept that the purpose of (DCED) Regional Fire and Emergency Services. The Center provides technical and financial assistance to support regionalization efforts and continually recognizes successful ventures. dced.pa.gov/fire

B. Agree to complete the entire mediation process that is offered by the State through the Department of Economic and Development (DCED).

C. Establish a 3-person team plus an alternate member to attend mediation selected by the individual fire companies. This team will be approved by the DCEC.

I. Mediation Goals Con't.



D. Establish and maintain a functional operational agreement that benefits the JH community for providing and improving the best fire protection access of equipment and vehicles.

E. Establish and maintain a positive working relationship among the members of all 3 fire stations within the JH community.

F. Continue to assess the possibility of the common ground, goals, and long-range plans for improved fire protection for the entire JH community. This will permit each organization the opportunity to reflect on different perspectives on how to accomplish the goal of maintaining and improving the fire protection of the JH community.

I. Mediation Goals Con't.

G. Compile a communication process for transferring the progress of the mediation process to the fellow membership to achieve transparency and feedback from the membership.

H. Recognize that these goals may be supplemented with additional goals once the individuals are involved with the mediation process.



Work Together



IF YOU HAVE
THE COURAGE
TO BEGIN,
YOU HAVE
THE COURAGE
TO SUCCEED.



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