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TOWN FILES MOTION TO PRESERVE LOCAL CONTROL OVER PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES AND COSTS

Implementation of the Jupiter Fire Rescue Department is well underway, and on October 1, 2026, the JFRD will be ready to provide excellent service to Jupiter residents and businesses.

As implementation continues, residents may be wondering about the lawsuit filed against the Town by the Political Action Committee (PAC) funded 99.9% by individuals outside of Jupiter, and the union. This PAC sued the Town in November in an effort to force the Council to place an illegal question on an upcoming ballot to change the Town's charter. In response to the PAC's lawsuit, and to save taxpayer money by avoiding a lengthy legal process, the Town filed a Motion for Summary Judgement (MSJ) in the case on July 3. The purpose of this motion is to argue that the Town is entitled to a judgment in its favor without a trial.

The Town's motion outlines the fact that the proposed ballot question is deceptive and misleading as to its true intent. It also outlines why the proposed charter change would violate state laws, the Florida Constitution, and the Town's current charter.

In the motion, the Town outlines several reasons why the question is illegal, and the potential impacts it would have on the Jupiter community. Some highlights from the motion are as follows:

- **Financial Impact:** The proposed language would require Jupiter taxpayers to pay PBCFR tens of millions of dollars more for local fire and emergency services. According to an independent report, Jupiter can and should provide these services at a reduced cost, avoiding reliance on Palm Beach County, which has proposed charging Jupiter taxpayers a quarter of a billion dollars over 10 years.
- **Lack of Disclosure:** The language submitted by the PAC does not inform Jupiter taxpayers that they would be bound to an unfavorable, ongoing contract with the county and strips local officials of their ability to negotiate terms, which would cost residents tens of millions of dollars more annually. This critical fact is not disclosed as state law requires. In addition, the Town's agreement for fire rescue and emergency services is with Palm Beach County, who is not a party to the lawsuit. The PAC and the Union funding it have no authority to negotiate service agreements on the County's behalf.
- **Local Governance:** The proposed ballot language potentially violates state law and the Florida Constitution by constraining our elected officials from implementing the best policies for Jupiter's future fire and emergency services. What's more, Jupiter's Town Charter provides the Council with the authority to create Town departments in order to best serve the community's needs.
- **Legal Violations:** The proposed Charter amendment unlawfully rewrites our local charter, forcing current and future Town Councils to accept a costly agreement and comply with the County's demands without recourse. It undermines local control and our Town's Home Rule authority.

It is anticipated that the Town's motion will be heard at a hearing in August. As the legal process runs its course, the Town remains committed to its goal of the JFRD being in-service on October 1, 2026, ready to provide excellent service. As Fire Chief Darrel Donatto often says, "We are building a fire department that the residents and businesses of Jupiter - and the firefighters who work here - will love."

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that they would not renew the town's interlocal agreement for fire and emergency services at the cost required to provide those services. Instead, PBCFR insisted the Town pay the same rate the rest of the County was paying, which is double Jupiter's current rate. With Jupiter's property values, this potentially would have resulted in an additional \$250,000,000 (a quarter of a billion dollars) over the life of the 10-year agreement.

The Town remains committed to providing complete transparency in the creation of the JFRD, and posts the documents, emails, timelines, studies and presentations related to the decision to create a fire department on its website at jupiter.fl.us/FireRescue. The Town's motion can be viewed on that page, or by clicking [here](#).



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