

# REPORT

## On The Finding of the LMRFD Alternative Funding Committee Regarding Annexation of properties in Meadview and Lake Mead City into the LMRFD

1. Efforts to recruit volunteers, preferably from Meadview, have netted 1 (one) volunteer. The annexation effort will require convincing more than half of Meadview and Lake Mead City (LMC) taxpayers to cooperate. That will require more than 1 volunteer.
2. Analysis of data received from Mohave County Assessor's office, (see attached **Exhibit A**) indicates that based on current property values and the current reported property tax collection rate of 89%, with all properties annexed in there would not be sufficient revenue collected from Meadview/LMC to put 2 Full Time personnel at Station 43 in Meadview, with one being a Paramedic.
3. The process to annex properties in a large block into the LMRFD, "Step 1" (see attached **Exhibit B**) requires a "legal description of boundaries of the area to be included within the proposed change". Conversations with Teresa Woods at the Mohave County Assessor's office revealed that it is considered to be the LMRFD's responsibility to provide the legal description of the proposed boundaries, which would require the hiring of a surveyor. In order for the project to move forward, someone needs to work with the County Assessor's office to provide that information.
4. Step #2, "Get a map and general description of the area..." is dependent upon Step #1 being completed first, and that information being provided to the Mohave County cartographer's office.
5. A "Boundary Change Impact Statement" needs to then be prepared, including data gathered in steps 1 and 2...and elsewhere, and submitted to the Mohave County Board of Supervisors (BOS). The LMRFD would then pay for mailing of notices to approximately 6500 proposed annexees, advising them of a hearing by the BOS on the subject. The County BOS may or may not approve the annexation at this point.
6. If the BOS approves the proposed annexation, anyone may circulate petitions in the proposed annexation area and deliver them to the LMRFD Board. There are significant time constraints and detailed instructions at every step, and any deviation can void the entire annexation effort. (see attached **Exhibit C**)
7. The petitions to annex in must be signed **by "owners of more than ½ of taxable property units within the boundaries of the proposed change, AND owning collectively, more than ½ of the assessed valuation."**
8. The County BOS then has another hearing upon receipt of the signed petitions to yav or nay the annexation.
9. If the BOS approves the annexation, anyone can file a complaint within a specified time period, challenging the validity of the annexation, and it can be overturned.

## ANALYSIS

The process of annexing Meadview/LMC properties into the LMRFD would require:

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1. A team of dedicated, committed and detail oriented individuals to get the County's help and to follow through with each step within the required time frame.
2. Taxpayer \$\$ to support it at different stages, with potential loss of investment if the effort fails at any stage.
3. Majority of the Meadview and LMC taxpayers to desire and support consolidation. Walt Kiffer's analysis indicates "**It would take the owners of the 756 highest valued properties, along with a total of 2534 of the property owners**" to meet the criteria for annexation. (see attached **Exhibit D**) It would take more than 1 or 2 volunteers to reach that many people and convince them to annex in. A fruitless effort, at best, considering it won't put 2 people in their station anyway.

## CONCLUSION

At this time it is a waste of time, money and energy to pursue annexation of Meadview/LMC properties into the LMRFD.

## RECOMMENDATION

The LMRFD Alternative Funding Committee should pursue County-wide solutions to the issue of a handful of taxpayers in Dolan Springs and Meadview supporting non-contributing properties, and County/State tourism and commerce related incidents.

Based on ambulance run data gathered in **2015**, 1/3 of ambulance calls were OOD (out of district), and 50 % of those were uncollectable. (We are unable to obtain more current data) (see **Exhibit E**)

At roughly 600 runs a year, 1/3 is 200 OOD runs, and 50% uncollectible would be 100. At roughly \$2000 per ambulance bill, 100 runs represent a loss to the LMRFD of **\$200,000** in uncollectible OOD, primarily out of country, out of state, tourist and commerce related ambulance runs. **That is roughly \$200,000 in losses that the taxpayers in the LMRFD subsidize for County and State tourism and commerce activities**, while Meadview goes without 2 personnel on shift.

There are extremely few taxpayers in the LMRFD who benefit from tourism. There may be 3 businesses in Dolan that net a little as the tourists shuffle from one bus to another and purchase a trinket so they can use the restroom, but for the most part, the tourists blow through town ignoring speed laws, pedestrians, and other motorists. They create more of a hazard than anything. Meadview residents don't benefit at all.

As I-11 moves toward becoming a reality, and truck traffic on the highway increases exponentially, resulting in the inevitable increase in accidents, are we going to be expected to double, triple, quadruple our property taxes so we can meet the increased demand? NOW is the time for taxpayers in the LMRFD to make their voices heard and demand change in the way Fire, EMS and Police services are funded for NW Arizona.

The most obvious solution to the problem is for Mohave County to create a County Fire District. We have a County School District, a County Library District, a County T.V. District, etc., why is funding for the most critical of services which people's lives and property rely upon left to a handful of rural disabled and retired living on

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fixed incomes? It is incomprehensible and only becomes more so as the demand increases with increasing County and State related traffic demands on our services.

You only need look at a map of the LMRFD C.O.N. (Certificate of Necessity governing our ambulance service) to get a visual of the extreme area our 2 guys cover, (2200 square miles!) to understand why YOUR tax dollars will likely NOT provide YOU service when YOU need it. (see **Exhibit F**)

Administrator John Flynn and Fire Chief Patrick Moore, when they were in charge of LMRFD during its financial recovery, lobbied for a County Fire District. They came close, gaining approval at various levels. It was shut down at our County level, as the **County Board of Supervisors “did not have the appetite for a County Fire District”**, as John Flynn stated. It is not likely they will ever “have an appetite for it”, so long as LMRFD taxpayers continue to roll over for an ever increasing tax burden to subsidize its ambulance service losses. The only thing that will generate change is the taxpayers standing together and demanding it!

In order to proceed with any hope of success, we need a strong group of committed individuals, who among them have communication skills and the ability to research and compile and analyze data. And, we need a cooperative Fire Chief who will support the effort and provide accurate up to date data. The current reporting system used by the LMRFD has not been able to provide reliable ambulance service related data for nearly 2 years. It is impossible to make arguments for our case without accurate up to date data. Until we have these elements in place, we can look forward to repeated attempts to raise our taxes as our declining property values fail to meet the increasing costs of operating the ambulance service. And, until these elements are in place, working together toward a solution, I hereby withdraw my services from further volunteer efforts on behalf of the LMRFD Alternative Funding Committee.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ellen Reh-Bower  
LMRFD Alternative Funding Committee  
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