


LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION FOR SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

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DATE: DECEMBER 8, 2015 
FROM: KATHLEEN ROLLINGS-McDONALD, Executive Officer
TO: LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM #5 – Consideration of Fee Reduction Requested by the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District on behalf of the City of Needles for its Reorganization Proposal to Annex the City to the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District (et al)

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Commission approve a reduction in application fees for the City of Needles request to transfer its fire responsibility to the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District to a total of \$12,500 (total fees and deposits is \$15,400).

BACKGROUND:

The City of Needles at its meeting on October 27, 2015, accepted the recommendation of its Fire Services Task Force to pursue annexation into the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District (hereafter shown as "SBCFPD" or "County Fire"). The adopted resolution, Resolution No. 2015-49, does not comply with the requirements set in the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act (CKH) to initiate such a change, but the City is proposing to correct those deficiencies at its December 18, 2015 meeting. Much like the other fire changes the Commission has received, the City anticipates a sphere of influence amendment for SBCFPD along with the annexation to the SBCFPD, its South Desert Service Zone, and either Service Zone FP-5 or FP-6 for supplemental funding. Since 2004, the City of Needles has contracted with the SBCFPD to provide its fire protection services. Beginning in January 2015, the City and County Fire began negotiations to evaluate service options based upon the limitations of the tax revenues received by the City. The service changes anticipated for that upcoming fiscal year identified significant cost increases straining the City's ability to fund. The City in turn responded with development of the Fire Services Task Force to evaluate options for providing this service within the City.

At the October 27, 2015 City Council meeting, the findings of the Task Force were presented and the City indicated, through adoption of Resolution No. 2015-49, that it wished to pursue the option of annexing the City to the SBCFPD and its service zones for fire

protection/emergency medical response and supplemental funding. The purpose of this change of organization is to provide for a means to continue fire protection and emergency medical response in a financially sustainable manner. On November 23, 2015, LAFCO received a letter from County Fire requesting a reduction in the filing fees on behalf of itself and the City.

Based on the Commission's adopted fee schedule, the total filing fee for the sphere of influence change and reorganization would be \$33,960. The breakdown below shows all the required fees/deposits for the submission of the reorganization proposal:

LAFCO Filing Fees:

a. Sphere of Influence Amendment	\$ 5,000
b. Reorganization (\$7,500 plus \$1 per acre over 1,920 acres)	\$26,060
c. Deposit – Legal Counsel	\$ 1,150
d. Deposit – Environmental	\$ 750
e. Deposit – Legal Ad In Lieu of Individual Notice	<u>\$ 1,000</u>
TOTAL	\$33,960

Given the financial position of the City of Needles as well as the fact that the proposal addresses the whole of the service area which has been the subject of a service contract for more than ten years, staff supports a reduction in the fee. The reduction would be based on the Commission's adopted fee schedule, broken down as follows:

a. Sphere of Influence Amendment	\$ 5,000
b. Reorganization (a maximum single change fee)	\$ 7,500
c. Deposit – Legal Counsel	\$ 1,150
d. Deposit – Environmental	\$ 750
e. Deposit – Legal Ad In Lieu of Individual Notice	<u>\$ 1,000</u>
TOTAL	\$15,400

Staff is recommending that the Commission make the determination to reduce the total LAFCO filing fee to \$12,500 (sphere and reorganization) along with the balance of the required deposits. Staff will be happy to answer any questions of the Commission prior to or at the hearing.

KRM

Attachment

1. [Vicinity Map of the Fire Reorganization Anticipated](#)
2. [Letter Dated November 23, 2015 from the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District with City of Needles Resolution No. 2015-49](#)