

Rob Gaslin
703 Cottonwood Dr.
Lansing, KS 66043
December 4, 2023

Mr. Vandall
City Administrator
City of Lansing
800 First Terrace
Lansing, KS 66043

Dear Mr. Vandall:

I am applying for reappointment to serve as a member of the Board of Trustees for Leavenworth County Fire District Number 1. The following are my responses to the questions listed in the City's application instructions. I am attaching my application letter from December of 2019 as an integral part of my current application.

Beyond the foundational qualifications I listed in my 2019 application, I can now add that I have served a four-year term as a member of the FD#1 Board of Trustees—and as its Chairman.

In my 2019 application, I mentioned three key elements of a “personal philosophy” regarding FD#1: appropriate and adequate fire protection services, fiscal prudence, and responsiveness/accountability. In the past four years, the Board of Trustees has relentlessly worked all three. I now add two more. The first is fostering the sense of security and well-being that residents feel when they are confident in their local emergency services. The second is governance at its best.

A brief review of “desired accomplishments” from four years ago is in order. We have sustained our ability to deliver quality and timely emergency services to the community—building upon the good work of those who served before us. We have done our part to “lower the temperature” regarding competing visions for future local emergency services. We have increased the quality and quantity of our communications with the elected bodies of our Fire District (annual asset inventory, audit documents, budget documents, briefings, et al.). We have improved our governance structurally by revising our bylaws—including provisions that require the Board to actively advocate for taxpayers in budget processes, by incorporating a disciplined strategic planning process, and by managing risk in all its forms. Going forward, I see us continuing to address the challenges of a dramatically shrinking labor pool (for both volunteer and professional firefighters). I also see us improving our communication of risk, so that other community leaders can make well-informed decisions.

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Personal references include:

1) Jon Fallesen, PhD, Center for Army Leadership, Ft. Leavenworth;

■ Southfork Road, Lansing, KS 66043 ■

2) Doug Gilbert, U.S. Army (ret.) & Assistant Pastor, Crossroads UMC;

■ Holiday Lane, Lansing, KS 66043 ■

3) Debbie McClain, Production Manager, Hallmark, Leavenworth;

■ Emerson, Ave., Bonner Springs, KS 66012 ■

Other references available on request.

If I can answer further questions or provide additional information, please do not hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob Gaslin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Rob Gaslin

Attachment: 2019 Application Letter

Robin L. Gaslin
703 Cottonwood Dr.
Lansing, KS 66043
December 9, 2019

Mr. Vandall
City Administrator
City of Lansing
800 First Terrace
Lansing, KS 66043

Dear Mr. Vandall:

I am applying to serve as a member of the Board of Leavenworth County Fire District Number 1. The following are my responses to the questions listed in the City's application instructions.

My qualifications for any leadership position begin and end with my 33-year career as a soldier and officer in the United States Army—where I commanded at all levels through group in peacetime and wartime. Specific to the world of fire-fighting: I have served as a member of a volunteer fire department and rescue squad, I have commanded units that included fire-fighting elements and missions, I have commanded aviation units that provided high-altitude search-and-rescue in mountainous regions, and I have been trained and certified by the U.S. Forest Service as a helitack pilot (training that included fire behavior). By way of specific example, I commanded the unit and served as pilot-in-command for the fire-fighting missions in Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks during the historic 1988 fire season. I have served on a number of boards and panels in a variety of settings to include religious, charitable, business, and government.

While I cannot claim to have a mature “personal philosophy of the...board” at this stage of the application process, I believe I have some elements of such a philosophy. The first is that appropriate and adequate fire protection services are essential to the community. Residents and taxpayers expect and deserve an emergency response that will help them when things turn bad—and to help them prevent or mitigate such occurrences. The second is that “appropriate and adequate” does not necessarily mean “the best and most expensive”. Taxpayers, through representation, must be a key component of any spending and taxation cycle. The third is that, as a component of local government, the Board must be responsive to, and accountable to its constituents; this includes taxpayers, voters, residents, visitors, and peer and superior governmental bodies.

As for desired accomplishments, again at this stage, I think such a list would be immature at best. Beyond providing the aforementioned “appropriate and adequate” fire protection services, I think

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the Board must eventually find a way to increase its accountability to its constituent taxpayers, voters, and peer governmental bodies. The best local government happens when its various elements are in competition for resources and when its leaders are accountable to voters and taxpayers. Currently, the Fire District represents a kind of stovepipe—and such is rarely a good thing in government. In my tenure, I would like to see these structural problems of governance resolved.

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1) Jon Fallesen, PhD, Center for Army Leadership, Ft. Leavenworth;

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2) Doug Gilbert, U.S. Army (ret.) & Assistant Pastor, Crossroads UMC;

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Sincerely,



Robin L. Gaslin