

REPORT

IN THE MATTER OF:

THE PROPOSED CHANGE IN THE FIRE PROTECTION & AMBULANCE AND RESCUE SERVICE DISTRICT BOUNDARY LINE BETWEEN THE SKYLAND DISTRICT AND THE ASHEVILLE SUBURBAN DISTRICT

Buncombe County recognizes that there is a demonstrable need for providing fire protection services as well as ambulance and rescue services to all citizens and residents in the County. Counties are authorized to and may define any number of service districts in order to finance, provide, or maintain for such districts services, facilities and functions related to fire protection and ambulance and rescue services pursuant to North Carolina General Statutes Article 16, Chapter 153A.

The County currently has twenty (20) Fire Protection & Ambulance and Rescue Service Districts. In almost all cases, the the fire district response areas coincide with the taxing service districts, however new construction, equipment, substations and requirements of the Office of the State Fire Marshal all contribute to cause discrepancies from time to time.

Skyland Fire Protection & Ambulance and Rescue Service District and the Asheville Suburban Fire Protection & Ambulance and Rescue Service District have identified forty-seven (47) properties currently paying property taxes in the Asheville Suburban district and receiving emergency services from Skyland, and the chiefs would like to relocate these forty-seven (47) properties into the Skyland district. Support for this change has been heard from the community. These properties are Ramble area and are most directly served by the Skyland district.

N.C. Gen. State. §153A-304.3, Changes in adjoining service districts, authorizes a board of commissioners to relocate the boundary lines between adjoining county service districts if the districts were established for substantially similar purposes. By Resolution #16-09-10 dated September 20, 2016, the Board County Board of Commissioners acknowledged the request to relocate these forty-seven (47) properties into the Skyland district and directed that this Report be prepared and submitted as provided in GS §153A-304.3 for the proposed service district line relocation before the date of the public hearing on this proposal set for October 18, 2016.

A. MAP and BOUNDARIES

As indicated above, there are forty-seven (47) properties currently paying property taxes in the Asheville Suburban district and receiving emergency services from Skyland.

These properties are in the Ramble subdivision area and are most directly served by the Skyland district.

Maps of the current service district line as well as the proposed service district line are attached hereto.

B. ADJOINING DISTRICT PURPOSES

These two (2) adjoining fire protection and ambulance and rescue service districts referenced herein were created for the same purpose, that is, to provide financial support for the professional fire departments to provide fire protection and EMS services as single-source, full service and comprehensive responding agencies in these Service Districts. The Chiefs of the Asheville Suburban service district and the Skyland service district have requested this district line relocation.

A map of the proposed district, showing its proposed boundaries is attached hereto.

C. PLAN FOR PROVIDING SERVICES

There will be no change in emergency services because Skyland currently provides emergency service to these forty-seven (47) properties and Skyland will continue to do so upon the effective date of approval. All operational plans for providing services in the district shall be in compliance with Standard Operating Guidelines compiled in accordance with the Office of the State Fire Marshal and the Department of Insurance as well as the Buncombe County EMS System Plan.

D. EFFECT THIS PROPOSED CHANGE WILL HAVE ON TAXES AND DEBT SERVICE

Records on file with the Buncombe County Tax Office indicate the appraised value of property subject to taxation in the Skyland Fire Protection & Ambulance and Rescue Service District is approximately \$3,400,917,063. The current tax rates levied in the Skyland service district is 9.1¢ per \$100 taxable value.

The Asheville Suburban district essentially covers the Biltmore Estate property which contracts with the City of Asheville fire Department for its emergency services and which is paid for through the proceeds of taxes levied in the district. The current tax rates levied in the Asheville Suburban service district is 8.5¢ per \$100 taxable value.

The appraised value of the forty-seven (47) properties covered by the proposal is \$47,058,000. This amounts to about 1.4% of the Asheville Suburban district tax base so the net effect on the districts abilities to fund its operation is de minimis.

CONCLUSION

The proposal to change the boundary line between these two districts and include these forty-seven (47) parcels in the Skyland Fire Protection & Ambulance and Rescue Service District does in fact meet the standards set forth in G.S. §153A-304.3.