



For Immediate Release: April 24, 2023

Borough of Kennett Square Hires Fire/EMS Consulting Firm *Public Meeting Scheduled for May 25th*

On Thursday, May 25 at 7:00pm at Borough Hall (600 S. Broad Street), a special Borough Council meeting will be held to discuss the Borough's needs and interests as it relates to its Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS). The Borough (along with five other local municipalities) is a member of the Kennett Fire and Emergency Services Regional Commission (Commission), which was created in 2017 to provide funding support to our local fire companies and reduce expenses.

Borough Council prioritizes high-quality emergency services. Accordingly, the Borough has been, and will remain, supportive of our local first responders. In addition to its annual contribution to the Commission, the Borough's financial support for local first responders has been demonstrated through assistance with fundraising events and sharing in the purchase of new equipment.

While the Borough's support for local first responders is clear, over the past several years, the Borough's contribution to the Commission has increased substantially. In 2018, the Borough's contribution was \$254,630. This figure has increased by 80% and is currently \$457,957 (for 2023). Furthermore, this cost is projected to grow significantly over the next several years. These projected contribution increases would very likely result in further tax increases. The Borough Council wishes to gain more information to better weigh the benefits and costs of additional spending.

As such, the Borough recently contracted with Fitch & Associates, a reputable Fire/EMS consultant, to review the Borough's Fire & EMS expenditures. This independent review will assess overall efficiency and determine what the appropriate cost to the Borough should be based on call volume, size of the municipality, response times, etc. The overarching objective of the review is to promote fairness, help foster a sustainable strategic plan for the Commission, and provide the best (and most efficient) service for Borough residents based on a thorough evaluation of objective data.

Fitch will present its report and findings at the May 25th special meeting. The special

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meeting is open to the public and residents will be able to make public comments after the report is presented. Borough Council will decide how to move forward at a subsequent Council meeting, after reviewing the report and hearing public comments.

The Borough appreciates the public's interest and welcomes feedback. For questions or comments, please contact the Borough by calling (610) 444-6020 or via email at sgreco@kennettsq.org.