

## Ballot Measure 20-304: Santa Clara Rural Fire Protection District Five Year Local Option Tax Levy for Operations

### **Ballot Measure 20-304: Santa Clara Rural Fire Protection District Five Year Local Option Tax Levy for General Operations**

Question: Shall the District impose \$.45 per \$1000 of assessed value for general operations for five years beginning 2020-2021? This measure renews current local option taxes.

Summary: This measure would authorize the renewal of the expiring local option levy for general district operations at the current rate of \$0.45 per \$1000 of assessed value on real property located within the Santa Clara Rural Fire Protection District beginning FY 2020-21. Accordingly, it will not increase the total assessment rates currently imposed on property within the District. The District will use the tax revenue from this measure to continue to operate the District at its present level of service.

The proposed rate will raise approximately \$334,926.53 in 2020-2021; \$344,974.33 in 2021-22; \$355,323.56 in 2022-23, \$365,986.76 in 2023-24, \$376,962.76 in 2024-25 for a total of \$1,778,170.45.

Background: Santa Clara Fire District was formed in 1943 and provided fire suppression and emergency medical services to what is now about 9000 residents. In 2018, SCFD entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement with Lane Fire Authority. The District exists as a legal entity, but all fire protection and EMS services are provided through Lane Fire Authority. The merger had the benefit of being able to draw volunteers from a wider geographic area. Increasingly, small fire protection districts are merging with larger neighboring districts. Each agency maintains its own taxing system and boards of directors but shares equipment and personnel. This levy will fund the agreement with Lane Fire Authority to maintain the level of 24/7 service residents expect.

#### Arguments for 20-304:

- The measure does not increase taxes. It maintains the same rate that District property owners pay now.
- The measure will fund fire and emergency services to an estimated 9000 people on the north side of Eugene. The services are provided by Lane Fire Authority through an Intergovernmental Agreement.

#### Argument against 20-304:

- Residents depend on volunteer fire fighters and a small paid staff. If residents desired an all-paid professional firefighting and emergency response staff, the funding provided by this measure would be inadequate.