



Northshore Fire Department

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Woodinville Fire & Rescue

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Northshore Fire Department Board to Meet on Merger Resolution *Public Invited to Attend and Comment*

KENMORE, Wash. – The Board of Fire Commissioners for the Northshore Fire Department will consider a resolution at its upcoming meeting asking voters to merge with Woodinville Fire & Rescue. If the resolution is approved, the proposed merger would be on the April 27, 2021 Special Election ballot for voters in Northshore’s service area.

“The purpose of consolidating is to improve service and be more cost-effective for taxpayers,” said Chief Greg Ahearn. “We invite the community to learn more about the proposal at this public meeting, ask questions or share their thoughts about it.”

The virtual meeting will be held at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 17 through a link on the Northshore website: <https://www.northshorefire.com/about/board-meetings/>. Those unable to attend are welcome to contact Chief Greg Ahearn at (425) 354-1780 or GAhearn@northshorefire.com. All comments are welcome and become part of the public record.

Throughout King and Snohomish counties smaller fire agencies are partnering together to provide residents with better service and cost efficiencies. Both agencies are similar in size and fund emergency services with a fire levy and fire benefit charge.

Northshore and Woodinville already share training programs for emergency personnel, administrative positions (fire chief, deputy chief, and a chief administrative officer) and joint departments, including finance, human resources, IT, and payroll. Finalizing the partnership through a merger would make these operational efficiencies permanent and provide an improve service.

From an operations perspective, a merger would maintain the same number of personnel but allow better deployment to provide an improved emergency response for both communities. Each agency also owns specialized apparatus and equipment that the other benefits from when responding to emergency calls. Merging also reduces impacts to taxpayers long-term for capital items (such as stations and apparatus) because costs are shared by more property owners.

Additional benefits include better training opportunities for firefighters, stronger fire prevention programs in local schools, more community engagement, and economies of scale in purchasing goods and services. There also is likely to be a cost savings for taxpayers in both communities, and that information will be shared when data from the county is available later this fall.

The resolution has Northshore merging into Woodinville Fire & Rescue. By state law, this means the election would only appear on the ballots of voters in Northshore’s service area of Kenmore and Lake Forest Park. The agencies would develop a new name that reflects all three communities if the merger is approved by voters.

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Northshore Fire Department provides fire and emergency medical services to approximately 37,000 people over 10 square miles, including the cities of Lake Forest Park and Kenmore. Its emergency call volumes average 3,600 a year.

Woodinville Fire & Rescue provides fire and emergency medical services to approximately 37,000 people over 30 square miles. Its emergency call volumes average 4,000 a year.