



September 30, 2021

ATTN: Mendocino County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo)
200 South School Street
Ukiah, California 95482

RE: Ukiah Valley Fire Protection District Annexation Proposal

LAFCo Commissioners:

I wanted to reach out regarding the Ukiah Valley Fire Protection District's annexation proposal coming before your board, and to share my concerns regarding this proposal, which appears to be advancing with little public awareness and even less understanding on the implications to taxpayers should this proposal be adopted.

The primary concern is the annexation's tax consequence for property owners in Ukiah. As you know, the annexation will subject all properties in the city to parcel taxes that were not approved by Ukiah voters. By current estimates, Ukiah property owners bear a new tax burden of \$850,000 to \$1 million each year. Yet, by the agencies' own reporting, city residents will not enjoy any appreciable improvement in the service they receive. That consequence of annexation has not been publicized to Ukiah residents and property owners. To the contrary, we have heard that the city officials have actively worked to prevent public publication, analysis, and discussion of the annexation's tax consequences. Indeed, describing the annexation as a "Zero Property Tax Sharing Agreement", it appears public officials are attempting to hide the real tax consequences of the annexation.

Moreover, supporting documentation suggests that the annexation would allow the fire district to meet its revenue obligations to the City of Ukiah after years of falling short (with taxpayers presumably left filling the gap), rebuild reserve funds, and use remaining resources to hire personnel, or perhaps more specifically, EMT/paramedic personnel. Medstar is particularly concerned by this posturing amidst ongoing discussions of fire looking to take over ambulance services at some point in the future, and this proposal, if approved, could be an initial cash infusion to help move that broader effort forward at a later date.

This proposal, if approved, may be the first phase in a broader effort by the fire district to upend our business after more than 80 continuous years in operation (see enclosures with more information), including nearly a decade as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, a designation that was made possible through the assistance and advocacy of the offices of Senator Dianne Feinstein and Congressman Mike Thompson. Before this proposal is approved, we ask for honesty, transparency, clarity, specificity and certainty with a proposal of this magnitude and so many unanswered questions to both us as a business and the public as taxpaying citizens...put simply, we believe it is ill-advised to push something of this scale through with so many unanswered questions and a community who has been largely left in the dark regarding these plans. If the newly expanded District uses its expansion and newfound funding—provided by the taxpayers of Ukiah—to deprive Medstar of its contractual and statutory rights to provide emergency ambulance services—Medstar will have no choice but to protect itself and the community it serves through judicial enforcement of its legal rights.



Medstar's attorney's are in the process of submitting a public-record request to help shed light on the District's plans and their impacts on the taxpayers, residents of Ukiah, and Medstar. In the meantime, Medstar implores the Commission to take a closer look at these concerns before taking final action on the proposed annexation.

We deserve and expect a more inclusive, open and transparent process.

Kind Regards,

Leonard Winter, President and Chief Executive Officer
Medstar Ambulance of Mendocino County, Inc. dba Ukiah Ambulance



MEDSTAR

Ambulance of Mendocino County Inc.

"An Ambulance for the People, not for Profit"

Startup date for MEDSTAR Inc. - June 2013

MEMBERSHIP FORM INSIDE!



"For the common good and general welfare of the people and the community"

We have been instrumental in organizing a new nonprofit ambulance company called MEDSTAR Ambulance of Mendocino County, Inc.

MEDSTAR will be purchasing Ukiah Ambulance, which has been a local ambulance provider for over 70 years. We will then begin doing business as MEDSTAR Ambulance, Ukiah Ambulance, and MEDSTAR Willits. We will continue to conduct business in Ukiah, Redwood Valley, Potter Valley, Willits, Hopland, and provide backup for Anderson Valley and Covelo.

We currently have stations in Ukiah, Redwood Valley, Willits and will be adding a fourth ambulance in the South Ukiah area.

Now more than ever, people are in need of affordable, reliable health care. MEDSTAR Ambulance will be able to provide ambulatory services and ambulance service to those in our community who cannot afford to pay. We will also offer an optional membership program for all persons, regardless of their health care coverage*.

Here's a few changes you will see immediately:

- ★ **Membership rates start at \$45 annually**
- ★ Group membership plans available
- ★ Ambulance stationed in the South Ukiah area 24/7
- ★ Hardship Program, which upon review, will enable Medstar to reduce or eliminate any costs for service



Thank You,
Leonard Winter
Leonard Winter
CEO, Medstar Ambulance

*Membership is not offered to Medi-Cal recipients as it will provide no benefit.

Services We Provide:

- ✓ 911 Emergency Ambulance
- ✓ Non Emergency Ambulance
- ✓ Advanced Life Support Ambulance (ALS)
- ✓ Basic Life Support Ambulance (BLS)
- ✓ Wheelchair Van
- ✓ Special Event Standby

MEDSTAR

Ambulance of Mendocino County Inc.

**130 FORD STREET
PO BOX 277
UKIAH, CA 95482
Office: (707) 462-3808**

Leonard Winter
Chief Executive Officer

winter@medstarmendocino.com

General Inquiries
info@medstarmendocino.com

Employment Inquiries
Theresa Gowan
tgowan@medstarmendocino.com

Ambulance

(707)462-3001 (707)459-3001
Ukiah Willits



Like us on
Facebook
www.facebook.com/medstarmendocino

www.medstarmendocino.com

MEDSTAR

Ambulance of Mendocino County Inc.

MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

Don't Wait for an Emergency - Join our Membership Program Now

In these difficult economic times, with low-paying reimbursement rates and high insurance premiums, we find more people are paying out-of-pocket for their medical expenses. With MEDSTAR's membership and hardship programs, we will be able to help patients reduce their out-of-pocket expense.

MEDSTAR holds itself to a high performance standard of emergency ambulance service. Through our continuous commitment to our community, assurance of clinical excellence, response time reliability, economic efficiency and customer satisfaction, we have endured trying times and are looking onward towards the future.

To Sign Up for the Membership
Fill out the included membership form.

Or visit:

www.medstarmendocino.com/membership

OUR GOALS:

- ★ Educate the public in First Aid and CPR through workshops and special events.
- ★ Add a Specialty Care Transport ambulance.
- ★ Gain financial resources through grants and fund-raising to support our mission and goals.
- ★ Apply for grants in collaboration with Covelo Fire Department to add paramedic services in Round Valley.

MEDSTAR Ambulance 2013



We would like to thank the **Robert H. McAdoo Trust** and **Rhonda McAdoo** for their willingness to work with us over the past two years on the development of the non-profit, MEDSTAR.

Without their support none of this would have been possible.

MEDSTAR Ambulance of Mendocino County, Inc. is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Tax identification number 45-2591387. Donations are tax deductible.

Ambulance

(707) 462-3001
Ukiah

(707) 459-3001
Willits

130 Ford Street
PO Box 277
Ukiah, CA 95482
Office: (707) 462-3808



MISSION STATEMENT:

To provide the highest level of ambulance service to the citizens of Mendocino County.

OUR HISTORY:

In 1937, long before state regulations and licensing requirements, volunteer groups in Mendocino County came together to form an emergency medical response service. Ukiah Ambulance started in 1937 with volunteer groups like the Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, 20-30 Club, and the Druids. All groups came together to form a service the community desperately needed.

Ukiah Ambulance stands today as the longest running ambulance service in Mendocino County. Though things have changed over the past 75 years, the objective has remained the same – **to provide exceptional emergency care for the community.**

UKIAH AMBULANCE THROUGH THE YEARS:

1937 - Ukiah Ambulance begins operation with volunteer groups including Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, 20-30 club, and the Druids.

1956 - The volunteer groups begin to dwindle, and can no longer sustain the ambulance service. Shortly after, Len Winter and Rod Zimmerman take over operations.

1957 - A fund raising effort begins with the goal of purchasing a new custom-built ambulance. Through bake sales and generous donations, the local organizations are able to buy a 1957 Pontiac Ambulance. That same year, Ukiah Ambulance contracts with the County of Mendocino to provide an emergency ambulance to its citizens. The base rate is \$10.00 and \$1.00 per mile. The county reimburses for non-payers at a \$5.00 base rate and \$.50 per mile.

1960 - Len Winter takes over ownership and operations of Ukiah Ambulance.

1964 - The President's Commission of Highway Safety calls for Emergency Care and Transportation as one of its Community Action Programs.

1966 - The Federal National Highway Traffic Safety Administrator publishes the first guidelines for ambulances. These guidelines called for raising the training level of Emergency Medical Service personnel to Advanced First Aid. Ukiah Ambulance complies with these guidelines.

1969 - Ukiah Ambulance expands, adding an additional ambulance after the Civil Defense donates a new E-Series Ford Ambulance.

1970 - The National Registry of Emergency Medical Technician-1 (EMT-1) is established to attempt to unify the exam and certification on a national level.

1974 - All Ukiah Ambulance personnel become certified at the EMT-1 level through the Regional Occupational Program (ROP).

1975 - EMT-II level begins limited Advanced Life Support through government grants. These grants are used for training, and new radios to contact the hospital for direct communication with doctors.

1988 - Paramedics begin to operate and provide Advanced Life Support services in Mendocino County.

1994 - Ukiah Ambulance is sold to Robert H. McAdoo. Ukiah Ambulance is staffed with at least one paramedic and one EMT-1 per ambulance. This same year, Ukiah Ambulance and Winter Helicopters starts the first Air Rescue Helicopter service called Flightcare in Mendocino County with the purchase of a Eurocopter AS350.

2011 - Research and development begins for a non-profit ambulance service to purchase Ukiah Ambulance.

2013 - Ukiah Ambulance is purchased by MEDSTAR Ambulance of Mendocino County Inc. doing business as MEDSTAR Ambulance, MEDSTAR Willits, and Ukiah Ambulance. MEDSTAR offers both membership and hardship programs, that will help patients reduce their out-of-pocket expense.



Ukiah Ambulance 1957



UKIAH Ambulance 1964



Ukiah Ambulance 2012