SHASTA LAFCO

Report to the Shasta Local Agency Formation Commission
From: Jan Lopez, Executive Officer

Meeting Date: **December 18, 2014**
Agenda Item #: **11.d.**
Subject: **Response to Comments Given at the 11/6/2014 Discussion** *(Information only)*

Background and Discussion

At the November 6, 2014, Commission's public hearing to consider several SOI/MSR updates, one speaker, Mike Hebrard, made certain inferences regarding the Executive Officer's report on the Fall River Valley Coordinated FPD SOI Boundary that appear to require clarification. Mr. Hebrard serves as the Chief of the Shasta-Trinity Unit of CalFire, as the County Fire Warden, and as the Chief of the Shasta County Fire Department under a contract between Shasta County and CalFire.

- The proposed Coordinated FPD SOI does not lead to annexations; it serves to permit McArthur FPD and Northwest Lassen FPD to become one district and continue serving their historical response areas. Approval of the Coordinated FPD SOI does not have any material effect on CSA #1 – Shasta County Fire (SCF) services or its responsibilities.

- Both the McArthur and Northwest Lassen Districts have approved moving forward to merging or joining forces as one successor fire protection district, and an application is expected to come forward within the next few months. This proposed Coordinated FPD SOI is designed to accommodate that action.

- ISO (insurance) ratings of landowners and/or residents in the area will be unaffected by the approval of a sphere of influence boundary. Any future annexation proposal must be reviewed by the Commission at a completely separate public hearing process. No annexation proposal can be considered by LAFCO without an agency's Plan for Services that address the level of services and how they will be provided and paid for.

- LAFCO requested in January 2014 that CSA #1 - Shasta County Fire staff provide some form of map that would demonstrate service/response areas for the volunteer fire companies it currently administers for purposes of evaluating coverage available from those stations. The CSA #1 SOI study did not include that information because it was not provided. All other agencies provided this information.

- In July 2014 LAFCO staff provided a draft SOI map to SCF as a courtesy; the affected independent fire districts had not finalized their desired SOI area. Staff sent that proposal to the Valley districts, and they declined to use that configuration.

Revised Report for 12/18/2014

- The Commission hearing on this matter scheduled for September 2014 was continued to November 6th to permit the affected districts (McArthur, Northwest Lassen and Fall River Mills FPDs) to finalize their service area with a proposed sphere of influence map. A meeting of LAFCO staff and district representatives on October 8, 2014, concluded with the agreement of a SOI boundary that worked for all three affected independent districts. This boundary included the service/response areas of all three districts.

- The proposed Consolidated SOI boundary never did, and does not now include the community of Cassel. In the Burney Fire Protection District SOI/MSR study, approved by the Commission on November 6, 2014, the very same day, it is clearly stated that the Burney FPD had worked out a plan for annexing the Cassel area in 2012, but decided it was not fiscally feasible at that time. Although the Cassel area was not placed within the SOI of Burney FPD this year, it is clear that the Burney FPD would be the most appropriate agency to assume services there should annexation be desired by the community and Burney FPD. Neither Fall River Mills FPD, McArthur FPD, nor Northwest Lassen FPD have ever considered including the Cassel community within their SOI boundaries.

- Chief Hebrard referred to a 20-Year Long-Term Plan prepared for the Fall River Valley Community Services District, adopted by this District in July 2010. This work was prepared by Jan Lopez Consulting between 2007 and 2010 to assist the District in submitting information about their agency to Shasta LAFCO. All work conducted was at the direction of the District staff and Board.

  The District subsequently submitted to Shasta LAFCO an application for a sphere of influence amendment in May 2012, which request was ultimately denied in November 2012. The SOI boundary proposed at the time included an area three times the size of the proposed Coordinated FPD SOI. The Commission ultimately adopted a more area-specific SOI boundary for the Fall River Valley CSD

- Chief Hebrard intimated the current Coordinated FPD SOI was somehow related to the earlier FRVCSD proposal. The FPD proposed SOI boundary is literally one-third the size of that first proposed by the Fall River Valley CSD, and closely follows the service/response areas for the Valley FPDs.

- The only relationship between the CSD and the FPDs SOI map areas is that they are both located in the Fall River Valley of Eastern Shasta County. At no time was it recommended by either Jan Lopez or the independent fire districts that the FRV Coordinated FPD SOI be larger than the territories they already served.

- Neither LAFCO staff nor Jan Lopez has ever been employed by the McArthur FPD or the Northwest Lassen FPDs, and the boundaries for the Coordinated FPD SOI presented at

Revised Report for 12/15/2014

the November 6th meeting evolved after many discussions between those affected agencies and LAFCO staff. The proposed map for the Coordinated FPD SOI has now been slightly modified.

- As a result of misunderstanding these and other public issues, the Fall River Mills FPD is requesting of late they not be included in the Coordinated FPD SOI for Fall River Valley at this time. This District's SOI boundary will be proposed to remain coterminous with its District boundary.

Conclusions

Comments by CSA #1 – Shasta County Fire staff were seriously taken under consideration by the affected independent districts and LAFCO staff as they were submitted over a period of seven months. The District and its volunteer fire companies will not be affected, either positively or negatively, by approval the ultimate Coordinated SOI boundary the Commission selects for the McArthur and Northwest Lassen FPDs, nor the individual SOI boundary approved for the Fall River Mills FPD.

Any proposed annexation of any territory within an adopted sphere of influence for McArthur and/or Northwest Lassen FPDs will require a completely separate application, CEQA review, a Plan for Services and Proposal Justification, notification of all potentially affected landowners, and must meet all requirements of LAFCO codes for such applications before it will be able to be presented to the Commission for consideration.

There is no connection or correlation or conflict between a sphere of influence proposed by another Fall River Valley agency and the one proposed Coordinated Fire Protection District Sphere of Influence that now includes McArthur FPD and Northwest Lassen FPD.

Recommendations

It was recommended by the Executive Officer in the December 4, 2014, staff report, that the Commission accept this background information, and reserve it for consideration along with other testimony that may be presented at the December 18, 2014, meeting.

Attachments:

Revised Report for 12/18/2014