

UPDATE/WARNING to Lake Arrowhead Residents

To: Lake Arrowhead property owners and residents

From: Lake Arrowhead Volunteer Fire Department (LAVFD)

Date: September 15, 2008

RE: Fire stations 17 and 27 may close.

This communication is intended as an update to our previous email regarding the status of our fire stations.

Here is where we are:

-As of this writing, the developer, in cooperation with the LAPOA Board, wants the Lake Arrowhead Volunteer Fire Department (LAVFD) BANNED FROM USING ANY FIRE STATION IN LAKE ARROWHEAD.

-Please remember that it was the money and effort of LA residents that turned the building next to the chapel into a fire station.

-Please remember that it was the money and effort of the LA residents that built Station 17 on Chickasaw near the north gate.

-Please remember that it was the money and effort of the LA residents that purchased the equipment to outfit a volunteer fire department that lowered the ISO ratings for LA property owners.

-The Board of Commissioners will not sign an agreement that prevents volunteer fire fighters, particularly LAVFD volunteers and equipment, from entering the two Lake Arrowhead (LA) stations, Station 17 and the to-be-built Station 27. Therefore, the developer may not sign a lease and Lake Arrowhead will be without in-community fire protection.

-If the LAVFD is excluded from LA facilities, so will be the LAVFD equipment, which includes a fire engine (which significantly affects ISO insurance ratings), Thermal Imaging Camera, "Jaws of Life" vehicle extrication equipment, John Deere Gator used for rough terrain victim rescue, and other firefighting equipment that the CCFES fire fighters assigned to Station 17 may use.

-Cherokee County Fire and Emergency Service (CCFES) will be caused to provide fire/EMS support from outside the LA community.

-The Cherokee County Board of Commissioners is attempting to persuade the developer to compose an agreement that allows the LAVFD use the fire stations as well as other volunteer fire fighters.

-In process and administrative terms, the developer and LAPOA version of the lease agreement is unacceptable and unworkable for the Cherokee County Board of Commissioners.

What happens if fire/EMS support has to come from outside LA?

- It is not unrealistic to add 10-15 minutes to Fire/EMS response times
- The additional time may literally be the difference between life and death in a medical emergency
- The time may be the difference between being able to salvage a home and complete destruction
- YOUR HOMEOWNERS INSURANCE RATES may rise because we may have a dramatically higher ISO protection rating.

How did we get to this point?

About three weeks ago, Commissioner Harry Johnston met with the developer and members of the LAPOA board – LAVFD was excluded from the meeting and was not consulted with respect to pertinent issues. The meeting ended with a commitment by the developer to insure there would be adequate facilities available until the new station was built. LAVFD received neither feedback or advice from the developer or LAPOA.

The LAVFD received an email from Commissioner Harry Johnston indicating the LAVFD would be covered for facilities with no interruption in services. We breathed a premature sigh of relief – two days later, Harry Johnston reported the developer had changed its mind and we were back to square one.

-What's happening now?

There are ongoing negotiations between the county and the developer. THE DEVELOPER AND LAPOA WANT THE LAVFD BANNED FROM CONTINUING SERVICE IN LA AND THE COUNTY WANTS THE LAVFD TO CONTINUE SERVING THE RESIDENTS OF LA.

LAPOA has not met with the LAVFD board of trustees to explain their reasons for terminating the community's fire department.

As mentioned in prior correspondence, LAVFD is dramatically affected by the decisions made by the developer and the County.

-Comment.

The LAPOA board members have not accepted LAVFD board of trustees for whatever reasons or agenda, the board refuses to accept our invitations, does not solicit our counsel or expertise but YET does manage to participate in all the meetings and support the decisions of the developer. It would seem that an issue as important as FIRE/EMS support would be accurately communicated to residents and they would be given an opportunity to review/comment.

The developer wants our residents to believe that their goal is to have 21st Century level fire protection for Lake Arrowhead. Here is an example of which fire department is in the 21st Century. Several issues ago, the Cherokee Ledger carried an article about the CCFES training with newly acquired Thermal Image Cameras. Thermal Image Cameras detect heat, both human body and fire in areas of restricted visibility. Which were the first fire departments in Cherokee County to have and employ Thermal Image Cameras? The answer is three volunteer fire departments - Station 5 in Macedonia, Station 12 in Waleska, and your Station 17 (LAVFD) had Thermal Image Cameras YEARS before the county funded stations.

We will keep you advised as developments occur

LAVFD Board of Directors