



Clark County Fire District 5

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Board of Fire Commissioners Passes Resolution for Lid Lift *Measure Will Be on August Primary Election Ballot*

VANCOUVER, WASH. – The Board of Fire Commissioners for Clark County Fire District 5 unanimously passed a resolution placing a fire levy lid lift on the August 2, 2022 Primary Election ballot. The “lid lift” would cost the owner of a \$400,000 home an additional \$8 per month (\$96 per year). This would be the first voter-approved funding increase in approximately 28 years for CCFD5.

Voters in the City of Vancouver approved a property tax increase of \$0.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property value (AV) in February. CCFD5 is asking voters to increase its fire levy by \$0.24 per \$1,000 A/V. CCFD5 has a cooperative agreement with the Vancouver Fire Department to provide fire and emergency medical service to Fire District residents and businesses.

“This cooperative agreement with the Vancouver Fire Department provides a higher level of service than if we were a standalone fire district,” said Roy Rhine, Chair of the Board of Fire Commissioners. “Revenue from the lid lift would be used to add apparatus, make stations safer, and add firefighters to respond to higher call volumes.”

The number of firefighters serving the Vancouver area hasn’t changed for 15 years. In 2021, firefighters responded to almost 7,000 calls for service in Fire District 5, a 20.8% increase in just three years. Higher call volume equates to added costs, and those costs are higher due to inflation, which is 7.9% for the past year. The end result is that revenue is not keeping up with the demand for and cost to provide service.

Fire department operations at CCFD5 are funded by a voter-approved fire levy of \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. Over time, a fire levy rate falls as property values rise to limit a fire district to roughly the same amount of revenue per year (plus a 1% increase). CCFD5’s fire levy rate has fallen to \$1.01 per \$1,000 of assessed property value.

With the 24-cent lid lift, the fire levy would be collected at the rate of \$1.25 per \$1,000 of assessed property value in 2023. The maximum a fire district can request for its fire levy is \$1.50 per \$1,000. Neighboring agencies with a fire and EMS levy are paying closer to \$2 per \$1,000 for the same quality and level of service.

Specifically, funding would be used to hire three additional firefighters, including a paramedic, at the new Fire Station 11 which will serve the Orchards-Sifton area beginning this fall. These new positions will help improve emergency response times district-wide.

Fire Department facilities also require improvements including seismic upgrades to ensure stations can continue to operate in the event of an earthquake. Staffing and facility improvements will help maintain CCFD5's risk rating, which is linked to what homeowners pay in insurance premiums.

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Clark County Fire District 5 contracts with the Vancouver Fire Department to provide fire and life safety services to approximately 94,000 people over 36 square miles. In 2021, firefighters responded to almost 7,000 calls for service in CCFD5, a 20.8% increase in just three years. CCFD5 has been a leader in the county for improving the quality of emergency services, and health and safety through its public education and training programs. More information on CCFD5 can be found on its website www.ccf5.org.