



Agenda Report

MEETING DATE: Wednesday, February 10, 2021

TO: Revenue Measure Oversight Committee

FROM: Fire Chief Lopez

SUBJECT: FIRE DEPARTMENT STATUS REPORT- JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2020

STATEMENT OF ISSUES:

This is a report from the Watsonville Fire Department on operations and staffing as they relate to the Public Safety Revenue Measure.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Receive Staffing and Operations Report from Watsonville Fire from January 1 thru December 31, 2020.

DISCUSSION:

Background

On June 3, 2014, Measure G was approved by Watsonville voters. The new tax went into effect on October 1, 2014. On March 3, 2020 Watsonville voters renewed the Public Safety Sales Tax Measure (Measure Y) until repealed by voters.

The Public Safety Sales Tax Measure has been instrumental in providing adequate staffing levels for the fire department by increasing our staffing. In addition to staffing, the Measure has also provided for new fire engines, and in 2019, a new aerial ladder truck. The Measure provided for new personal protective equipment for personnel and updated rescue equipment. Prior to the Measure, we had to borrow fire engines from other local agencies because our engines were out of service; firefighters had to use equipment that was unreliable.

Measure Y Update

During this reporting period, Watsonville Fire Department (WFD) reports the following:

Staffing

Measure Y funding is being used to hire and retain seven (7) additional personnel- six (6) firefighters and one (1) administrative staff person. Although we were approved for seven (7) firefighters, with the unknown financial impact due to Covid-19, it was decided that one vacant position would not be filled until more information on the impact to the budget is available. Due to retirements and resignations in both the General Fund and

Measure Y, the department has struggled to continually keep the six positions Measure Y positions filled. Firefighter Sebastian Resendiz is one of our recent hires and he completed the Fire Academy in May 2020 along with three other firefighters hired to fill vacancies in the General Fund.

Apparatus and Equipment

Measure Y is currently funding our new Rosenbauer Tiller Ladder Truck. This fire truck was purchased in 2019 for \$1,431,534. Two payments have been made in the amount of \$286,306.82 each- one in 2019 and the other in 2020.

Payment Number	Payment Date	Payment Amount	Interest Portion	Principal Portion
1	3/12/2019	\$286,306.82	\$45,755.91	\$240,550.91
2	3/12/2020	\$286,306.82	\$37,230.79	\$249,076.03
3	3/12/2021	\$286,306.82	\$28,403.53	\$257,903.29
4	3/12/2022	\$286,306.82	\$19,263.44	\$267,043.38
5	3/12/2023	\$286,306.82	\$9,799.43	\$276,507.39

In addition to payments on the tiller ladder truck Measure Y is also being used to pay for maintenance repairs on Measure Y apparatus. Through the Measure we were able to purchase a Type 3 Water Tender fire engine which is better for responding to wildland fires and fires on the levee due to its compact size. This past year, the Type 3 and her crew was put to work responding to six (6) strike team requests throughout California as well as in our own backyard during the CZU August Lightning Fire. In addition to the Type 3, our Type 1 engine also responded to two (2) strike team requests.

Personal Protective Equipment and Uniforms

Measure Y has allowed us to ensure that all new firefighters received new equipment instead of hand-me downs. Structure protection gear was purchased for the new firefighters prior to them going on line and repairs on protective gear for current personnel were completed. All personal protective equipment was also disinfected and station uniforms were purchased for all personnel.

Building Maintenance

The roofs at both stations are leaking in various places and at Fire Station 1 the cinder block walls are water damaged from the roof leaks creating an unhealthy environment for personnel. Both roofs have only ever had patchwork done as leaks have occurred. Due to the severity of the leaks and damage to the walls at Fire Station 1 An invitation to bid was sent out in late December 2020. Pending bids and when the roof and wall repairs can be started, we anticipate having this completed in 2021.

Upcoming Projects and Programs

Community Risk Analysis

A Community Risk Analysis will be conducted this year. This analysis will provide guidance for strategic planning, operational needs and justify budgetary needs. It will help us determine any adjustments we need to make with regards to staffing, response areas, station locations, and how to best serve our community. This analysis will help to guide our department for the next 10- years at which point another analysis would be needed to capture the changes that occurred over time in our community.

Paramedic Training Program for EMTs

We are in the planning stages to create a paramedic training program for local EMTs who may not be able to afford paramedic school. The classes are expensive plus there is also a time commitment which isn't easily attainable for a lot of young adults in our community who may be helping to support their family. This program will give our young adults and opportunity to serve in their own community. By having this pre-established bond before they become firefighters it will give them a connection to the people they serve.

CPR Classes for Spanish Speakers

In partnership with California Fire Prevention Organization, a non-profit public benefit 501 (c) (3) corporation we are working to establish a CPR program in Spanish. This program will help train Spanish speakers learn how to save a life by learning CPR in their own language. This will be an opportunity to reach out to Spanish speakers more and get to know them as they get to know us.

Senior Fire Safety Classes

Also in partnership with California Fire Prevention Organization, we will provide Fire Safety classes to seniors by providing classes in their own communities so it is easier for them to attend. This will be an opportunity to get to know seniors in our community and help them get to know us.

Summer Youth Academy.

When announcements went out for the first youth academy in 2019 we had 28 interested youth within a day and a half. 14 candidates attended the Youth Academy and 13 graduated. Due to the response and interest we plan to expand this program to two sessions during the summer. Each session would be for two weeks and it would be open to youth 14 to 18 years of age. Our initial plan had been to hold two sessions this past year but due to COVID-19 shelter-in-place orders we had to cancel them. We look forward to moving ahead with the planned programs and classes later this year if COVID-19 restrictions allow.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

- 03-Infrastructure & Environment- Measure Y funds are used to address the needs to repair the infrastructure necessary for fire department operations.
- 05-Community Engagement & Well-Being- Measure Y funds are used to increase community engagement with all members of the community.
- 06-Public Safety - Measure Y funds are used to ensure adequate staffing and equipment needs are being met for fire department operations.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no financial impact. Measure Y funds are being utilized as directed by the voters.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION:

None.

ATTACHMENTS AND/OR REFERENCES (If any):

None