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REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF LAFCO PUBLIC INPUT MEETING

RE: REORGANIZATION OF STRUCTURAL FIRE PROTECTION AND
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES IN UNINCORPORATED
SAN DIEGO COUNTY

RAMONA, CALIFORNIA

MARCH 1, 2007

REPORTED BY SHANNON L. MARCOS, CSR NO. 8348

Peterson & Associates Court Reporting & Video Services

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1 REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF MEETING,
2 commencing at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 1, 2007, at
3 434 Aqua Lane, Ramona, California, Shannon L. Marcos,
4 Certified Shorthand Reporter, in and for the State of
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5 Cal i forni a.

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7 APPEARANCES:

8 LAFCO, Local Agency Formati on Commi ssi on
9 BY: MI CHAEL OTT
10 1600 Paci fi c Hi ghway, Room 452
San Di ego, Cal i forni a 92101

10

11 Al so Present:

12 Shi rley Anderson, Chi ef Pol icy Research
13 John Traylor, Local Government Consul tant
14 John Goss, Local Government Consul tant

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17 Mr. Ott: Michael Ott welcomed the public to the March 1,
18 2007 public outreach meeting and made some opening remarks
19 before introducing the project team. Mr. Ott indicated that
20 Shi rley Anderson would give a PowerPoint presentation and
21 and overview of the Micro Report on the Reorganization of
22 Fire Protecti on and Emergency Medi cal Servi ces in
23 Uni ncorporated San Di ego County.

24 Mr. Ott provided an opportunity for Public Comment.

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1 PUBLIC COMMENT

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3 MR. OTT: Are there any questions related strictly
4 to the presentation that Shi rley gave? Why don't the three
5 of you, I think there were three of you, could you come up
6 to the front aisle here, i denti fy yoursel f, and state your
7 name.

8 MR. McKIM: My name is Jim McKim, M-c-K-i-m, from
9 El fin Forest Harmony Grove area. My question is related to
10 the staffing levels showing three and four people on duty.
11 How is the number of stations derived at, that the staffing
12 levels have to be set at, is it the current number of
13 stations that are in the district or additional?

14 MR. TRAYLOR: For the Phase 1 agencies there are 42
15 fire stations, not including CDF fire stations. These are
16 CSA fire stations, volunteer fire stations, fire protection
17 district fire stations, there's 42.

18 MR. McKIM: So changing all those from whatever
19 level they're at now to those levels that were shown?

20 MR. TRAYLOR: Yes. If you took Model 5 without
21 volunteers, minimum level, three people on duty, dedicated
22 BLS first responder. If you took the same model with
23 volunteers, we looked at the viable volunteer organizations,
24 left them in place and will offer to embed, if you will,
25 either a paramedic or an EMT to be on duty 24 hours a day

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1 365 days a year to work with them. In a perfect world it
2 would be one of your volunteers.

3 MR. McKIM: So that career volunteer would be a
4 combination of somebody paid 24 hours a day?

5 MR. TRAYLOR: Our whole idea is to put a dedicated
6 BLS or ALS element in every one of those fire stations. And
7 also for those organizations that are already exceeding that
8 level of service there is no reduction of service. I'll
9 give you an example, Julian Cuyamaca has ALS transport,
10 there's no reduction in that level of service.

11 MR. ALDEARY (PHONETIC): Kevin Aldeary,
12 representing Yui ma, Mootamai and Pauma water districts. And
13 the question is the water districts are now excluded but if
14 they decide that they want to be part of Phase 1; is that
15 possible?

16 MR. OTT: Anything is possible. If you're
17 volunteering to give up some of your service
18 responsibilities, you provide more than just fire
19 protection, you provide water service, you may have some
20 other miscellaneous services, there would be a means by
21 which if it's a cooperative arrangement, that you would be
22 able to divest yourself of select services with LAFCO.
23 There would be some terms and conditions associated with
24 that, but it would be something that we would want to talk
25 to you about.

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1 But, as Shirley mentioned, this would not be
2 something that LAFCO would be able to force upon you as a
3 municipal water district. Ramona Municipal Water District,
4 Yui ma, Mootamai and Pauma are all in that same
5 classification. We did research the matter. We indicated
6 at the onset over a year ago when we initiated this
7 reorganization there may be a complication with removing or
8 mandating the removal of the service functions from those
9 four entities. And we just recently concluded that there is
10 a legal impediment.

11 I'd also just like to mention when I was making
12 introductions that John Traylor, who just spoke, he is the
13 executive director and consultant to LAFCO, but the
14 executive director of the task force on fire protection and

15 EMS in the County. I neglected to give you that affiliation
16 last Tuesday as well.

17 I think there's one more question before we'll shut
18 things down and go to the official speaker part of the
19 presentation.

20 MS. ARSIVAUD-BENJAMIN: My name is Jacqueline
21 Arsi vaud-Benj amin. That's A-r-s-i -v-a-u-d Benjami n. And
22 I'm with the El fin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council.

23 Clarification on the costs: Under the Micro Study,
24 do the costs include the maintenance costs such as
25 replacement of engines, equipment, buildings, or simply the

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1 staff costs, because what you had was just personnel costs,
2 so I'm just curious?

3 MR. TRAYLOR: Within the Micro Study there's an
4 example. It's one of the exhibits. I think it's Exhibit 1
5 or 2 that breaks down overhead costs. There's about 14
6 million dollars of overhead, which includes maintenance,
7 materials, supplies.

8 MS. ARSIVAUD-BENJAMIN: All right. And then my
9 second question was, at the beginning you mentioned that you
10 looked at what other counties did outside, and that while I
11 think some of what they did was interesting, it was really
12 not applicable because they had substantial tax revenue.
13 And I'm just curious, is it simply because they are more
14 densely populated or they have a different funding mechanism
15 or why is it not weighted different?

16 MR. GOSS: I think one of the things that happened
17 is that many of those other counties have combined various

18 districts, like in Sacramento County they put together
19 various fire protection districts, but they had a property
20 tax base before Proposition 13 and that continues to today.
21 We have many fire agencies today that were created after
22 Proposition 13 that have very little, if any, property tax
23 base.

24 MS. ARSIVAUD-BENJAMIN: Thank you.

25 MR. OTT: Are there any questions before we get to

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1 the speaker slips? Sir, why don't you come on up here.

2 MR. JOHNSON: My name is Dan Johnson. I'm with
3 Ocotillo Wells Fire. And I was just wondering, you were
4 talking about BLS service. We provide BLS service now with
5 just volunteers. If you take over our area, will our
6 volunteers be paid or how will that work?

7 MR. TRAYLOR: That's an outstanding possibility.
8 It's really up to the governance. In my opinion, if you
9 have dedicated BLS responders that could be on duty 24 hours
10 a day, there's no reason why those people couldn't be your
11 on duty BLS dedicated personnel.

12 MR. OTT: Any other questions? Please come up and
13 state your name.

14 MR. HIGBE: My name is Jim Higbe, H-i-g-b-e,
15 Borrego Springs Fire Protection District. I had three
16 questions actually. Number one, in terms of funding, if the
17 water districts were included, does that provide a source of
18 funding? Second question is, how is it possible that San
19 Diego County doesn't have a fire department up to this
20 point? Also, is BLS service considered adequate or are we
21 only considering ALS service?

22 MR. TRAYLOR: Let me see if I can remember the
23 questions. Why doesn't the County have a county fire
24 department?

25 MR. HIGBE: Yes.

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1 MR. TRAYLOR: The Board of Supervisors in, I think,
2 1973 chose to get out of the fire service business, the
3 Board of Supervisors.

4 Second question was, are we only looking at BLS.
5 We looked at a whole range of models from BLS to ALS, both
6 three people on duty, dedicated first responders.

7 MR. HIGBE: Is that acceptable? Is that really
8 considered acceptable? Is it considered to be one actual
9 option?

10 MR. TRAYLOR: I'm trying to figure out how to
11 answer the question. It is a level of service. If your
12 community currently has a higher level of service of ALS, it
13 will maintain at ALS, but that is the minimum level of
14 service as opposed to advanced first aid, first responder,
15 so the commission chose those models as the minimum
16 standards.

17 And then the third question, remind me.

18 MR. HIGBE: It had to do with water districts.
19 Since it doesn't look like there's enough funding for any of
20 these programs, if the water districts are considered, is
21 that suddenly a source of funding that we didn't have
22 before?

23 MR. TRAYLOR: It would not be a substantial amount
24 of funding. There still is about 22 or 20 million dollar

25 gap in funding with or without the water districts, but I'll

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1 let Shirley address that.

2 MS. ANDERSON: We'll just address Ramona because
3 it's comparable in relative size to the other two water
4 districts. There's about \$2,000,000 at Ramona that would be
5 attributable to structural fire protection, so it's not
6 enough to bridge that gap.

7 MR. OTT: We will continue with the more formal
8 part of the workshop tonight and we'll start with the
9 speaker slips. What I'll do is call two people up at a time
10 and it looks like we have -- actually, we have around four
11 empty seats up here. I'll call four people up at a time and
12 you can take a seat up in the front row here. Donn Grace,
13 Tim Costanzo, Nona Barker and George Lucia. And just take a
14 seat anywhere, and we will start with Donn.

15 MR. GOSS: This comment is just housekeeping and
16 that is as the speakers come up here, this is very delicate,
17 so if you use the podium, don't stretch the microphone.

18 MR. GRACE: My name is Donn Grace and I'm from the
19 Elfin Forest area. I'm a former board member on the Elfin
20 Forest Fire Department but here tonight I'm representing
21 myself.

22 First of all, I would like to just thank LAFCO for
23 the opportunity to speak tonight and say that my sense is
24 LAFCO is doing a very evenhanded and responsible job with
25 this whole operation here. I appreciate that.

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1 Speaking of my concerns, I believe that many of us
2 in El fin Forest are satisfied with our fire department. It
3 meets our fire and EMS needs and more, much more than that.
4 The department serves us as sort of glue for our community
5 and we like the ultimate control of the whole operation. At
6 the same time, I believe that many of us recognize the need
7 for better coordination with other fire departments in the
8 greater San Diego area. I, myself, voted for Proposition C
9 and I appreciate LAFCO's efforts, you know, to try to
10 implement Proposition C and consolidate those fire services.
11 I followed your efforts as near as I could over the years,
12 and as I have read the Micro Report, there are several
13 things that I have concerns over and two of which I would
14 like to speak about tonight. So, firstly, all the options
15 presented in the Micro Report require funding increases over
16 present levels, which I think is contrary to what
17 Proposition C called for, which I hope is to achieve
18 consolidation with constant levels of funding.

19 My first question is, given the situation can
20 LAFCO recommend any of these options since they're all at
21 odds with Proposition C and its requirements? Secondly,
22 given that a best bad option must be chosen, in the spirit
23 of maintaining local control and sense of community I
24 personally would prefer to see the regional fire protection
25 district and its eleven board member to be chosen. In the

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1 same spirit of community and so forth, my second question,
2 which has two parts is this, could each of the principal
3 subdistricts within the larger regional MPD district have

4 its own representative elected to the Board? Pretty much
5 like we elect congressmen now from our districts. And,
6 also, does the Regional Fire Protection District Plan
7 require that career firefighters be present at all stations?
8 It seems to me that if this was not a requirement, that we
9 might be able to have this regional fire protection district
10 and keep the total costs down to the present levels. So
11 that's pretty much what I had in mind tonight and I thank
12 you for taking my comments.

13 MR. OTT: We will take a stab at answering these
14 questions. The first one has to do with Prop C, the second
15 one has to do with the governance of a regional fire
16 district. And I'll defer to our panel here. Shirley and
17 John Goss can fight over that question. They can think
18 about the response as I respond to the first question.

19 Regarding Prop C, that was an advisory ballot
20 measure that 81 percent of the people approved in an
21 advisory manner that specified that through a
22 reprioritization of revenues, not new taxes, that those
23 reprioritized monies would then be allocated for fire
24 protection and would not cost anybody in existing
25 communities any additional monies to support a regionalized

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1 fire protection system. In terms of the options that we
2 evaluated in the Micro Report and whether or not those
3 satisfy the intent of Prop C, it's conceivable that any of
4 those options could satisfy the spirit of Prop C. We talked
5 at some length at the first workshop about a legislative
6 measure that's proposed right now by Senator Hollingsworth,
7 SB806, I believe it is, that would shift tax monies from

8 school districts, reprioritize that, and allocate that to
9 fire protection agencies. And then the State under the
10 legislation would backfill the amount of funds that are
11 shifted from school districts so that everybody remains the
12 status quo within the school community. That particular
13 legislative proposal would probably satisfy the spirit, the
14 intent of Prop C.

15 We will be discussing in LAFCO Monday morning at
16 9:00 in the morning that particular legislation. And
17 Supervisor Jacob who was a sponsor with her colleagues on
18 the Board of Supervisors of that bill will be weighing in
19 and providing some comments on that particular legislation.
20 If through the County's Fire Enhancement Program that
21 additional monies are allocated to provide the levels of
22 service that we've shown up on the screen beyond the eight
23 and a half million dollars to bridge that funding gap, that
24 would also appear to satisfy the intent of Prop C in that it
25 would not result in an additional tax burden on any

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1 particular community or individual. So there are ways of
2 satisfying the spirit, the intent of Prop C with respect to
3 reorganization.

4 John, do you want to answer the governance
5 question?

6 MR. GOSS: Sure. The question was if you had a
7 regional fire protection district instead of election at large,
8 could you elect them by district? And the answer is yes,
9 you could. But you have to realize that about 80 percent of
10 the population in this proposed district is in limited

11 areas, Deer Springs, Ramona, Valley Center, East County and
12 Rural. It's possible that all eleven people, could
13 be elected at large, but if you try to spread it out by
14 district, it would not necessarily mean that the more
15 rural areas would be represented, because under California
16 law you have to elect by the people, basically split up the
17 districts by population. You can take into account certain
18 geographical areas, but population is the basic way in which
19 to do that.

20 Now, to address this to a certain extent, as you
21 remember, there were like five areas, operational areas, and
22 what has been proposed in the plan is that each one of those
23 areas would have a battalion chief that would oversee like eight
24 or ten stations, somewhere in that range. We are
25 recommending -- there's not a recommendation, but a

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1 potential condition of approval would be to establish
2 advisory committees in each one of those five areas. Because
3 right now we have if you take into account the policymakers
4 that are elected by districts, the CSAs, even with the
5 501-C3s, there's probably over 100 people that are involved
6 in setting policy and giving direction to providing fire
7 service in the rural areas. And all of a sudden you have
8 eleven people. So we feel that maybe advisory committees
9 would be a way for people to have a voice for the whole area.

10 The other question was keeping volunteer
11 firefighters at volunteer stations. Certainly there's some
12 pros and cons to that. You can have an all volunteer
13 station, and maybe John should address this, but in some
14 areas where there's not a sufficient volume of calls, there

15 may be some advantage of having at least one career staff
16 there at those stations. For one thing that person can
17 provide some level of training to the volunteers there,
18 whereas right now in some areas a volunteer resource has to
19 leave the community to go get training. And so that would
20 provide an opportunity for that volunteer resource to stay
21 in the community which does not have a high volume of calls.

22 MR. TRAYLOR: Let me just also add that there's a
23 whole range of volunteer-type organizations. Some do not
24 stay at the station, some are not there at all unless there
25 is a call that comes in. There are some stations believe it

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1 or not in San Diego Rural Fire Protection District with zero
2 volunteers. So there's a whole range from zero volunteers
3 to a very active volunteer program such as Elfin Forest.
4 Our whole idea is to take those viable volunteer programs
5 and enhance it if they want to. If they have all the
6 resources they need and all they need is support, then
7 that's fine. We want dedicated BLS first responders 24/7,
8 that's the whole operation.

9 And as far as your question about other options,
10 all the options were identified in the Macro Report. There
11 were seven options from status quo to the four on, ALS. And
12 one of those options two, three or four addressed what you
13 just spoke about. So the Commission took a recommendation
14 from the San Diego County Fire Chief's Association and Fire
15 Districts Association to develop the SSP. That was the
16 basis of going forward with this level of service.

17 MR. OTT: Thank you, John. Our next speaker is Tim

18 Costanzo.

19 MR. COSTANZO: I brought this question up at the
20 last meeting, but I'm going to bring it up again. We know
21 that benefit fees are supposed to stay in the community, but
22 can those fees be restricted to maintain equipment and
23 pay for the training of the volunteers or are these
24 fees going to be available to pay the CDF employees
25 that will be staffing these communities? If this happens,

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1 it will destroy the ability of the volunteers to keep
2 training and keep the equipment up to approved standards.

3 The next question: If CDF is first out on calls
4 and volunteers are only called when extra staffing is
5 needed, after a few calls the volunteers will stop showing
6 up and the system of volunteers will completely break down
7 and cease to exist.

8 How would officers from volunteer stations relate
9 to CDF officers on calls? For example, if a volunteer
10 firefighter is trained to a higher level than a CDF paid
11 firefighter on a medical call, who would be in charge of the
12 patient? Another example would be if a volunteer
13 firefighter is trained to swift water and the CDF officers
14 are not trained to swift water, who would be in charge of
15 the swift water incident?

16 Are you in all cases going to maintain existing ISO
17 ratings or improve them?

18 How will existing automatic and mutual aid
19 agreements be handled with the new fire service?

20 The existing volunteer fire stations are often the
21 only place for small communities to meet and are usually the

22 central point of the community activities. Can you
23 guarantee that this will be allowed to continue under CDF
24 management?

25 Will the pooling of mitigation fees allow for

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1 improved service in the areas where the development took
2 place? Pooling the fees would not allow a station close to
3 development to improve or expand services to keep the
4 quality of the service up with the larger responsibility.

5 Will a volunteer manual be put together as
6 suggested before the CDF program is put into effect and
7 require both CDF and the volunteer station to sign in
8 agreement?

9 Thank you.

10 MR. OTT: Let's see, how much time do we have here?
11 I think you had about five questions there and I'll just
12 summarize the questions and then John Goss, John Traylor and
13 Shirley can take a stab at answering them, or I can if you
14 two decide to pass the baton.

15 One of the questions had to do with benefit fees
16 and the restrictions that could be placed on them or, in
17 fact, if benefit fees are subject to restrictions. Another
18 question had to do with the relationship between volunteers
19 and CDF, and I think that would probably be a good question
20 for you, John, to take on. Another question had to do with
21 ISO ratings, that's probably has your name written all over
22 it too, John. Existing future mutual aid agreements, the
23 effects on those. And then I think there was a last
24 question about volunteer manuals that may be something that

25 a future agency should consider. So why don't you take two,

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1 three, four and five maybe.

2 MR. TRAYLOR: Well, Tim, I think you have made a
3 huge leap in assuming that CDF will be the contract service
4 provider.

5 MR. COSTANZO: Okay, whoever is going to do it.

6 MR. TRAYLOR: If you look at the Micro Study, it
7 develops models based on local resources. Now, as far as
8 costing comparisons and things like that, we did need to do
9 due diligence and show the difference and in most cases
10 there virtually is no difference when you look at the cost
11 of the service. So I would not suggest that you make that
12 huge leap that ultimately CDF will be the contract provider.
13 They may. That would be up to the new governance. If it's
14 a newly formed fire protection district, we've got fire
15 protection districts now that are not signing those
16 contracts. And that's up to the governance of that fire
17 protection district. So as we go down the road, if you stay
18 with the status quo, you're going to see an evolution of an
19 enhancement program probably like you're seeing now. If you
20 go to the County program, there may be a preference by the
21 County Board of Supervisors, they're the governance, to
22 continue with CDF. If you go to the CSA 135, again that's a
23 way of capturing tax money, but the governance is still the
24 County Board of Supervisors. But I would suggest that you
25 don't take that big leap and assume that CDF will be the

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1 service provider long-term.

2 MR. COSTANZO: Well, let's assume whoever takes
3 over, whether it's CDF or some other paid-type situation,
4 the same would hold true with all the questions?

5 MR. TRAYLOR: Okay. As I recall one of your
6 questions was the facility?

7 MR. COSTANZO: Yes.

8 MR. TRAYLOR: I probably should have attempted to
9 answer that the other night, but I didn't think quick
10 enough. When you look at the Schedule A contract with CDF,
11 really all you're paying for is the personnel costs, the
12 apparatus is owned by the local organization. The facility
13 is owned by the local organization. I personally would not
14 sign a contract with CDF that gave them exclusive rights to
15 the facility if that is, in fact, a community building, so I
16 don't see that as an issue. It wasn't addressed properly
17 the other day and I appreciate you bringing it up again, but
18 those are community facilities. All you're doing is in a
19 sense paying for personnel services.

20 ISO is really an element of fire ground, number of
21 people on the fire ground and water supply. And unless
22 development continues to build in infrastructure for water
23 supply, that's the biggest factor for lowering ISO. And I
24 would say the basis of providing structural fire protection
25 and EMS, ISO is really, I would say, something that would

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1 come along as opposed to trying to build ISO or lower ISO
2 ratings and hope that structural fire protection, EMS, will
3 come along, you know what I'm saying.

4 MR. GOSS: Just a minor answer to one of the
5 questions and that is about the recommendation we have a
6 volunteer manual. That's a suggestion. There's some
7 suggestions in our report, especially the ones on
8 volunteers, that are basically like what I call road map
9 items. It's setting forth suggestions for the new
10 district to follow. LAFCO can't mandate that, but we would
11 suggest strongly that there be a volunteer manual like the
12 one used in Riverside County.

13 MS. ANDERSON: Jim, what was your question about
14 benefit fees?

15 MR. COSTANZO: The benefit fees, would the complete
16 fees still be able to be used by the volunteers themselves
17 or is there a possibility it could be diluted and used to
18 pay for the paid staff coming on?

19 MS. ANDERSON: Well, when you form a new agency,
20 okay, policy decisionmakers are going to, one, set the
21 service level, they're going to set the delivery mode, so
22 this is the discussion: Is it going to be CDF, is it going to
23 be local, is it going to be a combination? Whatever, we
24 don't know, because we don't know who those people are yet.

25 MR. COSTANZO: But in either case, if you bring in

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1 paid personnel, would it be coming out of those fees or
2 would it be coming out of some of the other fees?

3 MS. ANDERSON: We're talking about bookkeeping here
4 to some point.

5 MR. COSTANZO: It's totally different.

6 MS. ANDERSON: We're talking about putting money
7 into a reserve zone, okay. The money that is collected in

8 that zone has to be expended in that zone.

9 MR. COSTANZO: But that's keeping a volunteer
10 agency now. If you start bringing in paid staff, then more
11 money is needed than what's there.

12 MS. ANDERSON: Then that money would come from the
13 new agency, whatever its source of funds.

14 MR. COSTANZO: So it wouldn't be diluting the money
15 that's already there?

16 MS. ANDERSON: No. Okay, if you look at the budget for
17 the new agency, a lot your baseline expenditures are the
18 responsibility of the new agency, so facility maintenance,
19 equipment maintenance, and all that stuff, some of it ceases
20 to become the responsibility of individual pockets, because
21 those pockets disappear. We now have one large agency. So
22 that's why I say in some sense it's a bookkeeping measure,
23 okay. You would be responsible for some expenditures, but
24 you also would be -- local volunteer agencies would also be
25 relieved of some expenditure responsibility.

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1 MR. COSTANZO: I thought you said at the last
2 meeting for the Chapter 501-C corporations they would be
3 taking care of their own equipment?

4 MS. ANDERSON: It's not that they would be taking
5 of their own equipment, it's that there's no mechanism in
6 state law that can take away a private asset and those are
7 corporations. We can't take that asset and say, okay,
8 you've got some engines in El fin Forest and we're going to
9 take them and put them over there, because they belong to
10 El fin Forest volunteer.

11 MR. COSTANZO: Would automatically the County be
12 taking care of all maintenance on the equipment?

13 MS. ANDERSON: I don't know if the County is going
14 to have anything to do with it. Whatever the agency is or
15 whoever the new policy board is--fire protection district
16 elected, County if it's the successor agency--this would be
17 all a function of service delivery and how you run that
18 district. These decisions would be made by this new body.
19 I can't tell you right now. Does that clarify?

20 MR. OTT: Let me just add to that and hopefully I
21 won't muddy the issue. One of the objectives of the models
22 that we've established in our Micro Report is to establish a
23 minimum level of service, that means that some communities
24 that are currently below that level of service right now
25 would come up to whether it be a three-on-duty or a

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1 four-on-duty staffing level or with respect to emergency
2 medical service, basic life support or ALS. That type of
3 service level is not uniform throughout the entire County.
4 With the additional funds on top of what exist right now in
5 the community, those underfunded and underserved areas would
6 come up to a standard level of service. For those
7 communities that have approved benefit fees, special
8 assessments, those assessments cannot be touched by this
9 reorganization effort. The purpose of those monies will
10 have to remain after reorganization just as the purpose
11 exists today. So for those communities that have special
12 assessments, there will be a higher level of service
13 depending upon what the voters voted in related to those
14 assessments, and we showed you the slides in terms of how

15 many communities and the dollar value of those assessments
16 countywide that actually exceeds property taxes. So keep
17 that in mind during some of the discussions here.

18 Nona, you're the next speaker.

19 MS. BARKER: You know, I can explain that really
20 well. I can explain that benefit fee stuff really well. So
21 if it's going to cost a dollar to pay somebody and we have
22 60 cents, they're going to give us another 40 cents to make
23 the dollar, that's how it works. Sorry.

24 So my name is Nona Barker, B-a-r-k-e-r, and I'm the
25 chairman of the board of the El fin Forest Fire Advisory.

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1 Once again, I'm going to thank you guys. I think you've
2 done a wonderful job. You've kept the fire service
3 informed. I think where everything has fallen down is the
4 public has not been informed. I don't see many public. The
5 public came with me, but I don't see a lot of public. I see
6 all fire. So tonight I want to submit to you the resolution
7 from the fire advisory board. I really don't want to read
8 it because it's three pages long, but I will give you the
9 highlights, is that the El fin Forest Harmony Grove Fire
10 Advisory Board of Directors with regard to County Service
11 Area 107, as well as all existing funds and future revenue,
12 recommend the LAFCO Micro Report for CSA 107 be removed from
13 Phase 1 and placed into Phase 2 of the LAFCO Micro Report.
14 That's the basis of it.

15 I also want to explain to you about a meeting we
16 held last night in El fin Forest. It was a special fire
17 advisory board meeting, all legally posted, notified and all

18 that kind of stuff. We've been keeping our residents
19 informed all along about the Macro Study, you know,
20 everything. The residents want to know, they demand
21 communication from us, and last night they communicated. So
22 similar to tonight's presentation, we borrowed a CD of the
23 Power Point and Chief Twohy gave an absolutely great
24 presentation on the Micro Study and attempted on the DPLU's
25 plan and a question-and-answer period followed. And you

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1 know what the most asked question was, is why wasn't LAFCO
2 doing this and how do we get DPLU to come and explain their
3 proposal. So the public is interested. They want to know.
4 I mean, they absolutely want to know. So, you know, a lot
5 of other questions were similar to tonight and to Pine
6 Valley's night, and we took a pretty good stab at answering
7 those. The Fire Advisory Board though, we want the
8 citizens, our community, to tell us what they want to do.
9 And so by a show of hands we did an advisory vote and of the
10 140 plus residents that attended the meeting, and that was
11 not including the Fire Advisory Board, the firefighters, or
12 the auxiliary members of the community, so in all total there
13 were close to 170 people at the meeting, but there were over
14 140 residents. And this is what they, the residents,
15 directed the board of the El fin Forest Harmony Grove Fire
16 Department to continue to provide superior service demanded
17 by the El fin Forest Harmony Grove residents in County
18 Service Area 107 as provided in the contract for fire
19 services dated April 28th, 1982 between El fin Forest and
20 County Service Area 107 for the County of San Diego, and
21 follow the 15-year plan created by the advisory committee

22 Focus 15 Group in 2001, which included an additional fire
23 station in Harmony Grove and full-time paid staffing.

24 To prove the community support and direction, I'm
25 going to hand you 156 petitions signed by all registered

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1 voters. And not only does the petition support us, the
2 petitioners also pledge to protest and cause a vote.

3 So these are the originals and they're for you and
4 then here is our resolution. Thank you.

5 MR. OTT: George Lucia.

6 MR. LUCIA: I'm going to give you a break and give
7 you no questions, just a comment. My name is George Lucia,
8 37 consecutive years in the fire service and 28 years back
9 east, maybe that's the problem. I just want to say I
10 represent Palomar Mountain Volunteer Fire Department. My
11 community trusts me to make a decision on this. I try to
12 keep them as informed as I can. We do have special support.
13 They trust us to take care of them. It's hard to follow Tim
14 because he definitely had some great comments, but I want to
15 say that the LAFCO people have been 100 percent professional
16 and you guys, you are absolutely, absolutely doing a great
17 job for analyzing what is needed. I think my problem is,
18 this is my personal problem, is I don't trust that your
19 recommendation will go anywhere or will be received
20 properly. I don't know that I have the evidence that the
21 County is going to do the right thing. I am very concerned
22 about a level playing field. I have had the opportunity in
23 my past to work -- my job was to coordinate the career
24 volunteers. I will tell you right now if you do not keep the

25 volunteer momentum going from the chiefs down to the

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1 first-year firefighter, you will lose it. That is the core
2 of the community. Those are the taxpayers, they all have
3 mothers, brothers, sisters and friends, and you will feel
4 the repercussion of that if you don't do the right thing.
5 We're feeling the effects of it right now in Zone 8. I
6 don't know that we have the proper communications. I don't
7 know that there's proper trust, but I don't know that I'm in
8 the right forum to say that. I will tell you that I think
9 your report is great. I think you've come up with some good
10 answers. I think that if the right thing is done, it will
11 be a level playing field.

12 We talked about BLS and ALS responses and my
13 analyzation is that if you to go the areas that are not
14 involved in this because they're fat with money, because
15 they have tax money, that you'll see that they run three
16 shifts with lots of paid people and with constant staffing.
17 And when you analyze their lines, 100 percent of their
18 medical, 100 percent of their ALS gets reduced, 95 percent
19 becomes BLS. And so we're training a lot people for a lot
20 of nothing. Maybe if you spread some of that out across the
21 county, your volunteers will be trained and have equipment
22 to cover what's going on.

23 As I said in the past where I worked, 72
24 municipalities, three of them paid, more equipment than the
25 entire City of New York, more fire exposure, volunteers are

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1 alive and well, highly trained professionals working
2 alongside career people. It can be done. But if you don't
3 pay attention to that, this will not work and we'll suffer
4 for it and all of this will be wasted. So I encourage you
5 to please, please, I encourage everybody here to have the
6 County do the right thing. Thanks.

7 MR. OTT: Thank you for those kind words. I would
8 just like to say in my 20 plus years in government, I
9 haven't seen as courteous a professional group as what we're
10 witnessing here tonight as well as in Pine Valley, so it
11 goes both ways. We appreciate the words that everybody is
12 saying here.

13 The next four people that should come up to the
14 front row, Gilbert Turrentine, Stephen Sheppard, Harry
15 Seifert and Kevin Dubler. Sit anywhere in the front row and
16 the closest person to me will get the microphone.

17 MR. TURRENTINE: My name is Gilbert Turrentine,
18 T-u-r-r-e-n-t-i-n-e. I'm the Chief of San Pasqual Fire
19 Department and I, too, would like to ask that our station be
20 removed from Phase 1 of this operation. I think if Phase I
21 fails, you're going to lose a lot of volunteer fire
22 departments in the back country. I disagree with little
23 served or no served district. I think all the volunteers
24 are doing an outstanding job providing fire and EMS service
25 in the community. I think they deserve a hand right now for

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1 what they have done. I've been a volunteer fireman in San
2 Diego County for 55 years. I've been chief of our fire
3 department for 22 years. I started with nothing. We were

4 almost bankrupt. Now we have 15 pieces of equipment and 65
5 volunteers. A lot of them are hoping to become paid
6 firefighters through this program. I would hate to
7 disappoint them and see them pushed out on the street
8 and have CDF come in and take their positions. Thank you.

9 MR. OTT: Stephen.

10 MR. SHEPPARD: My name is Stephen Sheppard and this
11 is only a short series of comments really not questions. I
12 also am a volunteer firefighter. I carry two hats. I'm
13 also a paid firefighter/EMT soon to be paramedic in Julian.
14 I've been in the fire service here for 10 years, but what I
15 want to talk about tonight is not necessarily the fire
16 service. I know a lot of people in this room. I've fought
17 fires with people in this room. One of the things that occurs
18 to me is the organization and the reorganization that's been
19 proposed is to augment or to overcome some of the problems
20 that we had during the Cedar Fire three years ago and that
21 we are going to attempt to improve structural firefighting
22 capabilities in the back country and improve EMS services.
23 I only want to speak about Julian since that's the only
24 place that I really know about. No. 1, the fire that swept
25 through Julian and burned down a significant number of our

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1 homes was not a structural fire. It was a wild fire.
2 Structures were burned, but if we had 10,000 fire engines in
3 Julian and a 100,000 firefighters and 1,000 airplanes, it
4 would not have made any difference. That fire was going to
5 burn out when it was ready to burn out. The level of
6 professionalism that was displayed in Julian, in my opinion,
7 and I was on that fire from the beginning until the end, was

8 exempl ary. Communi cation probl ems were signi fi cant. We
9 haven' t address ed any of that here. There' s still no
10 communi cation soluti on, not only in the back country, but
11 our abili ty to discuss or communi cate wi th San Di ego Fi re or
12 any of the fi re agenci es that came down into my neighborhood
13 to defend my home wi th me.

14 The other thing that we talked about is the
15 improvement of EMS facilities. We have in Julian, and I am
16 a paid, work 10 shifts a month on the Kelly schedule, spend
17 24 hours a day, 10 days a month in my station, three
18 paramedics and three EMTs, 24/7 medical service. I need to
19 point out to everybody that for the amount of money that
20 this is going to cost 95 to 96 percent of the calls that we
21 run in Julian are medical calls. They' re not fire calls.
22 They' re medical calls. Do we need a paid captain and a paid
23 engineer on 95 percent of our calls, no. We have people
24 that show up for the calls when we have a fire. We have
25 enough between retired professional firefighters who live in

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1 our district who are members of our fire department and CDF
2 that we have a very good relationship within our community.
3 For the five, the five structured fires a year that we have
4 in our district, do we need to spend 23 million dollars?
5 I' m sorry, I' m skewing your numbers and I apologize, I' m
6 trying to make a point. The only thing that occurs to me,
7 and this is the thing I really want to say, as a citizen, as
8 a resident of this community, as a business owner in my
9 community, to find that there is a bill that is being
10 proposed that wants to take school district money from the

11 school districts, and at least in our part of San Diego
12 County, to fund or to, quote, improve the fire service when
13 the fire service is not where our problem is. Another Cedar
14 Fire, forget it. We can have 15 fire engines fully staffed
15 and paid for in Julian and it would make no difference at
16 all. Am I proposing status quo, no, I don't think I am, but
17 we need to think about this very carefully. I would rather
18 that my kids could read and that the level of education in
19 the State of California is the way it was when I went
20 through elementary and junior high school and high school
21 here than the way it is now. That's all I've got to say.
22 Thank you.

23 MR. OTT: Harry Seifert.

24 MR. SEIFERT: I'm Harry Seifert, S-e-i-f-e-r-t.
25 I'm vice-president of the board of directors of the Julian

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1 Cuyamaca Fire Protection District. I've been elected to
2 that position for the past 18 years. I've also been a
3 firefighter in Julian Cuyamaca for the past 35 years. I
4 have seven years' experience with two other departments in
5 the state of New York and in San Diego County. As a board
6 member I would request that we be put into category two. We
7 have done our homework. We have lowered our ISO rating to a
8 five-eight. And we've done that not only by the quality of
9 our service, our equipment and our training, but we have
10 water districts in the community that are capable of
11 providing correct and proper fire flow.

12 You've talked about in one part of the Micro Report
13 about we will bring the level up or bring the fire rating
14 from a ten to a seven. That is going to be impossible to

15 achieve unless you have water. There is no organized water
16 outside the very few water districts or community service
17 districts in the back country.

18 Also the Cedar Fire, Proposition C was a knee-jerk
19 reaction to the Cedar Fire. I think everybody recognizes
20 that. The Cedar Fire was caused by mismanagement by the
21 Cleveland National Forest and by the state parks. Up until
22 the early 1980s the state park was doing controlled burns.
23 A whole new phase of administration came into the state
24 parks, no more controlled burns. Dead vegetation was
25 allowed to build up. Policies went from maintaining fire

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1 breaks in the Cleveland National Forest to let's make
2 trailheads for hikers. That changed back in the 1990s. The
3 fire access road that would have stopped the Cedar Fire in
4 incipient stages was so overgrown. Two Julian engines, one
5 CDF engine and Engine 33 from the Cleveland could not get
6 any closer than a half a mile through brush as thick as this
7 building is big in late hours, you couldn't get firefighters
8 in there safely. If that fire break had been maintained,
9 they could have gotten within 500 feet of the start of that
10 fire. So there's other problems that need to be addressed
11 that's far beyond what LAFCO can do, but we've got to manage
12 the resources better, both for brush as well as the
13 resources of our firefighters.

14 MR. OTT: Thank you, Harry. Kevin Dubler.

15 MR. DUBLER: Kevin Dubler, D-u-b-l-e-r. I'm the
16 chief of Julian Cuyamaca Fire. I agree with everything that
17 Harry said in the proceeding. I just want to make a few

18 points. I'm not going to ask any questions. I'm going to
19 make a few points about this whole proposal. The key to
20 this thing, my little talk here, it's all about money.
21 Everything about this proposal comes back to money. If we
22 have the money, we can do it. If we don't have the money,
23 we can't do it.

24 I want to bring up two things I brought up Tuesday
25 night. Proposition C was a joke, because it didn't address

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1 money. All it said was how would you like to have a fire
2 department countywide, wouldn't that be great, a firefighter
3 in every driveway, but nothing was said about what it was
4 going to cost. So then they said, well, we won't raise any
5 new taxes. Well, that's robbing Peter to pay Paul. We're
6 just playing a shell game with tax money. And it's going to
7 cost 29 million extra dollars no matter how we slice the
8 cake. So we've got to keep that figure in mind.

9 The benefit fee. The only point I made Tuesday
10 night about benefit fees is if it takes \$1,000,000 to staff
11 a station, which it does, because we were just in
12 negotiations with CDF for 3.0 staffing, that means three
13 people every day, the quoted price was a \$1,025,000 per
14 year. So if you take \$1,000,000 and we have benefit fees,
15 we have two benefit fees, one is for structural fire
16 protection, that's all it specifies. The other one was just
17 recently passed and that is for a new station. My
18 understanding is the one designated for the new station
19 can't be used for anything but that new station, so that one
20 is pretty safe. But our structural firefighting one, if it
21 cost that million dollars to staff the engine and we get

22 \$100,000 from our benefit fee, this new entity will give us
23 \$900,000 and the other 100,000 will come from our benefit
24 fee. So our community residents don't benefit at all from
25 their own benefit fee because they're getting the same

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1 million dollars that everybody else is getting. Now if we
2 ended up with \$1,100,000, then it would be a true benefit
3 fee. But don't let that little shell game get past your
4 sight either because it's there.

5 Then we get into my portion about figures lie and
6 liars figure. And if you keep that in mind, I took the
7 figure right out of the LAFCO report, so I'm not accusing
8 anybody of lying. I'm telling you where these figures came
9 from so that you know there is no lying on these figures.
10 These are right out of this report. Model No. 5,
11 \$58,000,783 and change. I took a start-up cost and I
12 amortized it over 10 years, so that's \$4,710,000 for each of
13 the first 10 years, because you got to amortize that money.
14 You can't just say we've got 47 million dollars and we're
15 just going to use it. It came from somewhere and it's being
16 spent somewhere. So we take all that and we divide it by
17 the 8,725 calls that this whole region generates in a year
18 and it will cost us \$7,277 per incident under this plan and
19 this is the chief plan. It gets worse as you look at the
20 other figures. So is this economy upscale? We keep hearing
21 economy upscale. I won't go through Model 5A. Model 5A
22 \$5,575 is what the figure comes to.

23 Right now for Julian Cuyamaca Fire optimistically
24 we have a \$650,000 budget, that's for our ambulance and fire

25 both. And the reason I took both is because most of our

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1 calls, as you were told, are medical, so it's not fair to
2 exclude those calls and only take the fire side. So if we
3 take our average of about 475 calls a year, our current cost
4 is \$1368 for each call we go on, which is absurd in and of
5 itself, but it's four times as cheap as the cheapest model
6 that we're proposing on this whole budget thing. So is it
7 really necessary to go this route? And do we really improve
8 service that much and I would say no.

9 Onto the DPLU plan, that calls for 4.5 million in
10 new revenue, so it would be status quo plus 4.5 million in
11 new revenue. The problem with that, as we discussed, at
12 \$1,000,000 a station, we can only staff four more stations
13 countywide with four and a half million more dollars. So
14 where are those four stations going to be? Are they going
15 to be in Harmony Grove because they brought a bus load of
16 people down here? I think it should be, if I could get a
17 bus load of people down here. But at three zero staffing
18 that allows us to staff four more stations, so I don't
19 understand the DPLU project entirely. And I have read it
20 and I have read it carefully. I don't see where that's
21 going to benefit. It's going to be a real improvement over
22 what is already out there.

23 And then my final statement is Shirley Anderson
24 said speaking about start-up costs, I'll quote you here
25 Shirley, "We all know the cash isn't going to be there."

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1 And my question is, is it going to be there for the
2 operational costs when we start this new district? Thank
3 you.

4 MR. OTT: Larry Jackman, Robert Krysak, I believe I
5 pronounced that correct, Bob Kephart and Frank Twohy. Since
6 you're here already, I'll give you the microphone.

7 MS. KRYSAK: Good evening, I'm Bob Krysak,
8 K-r-y-s-a-k. And I'm the chairman of the board of directors
9 of the Ramona Municipal Water District. And, again, I want
10 to extend my thanks to LAFCO. They are doing a terrific job
11 in analyzing the situation. And I have also no doubt that
12 there are sections of this county which is underrepresented
13 and underprotected. Ramona isn't one of them. So, please,
14 leave us alone. And I say that with all affection. We're
15 well funded. We have good facilities. We have a great
16 contract with the CDF that provides great service in Ramona.
17 Why would we fix something that isn't broken. And the fear
18 is that what will happen is we will end up with an agency
19 that is broken and underfunded and Ramona will suffer and so
20 will the people in this community.

21 The board of directors at last Tuesday's meeting
22 formally were gratified to learn that we are not being
23 considered in Phase 1. And we also went on record as saying
24 under no circumstances if things changed would we want to be
25 considered in Phase 1. However, the question I have is if

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1 the Ramona Municipal Water District is not considered in
2 Phase 1, why is it listed as such as SB806? And will that
3 be amended or changed to remove the water districts from

4 that bill?

5 But, again, we applaud your efforts and we hope it
6 brings responsible service to the rest of the county. But
7 on an individual level, I have always found that government
8 governs best that governs closest to the people that it
9 represents. The one thing we don't want is our local
10 authority to be transferred down the hill to some unknown
11 agency, funding taken from us to support this funding
12 agency. We're doing fine. We're funded. We're staffed.
13 Please, leave us alone.

14 MR. OTT: Frank, since you're headed this way.

15 MR. TWOHY: My mistake. I should know better as a
16 chief not to do that, but there are so many things that
17 could be said. First of all, my name is Frank Twohy. I'm a
18 citizen, resident of the Elfin Forest Harmony Grove area and
19 the fire chief of the Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Fire
20 Department. Our fire advisory board in subsequent letters
21 that are all in process to you will outline all of the
22 concerns of the department. But speaking on a few of them,
23 I guess is a personal thing, and that's always a tough thing
24 to do for an Irishman because you know they never take
25 anything personally. But, in particular, there's a couple

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1 of things, both plans do show the Elfin Forest Harmony Grove
2 area with one station. And I'd like to remind the staff
3 that I think after the last Department of Planning and Land
4 Use and County Board of Supervisors meeting that the 750
5 home development in Harmony Grove was going to have a
6 station, land and two paramedics. So that should, I think,
7 be included in the figuring in your plans, so there should

8 be actually two stations, unless, of course, Ralph and Gary
9 Pryer have other plans, and I'm not real sure what that is.
10 So any rate, a number of things about the county plan does
11 cause me some concern on a personal level.

12 The whole goal of the SSP and the whole goal of the
13 reorganization is to really have no loss in level of
14 service. The county plan includes dispatching through Monte
15 Vista. As you know, CSA 107 El fin Forest is an area that's
16 an island that's surrounded by cities and other fully funded
17 fire districts, and it's also dispatched through the North
18 County, North Comm GPA. It happens to have medical
19 dispatching costs as yet unidentified in the county plan.
20 And we also have paramedic service as part of our community
21 through CSA 107 or through CSA 17 and we receive lots of
22 automatic aid through our paid neighbors who are nearby. So
23 what happens is if it goes to Heartland, it then has to go
24 through Heartland, then has to go through the North Comm and
25 then has to identify all the other folks to come. So what

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1 happens is I do have a loss in service because I have a
2 delay in response time, just no doubt about it.

3 The county plan also states that all of the paid
4 people are what they call the safety people, those are the
5 guys, I guess, that get paid to go out on the engines, have
6 to be CDF employees. The El fin Forest Harmony Grove Fire
7 Department presently has three people, I don't really count
8 much, but I'm one of them who happens to get paid. And we
9 have another chief who acts as an administrative assistant
10 and another person that keeps everything working and in

11 order who are paid and are there all the time. If they're
12 not the safety people and paid by CDF, and they won't be,
13 then what happens to my level of service and my guarantee
14 that there are three people that are there all the time,
15 five days a week, working, and over and above that we have
16 all volunteers. So there's goes my level of service, once
17 again that's affected by that. It's been a real concern on
18 my part.

19 The county plan also says that there will be
20 overhead management and that, again, if we go back to the
21 safety deal, the CSA that I'm in would be serviced from a
22 battalion chief in Valley Center, which is probably on a
23 good day 30 minutes away. So what it says to me is that, by
24 the way, you, Frank, as overhead really wouldn't be there
25 because you're not safety. No. 2, Deputy Chief Denny

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1 LaVillie, the retired chief or deputy chief of Rancho Santa
2 Fe, 25 plus years wouldn't count. Chief Don Heyser, 34 plus
3 years, City of Encinitas, just retired and deputy chief,
4 wouldn't count. It would also mean that my battalion chief
5 for 20 plus years wouldn't count as overhead. My overhead
6 would come from Valley Center if they're not out doing
7 something else. I consider that a loss in level of service.

8 There's also a real interesting thing going on with
9 the county plan and they're figuring on the value of
10 volunteers and this upsets this Irishman just a little bit.
11 If you look at their answer on Page 17, it says, "The value
12 of volunteer contribution is six to 10 million dollars." I
13 note in your plan that it's over twice that. I guess I
14 can't help but wonder is that kind of what they really think

15 of the value of the volunteers less than half of what
16 somebody else might think? Also the thing that I would like
17 to think is that if you read the plan, as I did, and you
18 read it through, and I have to do a funny courtroom thing,
19 if you read it through, just say no to DPLU. Thank you.

20 MR. OTT: Larry.

21 MR. JACKMAN: Thank you. I had the opportunity to
22 speak in Pine Valley the other day, at least I won't have to
23 get out the snow scraper. I've never seen those before.

24 I would like to address two things that were
25 brought up. I would like to bring up two things and then

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1 bring up one other issue that has just come to mind
2 listening to everybody here. The first thing is I
3 participate in the fire district association meetings and I
4 sit in on the fire chiefs meetings occasionally, and one
5 thing I can absolutely assure you as was mentioned here
6 earlier is that there has to be a solid renewable funding
7 source or I don't think anything is going to move forward.
8 All of the associations throughout the county have adamantly
9 vowed that unless the County has some funding source, it
10 just ain't going to happen. And there's too many people and
11 too many places in this county that have, you know, put
12 their reputation on the fact that no money, no ticket and
13 nothing moves forward. And I would be the first one at that
14 line to say the same thing.

15 The second thing, the Hollingsworth Bill, I had
16 some knowledge about how that came about. In no way does it
17 take away school funding. The County of San Diego pays a

18 significantly higher percentage in property taxes in that it
19 goes to schools than all the other counties in the state.
20 And what the Hollingsworth Bill is trying to do, and there's
21 examples of this in the past as well in the legislature, is
22 try to provide a little more balance as to the amount of
23 money that San Diego County taxpayers pay towards the state
24 school system. And any money that's shifted, the State by
25 law has to backfill so the schools are not affected.

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1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I've got the Hollingsworth
2 Bill right here and it says increase the total amount of
3 property tax revenue allocated to each qualified school
4 district in the county by the fire protection agency payment
5 amount.

6 MR. JACKMAN: Correct. Now, if you read through
7 the rest of the bill, you'll see --

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And there is no reason for
9 backfilling.

10 MR. JACKMAN: It's all in the language, but
11 regardless, the state law prescribes a certain amount of
12 allocation per daily attendance and that comes from the
13 school. That's the intent of the legislation and it's not
14 going to go anywhere given the school teacher unions and all
15 the other factors, it's not going to go to level one unless
16 the schools are made whole. Which kind of brings me up to
17 another area that I wanted to cover. It seems listening to
18 your group that most all of you don't have a great deal of
19 experience with labor unions. And I come from a district
20 that has a very proactive labor union. They are active in
21 the election process. They're very proactive in the funding

22 process of our district. And I talked to other elected
23 officials, fire district board members throughout the
24 county, and they also talk about how proactive the labor
25 force is. So one thing I think we have to start to think

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1 about is that as we move forward, which isn't in the report,
2 is the politics of labor's influence on the finances. You
3 can go in and create the charts that are the median base
4 salaries. There's no such thing as a median base salary.
5 Whoever has the highest level of benefits, whoever has the
6 highest level of salary, the highest total of comp, that
7 becomes the benchmark that every paid gets, aspires to.

8 So we've looked at doing consolidations in the East
9 County area of the district, San Miguel, Lakeside, Alpine,
10 East County, and the problem -- everything comes together
11 and it's all functional consolidation and it all makes great
12 sense and scale to the economy until you get to the labor
13 unions collective bargaining group; this one has the best health
14 insurance and the highest value of health insurance; this
15 one has the best retirement plan, and this one has the
16 highest pay, and this one here is some other gadget, and
17 then when they collect it they think, good, we put this
18 whole package together.

19 Now, where I see the problem with this Phase 2,
20 it's not so much a problem in Phase 1, because as I'm
21 listening here it's all volunteer primarily, underserved,
22 you know, you have CDF which is employees which are not the
23 AFL, CIO type functionality in the politics. So I am
24 concerned that the governance of the new entity, whatever

25 that may be, is going to be profoundly affected by the

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1 proactive labor in how the dollars are spent and where that
2 money, then those resources. And I can assure you the
3 concept is, okay, what salary and benefit levels do we want,
4 how much money is there and whatever is left over is going
5 to fund the rest of the organization. And that's the
6 mentality that is out there, right, wrong or indifferent.

7 So I can kind of see this first phase working out
8 when all this money comes in the pipeline. But the second
9 phase, if this Hollingsworth Bill is only going to prescribe
10 this one percent shift, which I kind of scratch my head and
11 say, okay, that shift covers the underfunded Phase 1 level.
12 And the theory is that all the rest of the Phase 2 districts
13 which are viable, funded districts, then are all going to be
14 sitting back on their own saying, okay, when you go
15 collectively get together and you're self-sustaining so you
16 take the funded Phase 1 and the self-sustaining Phase 2, but
17 when I see that combining, I'm very apprehensive of what the
18 end result is going to look like, that stew as it starts
19 getting mixed up, because I can assure you that Phase 2
20 which is all labor, organized labor as far as the
21 firefighters, staffing and process, when it becomes one
22 agency that's going to be affecting all the volunteer
23 groups, labor, how many people, the question of volunteer
24 versus reserves.

25 I know in our district back in the early '90s

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1 putting together a reserve program or revitalizing our
2 reserve program was very difficult because, hey, labor
3 looked at it initially as you're taking away a paid seat and
4 a paid union member sitting in this seat. And I'm concerned
5 about how this is all going to be filtered out and it's not
6 addressed in the LAFCO report is the politics of labor and
7 how that's going to affect the cost. And I can assure you,
8 you might as well just stick another zero at whatever you
9 guys are estimating when labor gets involved. Thank you.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What district do you
11 represent?

12 MR. JACKMAN: San Miguel. I've been on the San
13 Miguel Fire District Board since 1992. They are by far one
14 of the highest total comped in the county. There are some
15 cities that are out there, but it's pretty high up there.

16 And our board -- tell you about the politics, our
17 board is made up of -- it's a seven-member board. In 1992
18 when I was elected we had seven members on the board that
19 were all from the public sector, I mean just community
20 people who were wanting to, you know, like give back to the
21 community. Now we have -- five of them are firefighters on
22 the board or related to firefighters, like the wife of a
23 firefighter. And there's only two of us left that are,
24 let's say, out from the general public. And we've been
25 opposed by the labor unions for the last few elections and

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1 Luckily we survived the election process the last couple of
2 times. But they've got two people on the board, then they
3 had three people on the board, then they had five people on

4 the board. So you got to, you know, start thinking about
5 the governance and who's going to actually control the
6 governance of this new group because labor is very
7 proactive.

8 MR. OTT: Thank you, Larry. San Miguel Fire
9 District by the way is a byproduct of consolidation. About
10 20 years ago, '88, so just about 20 years ago a byproduct of
11 the Spring Valley, Grossmont, Mount Helix fire districts
12 merging. It was actually my first fire consolidation that I
13 worked on.

14 Our next speaker is Bob Kephart and then we'll call
15 up the remaining three or four people. Bob, we saw you in
16 Pine Valley, didn't we?

17 MR. KEPHART: Yes, we did. I'm Bob Kephart. I'm a
18 resident of Elfin Forest. I'm on the Elfin Forest Fire
19 Advisory Board and I'm a volunteer with Elfin Forest and
20 have been on the advisory board and a volunteer for 18
21 years. So one thing I would like to go over that I guess on
22 the one side that everything keeps getting missed, we keep
23 looking at manning a station with one crew whether it's got
24 a volunteer staff or it doesn't. And we may be a bad
25 station to look at because we have quite a bit going on with

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1 our volunteers, but just from a money aspect. During a
2 normal day that we talked about when 80 percent of our calls
3 are medical aid and 20 percent are chasing snakes or going
4 to structure fires or just doing things that it doesn't take
5 a paramedic to do, it just takes someone with a little
6 knowledge and two hands to go out and take care of,
7 everything goes along just fine. But the knee-jerk reaction

8 that caused this whole situation was the Cedar and Paradise
9 Fire. I spent a week in a brush truck. You know, it's not
10 the first time I've been to a fire and spent days and days
11 out there doing it, and that's where we miss out. I think a
12 lot of -- what the volunteers mean and what we're missing
13 out on this one, we're going to put one crew in a station.
14 In Elfin Forest we man two structure engines, two brush
15 trucks, a water tender, an ambulance, and a utility, two
16 command vehicles, and we can primarily -- when the chips are
17 down, they're out there. During Paradise and Cedar we sent
18 a structure engine to Los Angeles which came back and went
19 to Cedar. I was on a brush truck. I spent a week at
20 Paradise with our water tender at Paradise. At our station
21 we had our ambulance and our brush truck and another
22 structure engine covered with people, and they were there.
23 Put a cost to that, and I keep hearing this 14 to 20
24 million, if the cost of volunteers in this County isn't in
25 the 60 to 80 million dollar range, it doesn't count, because

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1 it's when the chips are down all those people are needed.
2 And if we start eliminating them -- and it's being
3 eliminated just by everybody's estimate. I see \$250,000 for
4 a volunteer here, a volunteer there. I don't see it all
5 carved out. There's less money for volunteers than there is
6 anything else. 6.8 million dollars for paid staff and that
7 staff is overhead. It's going to take care of things that
8 it's just not there.
9 I've talked with Riverside people. I found out the
10 union is going to kill the volunteers and that's their job.

11 They want that seat on the truck. They don't want a
12 volunteer to be there. And if the County doesn't step up
13 and make the volunteers in this county a prime organization
14 and prime people, the County is going to suffer, this thing
15 is going to fall apart, and all of us are going to pay four
16 times what we're paying in fire taxes now. We tax -- our
17 district is the highest in your book. You're going to find
18 out we're in the \$400 range for benefit unit or for
19 household and everybody else is down. If everybody paid
20 their fair share, the County would be in just fine status.
21 And I know the Board of Supervisors can't force anybody to
22 pay their way, but they better start looking at the real
23 numbers of what volunteers are worth and what it's going to
24 take to do it. If Dianne Jacob is going for one percent,
25 she better start thinking about Phase 2 and she better be

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1 going for two percent because she started a train rolling.
2 If she's going to keep it rolling, she better have the money
3 behind her now, because if she's goes back to the well a
4 second time, the well is going to be dry. Thank you.

5 MR. OTT: If everybody can just do me a favor and
6 just stand up for a minute. Doug Wilsman, Jim McKim.

7 (Recess.)

8 MR. WILSMAN: My name is Doug Wilsman. I'm on the
9 water board. I've been there since 1992 when we still had
10 our own fire department here. In fact, I was one of the
11 prime movers to get CDF to take over our fire department. I
12 think we have a lovely fire department. I hope we get to
13 keep it just like it is. And the trouble I have, our
14 president was already here to address the people here and

15 the audience. I understand there's a CD of the Power Point;
16 is that right, Shirley?

17 MS. ANDERSON: We can get you one.

18 MR. WILSMAN: Have you ever been recorded, your
19 talk on the Power Point? It would be very helpful. This
20 stuff is so complicated even if you follow it. It's a
21 moving target. It changes all the time. If you notice the
22 Power Point said Ramona was in Phase 1, three or four times
23 before they said it wasn't. And it just recently got out
24 and now I'd like to -- if that man could give me a copy.
25 How did you obtain that copy? Is it on the internet

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1 someplace?

2 MR. OTT: Let me answer a few of those questions.
3 All legislation is on the internet. Leginfo is the
4 California web site (Leginfo.Ca.gov), in the State. If you would
5 go to that web site, there's a feature for California law.
6 You can type in author or bill number and you'll be able to
7 get that bill (SB 806). Also, if you want to read about the
8 bill, if you log onto LAFCO's web site, sdlafco.org, there's
9 a March 5th legislative report that's posted on our web
10 site. That bill plus a dozen other bills that we are
11 tracking are on our web site. There's a couple of different
12 ways of viewing that.

13 Let me just comment about the provision in SB806
14 regarding the schools. You do have to read the bill
15 carefully. There is a provision in there that says that tax
16 monies amounting to one percent, it's actually one percent
17 of the one percent, so that would be 1/100th, which equals

18 probably somewhere around 30 million dollars. We're going
19 to find out more about that as that bill goes through the
20 legislature. We may find out a little bit more Monday
21 morning when Supervisor Jacob discusses the bill as a member
22 of our commission. But there is also a provision in the
23 bill that does say that the amount that would be removed
24 from the school districts would be returned to the school
25 districts from the state general fund, so there is that

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1 provision in the bill and it's a very important point to
2 make. Supervisor Jacob would not be supporting advocating
3 that bill if that provision was not there.

4 Why don't you continue.

5 MR. WILSMAN: Okay. Thank you. I thought
6 Shirley's presentation was the best one I've ever seen. It
7 was really wonderful. The problem is my memory is not good
8 enough, so it would be nice if -- can I just make a request
9 now that you mail me to the water district a CD of that
10 Power Point.

11 MS. ANDERSON: Yes.

12 MR. WILSMAN: I don't have much to say except that
13 I'm curious as to what degree if we wait until April 6th to
14 write you something, whether that will have any impact on
15 anything?

16 MS. ANDERSON: That's our deadline date. We would
17 like those comments in and that facilitates our own internal
18 process, that we can analyze them and incorporate them into
19 the recommendations to the Commission. If you get them in
20 later than that, there's a chance they could be left out, so
21 we're asking get them there by the 6th.

22 MR. WILSMAN: Thank you very kindly. And I'm glad
23 to see all you people showed up. I hope some of you are
24 from Ramona.

25 MR. OTT: Thank you. Jim, you're next.

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1 MR. McKIM: My name is Jim McKim. I'm from the
2 El fin Forest Harmony Grove area. This is represented by CSA
3 107. I was a firefighter on the department for 15 years and
4 served on the fire advisory board there, but now I'm
5 speaking as a resident and a citizen. I appreciate LAFCO's
6 objectivity in this study and I understand what you're
7 trying to accomplish showing the costs and the governance
8 and those are the two things that I'm going to mainly touch
9 on which Shirley emphasized also. I view the costs as being
10 for the cheapest plan being not 22 million dollars short,
11 but 31 million dollars short. And the reason I say that is
12 that I have no confidence at all that the County will
13 continue the Fire Enhancement Fund. The County has a track
14 record of reactionary politics. This has only happened in
15 the last two years, gee, right after the Cedar Fire. It's
16 not written in law anywhere. Twenty something years ago
17 they just decided to get out of the fire protection business
18 and dumped it on the local residents. Very poor track
19 record, so I think it's 31 million dollars short. In light
20 of that, I don't see how we can view this kind of program as
21 anything but hysterical optimism. There's no magic wand
22 that's going to come up with 31 to 40 million dollars to
23 achieve the staffing levels.

24 As far as the governance goes -- as far as the four

25 proposals in the governance, I think the County proposal is

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1 the least viable, again because of their track record. They
2 have no experience over the last 30 years of fire
3 protection. And am I misstating something? I know there's
4 a county fire marshal, like one to serve the whole area, no
5 administrative experience. I view the fire protection
6 district as being the most viable of the four, but I have
7 one major problem with that is if you see that
8 organizational chart that was presented in the proposal, I
9 view that as very top heavy compared to what these
10 organizations are operating on now. There was one whole
11 side of that that was considered support staff, there was
12 finance and all that.

13 In our service area -- in our CSA 107 and Elfin
14 Forest Harmony Grove Fire Department incorporated, which is
15 a private non-profit corporation, has a contract with the
16 County to serve CSA 107. Many of those services are
17 provided by volunteers or people who are willing to do it
18 for some pay but a lot less than what a professional with
19 all their overhead would charge to do those things.

20 And touching on what somebody mentioned of seeing a
21 lack of economy of scale, I see it going almost the
22 opposite direction, lots of overhead to administer, and the
23 actual hands-on, you know, front line people are still
24 basically the same.

25 Regarding the level of service, I asked about what

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1 the station staffing was to get a better understanding of
2 that. I view this as LAFCO staff, it's my understanding,
3 has decided that the level of service would be what was
4 going to be presented or what is presented in this proposal;
5 is that correct?

6 MS. ANDERSON: It's by the Commission. The levels
7 five and six were selected by the Commission.

8 MR. McKIM: What is the Commission?

9 MS. ANDERSON: LAFCO. Not the staff, the
10 Commission.

11 MR. McKIM: So LAFCO top level decided, okay.

12 That represents a greatly increased level of
13 service for many of those residents in those areas. I
14 understand that you don't want to decrease the level, but
15 for a vast majority of the residents in that area that's a
16 greatly increased level of service and which is reflected in
17 the greatly increased costs. There's no magic here.

18 My question, it's a rhetorical question, is are the
19 citizens that are being represented by those representatives
20 on LAFCO really asking for, demanding that level of service?
21 I live in a rural area. I have accepted that. And there's
22 trade-offs for living in a rural area and one of these
23 trade-offs that I accept as a resident is a decreased level
24 of service in varying degrees or varying aspects including
25 fire and EMS protection. And I know from personal friends

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1 that live out in Earthquake or Shelter Valley, areas like
2 that, right out here east of Ramona, they are living there
3 for reasons and those reasons have -- in their mind have

4 trade-offs and they are personally willing to accept some of
5 those things in lieu of paying higher taxes or assessment
6 fees.

7 So I see if this program is going to go forward at
8 all to fund that major shortfall, it is up to those citizens
9 to make those decisions about whether they are going to be
10 willing to pay assessment fees, increased taxes. I realize
11 we've got Prop 13 to limit the taxes. They are going to
12 have to decide to pay assessment fees to make up the
13 difference, which is what the residents of CSA 107 have
14 done. And if they don't do that and this program goes
15 through, I see a big inequity between different areas, areas
16 that have decided to pay it and areas that don't have it and
17 somehow they get equal areas of service.

18 Touching on the career versus volunteer situation.
19 I appreciate that there are people in the room here that are
20 one or both simultaneously, concurrently, or at different
21 histories in their life have been one or the other. I don't
22 have any agenda of volunteer versus career at all. What I
23 do know is that managing a joint career volunteer station is
24 very difficult. It's been shown to be difficult across the
25 country. Places that are successful at it had a long

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1 history of volunteers. And like one of the chiefs was here
2 from New Jersey, they started all volunteers and they grew
3 to places and then some of them decided to be paid. So they
4 got this history that has a foundation form and they are
5 managed on a local level to get that blend working.

6 If this is pushed through out at a high level of a
7 regional fire protection district or one of the other plans,

8 all that decision-making is going to come up from above and
9 it's going to come down on people who are not going to be
10 happy with the way it's executed and you're going to lose
11 the volunteers. Even as local of a level of San Marcos,
12 which is a fire protection district, I believe, they had a
13 volunteer program started in the '50s up in the '70s, that
14 is completely gone away now. There's no active functional
15 volunteers in San Marcos and it shows. So the thing that
16 you're going to be able to maintain it with very little
17 management, I think it's just again hysterical optimism.

18 In light of all that, I think the money would be
19 better spent on some of the other issues that speakers
20 touched on that this program doesn't address which is
21 communication systems, joint training, maybe BLS only, that
22 as we talked about like the 95 percent of the calls are BLS,
23 don't require a captain, don't require a training
24 engineering, they're all getting higher salaries than the
25 EMT that's on a BLS unit. So if we're going to try to

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1 address the majority of the calls that are being created in
2 this area, geographical area that we're talking about and
3 provide an increased level of service for people that's
4 going to have the most effect, I think staffing some kind of
5 BLS program rather than structural fire protection would
6 have more benefit to them. I think reality is that in most
7 of these areas out here a structure fire is enough distance
8 away from even the best staffed station that most of them
9 are going to burn to the ground. And as people found out in
10 the big one, Cedar Fire, it doesn't make any difference how

11 many you have. Harmony Fire, it went right through our
12 area. It wouldn't have made any difference how many people
13 we had. That fire went through in just a matter of two
14 hours or less to cause the majority of the damage.

15 So I think instead of looking at a program that's
16 structural fire protection and BLS, those staffing levels,
17 to rethink it and look at BLS service which is going to be
18 more benefit to people.

19 As a resident of CSA 107 I request that CSA 107 be
20 removed from Phase 1. I think for a couple of reasons; one
21 is that we are funded and a majority of those other
22 districts. And two, it is a geographical island compared to
23 those other districts. I think Frank actually touched on
24 that little bit. You can see it clearly on one of those
25 maps. There is a yellow area surrounded by pink. Our goal

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1 for CSA 107 is to work with our surrounding areas for
2 communication, training, response, mutual aid, all those
3 kind of things, and we function much better working with
4 them, and maybe a joint agreement with Rancho Santa Fe or
5 something, rather than being part of a rural fire protection
6 district or CSA 135. Thank you.

7 MR. OTT: Our next speaker is Angus Tobiason.
8 Angus, it's your turn and you're from Ramona.

9 MR. TOBIASON: Sixty-nine years I've lived in
10 Ramona. I've been on the planning group for 28 years. And
11 at this time I would like to invite the Ramona Fire
12 Department through the water district to assist us in our
13 regional 20/20 plan if we need a fire protection plan. At
14 this moment we have 417 houses are being clustered on the

15 edge of the Clevenger Canyon, Highway 78, which is less than
16 a quarter of a mile from those houses. They're going to burn on
17 an easterly windy day and an accident in Clevenger Canyon the
18 fire will be burning on those houses before the fire
19 department gets its first ring. We need help. I've been
20 listening here that the bureaucracy already is too -- or
21 Governor Gray Davis appointed a lady fire chief that had
22 never been on a fire to direct the California Division of
23 Forestry. Then the Cedar Fire started coming. She said
24 don't let any fire truck go down a road that doesn't have an
25 outlet. This stopped all the fire trucks from going down

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1 Mussey Grade, 50 or 60 houses burnt. I live down there. We
2 lost two houses and two shops and we had 10 hours' notice
3 before the fire came. We called in five water trucks. We
4 called in two dozers and then the police chased everybody
5 out. There was three fire trucks sitting on our road and
6 they were not able to take a fire hose off the thing. My
7 son went up said, "Oh, my dad is down here, come down
8 quick," so one of the fire trucks went down. And they said,
9 "Oh, the fire is on your cabana, it's in your garage, there
10 isn't a damn thing we can do. Sorry, we're not supposed to
11 even be down here because the director from San Francisco
12 said no fires."

13 Another problem that we have in our community is
14 our open space policy. The County now has got a plan for if
15 you have 10 acres and you want to build a house, they said
16 build your house down in the corner along the road here on
17 this one acre of the ten. The rest of it we're going to

18 hold you up, we're going to condemn it as open space. And
19 then they said we want to have a hundred foot -- or you're
20 allowed to clean the brush on your property 100 feet away
21 from your house and everyone of you know, you see the fire
22 jump over 395 and over 15 and this 700 feet is not too close
23 to protect a house. If you own the damn property, you ought
24 to be able to go there and clear the brush away from it and
25 it ought to be up to you people to go after the

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1 environmentalists and say, hey, these people are paying the
2 taxes on it, they should be able to clear two or three or
3 500 feet away. If you're living on a steep hill, there
4 isn't no way that a fireman can stand between the fire
5 coming up the hill with 40, 50 feet flames and try and
6 protect your house. They just have to say so long. Now
7 we've got our new plastic windows. A fireman was telling me
8 last night that the -- when one house catches on fire, it
9 melts the plastic windows and they all fall and the next
10 house catches right on fire. And they're so bunched
11 together in this clustering zone to protect the area that is
12 making this area just almost indefensible. Thank you.

13 MR. OTT: Thank you. Our next speaker is
14 Jacqueline. And then if I can ask the following speakers to
15 come up to the front, Jim Depolo, hopefully I got that
16 right, Randy Scales, and David Osuna, and that will conclude
17 everything tonight.

18 Jacqueline, why don't you just state your name
19 again for the record.

20 MS. ARWIVAUD-BENJAMIN: Hello, my name is
21 Jacqueline Arsi vaud-Benj amin of the El fin Forest Harmony

22 Grove Town Council. First of all, I want to formally extend
23 the invitation I extended just a moment ago privately to
24 DPLU staff to come to the next town council meeting in Elfin
25 Forest. As you know, as I think you can see, there's a

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1 tremendous amount of interest from all residents and
2 especially of concern in the DPLU plan and it would be
3 wonderful if we could have you or some of your
4 representatives there to address our concerns directly.

5 I have two questions; one is, you know, one of the
6 things of this plan is the ability of the special
7 assessments that various communities have voted, and we are
8 one of those that voted a pretty hefty benefit fee for
9 ourselves to provide sufficient funding for fire. Could a
10 community vote to repeal the same special assessments that
11 have been voted in if say, for example, that the plan was
12 being implemented which the community did not support?

13 MR. OTT: I think that question was posed or at
14 least the answer was provided in Pine Valley. The answer is
15 yes. You can vote it in, you can vote it out. It's also my
16 understanding, and maybe there are some representatives here
17 that can elaborate, but it's also my understanding that if
18 an assessment has been voted in, that it isn't a requirement
19 that the Board of Directors of a special district actually
20 impose it. They have the legal authority to do so, but they
21 can choose to not levy it. Is that correct, Larry?

22 MR. JACKMAN: Yes, it is correct. But at this
23 point the Board of Supervisors has to approve it.

24 MS. ARSIVAUD-BENJAMIN: So even if we didn't want

25 to tax ourselves anymore, we wouldn't have the ability to do

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1 that?

2 MR. JACKMAN: We can take it as far as the Board
3 and then the Board of Supervisors has to approve it or not
4 approve it.

5 MS. ARSIVAUD-BENJAMIN: But there is a process to
6 formally trigger a vote.

7 The second question I have is one that came up last
8 night at our meeting is the notion of the responsibility and
9 eventual liability of the County should our ISO rating or,
10 let's put it, our level of service go down. Currently most
11 of us in Elfin Forest are at a level four, I believe. I
12 understand it's not possible to predict at this point
13 exactly what it would be, but let's say if it was to become
14 something less than that, certainly the immediate impact on
15 residents would be an increase in our insurance rate and as
16 such would the County be liable in the sense that they would
17 be changing the funding and structure of an existing
18 organization and imposing something new that might bring a
19 detriment to the local populous?

20 MS. ANDERSON: I'll give it a stab. The assumption
21 here is that the County has been awarded the successor
22 agency?

23 MS. ARSIVAUD-BENJAMIN: Exactly.

24 MS. ANDERSON: Okay. Again, whatever successor
25 agency, regional fire protection district, County, CSA, the

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1 policymakers, Board of Supervisors, elected officials of the
2 SSP would be making all program decisions, funding
3 decisions, whatever. If it's the result your ISO ratings in
4 a specific area went down because they messed up basically,
5 I mean, our entire democratic system is based on the voters
6 have to go after their policymakers. To my notion right
7 now, and I may be going out there because I don't have the
8 legal research to substantiate this, there isn't any
9 mechanism that would trigger for liability because your ISO
10 went down. I mean, you need a new elected body.

11 MR. OTT: Jim Depolo.

12 MR. DEPOLO: Thank you. It's Jim Depolo,
13 D-e-p-o-l-o, and I'm a resident of Elfin Forest. I am not
14 on the fire board. I am not a volunteer fireman. So you
15 heard lots of people speak tonight that have much greater
16 knowledge than I do in all of these areas; however, I wanted
17 to come up here and say a couple of things that I've heard
18 and first to thank you, LAFCO, the staff, and everyone who
19 worked on this report. I know you guys are trying to take
20 Measure C, you're trying to do the best you can to improve
21 things. I happen to serve on the school board. I know it's
22 not easy to try and improve things. I really admire what
23 you're doing and I really appreciate the fact that you've
24 had these community forums to listen to people.

25 One of the things I'll tell you from the school

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1 standpoint, I know people are concerned, so despite all the
2 language and everything that might be in there that it will
3 be replaced by state general fund, the last time I checked

4 the state general fund wasn't real flush with money either.
5 It does concern schools just as a matter of principle.

6 The other thing, you've heard a lot input from the
7 very concerned and intelligent people here tonight. The
8 thing that I kind of heard that I think as you go forward
9 and you need to consider is what is the problem that we're
10 trying to solve. We're trying to improve service throughout
11 the entire county, but there's all sorts of different fire
12 districts that are involved in that. You got your Phase 1
13 and your Phase 2, maybe you need to look at them even a
14 little bit differently than that, you know, which districts
15 belong in each phase. I know that Elfin Forest, and I
16 support that, would like to be at least pushed into Phase 2
17 because of service that we have. I think understanding the
18 issues of the Cedar Fire and what happened, you know, the
19 communication issues I've heard a couple of times here, you
20 know, is what we're proposing to do actually going to fix
21 that issue? I mean, are we addressing the issues that
22 really will be increasing the level of service? So I would
23 ask that you just, you know, listen to the things about
24 communication, joint training.

25 I thought it was a very interesting point that

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1 somebody brought up about land management and fire trails
2 and are we doing a good job in keeping those things up. I
3 mean, how can we help ourselves better be prepared for a
4 fire?

5 I think it's a very interesting point about labor
6 unions and how that affects volunteers working together. I
7 think we have a tremendous resource of our volunteers here

8 and what we use. I think you need to really carefully look
9 at that. I would hope that paid firemen or volunteer
10 firemen, you know, there might be political issues in a fire
11 station one day, but when there's a fire, you know, people
12 that go into this line of work, I believe, do it because
13 they're trying to help people, they're trying to save lives.
14 I would hope that that certainly wouldn't make the
15 difference when, you know, there's a fire like the Cedar
16 Fire, I wouldn't think whether you're a paid fireman or a
17 volunteered fireman, everybody is out there helping, trying
18 to do the best to protect life and property. Maybe I'm
19 wrong. I know in schools people go into it because they
20 really want to help kids, they want to help educate. It's
21 not always about the money and what you get paid, although
22 it doesn't come initially I understand. I would encourage
23 you not to lose the great resources that you have here in
24 the volunteers that you have set up.

25 Money is an interesting one. I know, you know,

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1 we're trying to build a new school and, you know, we can
2 design them and we can do all these things and then there's
3 that money of how should you pay for it. I don't know what
4 to tell you on that one other than good luck. Everything
5 that you put up there on your slides and said assuming
6 funding, I mean it was a recurring theme. Obviously to put
7 a plan in place and not have the funding is detrimental to
8 everybody.

9 So I would just like to reiterate that I wish you
10 luck. I appreciate what you're doing and I hope that you

11 can take a look at some of the districts and put them in
12 Phase 2 is what we would like you to do. So thank you very
13 much.

14 MR. OTT: Thank you. Randy Scales.

15 MR. SCALES: My name is Randy Scales. I represent
16 CDF firefighters. There's no questions for the board here.
17 It's more a clarification for some of the organizations.
18 There seems to be a big misconception that if CDF comes in,
19 that the volunteers are going to go away. That's not true
20 at all.

21 Recently we just transitioned San Diego Rural which
22 has 11 stations which only one station was a permanent
23 full-time station. They had 11 employees, 10 of them came
24 to work for us as paid employees. The other station that
25 they opened in Descanso and that station was a complete

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1 volunteer station. The volunteers still come and work at
2 that station with us with the paid personnel. We have two
3 permanent paid people on every day at that station
4 supplemented by at least one volunteer every day. Whether
5 you call them volunteers, reserves or Explorers, they aren't
6 getting paid to be there so they're volunteering their time.
7 We call them reserves in San Diego Rural, okay. They come to
8 work with us every day. They train with us. They get the
9 opportunity to go to the State sponsored training classes
10 that CDF puts on and they're treated just like a State
11 employee that's a permanent paid employee.

12 If you look historically at the contracts that we
13 have here in San Diego County, Valley Center, Deer Springs,
14 Ramona and now Rural, they all still have reserves,

15 volunteers or Explorers as part of their organization. None
16 of them have gone away over the years.

17 Currently in San Diego Rural we have around 40
18 reserves that just supplement the two stations that have the
19 paid staff. The other volunteers still serve those
20 communities in which they live and work in and they are
21 still an adequate part of that program. We do have
22 volunteer training manuals that we train out of with them.
23 We have volunteer training days set up during specific days
24 of the week and we also train with surrounding communities
25 that are volunteered out in those areas.

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1 It seems that there's a big concern, and rightfully
2 so, that the volunteers will be phased out. And I'm just
3 here to tell you that that is not true. Riverside has a
4 huge county contract with CDF and that a lot of those
5 communities don't have volunteers or reserves anymore, but
6 it's not because of the lack of interest or that they pushed
7 them out. As your communities grow and become cities they
8 transition those folks into paid permanent positions and the
9 volunteers will either continue to come back and staff those
10 engines behind the permanent personnel when they go to large
11 incidents or they still staff those additional engines
12 behind the permanent personnel on a regular basis.

13 So my only concern is that there's a lot of
14 comments that we've pushed the volunteers out and I'm just
15 here to tell you that that's not true. Thanks.

16 MR. OTT: We have about five minutes to go. We
17 have two speakers, David Osuna and then Virginia.

18

David.

19

MS. OSUNA: Good evening. My name is David Osuna.

20

I'm the assistant fire chief of Pala Reservation Fire

21

Department. I'm also the volunteer fire chief of San Ysabel

22

Reservation Fire.

23

My question to the panel is in your report, first

24

three paragraphs, you mention that you worked with tribes.

25

Throughout your report Power Point I never seen tribe one

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1

mentioned. I'm just curious why out of the 28 reservations

2

in Southern California, 18 are in San Diego County,

3

currently nine have fire departments that are paid with new

4

equipment, certified personnel, with state fire marshal, and

5

I don't know if the County is aware of that. It seems like

6

on the big picture we have a government-to-government

7

relationship with everybody, but on the ground when you

8

start talking about this we're not mentioned, we're not

9

recognized, and I'd like to know why? What is your plan

10

going to -- your big scheme across the board going to do for

11

the tribes? There are a lot of tribes that don't have fire

12

departments at all in these rural areas, you know, what are

13

you doing for them or did you contact them? There is an

14

organization is the county, Southern California Tribal

15

Chairmen Association, which has chairmen from all these

16

tribes belonging to it, you know, did you contact them?

17

So I just want to know what other information you

18

guys pursued or researched? You have all the volunteers

19

covered. I know a lot of these guys from my early career

20

working in Julian as a seasonal, so most volunteers in my

21

area, San Ysabel, Julian, in that area, get along well with

22 CDF. We always have. And if they come in, that's fine.
23 It's just people take a lot of pride in protecting their own
24 communities, so my biggest concern is what are you doing for
25 the tribes?

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1 MR. OTT: Thank you. Let me tell you how we have
2 dealt with the tribes. The tribal authorities are in a
3 sovereign status. We do not have control over their fire
4 departments. They're boundaries as tribal entities, and
5 therefore, they're not a direct part of this Micro Report
6 that we've prepared. In some of our earlier reports we have
7 discussed the inter-relationship in San Diego County with
8 the tribes, with military organizations, with federal, state
9 forestry departments. But we are focusing here on local
10 government, on special districts, and that is the primary
11 reason why they're not a part of this plan.

12 Obviously there's an inter-relationship between all
13 fire agencies in this county and it's something that
14 whatever successor agency, if one is selected, will have to
15 deal with, but that is the reason.

16 We've also notified the tribal authorities in the
17 county about our process and included them in our review.
18 There, I believe, is also a tribal entity represented on our
19 task force on fire protection. Is that correct, John?

20 MS. ANDERSON: There's a fire district, a tribal
21 fire district association and John and I have met with them.
22 And early on --

23 MR. OSUNA: Who, I've never heard of it?

24 MS. ANDERSON: We had some joint meetings with the

25 fire chiefs of several of the tribal associations early on.

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1 And, also, if you look in the Micro Report there is
2 correspondence specifically requesting that tribal lands be
3 not included. That's not an option anyway as Mike has just
4 said, separate set of jurisdictions, and LAFCO or the County
5 has no authority over the tribal lands, so that's why
6 they're not addressed in Micro Report.

7 MR. OSUNA: I'm curious how the first report talks
8 about how you talked to everybody. I mean, you should have
9 just excluded us in the report altogether. It's a little
10 misleading.

11 MS. ANDERSON: We'll try to make that clear. Thank
12 you.

13 MR. OTT: Our final speaker, Virginia.

14 Identify your name for the record and then you can
15 proceed with your comments.

16 MS. McMANUS: Virginia McManus, M-c-M-a-n-u-s, and
17 I'm from Elfin Forest and I'm very fire phobic, so when the
18 firemen hop in their cars, drive down that road, I go lock
19 up and leave. I do not like fire. I just seem to have been
20 born that way. And so I admire the skill, tenacity,
21 willingness to put themselves in harm's way and all the
22 people who are so dedicated to serving others including the
23 committee. I have a concern that before we know it, we're
24 trying to find which group we need to be with to survive the
25 reorganization or which strategy should I use to survive

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1 this. Fighting the fires should be the issue. Stopping the
2 fire, preventing the fire has to remain the issue. And at
3 some level I'm starting to feel like we're shifting the
4 chairs on the deck of the Titanic. I'm going to put my
5 chair here, but the boat is sinking. And I do wonder the
6 state support, forestry management, the fire break issues,
7 water, access to water, the parks and recreations. I don't
8 want a trailhead to be a part of blocking a fire truck. And
9 I think the big picture has to come along with all our
10 concerns and perhaps that's less than another way that I'm
11 unaware of, but should we be contacting the state? Should
12 we be contacting our representatives, the governor? And
13 should we be demanding more for ourselves to prevent, manage
14 the forest, prevent fires, support the staff that's willing,
15 volunteer and fully paid and get on with it? But let's not
16 just rearrange the chairs.

17 And I'm concerned about DPLU. I don't know them.
18 They have not spoken that I'm aware of. If they have
19 answers, where are they? And there's a missing part of this
20 process that concerns us and I think it gives us reason to
21 be concerned. All of this effort, instead of -- we're
22 communicating, but not about how to solve it. It's like I'm
23 running, I'm going this way and I found an answer and we're
24 staying the same. And the shift must be how do we prevent
25 fire, how do we successfully fight fire, how do we manage

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1 the wildlands, and how does all of government participate in
2 this, supporting all our efforts to live well in the
3 environment safely and support the firefighters of any

4 background, of any size, rural or city, and let's not just
5 shift the chairs for the sake of looking like we've done
6 something. Thank you.

7 MR. OTT: All right. I think that's probably an
8 appropriate way to end this evening full circle fire
9 prevention to protection. It is 9:00. We do have a
10 commitment to vacate at 9:00. If there are any pressing
11 questions, you can ask them now but be very brief. I don't
12 see any. We thank you very much. March 7th is the next
13 date for the workshop downtown San Diego at 2:00 to 5:00.
14 Thank you very much for having us.

15 (Whereupon the meeting was adjourned at 9:03 p.m.)

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