



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **PRESS RELEASE: Statement on Appointment of Airport Fire Chief**

*Rochester, NY, July 1, 2021* - In spite of what many people have heard or been led to believe, the Firefighters and Fire Captains that this Union represents have been working without the guidance of a Fire Chief at the Frederick-Douglass Greater Rochester International Airport since March 2020. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the majority of the responsibilities a Fire Chief is supposed to handle instead fell largely on the shoulders of the junior Captains and even on the Union leadership. We have remained quiet on this matter publicly in order to try and maintain a working relationship with the Airport Director, and later the airport's Special Projects Manager Dave Young, whom was appointed as our administrative liaison. While there were some obvious growing pains, the consensus among our membership is that morale has greatly improved and the efficiency of the unit as a whole has increased during these last 16 months despite the hiring of seven new Firefighters during that time.

With all of that said, today brings about change in the formal presence of a provisionally-appointed Airport Fire Chief. Ken Stavalone assumes that role after a lengthy negotiation with Monroe County. He comes to us after spending 15 years - including the last six as an officer - with the Brighton Fire District where he currently serves as a Captain. Ken also has a connection with Airport Fire where his father-in-law Steve Studley retired as a Captain in 1999.

Too often in the past, issues have not been properly addressed - sometimes they were outright dismissed - leading to increased grievances on matters that could have been handled with a conversation or two. Not to mention the negative impact this had on morale. After multiple conversations with Union leadership and several of our members, Chief Stavalone has us feeling confident that his appointment will bring about a new era in the history of the Rochester Airport Fire-Rescue Division. One in which all of our members feel valued, appreciated, and as if they are a part of one team working towards a common goal.

We have faith that our relationship with Chief Stavalone will truly be a partnership that will increase the efficiency of our operation. Not just by looking out for the safety and morale of our members, but also by ensuring they have the proper equipment and resources to accomplish the mission.

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

The leadership of IAFF Local 1636 look forward to working with Chief Stavalone for many years to come, and gladly welcome his family into our own. While we will assist him where we can, we have also made it clear that we will hold him accountable when necessary.

# # #

*The Rochester Airport Firefighters Association represents the Fire Captains and Firefighters of the Frederick Douglass-Greater Rochester International Airport Fire-Rescue Division. The Association was chartered June 17, 1966 as Local 1636 of the International Association of Fire Fighters, AFL-CIO, CLC, and has 21 members - representing 100% Union participation. You can follow us @iaff1636 on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.*

*For more information or interview requests, please contact President Keith Farrell at (585) 944-7183 or email [president@iaff1636.com](mailto:president@iaff1636.com)*