

PUBLIC COMMENT: Mill Creek City Council meeting - February 22, 2022

My name is Greg Urban, and I am the Chair of the South County Fire Board of Commissioners. I want to thank you for allowing public comment on this important issue - the future of fire and EMS service for Mill Creek residents and business owners.

South County Fire is excited about this partnership we are creating with the City, its residents and business owners. If you look at our equivalent rate for fire and EMS in 2022, we are the lowest cost provider that will be able to maintain the same level and quality of service.

I wanted to let the Council know that our board and agency is strongly in support of the City of Mill Creek annexing to South County Fire, despite individual opinion's expressed by some. We already respond to calls within the City as part of our mutual aid agreement. The Mill Creek Fire Station will continue to operate with the same number of firefighters, paramedics and emergency apparatus, as well.

A couple issues that may be of interest to your taxpayers? South County Fire can reduce the need for property taxes to fund emergency services by relying on our fire benefit charge. This is a form of funding gaining in popularity because it looks at a property's use and risk of fire, as opposed to its assessed value. Smaller structures, like single family homes pay less than commercial buildings because it costs less to provide service to a small structure.

Another item is that the assessed value of properties in the City of Mill Creek would lead to a six-cent reduction in the property tax rates for fire and EMS. As elected officials, this is good news to share with property owners that their tax burden will be reduced.

Those are the key points I wanted to share with you tonight. We look forward to the City of Mill Creek and its citizens becoming a partner of South County Fire when the voters approved the annexation this April.

Thank you.

Greg Urban - Chair

South County Fire - *Commissioner District 2*

12425 Meridian Ave S | Everett, WA 98208

O: 425-551-1251 | c: 425-224-0403

gurban@southsnofire.org | www.southsnofire.org