



South Kitsap Fire and Rescue

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SOUTH KITSAP FIRE SEEKS TO RESTORE FIRE LEVY

\$.41 NEEDED TO KEEP UP WITH GROWTH AND IMPROVE RESPONSE TIMES

[Port Orchard, Wash.] – The South Kitsap Fire and Rescue (SKFR) Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to approve the resolution placing the fire levy renewal on the August 1st primary election ballot. This is not a new tax, it is a renewal of the current fire levy approved in 2017. If approved by the majority of SKFR voters, the fire levy would reset to the statutory maximum of \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. The \$.41 increase over the current levy rate of \$1.09 would be used to add firefighter EMTs and firefighter paramedics to the current daily staffing of 19.

“SKFR responds to the most calls in Kitsap County, with the least amount of daily personnel,” states Fire Chief Jeff Faucett. “We established our daily staffing of 19 in 2013, when we were running less than 9000 calls per year. Our call volume has grown by 55%, while our daily staffing has remained the same, and now response time are almost two minutes slower on average. We need more firefighter EMTs and firefighter paramedics on duty every day to keep pace with the growth of our community and need for our services.” In addition to increasing daily minimum staffing levels, the levy will also allow the district to re-staff the Banner Road fire station (Station 10) twenty-four hours a day. “As our community grows, we have to have more personnel in order to meet the growth and demands for service,” said Faucett, “if this levy is not approved, the district will have to consider further staffing moves and possible cuts in service, which is something none of us want.”

SKFR conducted 10 town hall style meetings in March of 2023, with nine in-person opportunities at various locations throughout the fire district, and one virtual. The insight gained from these town halls was then shared with the Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) over two additional meetings, with the CAG recommending and supporting the levy restoration. “We have engaged with and listened to our community and are committed to providing the quality of service that our residents deserve,” Faucett states. “We are proud to do the work our community needs, while constantly evaluating our performance with the goal of continual improvement.”

For more information about the fire levy or anything about the district, please visit www.skfr.org or follow us on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram.

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South Kitsap Fire and Rescue is the largest emergency services provider in Kitsap County. Serving the community for over 75 years, the agency provides fire and EMS to more than 79,000 people over 117 square miles. Full-time and volunteer emergency personnel responded to over 12,708 calls in 2022, a 6% increase compared to the year before.

Doing the work our community needs with purpose, performing as a team of professionals, always evaluating, always improving.