

Ladies and gentlemen of Council, Madam Mayor: My name is *Kevin Lipscomb* and I am in my fifth term as the president of the *Kempsville Volunteer Rescue Squad*, or “KQRS”, for short. KQRS is *one* of the *eleven* volunteer rescue squads that cooperate to serve the City of Virginia Beach.

FOR ALMOST HALF A CENTURY, KQRS has responded to emergencies involving illnesses and injuries of all natures and magnitudes, in Kempsville and beyond. We provide skilled, compassionate medical care, safe and rapid ambulance transportation, and quick and effective rescue services. We take particular pride in our long history of partnership and cooperation with area firefighters, and in our progressive overall track record.

RECENTLY, the Virginia Beach firefighters’ union has initiated, and the media has given attention to, a discussion of our city’s provision of fire & emergency medical services. Some of the union’s recommendations -- I’ll address three of them here tonight -- have a bearing on the coming year’s city budget. KQRS wants you to know where the volunteer rescue squad stands.

FIRST, the union has recommended that the city fund *more firefighter positions*. Doing so would *certainly* benefit the citizens and visitors of Virginia Beach, in terms of both fire and medical protection. KQRS endorses this recommendation.

SECOND, the union has recommended that the city fund the *construction and population of more fire stations*. Again, the citizens and visitors of our city *would* be better off for such action. KQRS endorses this recommendation.

THIRD, the union has recommended that the city fund the *installation of Advanced Life Support, or “ALS” equipment*, such as drug and IV boxes, *on all fire trucks*. KQRS endorses this recommendation, and is pleased to report that it is our understanding that the city’s Fire and EMS Departments are completing an aggressive plan to place a full set of ALS gear on all fire trucks by the end of this Spring, if not sooner.

IN CONCLUSION, let me say that every penny spent on improving the fire and emergency medical protection afforded to the public *is spent* in accordance with Council’s stated Destination Points. On behalf of the Kempsville Volunteer Rescue Squad, I *urge* you to fund the budget requests of our Fire and EMS Departments in full. Thank you.