

Request for Millage Increase for Dunklin Fire Department

To: Mr. John Hansley, Deputy County Administrator

From: Fay Childress, Chairperson to the Board of Fire Commissioners, Dunklin Fire District

This letter is to acknowledge that the Board of Fire Commissioners of the Dunklin Fire District are in support of the request for a millage increase for FY18. Dunklin Fire District serves 44.18 miles in southern Greenville County, most which is rural agricultural land. Dunklin's district is comprised of Tax Districts 5 and 25. Dunklin was founded in 1968 and is since its inception has been a 100% volunteer department staffing 3 stations strategically located throughout the district. We are tax based funded with a current millage rate of 27.9. In addition, we seek and have received numerous grants recently to help fund our department and its' equipment needs.

While we take pride in being able to respond to over 280 calls for service annually with our volunteers, we realize that we are now at a time where we should guarantee our citizens and visitors adequate fire response by staffing full-time, paid personnel, in our district. Being an all-volunteer department, many of our volunteers work during the day on conventional 9am-5pm business hours, leading to small turnout of volunteers during the day time.

We, as a department, are requesting a millage increase of 3.2 mils (current + 3-year lookback) be levied to allow us the funds necessary to begin a transition to hiring full-time personnel. With a 3.2 millage increase this year, we would immediately be able to hire one full time firefighter to staff Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm. In addition, this millage increase would allow us to increase our training budget for current firefighters, and create a fire prevention program for community outreach.

While our district would see an immediate impact this fiscal year, this increase would allow us to implement a 5-year plan in which we would then be able achieve 24/7 staffing of our district. Without this current increase, we will not be able to provide day-time staffing for FY18, and will not be able to move forward with our 5-year plan of having 24/7 coverage.

Sincerely,

Fay Childress

Dunklin Fire District Board of Commissioners