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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Board of Fire Commissioners Approves M&O Levy Resolution

Measure on August Primary Election Ballot

Auburn, WA – The Board of Fire Commissioners for Mountain View Fire and Rescue unanimously passed a resolution to place a Maintenance and Operations Levy (M&O Levy) on the August 4 Primary Election Ballot. If approved by voters, funding would be used to purchase protective gear for firefighters, replace a fire engine and water tender, and make repairs to fire stations to extend their usable lives.

“This is *not* because of COVID-19. We want to be clear on that,” said Fire Chief Greg Smith. “This funding request was planned prior to the pandemic to meet some of our operational needs. However, we are expecting call volumes to increase and this revenue can help us pay additional costs associated with responding. It is timely.”

Mountain View Fire and Rescue (formerly known as King County Fire District 44) provides wildland firefighting, fire suppression, life safety, and Basic Life Support to approximately 20,000 people over 77 square miles. Its service area includes unincorporated King County near the cities of Auburn, Enumclaw, and Kent.

Daily operations at Mountain View Fire and Rescue are funded through a regular Fire Levy paid through property taxes. From time to time, the Fire District asks voters for temporary funding through an M&O Levy. In 2013, voters approved an M&O Levy of \$0.30 per \$1000 of assessed property value to replace revenue lost during the last recession. That M&O Levy expired in 2017.

Call volumes increased almost six percent last year for the Fire District, which responds to approximately 2,200 emergencies a year. The Fire District is limited to a one percent annual revenue increase in its Fire Levy by state law, which is not keeping up with the demand for service.

That’s why the Fire District is asking voters to approve a temporary M&O Levy of \$0.30 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. The cost of the M&O Levy would be \$9.60 a month for the owner of a \$384,000 home (an average for the area). The M&O Levy would expire in four years.

More information can be found at www.mvfire.org. Chief Greg Smith is also available to answer questions at 253-735-0284 or chiefsmith@mvfire.org.

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