



# City Grants Fire Trustees Agreement

**Friday, Nov. 12** - On Wednesday, Nov. 10, the West Liberty City Council voted 5-0 to move forward in a manner that will grant the Trustees of the Rural Fire District their request to end their current agreement with the City.

The vote occurred to adopt this resolution after the Council held a special session regarding the ongoing litigation and contract negotiations with the Trustees.

## History

Since February of 2021, the Council has been attempting to negotiate a new 28E Agreement with the rural trustees that would be compliant with requirements of the state code, clarify roles and responsibilities for the fire department, and improve the coordination of services by the two entities.

As part of that process, the Council voted in March to terminate the current agreement effective on July 1, 2021, with the expectation that a new agreement would replace it. In July 2021, the Rural Trustees elected to file a lawsuit against the city seeking, among other things, a permanent dissolution of the current agreement and a distribution of the assets.

During the special meeting Wednesday evening, the Council considered the history of these events, the results of the city's attempts and efforts to negotiate, the various claims and allegations of the Rural Trustees in their lawsuit, and the well-being of the West Liberty community.

## City's Decision

Ultimately, the Council made the difficult, but necessary, decision to move forward in a manner that will grant the Rural Trustees their request to end the current agreement as it stands. At the close of the special session, the Council voted 5-0 in favor of a resolution ending efforts to negotiate a new or replacement 28E Agreement with the Rural Trustees.

The resolution leaves the current agreement in place, which means emergency services will continue to operate fully until the lawsuit is resolved in the courts. The City Council will then begin planning for a new system to provide fire and emergency services to West Liberty and will ensure a smooth transition.