

RESOLUTION NO. 2004-10

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MONTECITO FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT ESTABLISHING DISTRICT PLANNING PRIORITIES

WHEREAS, the Montecito Fire Protection District (“District”) was formed in 1917 to protect the Montecito community from fire and other perils; and

WHEREAS, the District has consistently strived to provide a high level of service to all areas of the District and surrounding community; and

WHEREAS, response times are an important factor in emergencies and the District strives to meet currently recommended response time standards, and

WHEREAS, studies conducted by the District indicate that many areas in the eastern portion of the District are beyond those currently recommended response time standards; and

WHEREAS, residential development in the eastern portion of the District has increased and is expected to continue to increase in light of land use and development trends; and

WHEREAS, such development will result in significant numbers of residential dwelling units located in areas outside of currently recommended response time standards; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors considered a report from the District’s Fire Chief on November, 17, 2003, and determined a need to plan for a new Station 3 in the eastern portion of the District; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors considered many factors that were studied in order for the Fire Chief to make a recommendation as to the proposed best general location for a new Station 3; and

WHEREAS, continually rising real estate costs indicate that the acquisition of land for a new Station 3 is in the best interest of the District as soon as a need is established, one or more acceptable locations identified, and appropriate environmental review considered; and

WHEREAS, the mission of the fire service in general has expanded greatly since 1917, to include emergency medical and rescue services, hazardous materials response, technical rescue, urban search and rescue, response to terrorist acts, as well as many new challenges, resulting from the increase in District population and homes, as well as traffic on U.S. Highway 101; and

WHEREAS, new responsibilities will arise in the future; and

WHEREAS, these expanded roles and responsibilities constantly require additional expertise, equipment, and supplies; and

WHEREAS, such equipment and supplies need to be adequately stored, staged, maintained and delivered to emergencies; and

WHEREAS, the District has for its entire history depended on the ability to call in “off-duty” personnel during times of emergency to augment on-duty staffing in order to properly respond to the emergency; and

WHEREAS, because of continuously rising housing costs in not only the District but throughout the southern area of Santa Barbara County, many employees have not been able to acquire adequate housing in the immediate vicinity of the District; and

WHEREAS, a survey of current District employees shows that less than 50% live in the southern area of Santa Barbara County, while more than half live in either Ventura County, northern Santa Barbara County, or distant San Luis Obispo County; and

WHEREAS, in times of emergency the potential traffic delays due to the fact there are only four highways (U.S. 101 South, U.S. 101 North, State Highway 150 and State Highway 154) linking the District to these more distant communities may adversely affect the District’s ability to call in sufficient off-duty personnel to adequately augment on-duty personnel, as may be required; and

WHEREAS, the District has met with representatives of the Montecito Firefighters Association and discussed methods to insure that the District can adequately augment its on-duty forces during emergencies; and

WHEREAS, many options have been considered by the Board of Directors to respond to the District’s identified needs, including the possibility that the District provide subsidized housing to employees and

also that the District investigate methods to assist employees with the purchase of housing geographically convenient to the District.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Board of Directors of the Montecito Fire Protection District does hereby resolve, determine and order as follows:

1. The District's highest planning priority is the identification and acquisition of a parcel or parcels of land, located appropriately, and adequate to accommodate a fire station and such facilities as the District determines may be necessary to serve the public for the next 50 years, subject to appropriate environmental analysis and review.
2. The Fire Chief is directed to develop a plan for the eventual construction and staffing of this third fire station at such time as the Board deems necessary.
3. The needs of the District to store and maintain diverse types of equipment shall be addressed by the Fire Chief in planning future facilities, including a third fire station and possible other facilities both to be held in fee ownership and/or leased.
4. During the planning for a third fire station the Fire Chief and Board will consider the inclusion of some form of employee housing in conjunction with the new fire station.
5. The District will pursue as a second planning priority the provision of housing to its employees in southern Santa Barbara County so that a larger number of the District's employees will be available to augment the on-duty forces in emergencies.
6. Such housing should be suitable to meet the needs of both single employees and employees with families.
7. A plan to fairly manage an employee housing program should be drafted by the Fire Chief and shall include methods to financially assist its employees in purchasing housing, as well as the District owning and renting housing to its employees.
8. The pursuit and acquisition of appropriate housing will be ongoing as District finances allow until further determination by the Board of Directors.
9. The Fire Chief is directed to research and report to the Board of Directors methods of financing the facilities described in this resolution.

10. The Fire Chief is directed to recommend a budget that sets aside funds toward the acquisition of the facilities described in this resolution in a manner that does not affect the operations of the District at the level of service currently provided, and does not adversely affect the ability of the District to adequately compensate its employees, to be held in a separate fund, and that such funds be designated for their intended purpose as described in this resolution.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Governing Board of Montecito Fire Protection District this 20th day of September, 2004, by the following vote, to wit:

AYES: R.J. Jensen, J. Venable

NAYS: None

ABSENT: D. Newquist

Roland J.Jensen
President of the Board of Directors
MONTECITO FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

ATTEST:

J. Venable
Secretary