FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date October 9th 2026

September 20th Public Engagement Meeting Recap and Next Steps

MANISTEE, Mich. — The Manistee Regional Fire Initiative (MRFI) thanks the many residents, community leaders, and stakeholders who attended the Community Engagement Session held on September 21, 2026, at Stronach Township Hall. Approximately 100 residents attended the event, which allowed community members to learn more about Fire and EMS service delivery throughout the region and engage in an open discussion about the future of fire and EMS opportunities and challenges within our community.

The session included presentations from experienced fire service and government leaders and subject matter experts who reviewed information collected during the initiative's assessment process. Topics included current Fire and EMS response capacity, staffing trends, equipment and facility needs, financial considerations, and the increasing challenges many communities face in maintaining sustainable emergency services.

Residents participated in a question-and-answer period, during which the Steering Committee answered about 50 questions. Steering Committee members gave feedback and shared perspectives regarding emergency services in their communities. Questions focused on service levels, response times, potential governance models, funding considerations, and how any future changes could affect residents throughout the region.

The Manistee Regional Fire Initiative (MRFI) invites residents to attend an upcoming Community Engagement Session focused on the future of Fire and EMS services in the greater Manistee area. The public meeting will provide community members with an opportunity to learn about the work completed through the initiative to date, review information regarding current Fire and EMS service delivery throughout the region and ask questions.

The Community Engagement Session will be held:

Date: Monday, October 19, 2026
Time: 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM
Location: Onekama Township Hall
Address: 5435 Main Street, Onekama, MI 49675

"As this initiative continues to move forward, it is important that residents have access to factual information and meaningful opportunities to ask questions and provide input," said Phil Vadeboncoeur, Stronach Township Supervisor. *"This community engagement session will help ensure that residents understand the work completed to date and the options being evaluated for the future."*

The MRFI Steering Committee remains committed to transparency, public engagement, and providing residents with factual information throughout the process. Community members are encouraged to continue following project updates and educational materials available on the initiative's website www.mrfi.info or contact info@mrfi.info.

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