

ISLAND COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT #1

Camano Island Fire & Rescue (CIFR)

SPECIAL COMMISSIONER'S MEETING

May 23, 2022

3:00 PM

MINUTES

Chair Trembl called the **Special Fire Commissioners Meeting** to order at 2:59 p.m.
Meeting/Workshop Topic: Levy Communications

Those in attendance were :

Fire Commissioners

Janice Trembl

Paul Williams

~~Jerry Evans~~ -excused due to personal reasons

Kelly Yadon

Kim Williams

Fire Department Staff

Chief Levon Yengoyan

Amy Martin, Fire Board Secretary

Bronlea Mishler, PIO

Chief Yengoyan opened with overview of meeting purpose: to establish a campaign to address educating the public regarding how the Levy Lid Lift supports the Fire Departments regular fire and EMS operations.

Discussion included:

Title of levy: District Regular Property Tax Levy -provides for regular operations of Fire, EMS and Rescue

- EMS also has a supplemental Levy
- What are all the items that the residents need to know it funds? EMS, Fire, Rescue, Wildland, etc.
- Immediate readiness
- ALS and BLS transport and ALS services which many agencies do not have and contract out.

How do we spend the public's money?

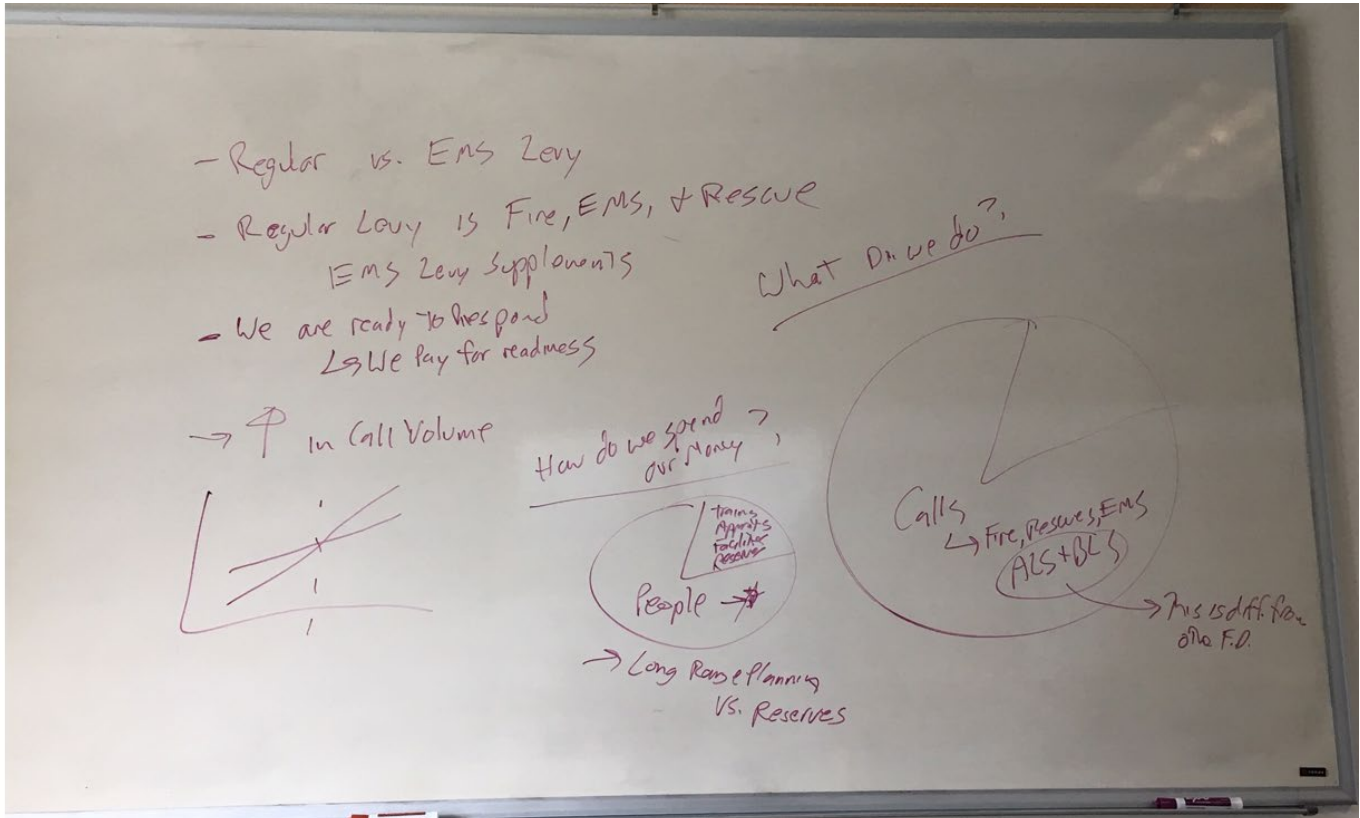
- Training, apparatus, facilities, reserves-15% is our reserve. We are planning for known expenditures. Long range planning vs. reserves.
- Revenue is going up, but our costs are going up at a higher rate. We know that will happen and we are planning for it.
- The People Pillar: CIFR must remain competitive with wages. In today's job market, people have more options and are willing to stand up for what they are worth.
- Message: Our people are our #1 resource, and you trust your life to these people. Wage must be commensurate with the expertise required.
- Call volume relative to revenue

School District Levy lessons learned:

- We need to find a direct connection to our citizens. How they use our services.
- We want to be prepared to respond to questions/criticism

Tax Exemptions Education

- Senior with low fixed income can get an exemption for tax levy. Can provide link for the County and phone number.
- Community Center might be a useful resource to remind folks they can get a tax exemption if needed.



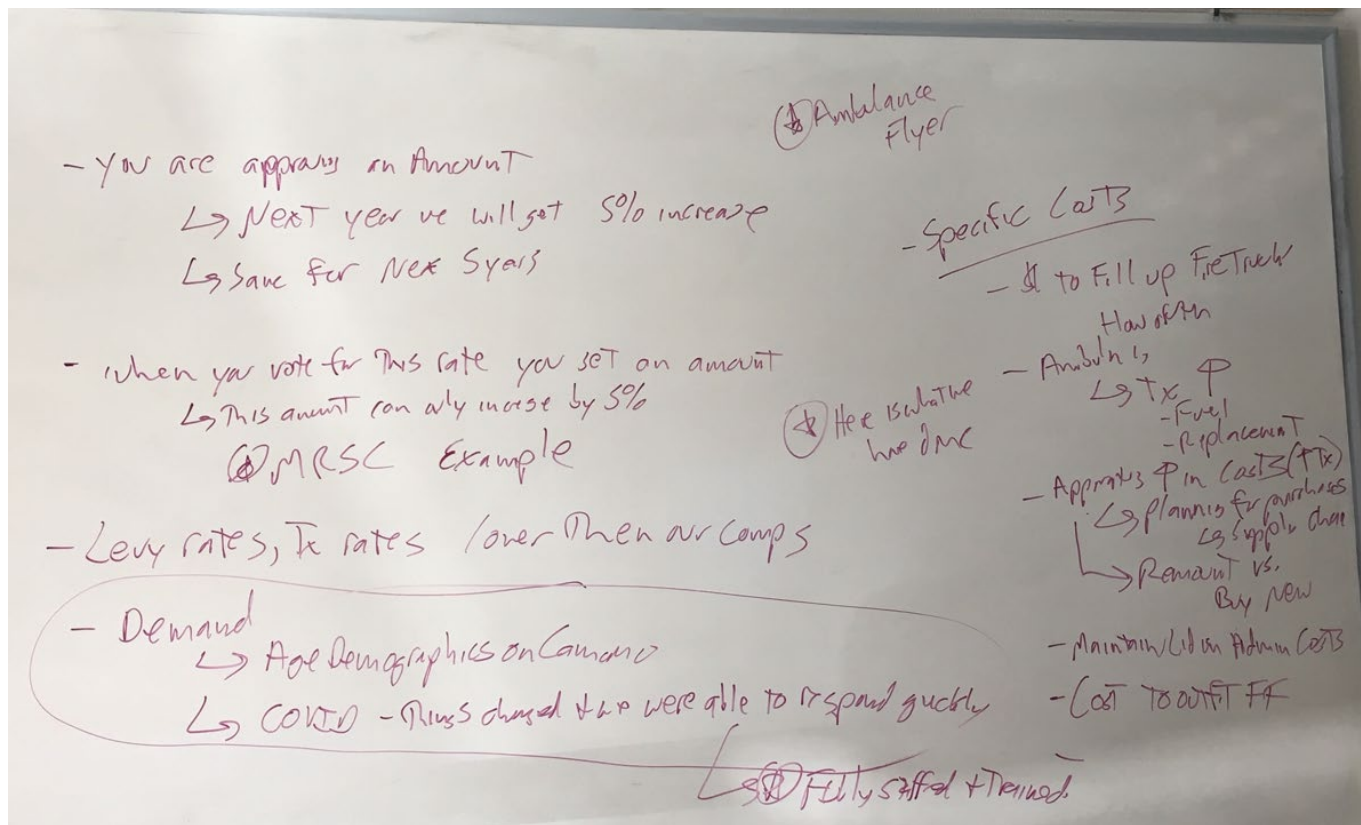
Communication Plan:

- Crab Cracker is allowing us 400-word piece per month.
 - PIO Plan is for intro then regular column
 - Launch with education on what we do and how we do it, then levy discussion
- How to communicate the math?
 - Last Levy Lid Lift was 2017
 - Wording of Levy: 100 percent of current levy Plus 5%. So, you replace the Levy you have plus 5%
 - When you vote for a Levy, you vote for the Levy amount not the rate. It establishes the baseline
 - It's a multi-year lid lift. 5% a year for the next 6 years.
 - MRSC Example
 - Average sale price of home on Camano Island is 700K-800K. Need to look at assessed values.

- Who are the voters in the middle?
 - Citizens understandably concerned about rising costs of gas and groceries and taxes and baby formula
 - Seniors who are on a fixed income.
 - People worried they can't afford to stay in their homes with rising tax rates.

Education Points:

- Transport Revenue- Transport rates are lower than anybody in the region.
- Readiness—data that shows increases and we have to be prepared for that volume leap again.
- Demographics on the island and who would be likely to need us. Focus on full time residents.
- Here are your taxes and breakdown and percent that goes to various entities.
 - Fire Department is listed multiple times—may need to do a breakdown of tax bill.
 - Fire, EMS, and Bond: we may need to call the assessors office and see what the breakdown is.
- Breakdown of costs
 - Gas to fill up an ambulance or fire truck
 - All the costs of the items in the ambulance
 - Cost of outfitting a firefighter
 - Cost of the apparatus now and down the road
 - Speaks to call volumes increasing—have to buy apparatus more often, fill up more often, etc.
 - Doing the best we can with the public's money
- Fiscally Responsible Planning/Practices
 - Replacing the chassis of the ambulance rather than the whole thing.
 - Maintaining the lid on administrative costs.
 - Shop maintains our own vehicles and we generate some of our own revenue in house.
 - Showing that we are engaging in money-saving techniques.
- Community Outreach
 - When crisis hits, we are here to take care of you--vaccines
 - There's regular demand and demand increase
 - We are here to support
- PIO Plan:
 - will have both a proactive and reactive approach to education.
 - Targeted Messaging in short time frame—Mabana flames meeting in June; strategic planning meeting, crab cracker, social media,
 - August 2nd-Election—two months away—there's not a lot of time to educate people. Ballots get mailed out July 15th.
 - Know Us and Support Us. /Neighbors helping Neighbors
 - Timeline: Announcement beginning of June, then all the meetings and education. Ballots arrive mid-July and vote early August.
 - Flyer: design printing and mailing. 4K-5K.
 - PIO will create a calendar for how things are flowed out.
 - Speaking points for commissioners so they can go out to local meetings



Announcements

- ✓ Regular Commissioner Meeting Monday, May 23rd, 2022, 4:30 PM, in-person/virtual Admin Bldg.

Chair Trembl moved to adjourn the Special Commissioner Meeting at 4:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Martin
Board of Fire Commissioners Secretary