

**SAN JUAN COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT #3
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
WORKSHOP
March 2, 2021**

Chair Jarman called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Albert Olson, Frank Cardinale and Bob Jarman.

OTHERS PRESENT:

- Fire Chief Norvin Collins, Assistant Chief Noel Monin, Capt. Tad Lean, Administrative Officer Carolyn Hudson, and others via call-in.

Discussion of Levy Correction

Levy Restoration Workshop – Staff was directed do further research and propose a levy rate restoration in reaction to information that the lack of growth in District revenue has not kept up with actual cost of services. The District has been limited to a 1 percent revenue increase per year plus new construction since 2002 and has not pursued any adjustments to this collection rate, while other County agencies have acquired adjustments during this time.

Staff reported that current District services cannot be sustained over time without an adjustment. In the past, capital purchases have been supported with funds from the general operations funding. Chief Collins said that eventually this will affect the future of maintaining current operations. He continued that the cost of doing business has increased exponentially and to properly support that, an adjustment to the levy is needed. Staff has also done studies that show moving two of the substations and adjusting the vehicle fleet would allow for more efficient and quicker responses. Chief Collins said that it is all part of a big plan to provide improved service to the community.

Staff provided comprehensive reports of the cost over time for personnel, equipment, fire stations, and materials and services. Staff also provided 3 models of funding for the future.

- Model 1 – This model would be to not do a levy correction. Over time, compromises would have to be made to a plan to maintain equipment and buildings. The current levy rate is \$.44 per \$1,000 valuation. That equates to the owner of a \$488,000 home (median) paying \$216.87 in taxes.
- Model 2- Chief Collins said this would adjust the levy rate from \$.44 to approx \$.65 and include an annual urban CPI adjustment and revenues for new construction. That equates to the owner of a \$488,000 home (median) paying \$317.20 in taxes. Chief Collins said this model would allow the District to maintain services while planning for a future capital replacement plan to maintain and acquire appropriate equipment and stations.
- Model 3 – Chief Collins said that this model would include an ambulance EMS levy and would be an add on of approx. \$.35 per \$1,000 valuation to Model 2 totaling roughly \$.98 to \$1.00 per

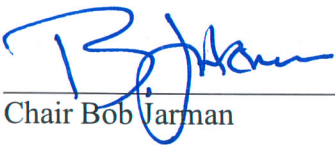
\$1,000 valuation. That equates to the owner of a \$488,000 home (median) paying \$488.00. The District currently responds to all EMS calls. However, this model plans for a fully functioning single agency providing service for all EMS and all Hazard calls on San Juan Island and several outer islands.

Summary - The Commissioners discussed the reports and the models and then requested that Chief Collins draft a report that secures a solid rate for model 2, which will be around \$.65 per \$1,000 valuation. Staff will determine a more precise rate based on the future needs of the District. The Commissioners said that they would like to further discuss the levy correction proposal and make a decision at their next regular meeting on March 8th. They would like to have a plan before the annexation vote on Tuesday, April 27th. For the Town to annex into the District, voters within both jurisdictions will each have to approve the annexation with 50 percent of the vote plus one (simple majority).

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The next regular meeting will be at 3 p.m. on Tuesday, March 9, 2021.

At 3:00 p.m., Commissioner Cardinale **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting. Vice-Chair Olson **SECONDED** the motion. The motion was **APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY**.



Chair Bob Jarman



Norvin Collins, Secretary