

Siskiyou County Local Agency Formation Commission
Regular Meeting
September 10, 2024

The Siskiyou County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) meeting of September 10, 2024, was called to order by Chair Ogren at 9:00 a.m. in the Board of Supervisors Chambers, 311 Fourth Street, 2nd Floor, Yreka, California.

Present: Commissioners Harkness, Mazzoni, Baker, Valenzuela, and Ogren

Absent:

Also Present: Hailey Lang, Executive Officer; Rachel Jereb, Deputy Executive Officer; Janine Rowe, Commission Clerk

Minutes: It was moved by Commissioner Valenzuela, seconded by Commissioner Mazzoni, to approve the Minutes from the May 14, 2024, LAFCo meeting as presented.

Voted upon and the Chair declared the motion carried unanimously by those Commissioners present, with Commissioner Baker abstaining since she was absent from the May meeting.

Unscheduled Appearances: The Chair read the description and noted there were none.

Conflict of Interest Declaration: The Chair noted that it is posted in the Agenda.

Presentation of Documents: The Chair read the description and noted there were none.

Availability of Public Records: The Chair read the description.

Public Hearing Protocol: The Chair noted that it is detailed in the Agenda.

Changes to the Agenda: The Chair noted there were none.

New Business:

Agenda Item 1: 2022 Countywide Fire Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Update (Potential Action)

Siskiyou County LAFCo will consider and adopt the Fire Protection Municipal Service Review (MSR) and Sphere of Influence (SOI) Update. This review encompasses cities, fire protection districts, Community Service Districts (CSD), hose companies, Zones of Increased Benefit (ZIB), and County Service Areas (CSA). The purpose of this MSR is to perform a comprehensive update and review of the current service levels provided by the fire service providers in the County.

Staff Report:

The previously circulated Staff Report was reviewed by the Commission, and a presentation of the project was provided by Deputy Executive Officer Rachel Jereb.

Ms. Jereb told the Commission that the consultants would be providing a PowerPoint presentation. She asked that the Commission bring up their questions during the presentation so they could be addressed as they arose.

Ms. Jereb said the process to update the Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence

(MSR/SOI) for the fire districts in Siskiyou County started several years ago. She said the last time it was done comprehensively was in 2006 so it is overdue.

Ms. Jereb told the Commission that the consultants proposed some recommendations for updates to the spheres of influence (SOI), but some fire service providers will just have municipal service reviews (MSR). She said because hose companies, volunteer companies, etc., are not official districts that have SOIs, there are no proposed updates or changes to those entities.

Brandon Fender of RSG Solutions introduced himself and said their company consults with LAFCo doing MSRs, feasibility studies, and annexations. He said he would go through an overview of the MSR process and would then hand it to Jill Glickman to discuss the key MSR determinations.

Mr. Fender told the Commission that at the end of the slide presentation, he would go through the numerous changes they are proposing be made to what will become the final MSR/SOI recommendations. He said some of the changes were based on public comment, some of them came from staff, and there was one correction that his staff caught.

Mr. Fender said they interviewed all of the districts as well as the hose and volunteer companies. He said the subconsultant, Planwest Partners, was also involved with the interviews and helped with the GIS mapping.

Mr. Fender began the PowerPoint presentation which covered how the information was gathered that is required by CKH and state law, the data analysis and collection, GIS mapping, service reviews, and fiscal reviews.

Ms. Glickman told the Commission that key findings were growth and population predictions, present and planned capacity of public facilities as well as an adequacy of public services, financial ability to provide services, status of and opportunities for shared facilities, accountability for community service needs.

Mr. Fender went over RSG's key SOI recommendations starting with the Grenada Fire Protection District. He said they recommended correcting an overlapping SOI with neighboring districts and including a small area located contiguous to the district that is not currently within in any fire protection district or service provider's SOI.

He said they recommended expanding all the SOIs for Hornbrook, Lake Shastina, Tulelake, Scott Valley, Mt. Shasta, and Dunsmuir to reflect their out of area responses. Most all of those changes were based on discussions with the chiefs about where they're responding to calls. He said they received call data and locations of calls through the GIS mapping process, and the recommended spheres are based on those locations.

Mr. Fender said they recommended adoption of fire only SOIs for specific areas in the cities of Yreka and Weed because those agencies, as well as the community service district, provide different municipal services other than fire protection. He said adopting a fire only SOI would limit the future provision of fire services to that area while giving each agency the capacity to provide the other municipal services that they already provide to the rest of their SOI.

Because there are some overlaps of the Mayten, Grenada, and Gazelle Fire Protection Districts near Interstate 5, Mr. Fender said they recommend using I-5 as a perimeter because it's an easily recognizable boundary that each district can understand rather than parcel lines which you can't necessarily see if you're responding to a call.

Mr. Fender told the Commission that because the Happy Camp Fire Protection District responds to a large area beyond their district's boundary, their recommended SOI reflects both their call geography and where they have a membership group that pays into a membership fund.

Mr. Fender said that the Montague Fire Protection District is currently working with LAFCo staff and Planwest to develop their boundary.

Mr. Fender told the Commission that the South Yreka Fire Protection District had their SOI approved in 2020 so they are not recommending any changes at this time.

At this point, Mr. Fender's presentation started going into more detail regarding RSG's SOI and MSR recommendations for each fire district. Ms. Jereb added that a lot of the descriptions would be very similar because most of the fire protection districts are in the same situation where they would benefit from additional funding. She said there are opportunities for consolidation potentially with their neighbors but lack sufficient funds.

Gazelle Fire Protection District: Mr. Fender told the Commission that both the Grenada and South Yreka SOI overlap Gazelle's SOI, and they recommend changing these three district boundaries to follow I-5 because it is an easily recognizable or geographic boundary for dispatching and responding to calls.

Commissioner Harkness asked how funding would work, and Mr. Fender said that one tool to fund consolidation is voter approval of a tax measure.

Grenada Fire Protection District: Mr. Fender said they recommend that Grenada reduce its SOI in areas that overlap with the South Yreka Fire and Gazelle Fire Protection Districts and SOI boundaries and increase its SOI by a half square mile area located contiguous to the District's southwestern boundary. The area is not currently included in any fire protection service provider's SOI.

The Commission asked about response time and the number of houses, but Mr. Fender said he didn't have that information available. Discussion was held regarding the fact that there are several unserved areas in the county.

Ms. Glickman told the Commission that RSG determined that Grenada's facilities were undersized for the District's modern equipment, there are issues with the roof, and there may be opportunities for consolidation with Gazelle, South Yreka, the city of Montague, and the city of Yreka. She noted that Grenada and Montague share fire chiefs and a considerable number of volunteers.

Discussion was held regarding the area proposed by the consultants to reconfigure the SOI boundary for Grenada in order to add it to South Yreka's district.

Chief Bernie Paul of South Yreka Fire Protection District told the Commission that in the 2020 increase of South Yreka's district it was not picked up on that it was already included in Grenada's SOI which is why there is an overlap.

Hilt Fire Hose Company: Ms. Glickman told the Commission that RSG didn't have any SOI recommendations. She said the fire company's current facilities are expected to experience a change in ownership in the future that presents uncertainty for the company's facility. Additionally, the company relies on donations and has little funding available for unforeseen expenditures.

Ms. Jereb added that the properties were owned by Fruit Growers who sold the land a couple years ago, but they haven't done anything major with the property. She said they don't have an SOI because it's a hose company.

Hornbrook Fire Protection District: Mr. Fender told the Commission that this is one of the large unincorporated areas that is currently underserved. The existing SOI is coterminous with the district boundary which makes the district boundary and the existing SOI the same. He said the recommended boundary is based on their volunteers, the core of staffing that they have, and the fact that Hornbrook has a year round CAL FIRE station in the area that can respond to calls. He said there are a lot of homes and a lot of call volume in this area.

Mr. Fender said they also looked at where each of these districts responds to calls but they don't respond to every call that they're dispatched to, so a district like Hornbrook might be dispatched to the Copco area because Copco doesn't always have the capacity to respond. He said this is one of the bigger areas that RSG recommends a large SOI to capture a large, populated area.

Discussion was held that rather than expanding boundaries, districts such as Hornbrook, Copco and Hilt should be consolidating. Commissioner Valenzuela said he was concerned about funding due to an aging population and the failure of past tax measures that would have paid for consolidation.

Ms. Jereb told the Commission that she wanted to make it clear that expanding the SOI would not create a financial burden or an obligation. It just creates the potential for the district to expand, and funding would have to be agreed to as part of any future expansion. Ms. Jereb said the first step for expanding and consolidating is having an up-to-date MSR/SOI which has to be no more than five years old. She reiterated that she wanted the Commission to understand that as part of this SOI staff is not saying this is what is going to happen in the future, but it is just the potential for what could happen in the future if everything else lines up.

Discussion was held that there would need to be mutual interest in consolidating districts and that their boundaries would need to be adjacent to one another.

Lake Shastina Fire Protection District: Mr. Fender said that because Lake Shastina provides different municipal services within the district boundary, they recommend a fire only SOI which only expands the district's capacity to respond to fire calls. He said the existing district boundary and the existing SOI are coterminous. Ms. Glickman said the fire department is currently developing a new apparatus bay which will include offices, sleeping quarters, training facilities and also the department currently responds to the Mount Shasta Vista fire zone per a contractual agreement.

Mayten Fire Protection District: Mr. Fender reminded the Commission that Mayten Fire Protection District is one where they recommend changes to the existing boundary to align with I-5. Ms. Glickman added that the district has limited staffing and has challenges responding to out of district calls due to lack of available staff members.

City of Montague Fire Department: Mr. Fender told the Commission that they don't have any recommendations for the Montague Fire Department SOI. He said from a fire perspective, the city of Montague is surrounded entirely by Montague Fire Protection District. Ms. Glickman added that the department's special assessment hasn't been updated since its adoption in 1976. She said there may be opportunities for consolidation given that Grenada and Montague currently share a fire chief as well as staff members.

Montague Fire Protection District: Mr. Fender said Montague Fire Protection District worked closely with LAFCo staff and Planwest for GIS mapping to define their boundaries, and they recommend that Montague FPD expand its SOI by approximately 148 square miles to reflect its current service area. Ms. Glickman said that the Montague Fire Department currently contracts with

the fire protection district to provide fire protection services to the entire district service area, and the district contributes all of its assets to the city of Montague.

Mount Shasta Vista Volunteer Fire Company: The consultants told the Commission that the Mount Shasta Vista Volunteer Fire Company does not have the volunteer capacity to provide adequate services in its service area and is dependent on Lake Shastina CSD for the delivery of comprehensive fire services.

South Yreka Fire Protection District: Mr. Fender said the SOI boundaries were already discussed with Grenada and Gazelle. He said this is the area where there's an overlap with Grenada FPD's sphere of influence and there are no recommended changes because it was recently updated for this district. Ms. Glickman said in conversations with district staff, the current facilities are undersized, but they are in the process of expanding its facilities to accommodate these needs. She said there is one disadvantaged unincorporated community (DUC) in the northeastern portion of the district's SOI.

Mr. Fender told the Commission that they mention DUCs because it's required by state law as mentioned in the CKH Guide. It is required to look at DUCs when there is an annexation, and it's based on the income of the population living in the area. He said the intent is to prevent districts from avoiding disadvantaged areas when they're forming a new district boundary.

City of Yreka Fire Department: Mr. Fender told the Commission that the Yreka Fire Department has a designated SOI, and they recommend that they adopt a fire only SOI to reflect its current response area. Ms. Glickman said that the department recently obtained a planning grant to begin development of a new firehall to accommodate the needs of the department. She added that a DUC was located within the city's SOI boundary. Chair Ogren said the city has hired someone to do the work on the new firehall.

Discussion was held regarding a small section on the map depicting Yreka Fire Department's SOI and that if the city wanted to annex it, it would have to be included in their SOI first. The city of Yreka did not include that section in the last city MSR/SOI.

Butte Valley Fire Protection District: Mr. Fender said the district has a coterminous SOI, and they are not recommending any expansion of the Butte Valley SOI. Ms. Glickman added that the district has limited staff capacity to respond to calls for service, and that they have not applied for any grant funding in over a decade due to a lack of personnel with grant writing experience and available staff time.

Copco Lake Fire Protection District: Mr. Fender told the Commission that Copco Lake's district boundaries are the same as their SOI. He said they don't have any recommendations given the volunteerism in the district and the uncertain future with the dams. Ms. Glickman said that the dam removals will result in temporary population increase in Copco's service area. Discussion was held that the dam removal will be done soon so the population increase mentioned in the report would be moot.

City of Dorris Fire Department: Mr. Fender told the Commission that the city of Dorris has a coterminous SOI and no changes were recommended. Ms. Glickman said that the Dorris Fire Department responds to the Pleasant Valley fire zone and uses the fire zone's facilities and apparatus equipment when responding to calls for service in that area. She added that there might be opportunities to consolidate with Pleasant Valley in addition to the Butte Valley Fire Protection District given Butte Valley's low volunteer status.

Pleasant Valley: Mr. Fender said Pleasant Valley does not have an SOI so there are no SOI requirements. Ms. Glickman said Dorris is the primary fire protection service provider. It was noted that the fire zone's apparatus equipment has reached the end of its life cycle and would benefit from an upgrade.

Tennant Community Services District: Mr. Fender said Tennant is one of the most remote areas. The existing boundary and SOI are coterminous, and they are not recommending any changes to this district. Ms. Glickman said Tennant currently relies on CAL FIRE for fire protection services, and it is recommended that the CSD's resources be considered for reorganization to ensure the efficient delivery of fire protection services in the area. She also wanted to note that the CSD hasn't completed any audits in the last several years and does not have those publicly available.

Tulelake Fire Protection District: Mr. Fender said the existing district is located partly in Siskiyou County and partly in Modoc County. He said they recommend that they expand their SOI to the west in Siskiyou County to reflect its out-of-district response area to developments located on the west side of Hill Road. Ms. Glickman said there weren't any significant determinations made in relation to Tulelake.

City of Etna Fire Department: Mr. Fender said there is a designated SOI and there are no recommendations at this time. Ms. Glickman said the current facility lacks sufficient space for the department's modern equipment. She said they noted there might be opportunities for consolidation with the town of Fort Jones Fire Department and the Scott Valley Fire Protection District given their close proximity to one another. There's also one DUC located within the city's SOI boundary.

Happy Camp Fire Protection District: Mr. Fender told the Commission that Happy Camp has a designated SOI which doesn't expand much farther beyond the district's existing boundary. He said they recommend an expansive SOI based on their call volume and the distance they travel to respond to calls. He said this is a very remote area and not a lot of districts go out into this area. He added that this is a membership area so the data is also based on where they're receiving funds in their membership area.

Ms. Glickman said district staff noted that the 2020 Slater fire destroyed over 200 homes in the service area and that most residents affected by the fire had relocated. Ms. Glickman said the district's current facility would benefit from improvements to its roof. She added that three DUCs were identified in the district's SOI.

Klamath River Fire Company: Mr. Fender said Klamath River Fire Company is a volunteer hose company so they do not have an SOI. He said the rough boundary for hose/volunteer companies are based on where they're currently providing services, so it's an unofficial SOI. Ms. Glickman said they also noted that a fire in 2022 had destroyed over 100 homes in the area and they do expect residents to rebuild.

Salmon River Volunteer Fire and Rescue Company: Mr. Fender said this is another volunteer district and it almost connects to the Happy Camp SOI. He said their map is a rough estimate of their boundary where they're responding to calls. Ms. Glickman added that the company's staff noted that workers compensation liability insurance has had steep increases in recent years which is putting a big strain on the company's fiscal health. They have not been unable to apply for grants in recent years due to limited staff experience and capacity.

Scott Valley Fire Protection District: Mr. Fender told the Commission that the existing boundary

and the existing SOI are coterminous. He said the recommended SOI captures very remote areas represents where they respond to calls. He said they are the nearest resource responding to those areas.

Discussion was held that the recommended SOI boundary go to the edge of land for which the federal government is responsible and that the boundary is the same as that for the Scott Valley Area Plan.

Discussion was held that CAL FIRE is responsible for any wildland fire within the district that is not their local responsibility all the way to the federal and state border that some of those lands overlap. CAL FIRE is not required to respond to medical calls, but they do provide medical aid to traffic as long as they have the resources.

Ms. Glickman told the Commission that district staff noted that their current facilities were obtained through informal agreements established in the 1960s and 1980s. She said staff has experienced issues with being forced to vacate its premises which occurred on three occasions to date. She added that one DUC was located west of the district's SOI boundary.

Seiad Valley Fire Company: Mr. Fender said Seiad Valley Fire Company is a volunteer district so there is no SOI based on where they are responding to calls. Ms. Glickman said no significant determinations were made.

Town of Fort Jones Fire Department: Mr. Fender told the Commission that the department has a designated SOI and they have no recommendations for this SOI. Ms. Glickman added that department staff said they want to build an additional fire station to accommodate potential future growth of the department.

Mr. Fender pointed out that the DUC map showed the area around Happy Camp.

Dunsmuir / Castella Fire Department: Mr. Fender said Dunsmuir is a designated SOI, and they had no recommended changes. Ms. Glickman said the department noted they want to acquire a new station to replace its primary facility due to a lack of sufficient space and a deteriorating floor. She said the department's special assessment has not been updated since the early 1990s and that three DUCs were identified located contiguous to the city's boundary.

Dunsmuir Fire Protection District: Mr. Fender told the Commission that the district has a designated SOI, and they recommend that the SOI be expanded to reflect where they are responding to service calls outside their current boundary. Ms. Glickman said no significant MSR determinations were made.

Hammond Ranch Fire Zone: Mr. Fender said that since this is a fire zone, they do not have an SOI. Ms. Glickman said they are unable to invest in new equipment due to a lack of budget. She added that there may be opportunities to consolidate with the city Weed given their close proximity. She said one DUC was identified in close proximity to the southern boundary of the fire zone.

McCloud Community Services District: Mr. Fender told the Commission that the district has a designated SOI. He said there are small pockets between the McCloud CSD and the fire zone that are SOI. He said they had no recommendations to the SOI.

Ms. Jereb said she wanted to note that there is an SOI to north and south of the CSD that is not shown on the map which was inadvertently left out of the data that was sent to consultants, so the map is incorrect as far as depicting the SOI.

Ms. Glickman said district staff said that they are expecting an increase in residential growth in the CSD over the next several years, and the current capacity of public facilities is expected to be sufficient to accommodate that growth. She said the McCloud Volunteer Fire Department is the primary fire protection service provider to the McCloud fire zone that surrounds it, and one DUC was located west of the CSD in the McCloud fire zone.

McCloud Fire Zone: Mr. Fender told the Commission that the McCloud Fire Zone doesn't have SOI and they had no recommendations nor were they making any changes at this time.

City of Mt. Shasta Fire Department: Mr. Fender said the department has a designated SOI and they were not recommending any changes to the SOI. Ms. Glickman said the department said they lacked sufficient space for the department's growing apparatus inventory, and their special assessment has not been updated since 1994. She said two DUCs are located contiguous to the city's boundary and one DUC is located in close proximity to it.

Mt. Shasta Fire Protection District: Mr. Fender told the Commission that the district has a designated SOI and they recommend that the district's sphere be expanded by approximately 22 square miles. Ms. Glickman said the primary station lacks sufficient space for the district's future growth, and there are four DUCs located within the district's SOI.

City of Weed Fire Department: Mr. Fender said the department's SOI overlaps the Hammond Ranch Fire Zone, and they recommend that the city adopt a fire only SOI consisting of approximately 11 square miles to reflect its out-of-district service area in the Carrick Community along Old Edgewood Road including the area that borders the city's eastern boundary. He said this recommendation would reduce the city's SOI to exclude the portion that overlaps Hammond Ranch Fire Zone.

Ms. Glickman said at the time the department was interviewed, staff said recent fires in the city of Weed reduced their housing inventory in the service area. She said the department noted challenges with facility maintenance due to the size of its capital outlay budget. She added that one DUC was located contiguous to the city's boundary.

Mr. Fender told the Commission that the next part of their presentation covered some amendments to text in the MSR based on feedback from LAFCo staff and the public and from the final review. He said they would like the changes to be reflected in the final MSR determinations. He said a lot of the changes were corrections to numbers, and there might have been some substantial changes.

The correct square mileage for Lake Shastina is 53.1 square miles.

The correct recommendation for the city of Montague and the Montague Fire Protection District should be that LAFCo expand Montague Fire Protection District's SOI.

Clarification was made to recommendations for the Grenada Fire Protection District that there is an opportunity to consolidate with the Gazelle Fire Protection District.

A label on the Engine Typing Standards table changed from "engine typing standards" to "engine type standards" and the source for that information was added.

The date the Gazelle Fire Protection District was established was corrected to 1961. Based on feedback from the district, changes were made regarding when the district meets, their board of directors, what they plan to do with their website, how they utilize social media, and how training is provided. Mr. Fender said they also provided an update to their apparatus inventory. He wanted to

note that their apparatus inventory varies from the county fire annual report which was a snapshot of time.

Mr. Fender said for the hose companies, they prepared this MSR based on the county annual fire report and how they referred to each of the volunteer districts so the Klamath River Fire Company and the Seiad Valley Fire Company were updated.

A correction was made to the Salmon River Fire and Rescue section noting that volunteers experienced difficulty attending training sessions.

Mr. Fender said that the Dunsmuir/Castella Fire Department was changed to City of Dunsmuir because the demographic profile did not include any population or housing outside the county's boundary.

Dunsmuir Fire Protection District's map in the report wasn't showing the recommended SOI so the symbology on the map was changed from a solid orange line to a dashed orange line to indicate the recommended SOI.

Mr. Fender told the Commission that Figure 185 for Hammond Ranch was corrected to reflect the five year incidents and staff.

Mr. Fender said Figure 199 regarding McCloud Fire Zone was changed from CSA #4's current SOI to McCloud's current response area.

The Chair called for a brief break at approximately 10:31 a.m.

The Chair called the meeting to back to order at approximately 10:40 a.m.

Ms. Jereb told the Commission that she wanted to go over staff's recommendations for this project, which are contained in the proposed Resolution.

Dunsmuir Fire Protection District: Ms. Jereb said staff agrees with the consultant's recommendations for the most part. She said the map contained in the consultant's report has the correct line, but LAFCo staff corrected the symbology and staff is proposing that it be approved. Mr. Fender added that the symbology was changed from a solid orange line to a dashed orange line, and Ms. Jereb confirmed that the line is labeled as existing SOI but it's actually the recommended SOI.

Grenada Fire Protection District: Ms. Jereb said staff recommends that it be updated as recommended on the map in the Resolution

Happy Camp Fire Protection District: Ms. Jereb said staff agrees with the consultants' recommendation.

Hornbrook Fire Protection District: Ms. Jereb said staff recommends approval as shown on the map.

Lake Shastina Community Services District: Ms. Jereb said staff recommends approval as shown on the map.

Mayten Fire Protection District: Ms. Jereb told the Commission that staff's recommendation is as recommended on the map with the modification that the SOI is not expanded into the Gazelle Fire Protection District boundary in the southwest. She said this recommendation is contrary to the

consultant's recommendation that I-5 be followed. She said staff received a letter from the Gazelle FPD stating "it was not feasible to take the 1.4 square mile section at the southwest boundary of Mayten FPD because that contains a bridge on East Louie Road on which heavy fire apparatus is not recommended for crossing and has portions of dirt and pavement that slow down driving time. In contrast, Gazelle has a straight shot entering the freeway from the Louie Road overpass or the Edgewood onramp for faster response time. Gazelle does not agree with this recommendation." Ms. Jereb confirmed the bridge weight limit with Public Works who said that should actually be brought up more often to make sure everyone is aware of it.

Montague Fire Protection District: Ms. Jereb said this had been discussed previously.

Ms. Jereb told the Commission that LAFCo staff reached out to all of the fire protection districts and requested that they work with them to amend the boundaries of their SOIs. She said only three contacted her and only Montague met with her to amend the boundaries so the boundary depicted on the map in the Resolution is what they came up with. It was modified slightly after further discussions between the consultant and Chief Vela and staff is recommending approval.

Mt. Shasta Fire Protection District: Ms. Jereb staff concurs with the consultant's recommendation that they expand their SOI boundaries.

Scott Valley Fire Protection District: Ms. Jereb told the Commission that staff concurs with the changes recommended by the consultant.

Tulelake Fire Protection District: Ms. Jereb said LAFCo staff recommends that the SOI be updated as shown on the consultant's map.

City of Yreka Fire Protection District: Ms. Jereb said the consultant recommended that the fire only SOI for the areas that overlap with the Montague FPD and South Yreka FPD be consolidated to not include that area. She said the consultants recommended expanding a little bit to the east and a lot to the west. However, LAFCo staff does not want a city SOI that does not include all the services offered by the city. She said staff recommends that the fire area not be reduced in those areas and that any areas where expansion is proposed for a fire SOI be expanded. Staff also recommends that services not be removed from areas where services are currently available from the city. To summarize, Ms. Jereb said staff recommends keeping the existing boundary and expanding it in areas.

A lengthy discussion was held regarding the boundaries not covering certain areas to the north and west and whether changes can be made after the proposed MSR/SOI is adopted. The discussion also included whether or not SOI boundary changes can be made outside an MSR update and that some LAFCos prepare addendums to an adopted MSR/SOI.

Discussion was held regarding whether it was worth making small changes now or waiting until the next city MSR update is due which will be in 2026.

The Commission discussed altering the SOI for the Yreka Fire Department.

A lengthy discussion was held regarding the specific areas that should be included as part of the fire only SOI for the city of Yreka.

City of Weed Fire Department: Ms. Jereb told the Commission that the city of Weed proposed SOI boundary excludes the adjacent fire zone. She said if approved there would be a portion of the city SOI that would have all available services except fire. Therefore, staff recommends denial of that

proposal and that the SOI remain the same and not be reduced in size. She said the Resolution excludes approval of the Weed SOI.

The Chair opened the Public Hearing.

Public Comment:

Bernie Paul, Chief of South Yreka Fire Department and President of the Siskiyou County Fire Chiefs Association, said when the report was circulated for review in June, the fire departments were busy fighting fires so not many departments had time to review it. He added that some chiefs didn't know about the report and hadn't reviewed it.

Chief Paul said the number of responses by a lot of departments are higher than what was contained in the report. A lot of volunteers don't know where their district boundaries are so they go no matter where they're dispatched, but the departments aren't getting compensated for that. He wanted to know what the expectation was. Commissioner Valenzuela recommended that Chief Paul come before the Board of Supervisors to have that conversation under a bigger context.

Commissioner Valenzuela added that he recalled previous studies that recommended consolidation, and Chief Paul said he jumped through all the hoops that were required and was told it had to go to a vote, but the district does not have the funds to pay for placing that on the ballot.

Chief Paul said he disagrees with expanding the SOIs for fires only because the guiding documents for all fire departments state that life is number one, so not going out for medical aid is not an option. He said the population numbers in the report are lower than what is in the County's records which hurts the district when applying for grants.

Commissioner Valenzuela asked for staff feedback, and Ms. Jereb said the Census was used for population and housing data which she conceded may not contain accurate numbers, but it was the best available. She said the consultants need to have a common data source for comparison purposes so notes were added based on comments that were received to reflect what the districts have. She added that constituents need to respond to Census surveys so the numbers for the county are more accurate which will result in better data. Mr. Fender added that ESRI is the vendor of the data which is pulled from the Census.

Greg Roath, CAL FIRE Unit Chief and Siskiyou County Fire Warden, said the description of the fire warden is inaccurate, and he would like to see that amended before the report is approved. He offered to provide the duties that were approved by the Board of Supervisors.

Chief Roath reiterated Chief Paul's comments on fire only response and that fire service is built on life and property with life being first priority. He said fire response is already being done through mutual aid between departments. He wanted to make sure the Commission was aware of the Amador agreement between CAL FIRE and the county for wildfire protection during non-fire season. The Amador engine is staffed in Hornbrook and they also respond to medical aid, traffic accidents, and hazmat, but the primary mission of that agreement is wildland fires during the winter and protecting the county. He added that it is not a full service agreement to the county year round.

Discussion was held that Chief Roath would work with LAFCo staff to provide the description for the county fire warden so the report can be updated before next month's meeting.

Janet Jones, Chief of Klamath River Fire, said she wasn't sure why Klamath River Fire was listed as the only hose company in the county because Seiad Valley Fire, Salmon River Fire, and Hilt are also

donation based departments. She said the population in their area is incorrect but understands that the data is based on the census. She said using the county's data would be a better source because when it affects getting grants and answering to their board, they would like to have more accurate information.

At Chair Ogren's request, Mr. Fender explained the difference between a hose company and a district. He said fire protection districts are independent districts that are formed and have their own boards and designated areas where they provide services. Hose companies are volunteer districts and do not have designated boundaries where they provide fire services. Chief Roath added that hose companies are donation based and are not provided with funding.

Commissioner Valenzuela said funding for these entities comes from donations, taxing mechanisms, etc., because the county doesn't have the funding. Therefore, the public has to step up and pay for the services. Discussion was held that the financial aspect needs a more in depth conversation in a different venue.

Through the chair, Ms. Jereb said in reference to comments regarding census numbers and county data, she wanted it on record that the county also uses census data for their population data.

Ms. Angelina Cook of McCloud said she wanted to know if the recommendations correlate with existing administrative capacity of the fire departments. She said she is working with McCloud's Chamber of Commerce, Resource Center, and Community Services District to strengthen public provision in McCloud which includes fire protection, and that they are trying to coordinate with the county's General Plan update to improve their representation. She wanted to know if LAFCo can provide any guidance as to how McCloud can strengthen its representation and provide better public services. Ms. Cook said she thinks consolidating efforts with other districts would help with addressing unmet needs in rural communities.

Commission Discussion:

The Commission discussed continuing the project to the October meeting and to leave Public Comment open with the hope that more people would be able to participate and comment.

Through the Chair, Ms. Jereb summarized Commission concurrence with staff's recommendations and Commission direction:

- Update the description of the County Fire Warden
- Correct the SOI for McCloud
- Keep the current SOI for Gazelle
- Modify the SOI for Mayten, as discussed
- Keep the current SOI for the city of Weed
- Staff concurs with the consultant's recommendations for Dunsmuir, Grenada, Happy Camp, Hornbrook, Shastina, Montague, Mt. Shasta, Scott Valley, Tulelake
- For the city of Yreka, staff disagrees with some of the consultant's recommendations, as discussed. Staff will work on modifying the map for expansion of the fire only SOI to north. Staff will work with CAL FIRE and the city of Yreka to get their recommendations for the specific detailed boundary location.

Discussion was held regarding the fire only expansion for the city of Yreka and Lake Shastina Community Services District.

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Discussion was held that the term fire only for purposes of the MSR means that only fire protection services were analyzed and EMS data was not considered. The Commission asked that clarification of the term be made clear in the report so there is no confusion about whether or not the agency has to respond to a medical call.

Motion: Following discussion, it was moved by Commissioner Mazzoni, seconded by Commissioner Harkness, to continue the 2022 Countywide Fire Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Update to the October 8, 2024, meeting, and to leave the Public Hearing open.

Voted upon and the Chair declared the motion carried unanimously by those Commissioners present.

Items for Discussion/Direction: None

Miscellaneous:

1. **Correspondence: None**
2. **Staff Comments: None**
3. **Future Meetings:** The next regular meeting of Siskiyou County LAFCo is scheduled for Tuesday, October 8, 2024, at 9:00 a.m.
4. **Commission Comments: None**

Adjournment: The meeting was concluded at 11:51 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on file

Hailey Lang, Secretary