

This document is an extract of a larger publication.

civilgrandjury.org is a project of UnGovr.org, a US-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to government transparency and public accountability.



7. In 2000, 63 % of the City's fire calls for service were for medical aid/assist.
8. The fire fighting training that the police officers are going through does not include Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) or Paramedic training.
9. The City stated that the cost to send the police officers to the fire academy, not including salaries, is \$350 per person for a total cost of \$5250. This would train 15 police officers, yet the City states that they have approximately 22 police officers.
10. The City stated that the cost to send the firefighters to the police academy, not including salaries, is \$1600 per person for a total cost of \$4800. This would train 4 firefighters.
11. The training costs provided by the City do not include the additional cost that will be required to cover the shifts of the employees in training during their absence.

CONCLUSIONS

Prior to the consolidation, the firefighters need for equipment and adequate living quarters were lacking. It appears as if the needs of the police were given priority over those of the firefighters.

While the City should be commended for cross training police and firefighters, the City should thoroughly investigate the history of the prior consolidation and subsequent separation of functions in an effort to avoid having history repeat itself.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Do more of an outreach to the citizens, including the business community and retail property owners, to make them aware of the changes that have occurred with the consolidation of police and firefighters.
2. Comply with Ralph M. Brown Act.
3. Explore providing EMT and/or Paramedic training to Public Safety Officers.
4. Provide a full public accounting of cost versus savings of the consolidation on a regular basis.

REQUIRED RESPONSES

City of Lindsay
City of Lindsay Director of Public

EXETER DISTRICT AMBULANCE BOARD ON THE MEND?

BACKGROUND

Exeter District Ambulance was formed as a special tax district in 1977. The District operated on County and State Grants until the tax money began to come in in late 1978.

Later that year, the District faced the financial obstacle of Proposition 13, which limited the ability to increase taxes on property until it was sold to another party. In the early 1980's the local hospital had a reduction in admittances which decreased the need for ambulance transfers.

In November 1985, the Exeter District Ambulance Board of Directors (Board) voted to close the service by the end of the year. This decision prompted an outpouring of support from local residents who raised enough signatures to convince the Board to rescind the closure. This grass-roots campaign raised money and began campaigning for a tax measure proposed by the Board to continue to fund the District. Enough signatures were obtained to place the measure on the ballot. In June 1986, the measure was overwhelmingly supported by 81.3 % of the District voters.

In the late 1990's a house was remodeled creating the current ambulance station and ambulance bays. In 1999, the District built the current administration building at 302 E. Palm Street. This building houses the billing office, operations office, Board of Directors meeting room and space for public education, first-aid and CPR training.

REASONS FOR INVESTIGATION

The Tulare County Grand Jury received numerous complaints concerning the operation of the Exeter Ambulance District Board. As a result, an investigation was initiated. The allegations centered around potential conflicts of interest of board members and alleged violations of the Brown Act.

The complaints were filed shortly after the Board decided to contract out the management of the ambulance services.

Several of the complaints alleged there was a conflict of interest since the Board was comprised of four City of Exeter employees and one Board member who has a contract for vehicle towing and storage services with the City.

PROCEDURES FOLLOWED

1. Relevant witnesses were interviewed
2. Relevant documents were inspected
3. Attended Board meetings.

FINDINGS

1. There was one special/emergency meeting held on May 7, 2009. The Board has been unable to provide an agenda for this meeting but evidence indicates that it was a closed session meeting. There was no opportunity for public comment, which is a Brown Act violation.¹

¹ California Government Code Section 54954.3 (a)
[See end of this report]