



Mason Fire Department

12162 Main St, Mason, TN 38049

David Wideman, Fire Chief

Cell: (901)-497-0103

Board of Mayor and Aldermen

Town of Mason

12162 Main St,

Mason, TN 38049

Dear Board Members,

Subject: Formal Report of Alleged Misconduct and Illegal Activities by Former Fire Chief Charles Jenkins

I am writing to bring to your immediate attention the serious allegations of misconduct and illegal activities committed by former Fire Chief Charles Jenkins, along with other concerning matters involving his role and leadership. This letter aims to outline the specific actions that appear to be in violation of Mason's charter, ethical standards, and potentially state laws, as well as the detrimental impact these actions have had on the Town of Mason.

1. Improper Retention of Town Property

Following his removal from office by the mayor, Charles Jenkins failed to return essential fire department equipment, including fire pagers and radios. Furthermore, he restricted access to critical dispatching software necessary for the department's proper operation, as defined by Section 15 of Mason's Charter, which specifies that all records, property, and equipment belong to the municipality. These actions obstructed public safety operations, a matter of significant concern.

2. Misrepresentation to Residents

Charles Jenkins allegedly misled a resident who was donating a vehicle to the fire department by falsely asserting that the mayor intended to misuse the donation. By convincing the resident to donate the truck directly to him, Jenkins bypassed standard donation procedures, a potential violation of Section 17 of the Charter, which prohibits officers from having direct or indirect personal interests in town-related contracts or work.

3. Unethical Leadership Conduct

It has come to light that Jenkins was involved in an inappropriate relationship with his subordinate, Lieutenant Elizabeth Rose. This relationship compromises professional ethics and creates significant conflicts of interest within the department. Such conduct damages morale and undermines the integrity of the fire department.



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4. Donation of Critical Emergency Equipment

Under Jenkins' leadership, the fire department donated the only boat available for flood responses and disposed of a brush truck essential for field fire emergencies. Given that Mason is classified as a flood zone and farmland, these decisions directly compromised the town's preparedness for emergencies. Section 12 of the Charter emphasizes the mayor's supervisory role to ensure efficient administration, which Jenkins appears to have disregarded by making these unilateral decisions without adequate replacements.

5. Procurement Mismanagement

The purchase of three fire trucks, including a ladder truck that failed inspection, indicates gross mismanagement of resources and neglect of due diligence. These decisions have left the department with limited functional equipment, severely impacting its ability to fulfill its duties. Such actions are inconsistent with the town's obligation to maintain operational effectiveness as per Section 16(a)(7) of the Charter, which outlines the municipality's responsibility to acquire and maintain property for the public benefit.

6. Retaliatory Actions and Manipulation

Jenkins recorded a missed emergency call and used it to attempt to embarrass town officials during a public meeting. This retaliatory act not only jeopardizes the morale of town governance but also demonstrates a lack of professionalism and accountability.

7. Deletion of Public Records

Charles Jenkins also deleted approximately 300 emails from his official city email account. According to Section 15 of Mason's Charter, all municipal records are public property and must be preserved. Additionally, Tennessee's Public Records Act (T.C.A. § 10-7-503) mandates that records related to official duties must be accessible for public inspection. The deletion of emails, especially if they contained records of public interest or evidence of misconduct, represents a significant breach of transparency, accountability, and potentially state law.

8. Missing Equipment and Lack of Documentation

It has been discovered that several critical pieces of equipment, including a thermal imaging camera, a Chevrolet Blazer vehicle, and water rescue equipment, are missing from the fire department. There is no paper trail to indicate where these items went, which violates the principles of proper recordkeeping and accountability outlined in Section 15 of Mason's Charter.



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Call to Action

In light of these serious allegations, I respectfully request that the Board of Mayor and Aldermen exercise its authority under Section 9 of Mason's Charter to thoroughly investigate these matters. The charter grants the board the power to compel witnesses and evidence through subpoenas to ensure accountability and transparency. If these allegations are substantiated, appropriate legal and disciplinary actions should be taken to safeguard the town's interests and restore public trust.

Consequences for Inaction

Should the Board choose not to act upon these concerns, I will pursue the following steps to ensure accountability:

1. Request State Oversight: I will report these allegations to the Tennessee State Fire Marshal's Office and the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury for investigation into potential mismanagement and misconduct.
2. File Formal Complaints: I will lodge complaints with the Tennessee Ethics Commission for violations of ethical standards and contact the local district attorney to explore legal avenues regarding criminal misconduct.
3. Mobilize Community Action: I will organize a public petition demanding transparency and independent investigation and advocate for public meetings to discuss these issues.
4. Engage the Media: I will provide detailed documentation to local news outlets to raise public awareness and encourage community involvement in holding town leadership accountable.

It is imperative that Mason's leadership sets a standard of ethical governance and ensures that no individual, regardless of position, undermines the town's welfare. I trust the Board will address these issues with the urgency and seriousness they warrant.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter. Should you require additional information or documentation, I am prepared to assist further.

Reuben Meyer

Lieutenant, Mason Fire Department

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