

## COMMUNITY QUESTIONS + ANSWERS

### RHFPD BOARD MEETING 7/15/21 + RMAC Meeting on 7/22/21

#### Chair Hill's Recusal

**Q: Was Contra Costa Fire involved in the AP Triton Study? If so, Mr. Hill must recuse himself.**

A: Chairman Hill will recuse himself from future proceedings during the board workshop at Jul 28, 2021 5 pm pst.

#### Pinole

**Q: What was the reason the RHFD Chief chose not to consider contracting services for Pinole Fire?**

A: After reviewing the financial feasibility extensively with the Pinole consultant hired to review a Contract for Service and understanding the financial implications of providing that service to Pinole, I made an executive decision in the best interest of Rodeo-Hercules residents. The service contract required RHFPD to reopen Station 74. This CFS would have required RHFPD to supplement the finances of Pinole Fire District every year.

#### Annexation Questions - General

**Q: Why does Rodeo Hercules need to be a part of this annexation process? Why Now?**

A: RHFPD currently faces shortfalls in staffing, training, and equipment resources to meet both current demand and future demand given the growth projections in commercial/residential and population growth within the fire district. These issues, along with others, can be corrected overnight with annexation.

**Q: What does the annexation offer RHFD that is not already available in the Battalion 7 and mutual aid agreements (at no additional cost)?**

A: Battalion 7 coordinates resources on the west end. It doesn't provide backfill or firefighter staffing coverage in the event of staffing shortages.

What we gain with annexation is immediate depth of personnel. Training programs and support for our firefighters, depth and variety of equipment support, and administration and overhead support.

**Q: Do the firefighters from Con Fire make the same amount of money the RHFD Firefighters do/are our people going to get a raise, or are their people going to get a raise?**

A: Although still negotiating with the labor group, RHFPD personnel will retain their current rank and incremental corresponding pay structure with CCCFPD. CCCFPD personnel follows the pay structure established in their current MOU.

**Q: What is a realistic timeline for the various Hercules residential projects to come online, and the corresponding impact to RHFD services? Deck presentation to City of Hercules, p. 14, likely needs updates below.**

A: All residential projects expected to be completed in the next 2-5 years. Fire district services, training ramp, and staffing need to be in place as these units come online. Data details added to deck.

**Q: Lafayette Fire Department is disappointed that ConFire does not support training to the public. What guarantees do we have that ConFire will provide training to RHFD, or deliver services in a responsive and timely manner?**

A: As part of the annexation, Con Fire is legally responsible for providing emergency services, fire protection to the residents of Rodeo-Hercules, and training and support to their employees.

### **Benefits to Annexation**

**Q: How will this annexation benefit our communities?**

A: Enhanced depth of personnel resources currently unavailable eliminates the possibility of brownouts like the department faced during the pandemic. Community risk reduction program addressing everything from school programs to wildland-urban interface fuels reduction program. Annexing with a larger organization will provide the district financial sustainability to help during an economic downturn.

### **Disadvantages to Annexation?**

**Q: What are the disadvantages of consolidation?**

A: Remaining status quo, unable to service upcoming and current development. Our continued inability to retain employees resulted in unnecessary expenses to the district.

## **Implications of Annexation?**

**Q: How does the annexation affect emergency services?**

A: The annexation will enhance emergency services making specialty equipment available. Firefighter training will also be significantly improved, allowing them to provide better service to the public.

## **Mutual Aid**

**Q: What mutual aid agreements are in place, and how will they be affected by the proposed merger?**

A: There is one mutual aid agreement in place with Battalion 7. There will be no negative effect to this agreement with the annexation. With annexation with Con Fire, it affords us 2/3 rds more resources than we have currently have with Battalion 7.

## **Finances and Annexation**

**Q: Will annexation impact insurance rates for homeowners given the different ratings each district has?**

A: If an annexation occurs, ISO will have to come in and re-evaluate their rating on the entire district. Effects on home insurance are not known and are dependent on individual insurance policies and plans.

**Q: Where are all the monies, and how do they get accounted for in the report (AMR Alliance with Con Fire)**

A:

**Q: How does the money stay in town for property taxes if it's all rezoned to Contra Costa Fire**

A: Property tax money outside measure O funds, will be consolidated into Con Fire budget to be used to provide fire protection and coverage for Rodeo-Hercules.

**Q: Is all reserve capital funds going into Con Fire?**

A: All reserve capital from each agency will be placed in a strategic reserve account.

**Q: Con Fire's recurring revenues include around \$11M in "Charges for services" (see, e.g., Packet page 46, full report page 16). What services are being charged, and why couldn't RHFD increase its revenues through similar service charges?**

A: CCCFPD Charges for services include fees for dispatch services to other agencies, plan reviews and inspections, false alarm charges, and charges to other government agencies.

RHFPD - charges for false alarms, plan reviews and inspections, govt agencies, AND we don't have dispatch services to charge for. If we did increase our rates for services above; 1) we would have to have the staff to execute the services, and 2) what we charge for services is currently in line with the rest of the county. Any rate increases would need to be approved by the CC Board of Supervisors and the City of Hercules.

### **Measure O**

**Q: Measure O-what happens with our dollars? They are repurposed to other areas under consolidation?**

A: Measure O by law must stay with Rodeo-Hercules and will not be consolidated with Con Fire funds.

**Q: Will the current senior exemption stay in place?**

A: YES, this is established in the Measure O Ordinance.

### **Process Questions**

**Q: Why did RHFD not submit a bid to study its current operations cost with annexation with Pinole Fire and Con Fire with stakeholder input before contracting with AP Triton?**

A: As stated earlier in the Q&A, RHFPD worked with Pinoles consultant and determined a CFS with Pinole was not a viable option..

### **AP Triton Report Questions**

**Q: P. 10 of report-EMS Transport fund, CCCFPD maintains 435 funded positions, 13 positions funded by EMS Transport fund-why the number 13, 1 place CCCFPD employs them and another they are employed by EMS Transport fund**

A: A request was sent to AP Triton for response. Stand by for more info.

**Q: Is the GIS system 3D 2D, or spreadsheet?**

A: A request was sent to AP Triton for response. Stand by for more info.

**Q: The report stated duplicative administrative services would be eliminated, but at the same time, you said there would be no layoffs. What kind of magic are you using to accomplish that?**

A: No current RHFPD or ECCFPD employees wishing to continue their employment will be laid-off. Increasing the CCCFPD service model will also increase the need for administrative personnel.

**Q: 5-year study left out growth in waterfront?**

A: Request made for AP Triton to update the study. Will provide results, update timing and post results when they become available.

**Q: Where in the report is a 10-year financial analysis of RHFD.**

A: The study focus was on five years for all departments.

**Q: Did you do outreach with rodeo residents? Where can that be found in your report on those interviews you mentioned?**

A: Volume II of the study contains stakeholder input and comments.

**Q: Will this report be used as an MSR to go to LAFCO**

A: No separate MSR is required to send to LAFCO.

**Q: The ECCFD Sphere of Influence (SOI) is nearly the same size as the entire ConFire SOI. In contrast, RHFD's SOI is one-tenth of the size of ConFire and one-eighth size of the ECCFD. [AP Triton annexation study Figure 3. Page 8.] How advantageous can it be for RHFD to merge with CF when CF's new SOI is 100 % + larger, and all entities have disparate needs? Bigger isn't always better.**

A: The larger the SOI, the greater the service levels, both quality and quantity.

**Q: Using the staffing figures by District in Figure 29 on p. 47 in conjunction with the training hours by District in Figure 125 on p. 130, it becomes clear RHFD firefighters receive 70% more training than ECCFD and ConFire. On average ConFire & ECCFD offer about 66 hours of training annually, while RHFD firefighters receive about 122 hours annually. Hercules also excels in on-the-job training. Given this data, one would expect RHFD training to be worse off, not better, by annexation with ECCFD and ConFire. What is the training benefit from RHFD annexation that is not available to any Fire District?**

A: On page 47, Figure 28, Staffing for Training is ZERO in RHFD and ECCFPD and 4 FTEs in CCFPD.

The Figure 125 on Page 130 shows 3.2Mil in Con Fire annual training budget vs. RHFPD of \$17,300.

## **RHFPD Services**

**Q: Why is there no mention of a 3rd station for RHFD in this report? The 3rd station would be a tangible benefit to our community. Isn't it more likely to happen if RHFD remains autonomous, especially since revenues for RHFD have been underestimated.**

**Based on estimated growth, how soon would RHFD need a third station?**

A: To add another station to RHFPD, we would need a construction bond for \$12-15 million\* for land/construction costs (\*Fire Facilities Impact Fee Impact Study, April 2019), plus an additional 2.5 Million/year to run the house. This is without equipment costs to launch a new firehouse. In the current RHFPD budget, this is not feasible. If all money to both build and maintain a 3rd firehouse was available, based on current growth, it would need to be available to use by 2024.

**Q: Are the incidents of fire going down from 1980 to now, or are they going up? Where are the California benchmarks?**

A: Regarding wildland fires, they have increased not only in occurrence but in varsity. Last year set a new milestone of one million acres burned in our state alone. Yes, over the last 41 years, the incidence of structure fires has decreased. Still, it has not been eliminated even with the requirement of residential sprinklers that can be quickly overwhelmed due to the materials most furniture is manufactured with today.

**Q: Difference between redbox EMS and ambulance?**

A: Not sure of the meaning of this acronym. I think this refers to interfacility transport ambulances, compared to paramedic ambulances. Stand by for more information.

**Q: Can the training you refer to happen without consolidation?**

A: We currently and won't have in the near future the depth of training resources that are available through CCCFPD. It would not be an efficient use of funds to create our own RHFPD inhouse training programs already available through CCCFPD.

## **LAFCO**

**Q: Is it premature to be talking about LAFCO here?**

A: LAFCO was part of the conversation early on to provide guidance in managerial steps and timing each agency needed to take.

## **General Questions**

**Q: What are the current trends for the time it takes for flashovers to happen? How does that affect response times?**

A: Flashovers don't affect response times. Flashovers occur when all items in a room reach their combustion temperature all at the same time. Delayed response particularly in conjunction with inadequate resources reduces the likelihood of controlling the fire in time to prevent major damage and possible loss of life and increases the dangers to firefighters.

## **Community Outreach**

Q: Will this board listen to the community you serve regarding consolidation?

A: Yes; Please join several of the following events to established to gather community input:

**RMAC Meeting - Chief Bryan Presentation + Q&A - July 22, 2021-7pm**

**Hercules City Council Meeting - Chief Bryan Presentation + Q&A - July 27, 2021-7 pm**

**RHFPD Special Board Meeting - Chief Bryan Presentation + Board Action Items + Q&A - July 28, 2021-5pm**

**RHFPD Town Hall Meeting - August 5th 7pm**

###

