



Proposed Fire Station in Oak Shores Survey

A Fire Station in Oak Shores survey will be mailed out to all San Luis Obispo registered voters within the district boundary soon, asking pertinent questions relating to whether support exists for staffing a full time fire station in the community. This survey is being circulated in response to a community meeting held in September regarding a proposed county property assessment to cover the cost for staffing the fire station with Cal Fire personnel. Resident concerns about fire risk, lengthy medical response time, homeowner insurance issues, and ongoing concern for the continued long-term viability of our volunteer staffing approach resulted in the presentation of the proposed assessment to the community by the County Fire Chief.

The assessment would apply to all property owners within a district boundary, which includes Oak Shores, and voted on by locally registered voters. Several points were raised at the meeting regarding the assessment. Among the commentary was concern over the lack of a sunset clause, whether the assessment would be capped, the uncertain affect full time fire station staffing would have on fire insurance rates, and the annual cost of the assessment. Based on these concerns the original proposal was determined to be unacceptable, in spite of strong support for a fire station in Oak Shores.

At the meeting, the Fire Chief did commit to, if the project was approved, funding and providing a new fire station building, fire trucks and needed equipment, training and administrative costs to support two firefighters around the clock. Paramedic service would be at additional cost. It was stressed that this minimal staffing level would be supplemented by, not replace, any volunteer firefighter staffing. It was explained that the proposed assessment was the least costly to develop and most expedient method for raising the necessary funding. The requirements of the assessment meant that locally registered voters participate in a special district election. If approved, the assessment would be imposed indefinitely.

At the conclusion of the meeting, given the rejection of the original proposal the Fire Chief asked whether the community is still interested in pursuing staffing a fire station and willing to contribute any amount in an assessment to support it. A community survey will be mailed out to answer the Chief's question. The survey will be mailed to those inside the district boundary that are registered voters in San Luis Obispo County. Participation in the survey will help the Oak Shores Board of Directors decide the most prudent and effective approach toward addressing staffing the Fire station within the district boundary.

To view the full presentation given at our community meeting by Chief Lewin please visit our website www.oakshores.us.