

RESOLUTION NO. 3316

A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR AN ELECTION ON A FIVE-YEAR LOCAL OPTION LEVY FOR FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Findings

- A. Bend Fire & Rescue has historically received \$1.185 per \$1,000 from the City's permanent tax rate of \$2.80 per \$1,000 of taxable assessed value for Fire and Emergency Medical Services and operations.
- B. In 2014, voters approved Measure 9-98, a local option operating levy at a rate of \$0.20 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value. The funding allowed Bend Fire & Rescue to hire additional personnel, resulting in response times that improved by over a minute, and improved cardiac survival rates.
- C. In 2019, voters approved a renewal of the levy at a rate of \$0.20 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value. Renewing the levy allowed Bend Fire & Rescue to maintain staffing levels, resources, response times, and service.
- D. In 2021, the City allocated an additional \$0.01 per \$1,000 of taxable assessed value for fire station maintenance and repair, and an additional \$0.01 per \$1,000 of taxable assessed value for Fire Services, through June 30, 2030, for a total of \$1.205 per \$1,000 of taxable assessed value. This funding allowed Bend Fire & Rescue to start a maintenance fund to address the needs of aging fire stations.
- E. In 2022, in partnership with the Deschutes County Rural Fire Protection District #2, the City made a one-time funding contribution using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to address the growing emergency medical services needs of the community. This funding allowed Bend Fire & Rescue to staff the Pilot Butte Station with nine firefighter/paramedics and hire a business manager to ensure efficient and effective administration of Fire and Rescue services. This one-time funding source is set to expire June 30, 2024.
- D. The current levy expires in June 2024. Approving a new levy is necessary to allow Bend Fire & Rescue to prevent response times from increasing, and to continue to provide fire and emergency medical services to the community at an acceptable level of service.
- E. The rate of \$.76 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value is projected to raise approximately \$11,765,000 in fiscal year 2024-25, the first year of the approved levy, and a total of approximately \$65,008,000 over five years. Nine firefighter/paramedics are presently funded through June 2024; this measure would continue their funding for an additional 5 years. The measure would also fund increases to advanced life support (ALS) and basic life support (BLS) services, help distribute calls more efficiently across the City and Rural Fire District, and help to improve response times overall.

Based on these findings,

THE CITY OF BEND RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

- Section 1. City Council submits a ballot measure to the electors of the City of Bend for the purpose of levying a local option levy in the amount of \$.76 per \$1,000 of taxable assessed value for 5 years, for fire and emergency services, beginning in July 2024.
- Section 2. Tuesday, May 16, 2023, is designated as the date for holding the election on the question stated in Section 1.
- Section 3. The election will be conducted by the Deschutes County Elections Department.
- Section 4. The precincts for the election shall include all territory within the City of Bend.
- Section 5. The ballot title to appear on the ballot shall be:

CAPTION

Five-year local option levy for fire and emergency medical services.

QUESTION

Should Bend issue a five-year local option levy of \$.76/\$1,000 assessed value for fire and emergency services beginning July 2024?

This measure may cause property taxes to increase more than three percent.

SUMMARY

The measure, if approved, authorizes the City of Bend to levy taxes to support the annual cost of fire and emergency medical services. The measure would provide for a local option operating levy at a rate of \$.76 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value for five years, beginning July 1, 2024. The prior levy of \$.20/\$1,000 of assessed value expires June 30, 2024, and on expiration would be replaced by this levy. Revenue from the levy would be used to provide sufficient staffing with the goal of assuring adequate response times. The funding could also support additional training and equipment necessary to maintain services.

The estimated revenue over five years is:

2024-2025	\$11,765,000
2025-2026	\$12,353,000
2026-2027	\$12,971,000
2027-2028	\$13,619,000
2028-2029	\$14,300,000

If the maximum levy is assessed, the estimated total revenue raised over five years would be approximately \$65,008,000.

The estimated revenue for this measure is an ESTIMATE ONLY based on the best information available at the time of estimate.

Section 6. The Council adopts the Explanatory Statement for the Voters' Pamphlet attached as Exhibit A.


Section 7. The City Recorder and staff shall take all necessary steps to effectuate this resolution, including providing public notice and submitting required materials to the County Elections Officer. If the measure is approved, the City will act consistently with the ballot title and explanatory statement.

Section 8. This resolution takes effect immediately upon passage.

Adopted by the Bend City Council on February 15, 2023.

YES: Mayor Melanie Kebler
Mayor Pro Tem Megan Perkins
Councilor Barb Campbell
Councilor Anthony Broadman
Councilor Ariel Méndez
Councilor Megan Norris
Councilor Mike Riley

NO: none



Melanie Kebler, Mayor

ATTEST:



Robyn Christie, City Recorder

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Mary A. Winters, City Attorney

Explanatory Statement
Exhibit A

The measure, if approved, would authorize the City of Bend to levy taxes for fire and emergency services at a rate of \$.76 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value for five years, beginning July 1, 2024. If approved, the levy would raise a projected \$11,765,000 in the fiscal year 2024-25, and an estimated total of approximately \$65,008,000 over the five-year period. Voters approved a \$.20/\$1,000 assessed value for fire and emergency services in 2014 and 2018; that levy expires in June 2024.

Bend Fire & Rescue provides fire suppression, emergency medical care and transport, technical rescue, and fire prevention services. The population of Bend and the demand on fire and emergency services continues to grow. The increase in call volume has made it necessary to add essential staff who can respond to meet this increased demand and maintain appropriate call response times. Revenue from this levy would be used to add staff to ensure adequate emergency response times, which lead to better patient outcomes. The funding would also support additional training and equipment necessary to maintain services.

If approved, the proposed levy would pay for the following:

- Maintaining staff to ensure sufficient personnel can provide timely services in emergency situations.
- Adding firefighter/paramedics to staff a fourth Advanced Life Support ambulance to keep pace with the increase in calls for medical emergencies.
- Adding Emergency Medical Technicians to staff a second Basic Life Support ambulance that can respond to non-life-threatening calls and keep emergency vehicles available.
- Firefighter and emergency medical safety equipment.
- Tools for firefighting and emergency medical response.
- Technology enhancements.