

Tony Orth, Chairman

Dear chairman Orth and Commission

I am writing to you today to voice my opposition to the Ukiah Valley Fire Districts, (UVFD) annexation of a portion of the City of Ukiah. As per the Public Hearing on October 4, 2021 I would like it made part of the public record that I, Leif Farr a citizen and resident of the City of Ukiah oppose the proposed annexation.

Back when the City of Ukiah was considering forming the Ukiah Valley Fire Authority, (UVFA) with the UVFD, the City held a series of workshops and public hearings at which time the presentations and data presented clearly showed that the UVFD was failing economically and could not continue to provide the level of service that its residents were requesting. Back at that time I attended one of the workshops and one of the public hearings of the City Council and voiced my opposition to the City being part of the UVFA. It was clear at that time that the main purpose of forming the UVFA was to financially prop up the UVFD. The City at that time had its own Fire Department and was currently funding the department for the level of service being provided and could have with modest increases over time continued to do so.

Any group of citizens within the County can work through the process to form a service district. It is inherent in that process that the cost of that service, as levied by the district on its residents through taxes or fees, should cover the cost for the proposed level of service.

It is clear from the information in the staff report that the Citizens of the City of Ukiah continue to subsidize the level of fire protection services for those residents in the UVFD. What is not made clear is some revenue streams and the potential for increased costs to the residents of the City.

For example, the report makes several references to the City's public safety sales tax measure, however it does not list any actual dollar amounts that are allocated to fire protection services. How much of the sales tax money goes to law enforcement as opposed to fire protection services? How much of the sales tax revenue is being generated within the City by City residents versus residents of the UVFD? There are a lot of assumptions being made but no real figures that would help answer these questions.

It is difficult to assess what the financial impact of the annexation will be to the vast majority of City residents. According to the information in the report the allocation of the UVFD's tax measures, J and B are not assessed at the parcel level, but are based on "units of development" and I did not find any reference or explanation in the report on how to calculate a unit of development, so how is the public or other agencies able to determine the full financial impact of the annexation?

Currently, (based on the information in the report) residents of the City of Ukiah pay for their own fire protection services and also pay for a substantial portion of the fire protection services for the UVFD. Now with the proposed annexation we will be asked to pay even more as measures J and B will be levied on us as well. There is no mention in the report that the City's general fund and sales tax allocations for fire protection services will be decreased and there is no mechanism in place that would tract this

information for the public. It might be prudent to remember that the City's general fund is not some anonymous fund, it is generated from fees and taxes paid for by City residents.

Once the annexation is approved and the Joint Powers Agreement, (JPA) is codified then the City residents are on the hook for the financial support and liability, (read deep pockets as the UVFD has no reserve funding) of the district, we cannot by ourselves dissolve the JPA and once the UVFD has roped in their cash cow they will never let it go.

Respectfully

Leif Farr

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