



## **Janesville Fire Rescue and Cedar Falls Public Safety Department Issue Resolution**

Janesville Fire Rescue held a meeting on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, the following issues were cited.

- (1) Fire ground safety issues caused by the lack of experience of the Cedar Falls PSO's. It is our belief that problem was created when the Career Firefighters positions were eliminated.
- (2) Efforts to draw up a Memorandum of Understanding between the JFR and the CFPSD have not been successful. The purpose of the MOU was to define individual department commitments to mutual aid responses. One request was for the CFPSD to commit to providing (1) engine and (4) men in Personal Protective gear and SCBA's. One response we received was "ideally" they would provide the manpower requested. Another stated "based on the resource availability". It is our opinion that those answers show Mr. Olsen's statement that Cedar Falls has no problem with manpower staffing is not correct.

**March 23<sup>rd</sup> , by unanimous vote the Janesville Fire Rescue members voted to discontinue supplying mutual aid to the Cedar Falls Public Safety Department.**

Chief West presented that decision of the JFR to the Janesville Mayor & City Council. In addition to the 2 items called out by the JFR additional concerns were expressed.

- 1) Liability Issue: While assisting Cedar CFPS at a fire scene and things were conducted as they have been in the past, a fear of a negligent liability would exist. If JFR was on scene they could be guilty by association. The City's insurance carrier could choose not to cover and possibly cancel the policy, or at a minimum require higher rates .
- 2) We also have a responsibility to our taxpayers. The mutual aid agreement is established to provide additional support to other departments should the need arise. The concept is we help each other. The past few years JFR has only requested Cedar Falls twice however, we have been called to assist 15 times. It is our belief that the excessive calls for service are due to lack of manpower and the attempt of the City of Cedar Falls administration to "cut costs" of call back or overtime by enlisting the aid of area volunteer departments. The question was presented as to why the Janesville City and rural community taxpayers should pay for the manpower and equipment to permit those tactics?
- 3) We also have a responsibility to our volunteers as well. Quite often our volunteers leave work or miss work to perform their emergency duties. It is abuse of their time away from their jobs and families to be called out of our district as much as they have been in the recent past.

**March 24<sup>th</sup> , by unanimous vote the Janesville City Council, voted to support the Janesville Fire Rescue with the decision to discontinue mutual aid responses with the Cedar Falls Public Safety Department.**