Alachua County
Board of County Commissioners

Michele Lieberman
County Manager

February 13, 2020

Charles A. Hammond, MPA
City Manager
City of Archer
16870 SW 134th Ave
P.O. Box 39
Archer, FL 32618

Dear Mr. Hammond,

In 2004, the City of Archer and Alachua County negotiated a partnership agreement for the staffing and operation of the City of Archer Fire Station. This partnership, now more than 16 years old, has enhanced the protection and safety of city and county residents in Southwest Alachua County. The station is equipped with an Advanced Life Support (ALS) Engine, Water Tender and Brush Truck staffed with a three-person team and is in service twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. The team and equipment are provided by Alachua County Fire Rescue at an annual cost of over one million dollars, while the building is provided by the City of Archer through an annual lease agreement of $1 per year. The Fire Rescue staff assigned to the Archer Fire Station connects with the community by providing public education, installing smoke alarms, maintaining fire hydrants while providing fire protection and advanced life-saving medical care response.

The relationship between both entities has been jointly beneficial with homeowners enjoying Alachua County Fire Rescue's Insurance Service Organization (ISO) rating of 3. Also, the unincorporated southwest Alachua County residents receive quicker response times to emergencies.

In 2007, the relationship gained more permanency as a new agreement was negotiated, whereby the County would pay off the remaining building mortgage owed by the City of Archer. This agreement has an annual payment of $34,254.48 to the City of Archer beginning the same year and by contract would end in 2020 at the end of the loan. The City of Archer has shown great commitment to the County's public safety efforts. In the initial agreement, all city owned apparatus and equipment was turned over to the county and in 2017 the City of Archer elected to join the Fire Assessment funding methodology with Alachua County.

The fire station was built in 1999 and is now in need of a new roof, painting, and additional capital maintenance in order to remain operational. As the county now has invested nearly $450,000 into paying the loan off, there is a desire to officially have ownership of the building prior to making capital investments in it.

At a February 4, 2020 meeting to discuss the future of the Archer Fire Station, Alachua County Fire Rescue Chief Harold Theus suggested that the City of Archer convey the fire station property to Alachua County for nominal consideration. The deed to the County would contain a reverter clause, transferring ownership of the property back to the City, in the event the County stops using the property for a fire station. This conveyance would allow the County to make major improvements to the building, such as the required roof replacement, without the problem of the County making capitalized improvements to an asset it doesn't own. Archer City Manager Tony Hammond was receptive to this idea and suggested a letter from the County to the Archer City Commission proposing the conveyance.

If acceptable to the Archer City Commission, the Alachua County Public Works Department will take an item to the Board of County Commissioners accepting the conveyance of the property. Public Works will also prepare the documentation necessary to transfer ownership of the fire station to the County, with the above described reverter language. The County will also pay the costs of closing, including survey, title work, inspections, document preparation and recording fees, as needed.

Sincerely,

FOR

Michele Lieberman
County Manager

ML/HT/jh