

**MINUTES OF THE CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE
FOR A POTENTIAL SPECIAL BALLOT TAX MEASURE FOR FIRE
PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
TWENTYNINE PALMS WATER DISTRICT
72401 HATCH ROAD, TWENTYNINE PALMS, CA**

AUGUST 14, 2013

The meeting convened at 6:00 p.m. Vice-Chairman Larry Bowden led the pledge of allegiance.

Committee Members Present:

Adam Lunn, Chairman
Larry Bowden, Vice Chairman
Antonio Jimenez
Randy Leazer
Mary Reeves

Management

Fire Chief Jim Thompson
Tamara Alaniz, General Manager
Cindy Fowlkes, District Secretary

Committee Members Absent:

The following Agenda items were discussed.

Public Comment

Ed Vallerand, of Twentynine Palms, spoke to a non-agenda item pertaining to the survey of insurance companies.

Review Fire Service elements of the LAFCO Municipal Service Review

Chief Thompson referred to the Land Ownership map and pointed out the non-taxable parcels owned by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) at the Northern boundary and suggested the community would be better served if Station 422 were relocated.

Review Davis Company Report on Fire Transfer Assessment

The committee discussed several options as noted in the Davis Company Report's Findings and Conclusions, including the formation of a JPA. It was noted that the community will either pay more for fire protection services through the special tax assessment or be forced to pay more for their homeowners insurance.

Chief Thompson noted the 2008 Davis Report projected at least a 17%-20% increase would be needed to support the current level of service by fiscal year 2010/2011. Given the current deficit, the committee was reminded that the current special tax would need to increase significantly to cover the current and projected costs for an 8 person service level model.

Dee Richhart, with Williams Insurance, spoke to Agenda Item #2 regarding the changes in fire personnel and the affects it can have on homeowners insurance. The underwriters for insurance companies use several factors for assessing the risks of insuring each property, including how far away the property is located from a 24 hr manned fire station and the proximity to a fire hydrant. Homeowners can expect their premiums to increase once the ISO conducts their review and reports their findings. Ms. Richhart suspects it would be cheaper to pay for an increased special tax assessment than higher premiums.

Formation of a Subcommittee for the Purpose of Preparing a Draft Report

Chief Thompson noted a subcommittee can work on drafting a report and present it to the Committee for review with a final draft submitted to the Board of Directors in October.

After discussion, Adam Lunn and Tony Jimenez volunteered to sit on the subcommittee and draft a report proposing a ballot measure with an increase in the special fire tax assessment while still pursuing other funding mechanisms.

C.J. Horn, of Twentynine Palms, spoke in favor of the increase in the special tax assessment.

Legal Counsel Responses to Various Questions

Committee members were given a Memorandum regarding legal counsel responses to various questions proposed at previous committee meetings.

Review of Cost Projections for Preferred Service Level Model

The Eight (8) person service model is a combination of four paid career firemen and four volunteers. Chief Thompson provided a funding model with a phase increase scenario of \$28.50 each year for two years with a 3% inflation adjuster starting in fiscal year 2016/2017.

Ed Vallerand, of Twentynine Palms, spoke to Agenda Item #4 in favor of the eight person service level scenario but with incremental increases in the special assessment tax.

Future Tasks

The committee asked Chief Thompson to provide them with the following information at the next meeting.

- Three year phase increase scenario

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 11, 2013 at 6:00 p.m.