



City Council

Regional Fire Authority Planning Briefing

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Title

Regional Fire Authority Planning Briefing

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

Not referred to a committee.

City Manager Recommendation:

Receive a briefing on the work of the Regional Fire Authority Planning Committee.

Report

Issue:

Whether to receive a briefing on the work of the Regional Fire Authority Planning Committee.

Staff Contact:

Jay Burney, City Manager, 360.753.8740

Presenter(s):

Jay Burney, City Manager

Background and Analysis:

In 2019, the City of Olympia participated with the City of Tumwater and other local Fire agencies in a study to evaluate options for a Regional Fire Authority (RFA).

The study looked at opportunities to improve emergency services in the Olympia and Tumwater communities and explored partnership opportunities to provide these services regionally. Findings from this study, which were presented at an elected official's workshop in November 2019, recommended further exploration of a Regional Fire Authority as Olympia and Tumwater share similar risk profiles, histories, and organizational structures, there may be a potential to control costs and improve service delivery, it would level tax rates across the region, provide greater equity, and leverages individual agency strengths, and minimizes weaknesses.

On May 18, 2021, the City Council authorized an Interlocal Agreement between the City of Olympia and the City of Tumwater which provides the framework for a planning process that looks at the viability of a Regional Fire Authority between the cities of Olympia and Tumwater.

A Regional Fire Authority Planning Committee was formed comprised membership of three Councilmembers from each City (City of Olympia - Councilmember Jim Cooper, Councilmember Lisa Parshley, Councilmember Yên Huỳnh and City of Tumwater - Councilmember Eileen Swarhout, Councilmember Leatta Dahlhoff, Councilmember Michael Althaus) who are voting members. The Fire Chief from each city (Olympia Chief Mark John and Tumwater Chief Brian Hurley) and local IAFF President from each City (Olympia IAFF Local 468 Steven Busz and Tumwater IAFF James Osberg) serve as ex officio non-voting members of the Committee. Olympia City Manager Jay Burney and Tumwater City Administrator John Doan also attend work group meetings as non-voting members.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

An RFA may provide options to improve fire service delivery in the Olympia and Tumwater communities. An RFA planning process will engage both communities in this evaluation.

Options:

1. Receive a briefing on the work of the Regional Fire Authority Planning Committee.
2. Do not Receive a briefing on the work of the Regional Fire Authority Planning Committee.

Financial Impact:

The cost of moving forward with a Regional Fire Authority planning process is estimated to cost \$150,000 (Olympia's share). Funding is available through 2020 Year End Savings.

Attachments:

Project Schedule
Statement of Shared Values and Principles
Community Engagement Approach