



**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: Fire and County Executive Office
Department No.: 031 and 012
For Agenda Of: March 1, 2022
Placement: Departmental
Estimated Time: 45 minutes
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department Director(s) Mona Miyasato, County Executive Officer
Mark Hartwig, Fire Chief

DocuSigned by:
Mona Miyasato
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Contact Info: Reese Ellestad, Fiscal & Policy Analyst

SUBJECT: KPMG Operational Performance Review – Santa Barbara County Fire

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Other Concurrence:

As to form: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Receive and file a report on KPMG’s Operational and Performance Review of the Santa Barbara County Fire Department;
- b) Provide direction as appropriate; and
- c) Find that the proposed actions do not constitute a “Project” within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act, pursuant to 14 CCR 15378(b)(2), as it consists of general policy and procedure making

Summary Text:

The Santa Barbara County Fire Department is the ninth County agency review completed by KPMG. The purpose of this review is to provide a high-level assessment of the Office, identify strengths and opportunities, and benchmark financial and operational areas with similar jurisdictions. The focus is to improve the overall operational efficiency, effectiveness, and service delivery provided by the Fire Department. KPMG’s report, entitled “Improving Performance to Better Serve our County Residents:

Countywide Operational Performance Review – Santa Barbara County Fire Department” is attached. The Agency’s response and implementation timeframe is also attached.

Overview of the Fire Department:

The Santa Barbara County Fire Protection District encompasses approximately 2,480 square miles, providing services to an estimated population of 172,000. This includes the unincorporated areas of the County as well as the cities of Buellton, Solvang, and Goleta. The Fire Department has 274 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) and the Adopted Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-22 operating budget is \$93,614,400.

The Fire Department’s mission states, “To serve and safeguard the community from the impacts of fires, medical emergencies, environmental emergencies, and natural disasters through leadership, planning, education, prevention, code enforcement, and all-hazard emergency response.”

The Fire Department responds from 16 fire station locations to all types of emergencies, including fire, medical, rescue, and hazardous materials incidents. Each fire station is staffed around the clock with a minimum of three firefighters and a Type I (structure) engine. Specialized equipment such as Type III (wildland) fire engines, water tenders, paramedic rescue ambulances, technical rescue, and water rescue equipment are strategically placed throughout the County and are cross-staffed with existing engine personnel. In addition to fire station response capabilities, the Fire Department staffs and responds with helicopters, bulldozers, and hand crews to fire, pre-fire, flood, and other disasters. The Fire Department maximizes the services provided to the community by cross-training firefighters and operating specialized programs out of crucial locations. Specialized programs include paramedic services, ambulance transport services, water rescue services, urban search and rescue services, a search dog program, an arson dog program, and child car seat safety checks and installations. Safety personnel are also deployed in specialized Support Services and Fire Prevention staff assignments.

Overview of KPMG Recommendations:

In brief, the KPMG report identifies twelve recommendations. The recommendations are divided into six categories: Data-driven deployment, Financial management, Inspections process, Performance Management, Workforce development, and Technology enhancement. These recommendations are summarized below, and are discussed more fully in the attached response and implementation table.

Data-driven deployment

- 1.1: Expand data-driven, demand-based staffing, leveraging geographic and temporal trends in calls for service.
- 1.2: Revise emergency medical protocols to more efficiently and effectively triage and manage demand.
- 1.3: Better define CAD problem and incident types to accurately capture incident and response data.

Financial management

- 2.1: Enhance processes for tracking the cost of services delivered and revenue generated by Tax Rate Area (TRA) within the County, as well as cost recovery for Mutual Aid provided to jurisdictions outside of the County, to better track the costs and reimbursements of the Department’s services.
- 2.2: Develop more transparent and equitable cost-sharing processes for Air Support Unit between Sheriff and Fire to support fair allocation of costs and increased transparency.

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2.3: Better forecast and prioritize capital planning, in conjunction with General Services, to undertake a strategic prioritization of projects.

2.4: Create an inventory management strategy to accurately account for assets and help minimize risk.

Inspections process

3.1: Implement processes to enhance consistency, streamline workload, and measure performance of inspections program.

Performance management

4.1: Strengthen performance measurement processes to enable continuous improvement and regular evaluation of progress toward established targets.

Workforce development

5.1: Better enable the training of new staff and establish pipelines for recruiting talent to enhance workforce development, succession planning, and Department resiliency.

Technology enhancement

6.1: Digitalize paper processes to alleviate workload on engine companies, dispatch, and administration.

6.2: Develop information technology plan and process to assess and establish current and future technology needs.

The Fire Department agrees with a majority of these recommendations, and some of the recommended changes are already underway.

Background:

The County contracted with KPMG in May 2019, following a competitive process, to conduct these operational and performance reviews as part of the Renew '22 initiative. The Board of Supervisors funded these reviews in order to provide a high-level assessment of departments, identify strengths and opportunities, and benchmark financial and operational areas with similar jurisdictions. The Board approved the initial contract with KPMG to review nine departments (“year one,” or first phase). The Board approved three subsequent amendments related to the initial contract to expand the scope of work to have KPMG provide a more focused and detailed review of specific County programs and processes at the request of the departments reviewed. In October 2020, the Board approved Amendment No. 4 to the contract with KPMG to review the next set of departments, and perform a focused review of the cannabis tax revenue assessment and collection process. The three additional departments included in this amendment are Fire, Social Services and Behavioral Wellness. The proposed cost of the work associated with this amendment is \$806,881 and the work is expected to be completed by December 31, 2021.

Performance Measure:

Performance measures will be developed in conjunction with the report recommendations and included in future Budgets to track progress and cost/benefit of the operational performance reviews.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Many of the recommendations provided by KPMG will not require additional resources or budget and, if implemented, will likely result in efficiencies of cost, time savings or improved outcomes. Other areas of

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improvement, may require additional resources, those recommendations must be evaluated through the annual budget process.

Attachments:

- a) KPMG report: Improving Performance to Better Serve our County Residents: County-wide Operational Performance Review – Santa Barbara County Fire Department.
- b) Santa Barbara County Fire Department’s Response and Implementation Timeframe.

Authored by:

Reese Ellestad, Fiscal & Policy Analyst