



Stephen W. Christy
Supervisor, District 4

PIMA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS


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MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 29, 2021

TO: Julie Castañeda
Clerk of the Board

FROM: Steve Christy 
District 4 Supervisor

SUBJECT: **May 4, 2021 Agenda Addendum Item**

Please place the following item on the Addendum to the Agenda for the Board of Supervisors meeting of May 4, 2021:

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Discussion/action directing the County Administrator to enter into a 5-year agreement with the Mount Lemmon Fire District and allocate \$30,000/year (totaling \$150,000) from the General Fund Budget, commencing in FY2021/2022. (District 4)

Thank you.



MOUNT LEMMON FIRE DISTRICT

13170 N. Oracle Control Rd. Mt. Lemmon, AZ 85619-Office.520.576.1201-Fax.576.3095

CHAIR: JOHN PERCHOROWICZ - CLERK: DENNIS COZZETTI - TREASURER: TERI CARPANTER

MEMBER: TODD CANALE - MEMBER: TONY MAZZA - CHIEF JOE GUNIA

12 January 2021

The Honorable Steve Christy
Pima County Supervisor
District 4
130 W. Congress Street, 11th Floor
Tucson, Arizona 85701

Dear Supervisor Christy:

I hope this finds you, your family and staff in good health.

On behalf of the Fire Board and Chief, I'm writing to bring you up to date on the financial situation faced by the Mt Lemmon Fire District in the 2021/2022 budget cycle and to ask your help in addressing it.

For the past five years Pima County has provided the District with \$15,000 annually as a contribution toward Fire Suppression Services. The last payment is anticipated this month. You may recall that we met in late February and discussed the potential for a substantial increase and continuation in this funding. Recently, we have learned that our tax revenue will decline by nearly \$19,000 for a total reduction in our 2021/2022 budget of about \$34,000 should the County money not be forthcoming. In light of this I would like to revisit how we might increase the funding from the County.

I have discussed with Chief Gunia the impact of the aforementioned budget shortfall and areas of possible reductions that could be made for the coming budget year. None are positive for the long-term health of the District and its ability to continue to deliver the high-quality professional service that residents and visitors to Mt Lemmon expect and I believe, you agree, deserve.

The potential impacts include the following

- Digging our vehicle amortization hole even deeper than the current \$164,000 2020 amount for anticipated apparatus replacement as detailed on page 18 of our 2020 – 2025 Strategic Plan.
- Reducing staff to two firefighters at times by having the Chief take shifts covered by his annual salary. Currently the Chief responds as necessary to provide a 3rd fully trained firefighter. Covering one day per week will save \$16,444. If he covers every 3rd Saturday another \$5,304 would be saved. Neither of these options is appealing from a staffing perspective.
- Deferring vehicle maintenance. Currently one of the District volunteers and at least one of the firefighters have been stepping up to cover some of the less than minor repairs, however with an aging fleet concern is always present that a piece of apparatus may be unavailable. Half way through the current fiscal year the maintenance budget has been exceeded by about \$1,200.
- Reducing employee benefits. Most of our firefighters are long-time employees who enjoy working on Mt Lemmon despite the fact that they could earn more elsewhere. They bring institutional and geographic knowledge that is tough to replace. Cutting benefits will impact morale. One possible area for reduction would be the Health Savings Accounts established at a total annual cost of \$9,000.

Chief Gunia and I would be pleased to meet with you at your convenience to discuss the anticipated budget shortfall and possible solutions you may provide and bring you up to date on other activities.

Thank you for your time,

Sincerely,

John T. Perchorowicz
Chair, Mt Lemmon Fire District Board

c: Dennis Cozzetti
Teri Carpenter
Todd Canale
Tony Mazza

