

SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA
SOUTH PLACER FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Wednesday January 31th, 2024
(Pursuant to Govt. Code § 54956)

1. **6:00 p.m. Special Meeting** at Station 17 (Portable Conference/Training Room), 6900 Eureka Road, Granite Bay, 95746
 - A. **In Person at Station 17, Portable Conference/Training Room**
 - B. **To watch the meeting online, use the link: <https://shorturl.at/s0589>**
 - i. Any public member may provide written comment to the Board before the meeting by emailing the Secretary at kmedeiros@southplacerfire.org. If you are commenting on a particular item on the agenda, please identify the agenda item number and letter. Any comment of 500 words or less (per person, per item) will be read into the record if: (1) the subject line includes "COMMENT TO BOARD FOR [DATE OF] MEETING – PLEASE READ"; and (2) it is received by the Secretary by 5:00 p.m. the day of the meeting. Please be aware that any public comments requesting to be read aloud that do not specify a particular agenda item number will be read aloud during the general public comment portion of the agenda. Due to potential technological delays in transmission, the public is encouraged to submit any comments to the Secretary early to ensure they are received in time to be read into the record.

2. **Flag Salute**

3. **Public Comment**

Persons who wish to speak to the Board regarding an item not on tonight's agenda or wish to ask the Board to pull an item from the Consent Calendar may do so now. Please submit the Public Comment form to the Board Secretary before the commencement of the Board Meeting. When called upon, please come to the podium, state your name and address, and limit your remarks to three (3) minutes. Please be aware that the California Government Code prohibits the Board from taking any immediate action on an item that does not appear on the agenda unless the item meets stringent statutory requirements. However, your concerns can be referred to the Staff for review and reported back to the Board at a later date. Comments on agenda items, including items pulled from the Consent Calendar, will be allowed at this time or when the Board considers them.

4. **New Business:** None

5. **Old Business:**
 - A. **Public Opinion Survey:** Staff recommends a discussion and possible action on conducting a public opinion survey to gauge community support of a future ballot measure.

6. **Closed Session**

At any time during the regular session, the legislative body may adjourn to a closed session to confer with real property negotiators, labor negotiators, or legal counsel regarding existing or anticipated litigation. The legislative body may also adjourn to a closed session to consider liability claims, threats to public services or facilities, public employee appointment, public employment, public employee performance evaluation, or public employee discipline/dismissal/release.

 - A. Public employee performance evaluation – Fire Chief (Gov Code § 54957(b))
 - B. Labor negotiations (Gov Code 54957.6) – Conference regarding contract negotiations.

7. **Adjournment**

Upcoming Meetings
Next Regular Board Meeting – February 14, 2024

Upcoming Meetings
SOUTH PLACER FIRE DISTRICT
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FROM: CHIEF MARK DUERR
SUBJECT: BOARD MEETING AGENDA STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS
DATE: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 31ST, 2024
CC: BOARD SECRETARY KATHY MEDEIROS

Agenda Item: Proposal for Public Opinion Research:

Action Requested: Staff recommends discussion and possible action regarding conducting public opinion research to determine the feasibility of a future ballot measure.

Background: In July 2022, the District conducted a benefit assessment for Division 2 of the South Placer Fire District. The goal of the assessment was to increase revenue to maintain three-person staffing on all fire apparatus in the District, increase employee compensation and benefits to better compete with local agencies, and rebuild the District fund balances to support the possible reopening of Station 16.

Unfortunately, the measure failed, and with that, the District acted swiftly to address the deficit spending, including:

1. Closing one fire station (Station 19).
2. Reduction of six (6) full-time positions, reducing daily staffing by two (2) from 17 to 15.
3. Closure of a truck company.
4. Staff was relocated from Station 15 (Granite Bay High School Area) to Station 16 to maintain overall response times in the district due to the closure of Station 19.

While these actions were difficult, they were necessary. Without such drastic action, the District would have exhausted all fund balances and reserves in as little as three to four years. The service model was not sustainable.

Since the closures, the District has worked diligently to rectify many of the issues threatening the service level to the community as well as the long-term viability of the District. By applying rigorous analysis of all facets of service delivery, the District was able to:

1. Improve overall engine response times by 1.5%.
2. Reverse deficit spending.
3. Improve employee compensation by an average of 24.5% over three years.
4. Reduce long-term unfunded liabilities.

However, these improvements are not enough if the District is to provide meaningful emergency medical and fire response to our community. While response times have improved, they are still significantly above the national recommendations, with no way to improve these times other than by adding more units to the District (essentially reopening closed stations). The number of firefighters available to deliver service is well below the recommendation of the National Fire Protection Association of four firefighters on an engine company and even below the regional professional standard of three personnel. This staffing level is unsafe and inefficient on the fire ground, taking a crew of two (the current staffing model at 50% of the SPFD companies) 15% longer to perform all necessary tasks to extinguish a fire than a four-person crew. Finally, the District continues to lose members to neighboring agencies due to the discrepancy in wages and benefits, costing the District thousands of dollars and countless hours of training every year, only to see the District's hard work lost. The District has applied all measurable budget controls available, yet without additional revenue resources; the District will be unable to improve staffing to the point that safely protects the community and firefighters.

With 2024 being an election year, it is the ideal time to assess community support for a possible special tax/benefit assessment or face the possibility of maintaining the current operating model for two more years until the next election cycle.

Impact: To continue to provide excellent service to our community through enhanced staffing, improved response times, and better recruitment and retention.

Attachments: Proposal for Public Opinion Research

Mark Duerr
Fire Chief
South Placer Fire District



OPINION
RESEARCH
& STRATEGY

TO Chief Mark Duerr
South Placer Fire Protection District

FROM Curt Below & Lucia Del Puppo
FM3 Research

RE: Proposed Survey Research Scope of Work

DATE December 14, 2023

Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3) is pleased to submit this short scope of work to conduct research assessing a potential special tax measure for voters to consider in the South Placer Fire Protection District. This would be a potential measure for the November 2024 ballot and is a follow-up to the 2022 property assessment that narrowly failed among property owners in the District.

PROPOSED RESEARCH SPECIFICATIONS AND ESTIMATED COSTS

Project Goals While the District is still considering various financial and legal factors, it is our understanding that the District's current thinking would be to seek approval for a measure establishing a new special tax that scales by property size and would replace similar existing special taxes in Loomis and Granite Bay.

Strategic Considerations As we have discussed, we might want to consider two potential ballot measures in the research, though this is not something the District would need to decide at this point in time. One measure would replace the two existing special taxes and increase the overall tax amount to generate additional funds for the District and more equitably distribute the tax. However, this could result in a relatively high tax rate being presented to voters, even though the net amount might be lower in practice.

An alternative approach might be to leave the existing special taxes in place and simply establish a new special tax. This measure would establish a lower tax rate and involve less complexity. However, it would leave in place some of the disproportionate tax rates associated with the two existing special taxes.

Research Methodology Dual-mode voter survey

Data Collection Mode	Telephone and online/mobile interviews
Respondent Contact Method	Telephone calls, email invitations, and text invitations
Research Population & Sample	We recommend conducting a dual-mode, voter survey of 400 likely November 2024 voters. (400 is a standard sample size for communities the size of the District and even much larger communities.) We also recommend conducting a relatively even balance between online and phone interviews, to mitigate against any potential mode bias.
Margin of Sampling Error*	±6.9% for a sample of 200 interviews (split sample) ±4.9% for a sample of 400 interviews (full sample)
	*At the 95% confidence level (i.e., in 95 out of 100 cases)
Questionnaire	A 15-20 minute survey, with most baseline surveys of this nature running 20 minutes.
Language	Given the District's demographics, we recommend conducting all interviews in English, only. We could conduct interviews in Spanish for an additional cost, upon request.
Deliverables	<p>Following the completion of the survey, we will provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A questionnaire with the topline results of the survey for easy reference • A complete set of crosstabs in an easy-to-read, comprehensive format • Verbatim responses to any open-ended questions • A complete analysis of survey results in PowerPoint • A presentation of the survey results <p>FM3 will also be available for ongoing consultation and any further analysis of the research.</p>
Cost	Figure 1 contains the total estimated costs for this research. These prices are comprehensive and include all costs for questionnaire design; sample acquisition and preparation; programming; email and text invitations; survey hosting; telephone interviewing; data entry and analysis; and reporting.

Figure 1: Estimated Survey Costs

Survey Length	400 Interviews
15 minutes	\$28,750
20 minutes	\$32,000

We would welcome the opportunity to work with you on this research, and if you have any questions or if there is any further information we can provide, please do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you for your consideration and you may reach us as follows:

Curt Below

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