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An open letter to the residents of the James Island Public Service District: June 26, 2018

I am writing this letter to you today in an effort to explain the reasons for the construction and relocation of Fire Station One, which is currently located at 1622 Camp Road.

Fire Station One was built in 1961 along with the formation of the James Island Public Service District (JIPSD). The JIPSD was formed to provide the residents of James Island with three major services: Fire Protection services, Solid Waste services, and Wastewater transportation services. It is my understanding that residents had requested services from the City of Charleston but were refused. Further, as it is my understanding, the citizens did not want the burdens of a municipality and only wanted these three main services provided. The main PSD offices were located in a little brown house (that has since be demolished) along with Fire Station One at 1622 Camp Road. Another Fire Station, Number Two, was also constructed that year at 853 Harborview Road.

Both Fire Stations are approaching sixty years old and need replacement. They are both small and no longer satisfy the needs of a modern Fire Department. They have been good stations and served the Island very well. The JIPSD's Capital Improvement Plan includes the replacement of Fire Station One first. Station One is the busiest, most centrally located Fire Station on the Island. It houses our ladder truck, battalion chief, administrative chiefs, training building, and reserve apparatus.

The original plan for Fire Station One was to demolish the existing buildings on the existing lot and construct a new state-of-the-art facility there. Unfortunately, that is no longer an option thanks to the Camp and Folly Road intersection improvements.

The widening of Camp Road has reduced our ramp area in front of the station nearly in half. Front line apparatus may no longer pull out of the front of the station; they must exit from the rear. Apparatus can not even pull onto the ramp area without blocking the sidewalk or roadway. Additionally, with the installation of the curbs and gutters motorists no longer have anywhere to pull of the roadway, out of our way, which slows our responses. Our ladder truck has to pull out and block two and one half of the lanes just to exit the fire station property. During school and rush hour the difficulty to safely exit the station increases. The speeds on Camp Road have significantly increased as well. In my estimation we have vehicles nearing double the speed limit on many occasions as they race past one another before the merge.

Therefore, due to the increasing difficulty safely exiting the station during high-volume traffic times and safety issues with the high-speed thoroughfare that now exists in front of the station the decision was made to re-locate the Fire Station.


The JIPSD has purchased three lots at the intersection of Prescott and Folly Roads directly across the street from Nativity Church and School. This property, through research from our

Geographic Information System (GIS) Department, provides a better spread of the existing Fire Stations on the Island and provides better overall coverage within its response area. It will house all of the existing personnel and apparatus from the current station. This station is being designed to meet a minimum of a Category 3 Hurricane and built to serve James Island for another fifty plus years. The building is in the initial design phase and renderings will be shared with the public as soon as they become available. We expect to occupy the station mid to late 2020.

I have always done my absolute best to ensure that all of us in the Fire Department remain stewards of the taxpayer's dollar. We do not purchase extravagant equipment or purchase things we do not need. All of our personnel have spent hundreds to thousands of hours training to be the best Fire Department in the state. We are 1 of 305 Class One ISO Fire Department's in the Country. It is our mission for provide public service excellence each and every day.

If anyone has any questions for me I am always at your service. Please feel free to contact me via email a [seaboltc@jipsd.org](mailto:seaboltc@jipsd.org) or my District mobile phone (843) 270-1556.

Always at Your Service,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Chris Seabolt', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

M. Chris Seabolt, Fire Chief