



CENTRAL KITSAP FIRE & RESCUE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Board of Fire Commissioners Passes Bond Resolution

Measure Will Be on November General Election Ballot

Silverdale, Wash. –The Board of Fire Commissioners for Central Kitsap Fire & Rescue, unanimously approved a resolution to place a bond for facility improvements on the November 3 General Election ballot. If approved by voters, the 20-year bond would fund the community’s emergency facility needs for the next 60 years.

Fire Chief John Oliver says that his recommendation to the Board to place this bond on the November ballot is about balance. The local economy now appears to be recovering and the balance of public safety and the economy supports staff recommendations.

The Fire District worked with community members to develop a Comprehensive Facilities Plan. The plan shows that facility improvements are necessary for the health and safety of the central Kitsap community and its firefighters.

For example, none of the Fire District’s stations are up to current seismic standards and some could collapse in an earthquake. Many are located away from populated areas, which delays emergency response times. The older stations also are too small to shelter modern emergency apparatus, which leaves this expensive equipment vulnerable to weather and reduces its lifespan.

Firefighter health and safety also is a concern. Cancer is a leading cause of firefighter deaths. Some stations lack effective diesel exhaust removal systems and decontamination areas to reduce firefighter exposure to cancer-causing carcinogens and infectious diseases, such as gear exposed during COVID-19 calls. Other stations lack effective security systems, sprinklers and fire alarms.

The Fire District had planned to run a bond request during the August 2020 Primary Election. District personnel delayed those plans due to COVID-19. After reviewing the most recent housing and market data available, the Board of Fire Commissioners decided to place the measure on the November ballot. If the bond is approved by voters, the Fire District would not start receiving revenue until the spring of 2021.

Fire Chief John Oliver says that timing for the bond request is also strategic. The Fire District waited until two other funding levies expired so as to minimize impacts to taxpayers. Here’s how the taxes property owners pay to the Fire District compare since 2019:



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Levy Measure	2019	2020	2021*
Fire & EMS	\$1.90	\$1.76	\$1.86
Maintenance & Operations Levy	\$0.19	0	0
Apparatus Bond	\$0.16	\$0.11	0
Facilities Bond			\$0.32
Total	\$2.25	\$1.87	\$2.18

**Projected based on current data as of July 28, 2020.*

Rates are per \$1,000 of assessed property value.

“Our goal is to keep tax rates predictable for property owners,” said Chief Oliver. “If voters approve the bond in November, the net result is property owners will pay less in taxes to the Fire District for emergency services than they did in 2019. We planned it this way.”

Station construction projects also will help stimulate the local economy as it recovers from the pandemic. Several of the projects are considered “shovel-ready,” which means the building design, environmental impact studies and site planning work has been completed ahead of time. Local subcontractors could provide many of the needed materials, and construction workers would spend money at local retail stores, restaurants and hotels.

More information on the facilities bond proposal can be found on the District’s website at www.ckfr.org, including a full list of station projects. Chief John Oliver also is available to respond to questions at joliver@ckfr.org or (360) 447-3566.

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Central Kitsap Fire & Rescue has provided fire and life safety services to residents and businesses since 1942. Today, it is one of the largest emergency service providers in the county, responding to over 8,000 emergency calls per year. CKFR operates under a balanced budget, and has passed all its financial and accountability audits with the State of Washington.