

06-25-2009

During the last board meeting I gave a statement to the public and the media as an attempt to make clear the position of the district staff during this time of question. I was greatly saddened to see that still the message was twisted, misunderstood, and misquoted leaving our position in the public eye still in question.

Tonight I stand before you as not only the district employees representative, but as an off duty fireman that cares deeply about my community, my department, and the image of our pride and devotion that we give. No agency ever wants to go through the process we are in right now. We don't look for or instigate any actions to anticipate such an ordeal. Firefighters are bound by a strong brotherhood and strive for a harmonious working environment and work very hard to maintain a high level of performance and professionalism for our community. When the community in which we serve calls upon us, we respond with no questions asked. We for the most part are complete strangers that you in your time of need welcome us into your home, putting full trust in our hands to save you, your loved ones, or your belongings. This responsibility we proudly accept. With that being said, I ask you this. When we, your firefighters need help.....who can we call? Who do we turn to when we are in need? We are faced with a very delicate and sensitive situation that required the upmost of unity among our brotherhood. One that required much scrutiny and deliberation in deciding how to handle. The decision was not reached lightly. It was unanimously decided to acquire the help of our fire board in regards to numerous situations of concern that was terribly affecting moral, liability, and the harmony of our work place. At no time has any of the fire district members been bribed, coerced, or threatened by our fire board into any testimonies given during this investigation, Please remember, we went to them for help. The local media has only provided one side of this story and even then its full half truths, misquotes, and misdirection. Media blogs have been portraying the district board and employees as corrupt conspires. This saddens us to think that some in the community would come to such conclusions and assumptions without knowing our side of the story. The district believes that the community has the right to know but as it has been explained before only Mr. Piccinini can allow that to happen. We have refrained from responding to these slanderous statements to maintain a fair and just investigation. We are professionals, not mud slingers. At the June 11<sup>th</sup> adjourned meeting 18 of our 28 members stood unified and proud not because they were told too but because they chose too. They stood to show their strength within and their pride for the well being of there community. To once again show our unification I present the community and the Anderson Fire Protection District board of Directors a majority "VOTE OF NO CONFIDENCE" of Mr. Piccinini. Of the districts 28 paid and volunteer members 23 votes of no confidence, 3 abstained, and 2 "unable to contact" was achieved. These votes were voluntarily cast by the members own free will and without coercion.

In conclusion, we beg the community of the Anderson Fire Protection District for their help by maintaining an open mind with patience and understanding until such time that all the facts can be revealed. Please know that your firefighters will always provide the upmost protection to you with professionalism and pride.

Respectfully,



Jason T. Bellinger

Fire Captain / IAFF Local 2942