



**SAN BENITO COUNTY
AGENDA ITEM
TRANSMITTAL FORM**

Dom Zanger
District No. 1
Vice-Chair

Kollin Kosmicki
District No. 2
Chair

Mindy Sotelo
District No. 3

Angela Curro
District No. 4

Ignacio Velazquez
District No. 5

Item Number: 3.4

MEETING DATE: 04/08/2025

DEPARTMENT: COUNTY ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

AGENDA ITEM PREPARER: Henie Ring

DEPT HEAD/DIRECTOR: Henie Ring

SUBJECT:

COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE – H. RING, INTERIM COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Discuss options for Fire Protection Services including the elimination of the County Fire Services Ad Hoc that negotiated with the City of Hollister on an amended Fire Protection Services Contract, the creation of a new Ad Hoc Committee to make recommendations on the creation of a new County Fire Department, including the hiring of a Fire Chief, the timeline to develop a new fire department, county costs, facilities options, equipment and staffing needs, discuss the option of contracting with Cal Fire in a partnership for fire services, and other relevant matters related to creating a Fire Department; and whether or not to continue with the previously approved Fire District Feasibility Study contract and the potential creation of a Fire Protection District. Provide staff direction as desired.

SBC FILE NUMBER: 119

AGENDA SECTION:

REGULAR AGENDA

BACKGROUND/SUMMARY:

On March 18, 2025, the Board of Supervisors held a special meeting to review the provisions outlined in draft amendment # 1 to the Fire Protection Services Agreement with the City of Hollister. On March 20, 2025, the Board of Supervisors held a second special meeting to consider approval of Amendment #1 to the Fire Protection Services Agreement with the City of Hollister and provide staff direction if desired. The Board directed staff to redline a section of the amendment related to the implementation of a "Brown Out" of Station 3 and forward the updated draft amendment to the City of Hollister.

On March 21, 2025, the City of Hollister held a special meeting to report the County's request for the draft amendment #1, including the removing of the redline section regarding the implementation of a "Brown Out" of Station 3. The City of Hollister rejected the County's requested draft amendment and further proposed a new option for fire services as follows:

Option E

- Minimum 3-0 staffing at stations
- Prepare set of proposed terms that treat the County and City of San Juan Bautista as one partner
- One comprehensive price and set of terms
- Terms prepared in partnership with the Hollister Fire Negotiations Ad-Hoc Committee, Fire Chief, Fire Union President, and City Management
- County of San Benito and San Juan Bautista to work together to develop partnership to meet the proposed terms of the City of Hollister
- Each agency provides City of Hollister with one-time payment for Fiscal Year 2024/25 within 30 days to compensate the City of Hollister for the financial impact during the ongoing negotiating process
- Issuance of 270-day termination notices to the County of San Benito and the City of San Juan Bautista Inclusion of 90-day provision to complete negotiations

On March 24, 2025, the City of Hollister held a special meeting to adopt a resolution approving and authorizing the City Manager to provide notices to termination regarding fire protection services agreements with the County of San Benito and the City of San Juan Bautista.

On March 25, 2025, the County received a second 270-day termination notice to cancel the current fire protection services contract by the City of Hollister. The effective date to terminate would be December 20, 2025.

On March 26, 2025, County Administration presented an agenda item to the Board to discuss the future of fire protection services. The Board meeting included a presentation by the County's Fire consultant, Don Ashton from Municipal Resources Group about Proposition 172. The Summary of the presentation included; the history of the Public Safety Half Cent Sales Tax Source, how the funds are used for public safety services, the decrease the County has experienced from Prop 172 annual allocation over the past few years, and how any change to the Prop 172 allocation methodology will result in reductions to other public safety departments.

The Board further discussed options if a contract for fire services with the City of Hollister was not to move forward. The options included:

1. The creation of a new County Fire Department; including the hiring of a Fire Chief, the timeline to develop a new fire department, county costs, facilities options, equipment and staffing needs;
2. The option of contracting with Cal Fire in a partnership for fire services and other relevant matters related to creating a Fire Department;

RESOLUTION OR ORDINANCE NEEDED FOR THIS ITEM:

N/A

CONTRACT NEEDED FOR THIS ITEM:

N/A

RFP AND BID HISTORY:

N/A

LAST CONTRACT AMOUNT OR N/A:

N/A

CONTRACT HISTORY (Describe all amendments and previous contracts):

N/A

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS: 1. Operational Development & Excellence

Yes

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS: 2. Planning And Sustainable Growth

Yes

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS: 3. Technology

No

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS: 4. Community Engagement

Yes

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS: 5. Health & Safe Community

Yes

BUDGETED:

N/A

BUDGET ADJUSTMENT NEEDED:

N/A

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

N/A

UNFUNDED MANDATE:

N/A

SBC BUDGET LINE ITEM NUMBER:

N/A

CURRENT FY COST:

N/A

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Discuss options for Fire Protection Services including the elimination of the County Fire Services Ad Hoc that negotiated with the City of Hollister on an amended Fire Protection Services Contract, the creation of a new Ad Hoc Committee to make recommendations on the creation of a new County Fire Department, including the hiring of a Fire Chief, the timeline to develop a new fire department, county costs, facilities options, equipment and staffing needs, discuss the option of contracting with Cal Fire in a partnership for fire services, and other relevant matters related to creating a Fire Department; and whether or not to continue with the previously approved Fire District Feasibility Study contract and the potential creation of a Fire Protection District. Provide staff direction as desired.

BOARD ACTION RESULTS:

N/A

ATTACHMENTS: