



JIM DESMOND
SUPERVISOR, FIFTH DISTRICT
SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

2019 JUL 15 PM 12:43

CLERK OF THE BOARD
OF SUPERVISORS

AGENDA ITEM

DATE: July 23, 2019

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TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH SAN DIEGO GAS & ELECTRIC FOR HELICOPTER UTILIZATION FOR FIRE SUPPRESSION (DISTRICTS: ALL)

OVERVIEW

On July 19, 2016 (1), the Board of Supervisors approved signing an agreement with San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) to utilize a leased Helitanker for the region's aerial fire protection program, and to jointly fund the initial flight hours for fire suppression within the County of San Diego (County). Between January 2017 and June 2019, the helicopter responded approximately 25 times for a total of over 134 hours of wildland fire related flight time. Some notable fires include the West Fire (Alpine, 2018), the Rangeland Fire (Ramona, 2018), the Pasqual Fire (Pasqual Valley, 2018), and the Recycle Fire (Campo, 2018).

Recently, SDG&E has advised the County they are leasing a second helicopter, having entered into a long-term lease with Helistream, Inc. for a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter. The County is seeking to increase its aerial assets to strengthen its initial fire suppression attack capabilities and SDG&E has offered to enter into an agreement with the County to make this second helicopter available to the region for year-round fire suppression. Further, during red flag events, one of the helicopters will be pre-positioned in North County, in accordance with the needs determined by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Fire Chief.

Today's action will direct the Chief Administrative Officer to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the County and SDG&E, adding the second helicopter to the current MOU. Under this agreement, SDG&E will cover the costs to operate the helicopter during the first two flight hours of any new fire, and the County will cover the second two flight hours.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

SUPERVISOR JIM DESMOND

Waive Board Policy A-87 and authorize the Director, Purchasing and Contracting, to enter into negotiations with San Diego Gas & Electric to utilize its firefighting-equipped helicopters in support of firefighting efforts, and upon successful negotiations and determination of fair and reasonable terms, enter into an agreement for up to three years through June 30, 2022, and to

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amend the agreement as needed to reflect changes to services and funding and to execute any related agreements or documents.

FISCAL IMPACT

No additional appropriations are necessary as a result of this action. Funds for this request are included in the Fiscal Year 2019-20 Operational Plan under the County's Aerial Fire Protection Call When Needed Program. If approved, it is estimated that this request could result in a maximum of \$150,000 in current year costs, depending on flight time and reimbursements from the State of California or the Federal Government.

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT

N/A

BACKGROUND

Wildfires are part of the natural environment in San Diego County, with its dry, climate, seasonally mixed with Santa Ana winds. The region is among several in California that has experienced major, devastating wildfires in recent years. Over the past 15 years since the Cedar and Witch Creek firestorms, the County of San Diego (County) Board of Supervisors (Board) has worked to strengthen our region's readiness and has invested more than \$500 million to transform and strengthen fire and emergency service levels.

Since the formation of the County Fire Authority in 2008, the County has partnered with CAL FIRE to reorganize fire services under one agency, County Fire. As a result, San Diego County is one of the most fire prepared counties in the Nation. Our combined Federal, State, County and Local response is second to none. The services safeguard against the loss of life and property both during large-scale disasters and on a day-to-day basis.

To supplement the County's Aerial Fire Protection Program, San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) has made two firefighting equipped helicopters leased from Erickson, Inc., Erickson Type 1 heavy lift, and Helistream, Inc., Helistream UH-60 Blackhawk available. These helicopters can carry and unload more than 2,600 gallons of water per trip and stay airborne for up to 2 ½ hours before needing to refuel. Depending on the location of a water source in proximity to the fire, these helicopters can potentially drop between 20,000 and 30,000 gallons of water per hour.

The helicopters will be based within the County and will be available for dispatch to fires within the region. During fires, the helicopters will be available to all local agencies, cities and fire districts at no additional cost, as long as funding for flight time is available. For each fire, SDG&E will cover the cost of the first two hours of flight time, and the County will cover the next two hours. County Fire will coordinate all requests for the helicopters with other fire agencies within San Diego County. Should SDG&E exhaust its \$150,000 contribution, the County would pick up the first two hours, and the next two, up to County's annual cost limit of

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\$150,000. After that, jurisdictions requesting the services would be responsible for the flight time hourly rate cost.

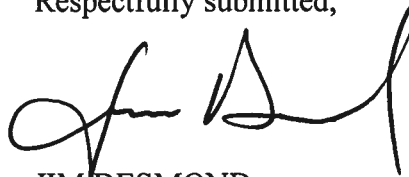
County funding will make the helicopters available to all local agencies, cities and fire districts at no additional cost, as long as funding for flight time is available. Where possible, the County will seek reimbursement from the State of California or the Federal Government for those expenditures.

It is clear from the recent usage of the SDG&E leased helicopter, that the partnership should continue. Approving the execution of the agreement will add a powerful tool to fight the regions wildfires.

LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN

Today's proposed Memorandum of Understanding between the County of San Diego and San Diego Gas & Electric supports the Safe Communities initiative of the County of San Diego's 2019-24 Strategic Plan by promoting safe communities throughout San Diego County.

Respectfully submitted,



JIM DESMOND
Supervisor, Fifth District

ATTACHMENT(S)

N/A

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AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET

REQUIRES FOUR VOTES: Yes No

WRITTEN DISCLOSURE PER COUNTY CHARTER SECTION 1000.1 REQUIRED

 Yes No

PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOARD ACTIONS:

October 20, 2009 (11), Agreement with San Diego Gas & Electric for Aerial Firefighting Equipment; June 15, 2010 (1), Flight of the Sunbird: New Agreement with San Diego Gas & Electric for Aerial Firefighting Equipment; July 19, 2016 (1), Flight of the Helitanker: Renewed Agreement with San Diego Gas & Electric for Aerial Firefighting Equipment.

BOARD POLICIES APPLICABLE:

A-87 – Competitive Procurement

BOARD POLICY STATEMENTS:

Board Policy A-87, which establishes the County Policy for competitive procurement, provides for exceptions where there is a single source for the services.

MANDATORY COMPLIANCE:

N/A

ORACLE AWARD NUMBER(S) AND CONTRACT AND/OR REQUISITION NUMBER(S):

N/A

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: Jim Desmond, Supervisor, Fifth District

OTHER CONCURRENCE(S): N/A

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