



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: CEO/OEM
Department No.: 012
For Agenda Of: 07/18/17
Placement: x-Agenda
Estimated Time:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Director
Mona Miyasato, County Executive Officer
Contact Info: Matt Pontes, Assistant CEO
Elsa Arndt, Deputy Director of Emergency Management
SUBJECT: Alamo & Whittier Fire Emergency – Update and Proclamation Ratification

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence:

As to form: NA

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: NA

Recommended Actions:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Receive an update on the Alamo and Whittier fires by Fire Chief Eric Peterson;
- b) Adopt a Resolution ratifying the Proclamation of a Local Emergency related to the Alamo & Whittier Fire Emergency declared by the Director of Emergency Services on July 16, 2017, when the Board of Supervisors was not in session, pursuant to Government Code Section 8550 et. seq. and Chapter 12, Section 12-5(a) of the Santa Barbara County Code;
- c) Direct the Office of Emergency Management to return monthly for re-ratification of the Emergency until such time that the response and recovery conditions dictate otherwise; and
- d) Determine the above actions are not a “Project” within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to Section 15378(b)(5) of the CEQA Guidelines, because the actions consist of organizational or administrative activities of the government that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.

Summary Text:

On Sunday, July 16, 2017, when the Board of Supervisors was not in session, the County Executive Officer, as the Director of Emergency Management, proclaimed a local emergency due to the Alamo

and Whittier Fires, in order to utilize all resources necessary to respond to the damage caused by the local emergency and receive any needed funding through the California Disaster Assistance Act and any other funding both State and Federal funds that may be available; the proclamation is effective for a period of seven days unless ratified by the Board of Supervisors. On the same date, the Governor of California also declared a state of emergency in Santa Barbara County due to the Alamo and Whittier Fires.

This action is necessary to continue the proclaimed local emergency for 30 days. The proclamation occurred after posting of the July 18, 2017 agenda; however, it meets the Brown Act's definition of emergency situation which allows the Board to add this discussion to today's meeting through a majority vote.

BACKGROUND

On July 6, 2017, a wildfire that has been named the Alamo Fire began burning in San Luis Obispo County and on July 7, 2017 at approximately 1500 hours it crossed into Santa Barbara County near Twitchell Reservoir. As of July 16, 2017, at 0900 hours, the Alamo Fire had grown to approximately 29,000 acres and was at 95% containment with evacuation orders reduced to warnings and road closures lifted. On July 8, 2017, at approximately 1342 hours, a wildfire, that has been named the Whittier Fire, started burning near Lake Cachuma. As of July 16, 2017 at 0900 hours, the Whittier Fire had grown to over 18,000 acres. Evacuation orders and warnings remain in effect, and roads near the fire remain closed.

The existence of two fires of the size and complexity that required Type 1 Incident Management Teams occurring within the County simultaneously is unique and unprecedented. Incident Management Teams are federally certified and are deployed to manage incidents of national significance.

Both incidents have resulted in loss and damage to structures, agriculture, infrastructure, recreational areas and facilities, critical watersheds and other property in the County. These conditions are beyond the control of the services, personnel, equipment and facilities of the combined forces of Santa Barbara County Operational Area to combat.

On July 16, 2017, when the Board of Supervisors was not in session, the County Executive Officer, as the Director of Emergency Management, proclaimed a local emergency in order to utilize all resources necessary to respond to the damage caused by the local emergency and receive any needed funding through the California Disaster Assistance Act and any other funding both State and Federal funds that may be available; the proclamation is effective for a period of seven days unless ratified by the Board of Supervisors.

The proclamation issued by the Director of Emergency Services covers the Santa Barbara County Operational Area (i.e., entire geographic area of the county), including cities, unincorporated county areas, and special districts. County staff is working within the Operational Area to compile a preliminary damage assessment.

The Governor's Office has declared a State of Emergency for these events. With the Governor's proclamation, our region could seek reimbursement for costs directly related to and in support of the fire event. Unfortunately, costs related to private property damage cannot be reimbursed through this process.

Fiscal Analysis:

Costs directly related to firefighting efforts are reimbursed by the incidents, and therefore largely covered by CalFire and the US Forest Service. The fiscal impact of other efforts in support of the incidents is being evaluated at this time and will be reported to the Board at future meetings.

Special Instructions:

Direct Clerk of the Board to send a copy of the minute order to:
Office of Emergency Management, Attn: Robert Lewin

Attachments:

Attachment A: Resolution Ratifying the Proclamation of Local Emergency
Attachment B: Proclamation of Local Emergency for Alamo and Whittier Fires

Authored by:

Elsa Arndt, OEM Deputy Director

cc:

Matt Pontes, County Executive Office
Eric Peterson, Fire Chief
Bill Brown, Sheriff