

## Comments:

We need your attention urgently before finalizing any agreements or pursuing a final vote from the Sandoval County Commissioners . I understand both Chiefs have been working on this agreement since February, but there are not enough details built into the proposal and the consideration of the impact to put the east mountain community at-ease with less than one week's notice.

Also, I'm asking that the office of the State Fire Marshall or a representative from the Fire Service Support Bureau to intercede or act as an intermediary to help us all better understand how this decision supports their charter.

As a Sandoval County resident, I have a hard time dividing the line of our community as succinctly and cleanly as others seem to be able to do. If I lived in the neighborhood just next door (Paako) or anywhere in the La Madera east mountain area, BernCo. would be my fire department serviced from Frost Road by 5 fire fighters. They, in turn, have been supported, when needed, by the mutual aid of the LMVFD team of 18. This mutual aid has been called on more than one occasion. In fact, LMVFD responded to a 3 calls already this week, 2 with BernCo support.

At the same time, the idea (if I were a BernCo. Resident) that my safety resources were reduced and potentially might be "out of district" servicing a 44 sq. mile area of homes without hydrants and wildland as far as Puertocito and that I would be counting on a crew yet further away (in Tijeras) to come to my aid, would be concerning. To stretch the idea even further, I believe your District 5 also relies heavily on these same resources.

Many of us recall that our paid and unpaid firefighters (up and down Hwy. 14), were shoulder to shoulder at the Dog Head fire a few years ago. We "back at home" watched the news and kept our fingers crossed with the knowledge that an emergency call of a lightning strike, house fire, or just sudden change in wind direction and speed meant that an entire community would be accessing limited roadways and we, too, could be faced with the prospect of loading up our families, pets, and horse trailers to attempt an evacuation. Since this news has broken, I've heard platitudes that the volunteers can be called out "when needed" in the event of just such an emergency. I wonder how realistically that can happen when they've been told to turn in all their radios, bunker gear and the majority of the local response vehicles are going to be removed from the district?

I believe that if anyone in the east mountain area had received this proposal along with news that additional resources were planned to offset the loss of our volunteer department or there was a plan to shore up a paid team to cover the additional needs, we would be saddened at the loss, but at least might feel somewhat better about this recommendation. Certainly, I don't think the reaction would be the deep concern that we share today. In addition, I heard on today's call that one reason that this needed to be done was that BernCo. was not sure how much longer they would be able to offer mutual aid to our area which is contradictory, at best, to the plan being proposed-how does any of this mean that they will be better able to provide service? 100K of state allocated funds annually will certainly not go very far.

As I understand it, Chief Perez confirmed the existing mutual aid agreement between BCFD and La Madera could easily be continued if Sandoval County wished it to be. That agreement has worked quite well for the citizens of southeast Sandoval County and northeast Bernalillo County for 22 years. Given the very large potential for emergency response upheaval during a global pandemic and as we enter high danger fire season, why are we rushing to "fix" a system that is obviously not broken? Let's back off, give everybody a chance to breathe, and decide this issue with all the stakeholders in broad daylight. It will take as long as it takes.

This current plan just seems short-sighted and I'm still struggling to see the benefit to either county's community members.