



GIG HARBOR FIRE & MEDIC ONE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Board of Fire Commissioners to Meet on Facilities Bond Resolution

Public Invited to Learn More and Provide Comment

[Gig Harbor, Wash.] – The Board of Fire Commissioners for Gig Harbor Fire & Medic One (GHFMO) will meet to discuss a resolution to place a facilities bond on the August 2, 2022 Primary Election ballot. There will be two meetings where the proposal is discussed, and the community is welcome and encouraged to attend the virtual meetings.

The meetings will be held at 5:00 pm on Tuesday, March 22, 2022 and Tuesday, April 12. Meetings are held via Zoom and accessed using a link on the District website www.gigharborfire.org. Community members unable to attend are encouraged to send input to Fire Chief Dennis Doan at DDoan@gigharborfire.org. All comments become part of the official record.

The Gig Harbor community has grown by more than 16% since 2010. Call volumes have increased 37% in the same time period. Emergency medical service accounts for 78% of all calls.

The Board of Fire Commissioners unanimously approved a Capital Facilities Plan in December of 2021. Priority projects for the bond include building a training facility, and renovating or replacing fire stations.

The Fire District has no facility for regular live fire trainings. This means firefighters may only train on live fire once every three years and must leave the area to perfect these life and property-saving skills. The training facility would be constructed on land owned by the Fire District adjacent to Station 50 (Swede Hill).

Stations 53 (Fox Island), 57 (Crescent Valley), 58 (Swede Hill), and 59 (Artondale) are scheduled for improvements. Some stations do not meet ADA requirements, or current seismic standards. They also lack living quarters to accommodate current and projected staffing levels, and a diverse work force.

Just as important for GHFMO is providing a healthier work environment for emergency personnel. Cancer is known to be a leading cause of death among firefighters. Some of stations lack decontamination areas to remove soot, hydrocarbons and smoke from firefighting gear. There is also a need for space to decontaminate medical equipment used at EMS calls.

Station 51 in Gig Harbor is the Fire District's busiest station. The Capital Facilities Plan calls for replacing the current station at the same location to accommodate additional personnel and modern emergency apparatus.

The bond would last for 20-years and is projected to cost \$9.90 per month for the owner of a \$500,000 home. Interest rates are still low, and the financial health of the Fire District helps ensure a favorable finance rate.

“It’s an exciting time for our community and Gig Harbor Fire & Medic One,” said Fire Chief Dennis Doan. “Our community has grown to the point it requires a modern emergency response. We’re putting plans in motion to deliver the level of service our community requires.”

More information on the facilities bond can be found at www.gigharborfire.org/about/bond.

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Pierce County Fire Protection District No. 5 (known as Gig Harbor Fire & Medic One) provides fire and life safety services to 53,000 people over 54 square miles. The Fire District responded to a high of 6,685 calls in 2019. Through community support, Gig Harbor Fire & Medic One has built one of the most advanced emergency response systems in Pierce County with highly-trained personnel and rescue programs.