

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-07

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COVINGTON, WASHINGTON, EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR PUGET SOUND REGIONAL FIRE AUTHORITY ("PSRFA") PROPOSITION 1 WHICH WILL APPEAR ON THE AUGUST 3, 2021 BALLOT, WHEREIN VOTERS WILL BE ASKED TO APPROVE A PERMANENT FIRE BENEFIT CHARGE TO FUND EMERGENCY MEDICAL AND FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES.

WHEREAS, the PSRFA adopted Resolution 175 on May 5, 2021. Resolution 175 calls for the placement of a ballot measure on the August 3, 2021, ballot which will ask voters to establish a permanent fire benefit charge. The ballot measure is referred to as Proposition 1; and

WHEREAS, the PSRFA is authorized by the Puget Sound Regional Fire Authority Plan and chapter 52.26 RCW to establish, impose, and collect a benefit charge on personal property and improvements to real property located within the PSRFA; and

WHEREAS, the voters of the PSRFA previously authorized the PSRFA to impose and collect a benefit charge for six years in 2010 and the voters reauthorized the benefit charge for an additional six years in 2016; and

WHEREAS, the PSRFA governing board has determined that the benefit charge, established in conjunction with a lower level of property taxes, provides the most stable, reliable, and cost-effective method for financing the services the PSRFA provides to its citizens; and

WHEREAS, the benefit charge will be reasonably proportioned to the measurable benefits to property resulting from the services provided by the PSRFA and shall not exceed 60% of the operating budget of the PSRFA; and

WHEREAS, the legislature has now authorized fire authorities to request voter approval of a permanent benefit charge and the PSRFA governing board has determined that a permanent benefit charge better serves the citizens of the PSRFA by providing for long term revenue stability and reduces future administrative and election costs associated with shorter term benefit charge authorizations; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with RCW 42.17A.555, city councils are authorized to vote on a resolution to support or oppose a ballot measure so long as the action is taken at a public meeting, the notice of the meeting includes the title and number of the ballot proposition, and councilmembers and meeting attendees are afforded an equal opportunity to express an opposing view; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate for the council to support Proposition 1 as submitted by the PSRFA, and therefore, the council urges voters to vote "Yes" on Proposition 1.

NOW THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Covington, King County, Washington, resolves as follows:

SECTION 1. - *Support for Proposition 1.* The Covington City Council endorses PSRFA Proposition 1 which will be submitted to the voters on the August 3, 2021, ballot, and urges Kent voters to vote “Yes” on the measure. The Proposition 1 ballot title and ballot statement are as follows:

Puget Sound Regional Fire Authority
Proposition No. 1

The Puget Sound Regional Fire Authority “Puget Sound Fire” is responsible for providing fire protection and emergency medical services in your community. For the last twelve years, the Puget Sound Fire has funded these services primarily through a combination of property taxes and voter approved benefit charges.

Under state law, voters must renew the use of Puget Sound Fire’s current benefit charge in 2021. A benefit charge is not a property tax. The benefit charge is a user fee designed to allocate the cost of the services provided by Puget Sound Fire in reasonable proportion to the measurable benefit a property receives. The benefit charge is based on an industry accepted formula that takes into consideration fire flows, the square footage of structures, the type of structures and various risk factors.

The Puget Sound Fire Governance Board has determined that permanently establishing the benefit charge will provides a long-term, stable, reliable, and cost-effective method for financing the operations of Puget Sound Fire and for maintaining satisfactory levels of service.

Under state law, regional fire authorities which collect benefit charges have reduced taxing authority. Benefit charges can constitute no more than 60 percent of a fire authority’s annual operating budget and the fire authority’s maximum property tax rate is reduced from \$1.50 to \$1.00 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation.

If approved, Proposition 1 would permanently continue the current funding methods utilized by the Puget Sound Fire to provide emergency medical and fire protection services.

Section 2. Severability. If any section, paragraph, sentence, clause, or phrase of this resolution, or its application to any person or situation, be declared unconstitutional or otherwise invalid for any reason, or should any portion of this ordinance be pre-empted by state or federal law or regulation, such decision or preemption shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this resolution or its application to other persons or situation. The City Council of the City of Covington hereby declares that it would have adopted this resolution and each section, subsection, sentence, clauses, phrase, or portion thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or

more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses, phrases, or portions be declared invalid or unconstitutional.


Section 3. Corrections. Upon the approval of the City Attorney, the City Clerk and the codifiers of this resolution are authorized to make any necessary corrections to this resolution including, but not limited to, the correction of scrivener's/clerical errors, references, resolution numbering, section/subsection numbers, and any reference thereto.

Section 4. Ratification. Any act consistent with the authority and prior to the effective date of this resolution is hereby ratified and affirmed.

Section 5. Effective Date. This resolution shall be effective immediately upon passage by the City Council of the City of Covington.


Passed by the City Council of the City of Covington this 13th day of July 2021.

Signed in authentication of its passage this 14TH day of July, 2021.



Jeff Wagner, Mayor

AUTHENTICATED:



Joan Michaud, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

/s/ Mark Orthmann, as authorized by email on July 13, 2021
Mark Orthmann, City Attorney