

International Association of Fire Fighters
Local 3249
Camden County, New Jersey

Post Office Box 1485, Laurel Springs, New Jersey 08021
Office: 856-374-3249 Facsimile: 856-374-3250
www.iafflocal3249.org

Resolution

**Communicating a vote of “NO CONFIDENCE”
in the
Board of Fire Commissioners, Voorhees Fire District #3
and
Deputy Fire Chief Michael J. Wharton**

Whereas Voorhees Fire District #3 is the municipal fire district which is charged with the responsibility to provide fire, rescue and basic life support emergency medical service to the residents, business community and visitors of Voorhees Township, and

Whereas International Association of Fire Fighters Local 3249 represents the full time paid professional firefighters, fire officers and emergency medical technicians and support staff serving within the Voorhees Fire District, and

Whereas the Board of Fire Commissioners is the body responsible to govern and manage Voorhees Fire District #3, and

Whereas Michael J. Wharton is the Deputy Fire Chief of the Voorhees Fire District since being provisionally appointed by the Board of Fire Commissioners to replace Fire Chief James Pacifico, and

Whereas the Board of Fire Commissioners and Deputy Fire Chief Michael J. Wharton have consistently failed to properly manage the Voorhees Fire District, and

Whereas the Board of Fire Commissioners and Deputy Fire Chief Michael J. Wharton have failed to address numerous issues which are negatively impacting service and protection to the residents, business community and visitors of Voorhees Township, and

Whereas specific evidence of the failures of the Board of Fire Commissioners and Deputy Fire Chief Michael J. Wharton includes the audit of the Voorhees Fire District for the fiscal and calendar year 2015 which indicates that Board of Fire Commissioners and Deputy Chief Michael J. Wharton failed to maintain a fully operational and balanced general ledger accounting system and failed to maintain a set of controls over the recording of purchasing obligations as incurred, and

Whereas this violation of New Jersey State law resulted in \$651,692.72 in liabilities not being properly recorded by the fire district and the over expenditure of a budget line item by \$129,007.78, and

Whereas the audit of the Voorhees Fire District for the fiscal and calendar year 2015 also indicates that Board of Fire Commissioners and Deputy Chief Michael J. Wharton failed to make timely payroll reports and remittances in addition to a failure to reconcile payroll deductions payable on a monthly basis, and

Whereas this additional violation of New Jersey State law resulted in two (2) quarters of employee pension payments, to the State of New Jersey Division of Pensions and Benefits, not being made on a timely basis, and

Whereas the Board of Fire Commissioners and Deputy Chief Michael J. Wharton have failed to develop and implement a business plan including short and long term planning for the Voorhees Fire District, and

Whereas the failure of the Board of Fire Commissioners and Deputy Fire Chief Michael J. Wharton to develop and implement a necessary business plan has resulted in the Voorhees Fire District's failure to maintain adequate fire company staffing policies and levels, and

Whereas the failure of the Board of Fire Commissioners and Deputy Fire Chief Michael J. Wharton to maintain proper fire company staffing policies has resulted a reduction in the number of first responders on duty and available for response to emergencies, and

Whereas the failure of the Board of Fire Commissioners and Deputy Fire Chief Michael J. Wharton to develop and implement a necessary business plan has also resulted in the Voorhees Fire District's failure to provide adequate training for its first responders, and

Whereas the Board of Fire Commissioners and Deputy Fire Chief Michael J. Wharton have also failed to maintain discipline and order within the ranks of the Voorhees Fire District by selectively enforcing or not at all enforcing the rules, regulations and standard operating procedures of the Voorhees Fire District, and

Whereas actions of the Board of Fire Commissioners and Deputy Fire Chief Michael J. Wharton have violated the rights of IAFF Local 3249 represented paid professional firefighters, fire officers, emergency medical technicians and other employees, including those guaranteed by the New Jersey Public Employer – Employee Relations Act and the Americans With Disabilities Act and the New Jersey Open Public Records Act, and

Whereas the Board of Fire Commissioners and Deputy Fire Chief Michael J. Wharton have repeatedly violated various provisions of the firefighter, fire officer and Emergency Medical Technician collective bargaining agreements negotiated and agreed to by the Board of Fire Commissioners and IAFF Local 3249, and

Whereas the numerous violations of Local 3249 collective bargaining agreements by the Board of Fire Commissioners and Deputy Fire Chief Michael J. Wharton have resulted in grievances and other personnel litigations which will waste taxpayer money that could be better spent to directly support training and other operational needs within the Voorhees Fire District, and

Whereas IAFF Local 3249 is in the process of filing impasse notices with the New Jersey Public Employment Relations Commission relative to the negotiation of three separate and distinct contracts on behalf of represented firefighters, fire officers and emergency medical technician / support employee bargaining units, and

Whereas proceedings to resolve outstanding contract disputes will result in the further waste of tax money that would otherwise be better spent to directly support operational needs within the Voorhees Fire District, and

Whereas the failure of the Board of Fire Commissioners and Deputy Fire Chief Michael J. Wharton to properly manage the Voorhees Fire District has negatively impacted public safety, and

Whereas International Association of Fire Fighters Local 3249 and the represented full time paid professional firefighters, fire officers and Emergency Medical Technicians serving within the Voorhees Fire District have repeatedly advised the Board of Fire Commissioners and Deputy Fire Chief Michael J. Wharton of concerns regarding the current state of affairs within the Voorhees Fire District, and

Whereas the Board of Fire Commissioners and Deputy Fire Chief Michael J. Wharton have not only failed to address the concerns that have been brought forward but have also attempted to blame IAFF Local 3249 and the firefighters, fire officers and emergency medical technicians employed by the Voorhees Fire District for management's failures, and

Whereas the failure of the Board of Fire Commissioners and Deputy Fire Chief Michael J. Wharton to address expressed concerns and deficiencies within the Voorhees Fire District poses a significant risk to the safety of not only Voorhees Township's first responders but to the people we serve as well, therefore be it

Resolved that International Association of Fire Fighters Local 3249 and the Local 3249 represented paid professional firefighters, fire officers and emergency medical technicians and support staff employed by the Voorhees Fire District find that there is no alternative but to express a vote of No Confidence in the Board of Fire Commissioners and Deputy Fire Chief Michael J. Wharton, and be it further

Resolved that the President of International Association of Fire Fighters Local 3249 is directed to transmit a copy of this resolution to all officials, agencies and organizations deemed necessary and appropriate.