

CITY OF STATESBORO



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50 EAST MAIN STREET • P. O. BOX 348
STATESBORO, GEORGIA 30459-0348

February 9, 2006

Chief Steve Vezo
Brooklet Fire Department
Highway 80 East
Brooklet, Georgia 30415

Re: Request of January 26, 2006

Dear Chief Vezo:

Your memo of January 26, 2006 to the Statesboro Fire Department has been forwarded to my office. Since the Statesboro Fire Department is a department of the City of Statesboro, in the future we would appreciate any request for a major policy change to come to the Mayor's or my office. In that memo, you have requested that the Statesboro Fire Department respond to every fire call in Brooklet five days a week, from 6:00 am to 5:00 pm, as you are having difficulty in getting personnel to respond during daylight hours.

As your neighboring community, we have enjoyed a good working relationship on mutual aid. We are also sympathetic to your concerns. However, what you are asking is that the citizens of Statesboro pay for a full-time fire department, then provide its services at no cost to the citizens of a community 8 miles away. Frankly, I don't see how that is possible. Let me explain.

The City of Statesboro in FY 2006 will spend \$1,771,367 just to operate the Statesboro Fire Department. That does not include the purchase of any capital equipment, as is necessary in some years. Bulloch County has established a Fire District in the area outside the city limits that is within a five-mile radius of either of our two fire stations. Bulloch County citizens in that area pay a fire district tax of 1.40 mills, which will generate about \$470,000 in revenue that the County pays the City to protect this area. This means the citizens of Statesboro will pay \$1,301,367 in FY 2006 to support the department, and the fire district residents and businesses will pay the remaining \$470,000.

It would be grossly unfair to those residents and businesses to tax them for this service, then provide it free of charge to the residents and businesses of Brooklet. And while we were doing so, the protection within Statesboro and our fire district would be

severely reduced. Again, we share your concern about fire protection in your community, but what you are requesting is not a workable solution to the problem.

This issue of inadequate fire personnel needs to be addressed not by the City of Statesboro, but by the City of Brooklet.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "George A. Wood". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "G".

George A. Wood
City Manager

Cc: Mayor and City Council
Mayor Joe Grooms, Brooklet
Interim Fire Chief Larry Colbert
City Attorney Sam Brannen
Bulloch County Manager Tom Couch
Bulloch County EMA Director Ted Wynn