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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Board of Fire Commissioners passes resolution for lid lift

Voters asked to restore funding for emergency services on August ballot

Granite Falls, Wash. – The Board of Fire Commissioners for Snohomish County Fire District 17 (also known as the Granite Falls Fire Department) unanimously passed a resolution asking voters to approve a 12-cent “lid lift” during the August 2 Primary Election.

Call volumes have increased 30 percent for the fire department since 2011. Fire district officials say the lid lift would help meet the increase in demand for emergency services.

At \$0.12 per \$1,000 of assessed property value (AV), the lid lift would cost less than \$30 per year for a home valued at \$240,000. Funding would be used to hire one additional firefighter and offset the rising costs to provide emergency services. This would restore staffing to 2008 levels and improve emergency coverage for the community.

Funding for the fire department comes from two voter approved levies paid through property taxes: a fire levy of \$1.50 per \$1,000 (AV) and a levy for emergency medical service (EMS) of \$0.50 per \$1,000 (AV). Over time these levy rates fall, which is why voters are asked to “lift the lid” back to the previously approved amount.

As of 2016, the fire levy for the Granite Falls Fire Department has fallen from \$1.50 to \$1.38 per \$1,000 (AV). The lid lift would restore the fire levy to \$1.50 and take effect in 2017.

State law limits a fire district’s annual budget increase to 1% per year, but the cost to provide service is often higher than that. More emergency calls, such as the fire district is experiencing, mean added costs for things like personnel, equipment, fuel, maintenance, utilities, and state fees.

Learn more about the proposed lid lift by visiting the fire district’s web site at www.gffd17.org. Fire Chief Jim Haverfield is available to answer questions as well at (360) 691-5553 or jim.haverfield@gffd17.org.

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Snohomish County Fire District 17, also known as the Granite Falls Fire Department, started in 1907 to provide protection to farms and mills around the City of Granite Falls. Today, it provides fire and emergency medical service to 12,000 citizens across 38.5 square miles, including city residents who annexed to the district in 1987. The fire district is proud to be debt free, operate under a balanced budget

and has passed all financial and accountability audits by the state. Learn more about the fire district at www.scfpd17.org or /GraniteFallsFire on Facebook.

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