Section 10

Fire

Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

Fire Department Budget Fiscal Year 2010/11 and Beyond

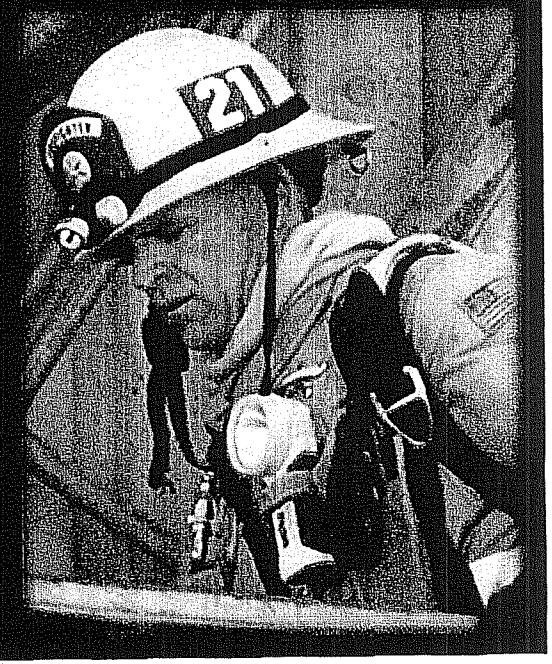
Fire Chief Michael W. Dyer

COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA CALIFORNIA

FIRE DEPARTMENT

SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS FISCAL YEAR 09/10

- Strengthened operational capabilities and advanced life support services by establishing permanent paramedic staffing at Fire Station 21 in Orcutt.
- Enhanced advanced life support services through the implementation of 12-lead defibrillators on all fire department medical transport units.



SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

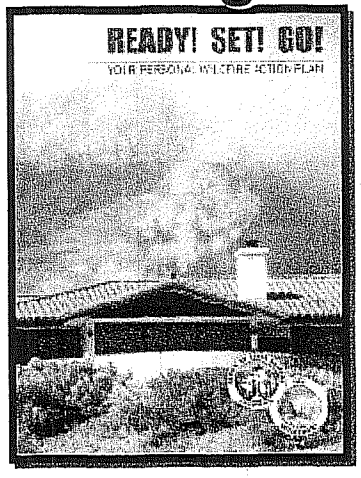
- Completed Tepusquet Canyon and Zaca Lake road brushing projects resulting in increased access by fire apparatus and easier egress by residents and visitors.
- Placed two tactical water tenders into service.

SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Replaced all self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) units with new NFPA compliant CBRN SCBA for all emergency responders.
- Completed the second phase of the Fire Command and Control Radio System Upgrade Project.

SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Enhanced public information communications by establishing a Major Incident Reporting format and providing subsequent reports to the Board of Supervisors, CEO and news media, distributing weekly public safety announcements via internet media outlets and conducting five community wild land fire preparedness workshops in Santa Barbara, Goleta, Lompoc, Sisquoc, and Solvang that focused on:
  - Ready Set Go
  - Defensible Space Program
  - Evacuation
  - Animal rescue and evacuation



FUNDING SOURCES

- Utilized $1,746,000 of Capital Designation Money
- Vehicle Replacement Fund was not utilized by direction of the County Executive Office
- General Fund Contribution increased $1.1 million to $2.7 million
  - The General Fund Contribution to the Fire Department is only 1% of the total County General Fund AND only 5% of the total Fire Department Budget
  - The General Fund Contribution is still less than it was in 2007/08 ($3.0 million)

STAFFING LEVELS

- The 2010/11 Budget reflects a reduction of 6.5 FTEs that include:
  - 1.0 Administrative Office Professional
  - 2.0 Hazardous Materials Specialists
  - 3.5 Reserve Firefighter FTEs

STAFFING LEVELS

- Without the 9 safety positions added through the City of Solvang consolidation, the number of safety positions within the Fire Department is still less than it was 20 years ago.
  - FY 89/90 = 207 Safety Positions
  - FY 09/10 = 214 Safety Positions

(214 minus 9 Solvang positions = 205 Safety Positions)

EMERGENCY RESPONSES

- 1989 = 5,800 Responses
- 2009 = 11,300 Responses
  - Over the last twenty years, there has been a 95% increase in response load.

CAPITAL PROJECTS

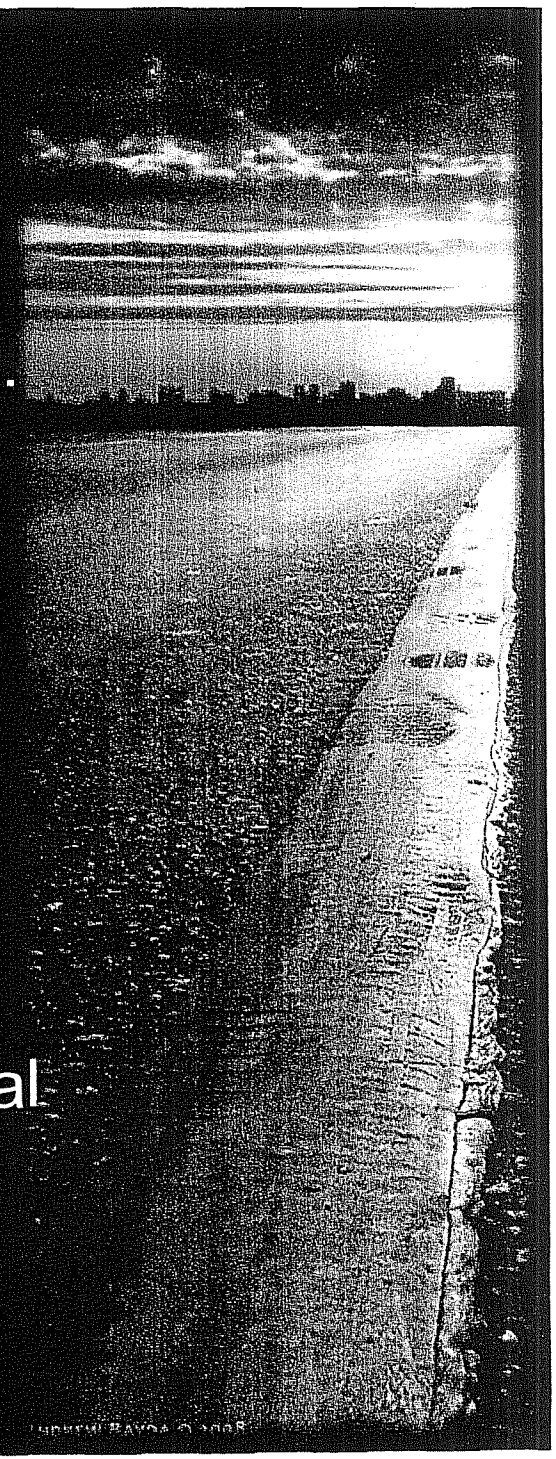
- After utilizing $1,746,000 of the Capital Project designation, there is $1.8 million left to fund over $76 million in unmet needs.

THE FUTURE

- For Fiscal Year 2011/12, the Department projects a $6.2 million dollar shortfall.

THE FUTURE:
- ACTION STEPS -

- Hiring freeze of vacant non-critical positions.
- Delay fuels crew activation, leaving 1 crew available for emergency response and projects.
- Delay hiring heavy equipment operator.
- Limit service and supply spending.
- Freeze all non-critical travel.
- Increase utilization of California Firefighter Joint Apprenticeship training funds for critical training.
- Utilize 40 hour staffing to backfill 56 hour (shift) positions as needed.



REVENUE CHALLENGES

- **Santa Barbara County Fire Protection District Property Tax Revenue is low compared to similar Fire Protection Districts:**

LOS ANGELES COUNTY FPD	17.14% (Plus Special Tax)
VENTURA COUNTY FPD	15.07%
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY FPD	11.97%

- **Santa Barbara County Fire Protection District Property Tax Revenue is lower than all other fire protection districts in Santa Barbara County.**

MONTECITO FPD	16.07%
CARPINTERIA/SUMMERLAND FPD	14.45%
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY FPD	11.97%

REVENUE CHALLENGES

- If Santa Barbara County Fire Protection District had the same rate as the Ventura County Fire Protection District, the department would be receiving an increase of 40% relative to its existing property tax base.
  - Organizational Review of Fire Department by Management Partners 2006

OTHER REVENUE LOSSES

1. Watershed Fire Protection Tax
2. Los Padres National Forest Payment in Lieu of Taxes
3. Annexation of Private Lands in the Los Padres National Forest

FUTURE REVENUE OPTIONS

1. Increase the General Fund contribution to recognize the loss in revenue in the areas previously mentioned.

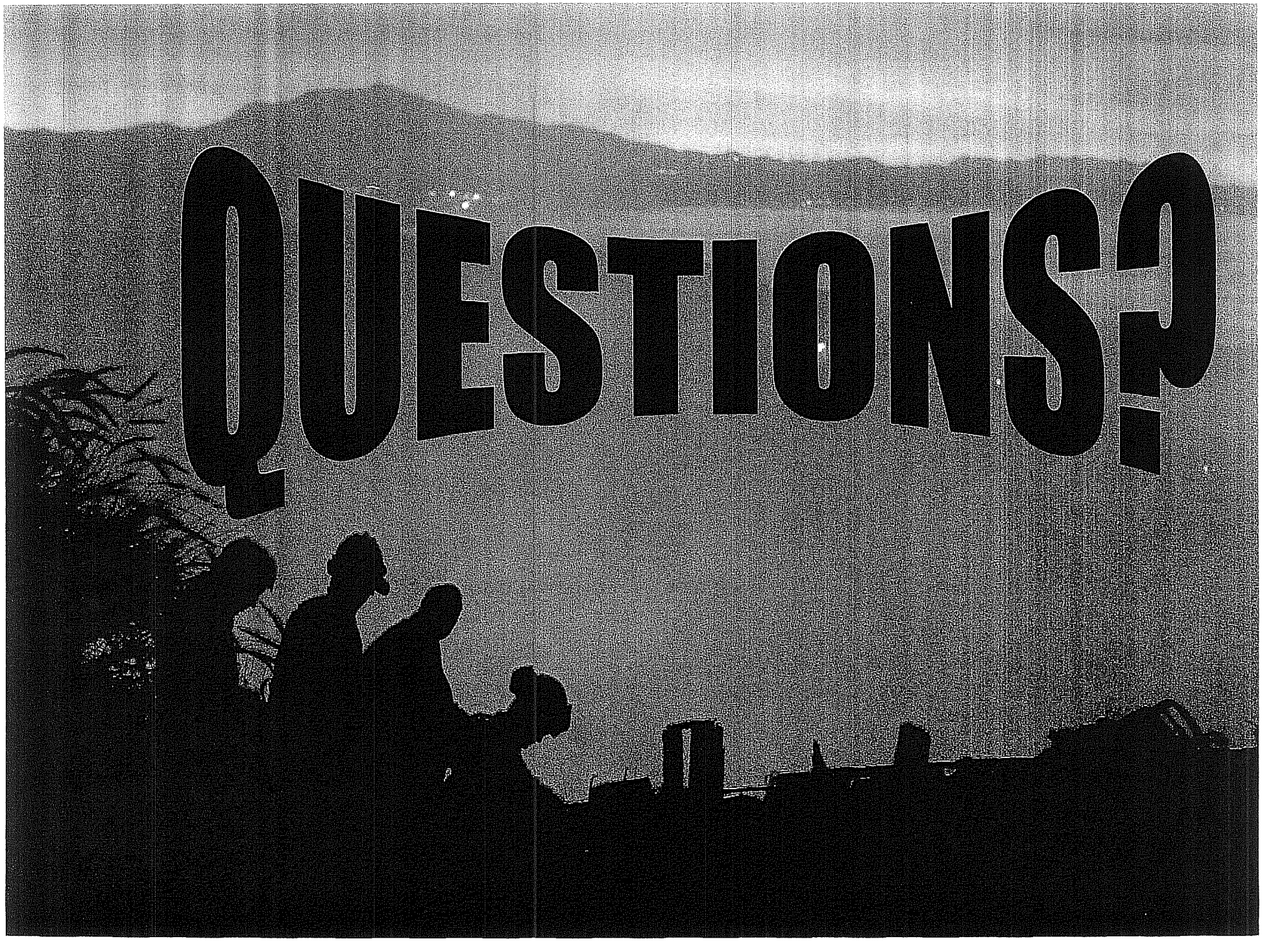
2. Consider all tax based funding options.

3. Consider a Countywide fire safety sales tax.

4. Consider a Fire District wide parcel tax.

BUDGET EXPANSION REQUESTS

- Currently, the Fire Department has over $9 million in unmet equipment needs.
- Fund $644,000 to equip all Fire Department front line units with a Mobile Data Computer (MDC) and Automatic Vehicle Locator (AVL). These critical pieces of safety equipment will improve operational effectiveness, communication and safety on all emergency incidents.


QUESTIONS?