

La Crosse firefighters are clearly agitated. Vacancies in the department have meant more work hours, higher stress levels, and a hit to morale. The numbers kind of tell the tale, says firefighter union head, Jeff Murphy. He says the department is on its way to having nearly five thousand calls this year. And, though the department's organizational charts show 97 firefighters on staff, they're actually down to 87.

The city council has given preliminary approval to filling several empty slots on in the fire department, even while mayor Matt Harter seems to be indicating he'll veto the move.