

RODEO-HERCULES FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Board of Directors, RODEO - HERCULES FIRE DISTRICT

FROM: Rebecca Ramirez, INTERIM FIRE CHIEF

DATE: July 31, 2024

SUBJECT: Resolution Requesting the Contra Costa Local Area Formation Commission Initiate Proceedings for the Dissolution of the Rodeo-Hercules Fire Protection District and Subsequent Annexation of Those Territories into Contra Costa County Fire Protection district

Staff brings forward, as directed by the Board and for the Board's consideration, discussion and possible action a resolution of application to the Contra Costa Local Area Formation Commission (LAFCo) requesting dissolution of the Rodeo-Hercules Fire Protection District (RFFPD) and annexation of those territories into Contra Costa County Fire Protection District (CCCFPD) and the attached draft Plan for Services for annexation of Rodeo-Hercules Fire Protection District to Contra Costa County Fire Protection District.

BACKGROUND

In July 2023, the Board of Directors contracted with retired fire chief Micheal Despain (DBA: M.E.D. Enterprises Inc.) to provide an independent review of RHFPD's long-term sustainability. From July 2023 to December 2023, Chief Despain conducted an analysis of the District, which included a recommended sequence of action items to provide the most efficient implementation of the District's strategic plan. During this same time, at the direction of the Board, Chief Despain solicited a number of local agencies to determine their interest in a possible contract for service. Of these listed agencies, El Cerrito-Kensington Fire Department and CAL FIRE (SCU) were the only agencies that indicated they were willing to entertain a deeper discussion on the proposal.

In December 2023, Chief Despain provided a summary of findings from the analysis of the long-term sustainability options for the RHFPD. Following the analysis, one option for the District was to request annexation of the RHFPD into the CCCFPD. At the direction of the RHFPD Board, staff initiated the process necessary to pursue a possible annexation.

Around March 2024, Staff met with the fire chief of CCCFPD and a representative of the Contra Costa LAFCo to review the processes and steps required for annexation. At the conclusion of the April meeting of the RHFD Board, the Board directed staff to enter into discussions with staff from CCCFPD to ascertain potential financial, personnel and service delivery impacts and bring information back to the Board for consideration.

During the special meeting in May on the topic of annexation, the Board voted/acted to direct staff to:

1. Develop a “Service Plan” that meets LAFCo standards for RHFD Board review.
2. Host at least (2) townhall meetings to provide the community with an overview and answer any specific questions from stakeholders regarding annexation.
3. Coordinate another RHFD special meeting to review the findings and present to the Board the opportunity to vote on a resolution to annex.

During the month of June 2024, the RHFPD hosted (2) Town Hall meetings. During the Town Hall meetings, online surveys were opened up for those attending (online or in person). A third survey was opened for the community through the RHFPD website, and it was opened from June 18, 2024, through July 1, 2024.

During the July 10th, 2024, meeting of the Board of Directors (“Board”) for the Rodeo Hercules Fire Protection District (“District”) the Board reviewed the surveys and town hall meetings, and after a discussion regarding annexation, the Chair appointed a Board Ad Hoc committee to review a Service Plan and resolution for annexation of RHFPD into the CCCFPD.

DISCUSSION

The proposed resolution requests the Contra Costa Local Area Formation Commission (LAFCo) initiate proceedings to dissolve the Rodeo-Hercules Fire Protection District and annex its territory into CCCFPD.

If RHFPD were to be annexed into CCCFPD, CCCFPD would assume all properties, assets, liabilities, and obligations of RHFPD. All employees of RHFPD would become employees of CCCFPD. Additionally, CCCFPD would agree to establish a Measure O Oversight committee. The committee would consist of individuals who reside within RHFPD’s current territory.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Board review and act on Resolution No. 2024-18 requesting the Contra Costa County Local Area Formation Commission (LAFCo) to initiate proceedings for the dissolution of the Rodeo-Hercules Fire Protection District and subsequently annex that territory into the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District and, if approved, direct staff to execute all documentation and take action as necessary or advisable to effectuate the resolution including remittance of required fees as may be required.

Attachments:

1. Resolution 2024-18
2. Map of Territory of Rodeo-Hercules Fire Protection District
3. Map of Proposed Contra Costa County Fire Protection District Boundary
4. Plan for Services for Annexation of Rodeo-Hercules Fire Protection District to Contra Costa County Fire Protection District