

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



ITEM
3.61
(ID # 4064)

MEETING DATE:

Tuesday, April 11, 2017


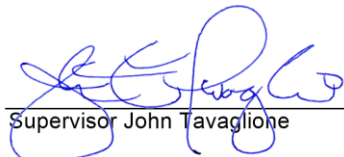
FROM : SUPERVISOR KEVIN JEFFRIES AND SUPERVISOR JOHN TAVAGLIONE :

SUBJECT: SUPERVISORS JEFFRIES and TAVAGLIONE: Fire AdHoc Committee
Recommendations; All Districts; [\$0]

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve, and authorize the Chairman to sign the attached letters approving the Fire Ad Hoc Committee recommendation of a three-year agreement renewal term with CALFIRE and a 120-day notice for reduction of state firefighter and administrative support positions due to a budget reduction;
2. Direct the Fire Department and Executive Office implement the budget direction for FY 17/18 and future years as outlined herein;
3. Direct the Executive Office and the Fire Department to explore additional budget savings and return to the Board of Supervisors during budget hearings with possible recommendations.

ACTION: Policy


Supervisor Kevin Jeffries 4/6/2017 
Supervisor John Tavaglione 4/6/2017

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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FINANCIAL DATA	Current Fiscal Year:	Next Fiscal Year:	Total Cost:	Ongoing Cost
COST	\$	\$	\$	\$
NET COUNTY COST	\$	\$	\$	\$
SOURCE OF FUNDS:			Budget Adjustment:	
			For Fiscal Year:	

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION:

BACKGROUND:

Summary

The County Fire Department is an integrated, cooperative, regional fire protection system that provides fire, EMS, technical rescue and hazardous materials response to residents in the unincorporated area and in 21 partner fire cities and one community services district. The County of Riverside contracts for emergency response from the State of California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), to serve as the Riverside County Fire Department. Keeping this regional system together is integral to providing a high level of public safety service to county residents.

On June 26, 2012, item # 3.37, the Board of Supervisors approved a five (5) year agreement with CALFIRE for fire protection and emergency services within the area of responsibility of Riverside County including partner or contract cities. This contract will expire on June 30, 2017.

On March 7, 2017, the Board of Supervisors received and filed a service delivery and projected FY 17/18 budget report with stated impacts from the Fire Department. Discussions occurred regarding the fiscal impact of the CALFIRE labor increases. In addition, the Board of Supervisors received reports regarding the IHSS increases and the general state of the county budget.

Subsequent to the March 7 Board meeting, the Board of Supervisors Fire Ad-Hoc Committee (Committee) held a meeting to discuss the fiscal climate of the county, the renewal term of the CALFIRE agreement, administrative charge, and county funded state administrative charge support positions. The Committee recommends a three-year renewal term due to the outstanding concerns relating to the state administrative charge although the County desires a longer contract term. Outstanding issues include the county funding, including paying the administrative charge, 15 state non-firefighter administrative support positions (for which we believe should be included in the administrative charge the county pays to CALFIRE), administrative charges paid on unplanned overtime, and administrative charges paid on the increased wages to the firefighters with no clear nexus of increased support costs to the state due to the increases. We are requesting the Board to approve and authorize the chairman to sign the attached letter, which provides a 120-day notice to defund the administrative support positions, notifies CALFIRE of the three-year term contract offer, and requests an immediate

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meeting with the CALFIRE Director regarding the state administrative charge and renewal of the cooperative agreement or contract.

Additionally, the Committee recognizes the need to provide direction to the Executive Office and the Fire Department for budgeting purposes, as well as acknowledging that there will be continuing financial pressure on the county. Therefore, the Committee is recommending the Board of Supervisors approve the following:

- Direct the Fire Department to attempt to absorb the estimated \$11.9 million in labor cost increases to the county in Fiscal Year 17/18.
- Adopt the recommendations presented, with some modification, by the Fire Department on March 7, 2017 listed below which will achieve an estimated savings of \$4.576M:
 - Eliminate one Hazardous Materials Response Team;
 - Close Station/Medic Engine 43 in Blythe and staff a medic squad at Station 44 in Ripley;
 - Eliminate Medic Squad at Station 40 Mecca;
 - Reconfigure municipal staffing at County Fire Stations;
 - Eliminate the County Funded Perris Battalion Chief position;
 - Eliminate two County Fire OA III's and one County Fire ASA from fire administration; and
 - Approve and authorize the chairman to sign the second attached letter which provides a 120-notice to CALFIRE to reduce 11 firefighter positions and reclassify 49 company officer positions in order to implement the above stated service changes.
- To achieve coverage of the remaining shortfall, after the reductions listed above and from the defunding of the state administrative positions, we request the Board of Supervisors to approve the following:
 - Allow the department to budget the use of \$2.5M in fund balance to help cover shortfall;
 - Direct the Executive Office and the Fire Chief to return to the Ad-Hoc Fire Committee with recommendations based on a comprehensive examination of cost allocation, and service delivery, and Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Fee revenue sources;
 - Direct the Executive Office to examine and return to the committee with possible options to provide notice and amend the revenue structure and/or rates contained within the exclusive ambulance agreement; and
 - Allow the Fire Department to be exempt from previous Board's action of January 24, 2012 (Item 3.5) titled "Firefighter Installation on Riverside County Engines (FIRE) Policy" to allow the Fire Chief in conjunction with the Executive Office the ability to reconfigure Fire Station staffing models in order to achieve additional

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savings during this fiscal emergency. Specifically, the Fire Chief will be allowed to deviate from the “Municipal Staffing Model” of one Fire Captain, one Fire Engineer, and one Firefighter per engine and use the “Traditional Staffing Model” of one Fire Captain or one Fire Engineer and two Firefighters per engine at selected county fire stations. The requirement to maintain a minimum of 3 persons on every fire engine will remain as directed in Item 3.5.

Impact on Citizens and Businesses

Reductions in staff within the fire department could result in increased response times to fire and medical emergencies, will result in weakened operational capabilities and does not provide necessary citizen and firefighter safety margins and will lead to increased monetary damages to properties when fires occur.

Additional Fiscal Information

The agreement administrative fee in 2012 was 11.51% at a cost of \$14,899,370; county \$7,384,072 and city partners \$7,525,297. The proposed administrative fee for FY 17/18 is 12.59% at a cost of \$20,893,576; county \$10,121,515 and city partners \$10,893,576.

The budget shortfall is estimated to be in the amount of 11.9M. The board’s action today will reduce the shortfall to \$4.166M. Below is the breakdown of the estimated savings per the reductions and use of fund balance:

Station staffing reductions \$4,576,000
Use of Fund Balance \$2,500,000
Defunding of state administrative support staff \$658,000

Additional savings will need to come from recommendations by the Fire Department in conjunction with the Executive Office, which will be presenting to the Board in the FY 17/18 Recommended Budget during the budget presentations to the Board of Supervisors.

Contract History

The contractual relationship between Riverside County and CALFIRE dates back to 1921 and has provided the public and the County a wonderfully successful fire protection system. Those first contracts were only to augment the level of wild land fire protection provided by the State. The agreement, as we know it today, began in 1946 with the appointment of a County Fire Warden. Today, the County Fire Department is a well-integrated system (County, partner cities & State) that provides municipal fire protection, advanced life support (paramedic) service, technical rescue and hazardous materials response all from 92 regional fire stations. Under the agreement, CALFIRE provides wildland fire protection with 16 State wildland (Type 3) fire engines working out of 11 fire stations. Even with the recent labor cost increases, the contract still clearly provides Riverside County a very important

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public safety program at much reduced cost compared to other local government fire departments.