



SOUTH METRO FIRE RESCUE
Special Board of Directors' Meeting
October 16, 2023
9195 East Mineral Avenue, Centennial, CO

I. SPECIAL BOARD MEETING – 6:00 P.M. – Board Room

A. MEETING CALL TO ORDER

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

C. ROLL CALL

D. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

E. PUBLIC COMMENT

Public Conduct at Meetings. Comments by members of the public shall be made only during the “Public Comment” portion of the meeting or a specified “Public Hearing,” and shall be limited to three minutes per individual and five minutes per group spokesperson unless additional opportunity is given at the Board’s discretion. Each member of the public wishing to speak shall identify themselves by name, address, and agenda item, if any, to be addressed. Disorderly conduct, harassment, or obstruction of or interference with meetings by physical action, verbal utterance, nuisance or any other means are prohibited. Such conduct may result in removal of person(s) responsible for such behavior from the meeting, a request for assistance from law enforcement, and criminal charges filed against such person(s).

F. PARTNER UPDATE

1. Lone Tree URA – Director of Economic Development & Public Affairs Jeff Holwell

G. DISCUSSION/POTENTIAL ACTION ITEMS

With a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the board members in attendance, the board has the discretion to amend the Agenda to move any Discussion/Potential Action Item to an Action Item.

1. 2024 Budget – Miskimins
2. SMFR Resolution 2023-09 Advocating Voter Opposition to Proposition HH – Dell’Orfano

H. INFORMATION ITEMS

1. State of the District Review - Eckmann

I. EXECUTIVE SESSION (upon motion)

N/A

J. NEXT MEETING(S)

Special Board of Directors’ Meeting to be held on November 13, 2023, 6:00 p.m. at 9195 East Mineral Avenue, Centennial, CO.

K. ADJOURNMENT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AGENDA ITEM

STAFF REPORT



Meeting Date: 10/16/2023
Agenda Item Type: Discussion Item
Agenda Item: 2024 Budget
Submitted By: Dillon Miskimins
Approved: Bob Baker

SUMMARY:

This agenda item provides the Board additional opportunity to ask questions and provide direction in the preparation of the 2024 budget and associated public hearings.

BACKGROUND:

This discussion may include any aspect of the 2024 budget including:

- Outstanding items: During the draft budget presentation at the October 2, 2023 board meeting, the CFO highlighted areas for continued direction or decision, which the board may choose to continue discussing at the October 16th meeting:
 - Finalize Budget Philosophy
 - Mill levy
 - Abatements
 - Revenue cap override (Prop. HH)
 - Board Meeting Schedule (Prop. HH)
- Citizen request: The Douglas County Assessor and Board of Equalization recently adjusted (4% reduction) the market values of residential property. Additionally, the county commissioners encouraged local taxing authorities to make further reductions in their 2024 property tax collections. This prompted a letter from the RidgeGate West Village Community Association requesting the lowering of tax rates for each of their taxing authorities.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

On-going budget discussions

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:

Strategic, sustainable fiscal stewardship

RECOMMENDED ACTION/MOTION:

Staff direction where desired by the board.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

N/A

ATTACHMENTS:

Chair Albee's communication regarding budget philosophies

RidgeGate West Village Letter

From: [Jim Albee](#)
To: [Dillon Miskimins](#); [Camie Chapman](#); [Mike DellOrfano](#)
Subject: Board Budget & Planning Principles / Philosophies
Date: Sunday, October 1, 2023 4:22:41 PM
Attachments: [Outlook-e0fhf4y2.png](#)

Hello everyone (board bcc'd),

As mentioned a few meetings ago I am sending for review / edit / confirmation the notes I had about the different principles and philosophies that we discussed in our budget workshops, and particularly at the August 16th meeting.

- Expense growth should be tied to revenue growth (windfalls are different), particularly:
 - Personnel comp & benefits
 - Operating expenses
- We have one mill rate that needs to provide for both operating and capital needs
- We are committed to investing in facilities, apparatus, etc. Capital is not just what's left over.
- Capital \$15M per year should be our minimum
 - Any/all general fund excess >23% (or then current) reserve should be moved to capital fund
 - Will look for 2023 potential budget amendment if >23%, and expect 2024 budget reflects same
- Debt is understood as a short-term tool for extending reserve threshold timeframe but little/no interest in exploring further
- Benefits as percent of salary target <=40% of salaries within two years and ongoing in planning
- Data presented shows we are exceptionally competitive on all important benefits - vacation, retirement, insurance premiums / plan design, etc.
- Areas for controlling/managing personnel costs, especially benefits
 - A average vs. As on all - ok to have a few Bs and Cs offset the many A+s
 - Line and staff benefits can/should be different
 - Differentials - need to rationalize practice of paying education differentials for jobs that require those education levels

Thanks, Jim

Jim Albee | Director
South Metro Fire Rescue
303-886-0667





RIDGEGATE
WEST VILLAGE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

October, 4, 2023

Rampart Range Metropolitan District

Attn: Denise Denslow
Denise.Denslow@CLAconnect.com

Douglas County RE1 School District

Attn: Christy Williams
Cwilliams5@dcsdK12.org

Douglas County Commission

Attn: Abe Laydon, District 1, Chair
bocc@douglas.co.us

South Metropolitan Fire and Rescue

Attn: Jim Albee, Chair
Jim.albee@southmetro.org

South Suburban Parks and Recreation

Attn: Susan Pye, Chair
spye@ssprd.org

Douglas County Library District

Attn: Bob Pasicznyuk, Executive Library Director
Rpasicznyuk@DCLibraries.org
Susan Burkholder, President/Trustee
answers@DCLibraries.org

Southgate Water and Sanitation District

Attn: John Spisak, President
jspisak@southgatedistricts.org

Urban Drainage and Flood Special District

contact@mhfd.org

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

This letter is written on behalf of the Ridgegate West Village Community Association (RWVCA) Homeowner's Association. The RWVCA is comprised of 430 homeowners within the Lone Tree community.

The residents and Board of RWVCA have been closely monitoring the proposed property assessment changes in Douglas County, which are anticipated to result in an average increase of approximately 39%. This increase is occurring concurrent with excessive insurance premium increases and record inflation. The effects of these extraordinary economic conditions are poised to create a material financial burden on the community, which includes many residents that are retired with fixed incomes. Conversely, the change in property assessments will result in record setting tax revenue for the County, and huge windfalls for the Special and Metropolitan Districts.

The RWVCA Board has reviewed the total mill levy rate for RWVCA in comparison to neighboring communities, and requests that the rates for each of the entities named above be reviewed and lowered to a more reasonable level. A reduction will ease some of the financial stress that may lead to tax payment defaults or other financial defaults which impact the larger community as well as individual residents.

The Board respectfully requests a response to this inquiry at the earliest possible opportunity. All replies will be shared with the residents to ensure that they are advised of the positions that our representatives hold respective to your organizations.

Thank you,
RWVCA Board of Directors

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AGENDA ITEM

STAFF REPORT



Meeting Date: 10/16/2023

Agenda Item Type: Action Item

Agenda Item: Resolution No. 23-09 Advocating Voter Opposition to Proposition HH

Submitted By: Mike Dell'Orfano

Approved: Bob Baker

SUMMARY:

During discussions at the October 2, 2023 board meeting, the board directed staff to create a resolution in opposition to the November 7, 2023 general election ballot measure – Proposition HH. A draft resolution is attached.

BACKGROUND:

The Fair Campaign Practices Act allows a board to pass a resolution or take a position of advocacy on any state or local ballot issue (Section 1-45-117(1)(b)(III)(A), C.R.S.). SMFR or its legacy organizations have taken such action for ballot measures such as inclusions, excise taxes, and constitutional amendments or propositions affecting special district funding.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Reference previous budget discussions.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:

A key focus area of the strategic plan is sustainable fiscal stewardship. Proposition HH imposes new regulations and restrictions that may challenge the ability to maintain that strategic focus.

RECOMMENDED ACTION/MOTION:

A potential motion:

“I move to approve Resolution No. 23-09 Advocating Voter Opposition to Proposition HH”

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

The board may choose not to take a formal position on Proposition HH, make modifications to the draft resolution, or direct staff to provide information to voters using an alternative method.

ATTACHMENTS:

Resolution No. 23-09 Draft

SOUTH METRO FIRE RESCUE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

RESOLUTION NO. 23-09

RESOLUTION ADVOCATING VOTER OPPOSITION TO PROPOSITION HH

WHEREAS, the South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District (“District”) is a quasi-municipal corporation and political subdivision of the State of Colorado operating pursuant to Article 1, Title 32, C.R.S., for the purpose of providing fire protection and rescue services; and

WHEREAS, Proposition HH: Reduce Property Taxes and Retain State Revenue (“Proposition HH”) will appear on the statewide ballot in the November 7, 2023 General Election, as set forth in Senate Bill 23-303; and

WHEREAS, if Proposition HH passes, Senate Bill 23-303 of the Colorado General Assembly will take effect lowering property taxes owed, allowing the State to keep additional money that would otherwise be refunded to taxpayers, temporarily changing how taxpayer TABOR refunds are distributed, and creating a new property tax limit for most local governments; and

WHEREAS, property taxes account for over 80% of the District’s revenues; and

WHEREAS, the District’s property tax revenues will already be reduced approximately \$6.85M through the assessed value reductions enacted in SB21-293 and SB22-238, and the market value reductions enacted by the Douglas County Assessor; and

WHEREAS, Proposition HH’s new property classes, market value reductions, assessment rate reductions, limited backfill, and revenue limits will further reduce the District’s property tax revenues about \$5M to \$15M in budget year 2024 and up to \$8M in future years, along with uncertain long-term impacts through 2032 and beyond; and

WHEREAS, significant reductions in the District’s property tax revenue challenge its ability to provide high-quality fire, ambulance, emergency medical and other emergency and life safety services, including significant investments in service expansion to large areas of new development, construction and maintenance costs of facilities and infrastructure, as much as 25% increases in the cost of fire apparatus, increased salary and benefits costs, and other inflationary impacts; and

WHEREAS, Proposition HH’s property tax reductions will have a significant impact on fire service agencies throughout Colorado, some of which are neighbors and mutual aid partners of the District, which limits the ability to provide the most effective, regional response to wildfires and other significant emergency incidents; and

WHEREAS, while the District has taken previous bold actions to improve service, reduce costs, and support long-term financial stability by consolidating several fire agencies, achieving accreditation through the Center for Public Safety Excellence, reducing insurance premiums for many taxpayers by achieving an Insurance Services Office (ISO) Class 1 rating, and maintaining its voter-approved mill levy of 9.25 mills since 2004, one of the lowest mill levies in Colorado for career fire districts; and

WHEREAS, while the District understands the financial burden that the sharp rise in property values may create, the District and its citizens should determine the appropriate property tax revenues to collect, rather than a statewide policy that doesn't account for local circumstances; and

WHEREAS, the Colorado Fair Campaign Practices Act authorizes local governments to adopt resolutions in support of or opposition to ballot issues, and it is the desire of the Board of Directors of the District to express its opposition to Proposition HH; and

WHEREAS, the Colorado Fair Campaign Practices Act also authorizes local governments to distribute in normal fashion an adopted Resolution regarding any ballot issue of importance to that local government;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of the South Metro Fire Rescue Fire Protection District that the Board hereby expresses its strongest possible opposition to Proposition HH; and the voters of the District are encouraged to **vote "NO"** on Proposition HH at the November 7, 2023 General Election; and further confirms that, if passed, Proposition HH will threaten to impair the District's ability to provide the same level of emergency response and life safety services and facilities that it currently provides.

ADOPTED this 16th day of October 2023

SOUTH METRO FIRE RESCUE FIRE
PROTECTION DISTRICT

By: _____
Jim Albee, Chairman

Attest:

Sue Roche, Secretary