



# MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** Mayor and City Councilors  
**FROM:** Rich Olson, City Manager  
**DATE:** April 1, 2013  
**REF:** Presentation – ELCIPACA Fraternal Order of Leatherheads Society

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Elizabeth City Fire Department Battalion Chief Dale Smith has requested thru Mayor Pro Tem Lena Hill-Lawrence an opportunity to provide a short presentation to Council regarding the mission of the ELCIPACA Fraternal Order of Leatherheads Society (F.O.O.L.S).

Battalion Chief Smith has provided the attached Mission Statement for the Council's review prior to his presentation during the April 8, 2013 Council meeting.

RCO/vdw

# The Mission



The mission of the ELCIPACA FOOLS is to embrace the brotherhood/sisterhood of firefighters of the Elcipaca area and to support our citizens by:

Attending Area Fire Department Functions

Public Education Programs designed to teach adults about firefighting and fire prevention

Fundraiser Programs for Burn Centers (Norfolk Sentara, CHKD, NC Jaycees Burn Center and the Albemarle Area Chapter of the American Red Cross)

## **F.O.O.L.S. Mission Statement**

The Fraternal Order of Leatherheads Society (FOOLS) is an organization that was started in 1995 by a group of Central Florida Firemen. This group, known today as the Founding Fools, had a passion for not only the camaraderie and brotherhood that is forged between firefighters, but the rich tradition and heritage of the Fire Service. Since 1995, this brotherhood has grown to over seven thousand strong. There are chapters all over the world, with new chapters starting almost every day.

The Leatherhead is a term used for a firefighter who uses the leather helmet for protection from the hazards we face everyday on the streets. The Leather Helmet, is an international sign of a Firefighter, a symbol that is significant in not only tradition from the early years of firefighting, but one of bravery, integrity, honor and pride. The helmet is a sign of who we are, not what we are.

The FOOLS, like the traditional leather helmet, has always existed throughout the brotherhood of the Fire Service, and will continue to grow and flourish as long as there are fires to fight and emergencies to respond to. The FOOLS are about the brotherhood and tradition that the fire service is based on. When we are in our gear, and trying to make our way down the dark Smokey hallway, we are all the same. All that matters is that you have my back, and I have yours. We do not care if you are a chief, a recruit, a volunteer or a career firefighter, a male, a female or the color of your skin. All we ask is that you are true to your brother and sister firefighter, and to the fire service. All firefighters are welcome to be a part of this great organization; one does not have to own a leather helmet to be considered a "Leatherhead". Our membership is growing everyday, and we encourage you to start a FOOLS chapter in your department.

The FOOLS are not a political organization. We will not be involved in union, management, or any other political issue. We are about preserving the tradition and heritage of the fire service and taking care of our brother and sister firefighters. We have been involved with fundraisers, charity events, and helping disadvantaged children receive gifts for Christmas. We believe that this part of what being a member of the FOOLS is all about.

The FOOLS also believe in providing real fire training for real firefighters. We believe that it is our duty to be as well trained as we possibly can. This can only keep us, and our brothers and sisters safe on the fire ground. We owe it to ourselves, our brothers and sisters, their families, and to the citizens we protect.

We believe in Pride: In our departments, in our stations, in our apparatus, and pride in ourselves.

One last thing that we as the Founding Fools ask of each and every one of you, let us never, ever forget those that have gone before us in the line of duty. Because those brave souls have given all, it is up to us to keep them alive in our hearts and our memories.