



Joint Meeting: Fall City Fire District 27 Commissioners & Consolidation Evaluation Committee - May 24, 2018

INTRODUCTION

- Committee has met 14 times with the goal of collecting and analyzing available options to provide the board with information to support their decision-making.
- We've looked at 4 options.
 1. Stand-Alone: Continue as Fire District 27, essentially as we operate today
 2. Join Eastside Fire & Rescue as interlocal agreement partner
 3. Merge with Fire District 10
 4. Cooperative arrangement with City of Snoqualmie (4 sub-options)
 - Sharing resources or administration → merged organization
- Our focus has been to look at how the options impact:
 - Governance/Local Control
 - Taxes and Budget
 - Service
 - Operations
- We understand there had been consideration of November ballot measure with August filing deadline.
 - Today is an update on what we know at this time and an opportunity for you to ask questions
 - We're not done with our analysis yet because discussions with Snoqualmie are still in-progress
 - After discussing the options, we'll talk about the potential ballot measure

Option 1: CONTINUE AS STAND-ALONE DISTRICT

Governance/Local Control

- Strong community support demonstrated by passage of ballot measures
- Continuing as an independent fire district ensures local control and that services are adapted to our community

Taxes & Budget

- Taxes that are collected stay within Fire District 27 (Fall City) service area
- However, there are concerns about financial sustainability due to reliance on levies

Service

- Over time, have been a very lean organization which is fiscally prudent, but also has some downsides....
- From a level of service and emergency response perspective...
 - Don't consistently have 3 career staff on duty for response
 - 3 career staff on duty ___% of time
 - Revenue for additional staffing could be included in future levy.
 - Dependent on Volunteer Program for supplemental staffing
 - 3-person staffing 98.1% of time via combination of career staff and volunteers.
 - If only 2 firefighters available for structure fires, limited to defensive tactics only

Operations

- From a management and administration perspective...
 - Limited resources for HR, fire prevention, training, maintenance, etc.; These functions are performed by chief, administrative assistant and firefighters
 - Lack dedicated training officer and there are limited career advancement opportunities

Option 2: JOIN EASTSIDE FIRE & RESCUE AS INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT PARTNER * As of 6/29/18 **Fire District 27 Board of Commissioners have decided not to pursue this option due to the costs.**

In this option FD 27 continues as an entity from a financial and political perspective; however, EFR would provide our fire service, including management of all operations.

Governance/Local Control

- Requires unanimous vote of current ILA partners and new ILA
- FD 27 retains independence and ability to adapt services to community
- Decision to join EFR is reversible

Taxes & Budget

- FD 27 expenses would increase an estimated \$514k/year + annual contribution to equipment and capital funds
- FD 27 would have option to use either levy or fire benefit charge

Service Levels and Operations would be comparable to Option 3

Option 3: MERGE WITH FIRE DISTRICT 10

In this option Fire District 27 ceases to exist. All aspects of the fire service would be administered by Fire District 10.

Governance/Local Control

- Requires voter approval of >50%
- Irreversible decision
- FD 27 commissioners on FD 10 Board during transition, then elected at large
- Decisions made to benefit larger (entire D10) area - *see district area map*

Taxes & Budget

- Overall cost to FD 27 taxpayers would decrease an estimated at \$250k/year (2018 data)
 - Fire Benefit Charge decreases cost for most taxpayers (77%); increases for most businesses and some homeowners
- Rely on Fire Benefit Charge - voted measure every 6 years, instead of levy
 - Higher ceiling relative to operating budget
 - Commissioners can adjust Fire Benefit Charge rate for unexpected needs after public hearing
- Charge for transport fees

Service

- 3-person career staffing at all times
- Expanded community outreach programs
 - Community liaison officer
 - Citizen corps
 - Fire Explorer program for youth

- Community Emergency Response Teams
- Special operation enhancement
 - Haz-Mat
 - Trench Rescue
 - Confined Space Rescue
- Fire Prevention Division
 - More resources to identify and inspect higher hazard/target areas
 - Expanded inspection program and Fire Marshall oversight

Operations

- Robust organization with levels of management and full scope of support services
 - HR, IT, Facilities, Vehicle Maintenance, etc.
 - Battalion Chief services
- Greater administrative expertise, capacity and efficiencies
- Expanded fire fighter training
 - Dedicated training division
 - Access to regional training
 - More exposure to special operations training
- Reserve volunteer fire fighter program focused on people interested in pursuing fire fighter career while also supplementing career staffing (farm team concept)
 - FD 10 Program is evolving
 - Long-term uncertainty on structure of program
- All employees transfer with no loss of jobs, including admin and volunteers
- Increased career pathways for staff

Option 4: CITY OF SNOQUALMIE

Snoqualmie Fire Department has many similarities with FD 27 (size, administrative structure, volunteer programs, etc.) and have history of working cooperatively and sharing resources.

There are a range of options being discussed with Snoqualmie that would primarily be accomplished via an interlocal agreement. In Options 1-3, FD 27 would continue to exist. In Option 4 a new organization would be created, such as a regional fire authority.

- Do not have much detail yet, so focused more on *potential* outcomes and considerations
- Snoqualmie City Council expected to vote May 29 on resolution to continue discussions.

(Sub-Options 1-3)

Sub-Option 1: Functional Consolidation of Major Divisions (Operations, Training, etc.)

Sub-Option 2: Shared Administration (one management team leading/overseeing 2 departments)

Sub-Option 3: Merged Organization (Interlocal Agreement; function as 1 agency)

Governance/Local Control

- Continue elected Fire District 27 Commissioners
- Negotiated interlocal agreement establishes levels of service, administrative structure, financial structure, etc.
 - May have less control depending on interlocal agreement provisions
- No public vote required

Taxes & Budget

- Continued reliance on voted levies

- Unknown impact to expenses/taxes
- No plan yet on how to split costs

Service

- Could achieve 3-person career staffing at station w/Sub-Option 3
- Similar community programs and emphasis
- Similar Special Operations
 - 1 HazMat technician
- No Battalion Chief

Operations

- Could achieve administrative efficiencies with improved administrative/management structure (Sub-Options 2 & 3)
- Improved overall training

(Sub-Option 4: Voter-Approved Merged Organization)

- *Has most potential benefits*
- *New structure could be politically challenging to implement*

Governance/Local Control

- Requires voter approval >50%; if Fire Benefit Charge, then >60%
- Irreversible decision
- Fire District 27 replaced with new organization and new elected officials
- Governance structure to be negotiated

Taxes & Budget

- Taxes would likely decrease for FD 27 taxpayers; may increase for Snoqualmie taxpayers

Service

- Would be established with 3-person career staffing
- Could be established with locally-focused community programs

Operations

- New organization established with merged operations (all benefits of Sub-Options 1-3 plus independent organization with fully merged administration and changed taxing structure)