March 26, 2019

Marin County Board of Supervisors
3501 Civic Center Drive
San Rafael, CA 94903

SUBJECT: Update to report “Lessons Learned: 2017 North Bay Fire Siege” and related budget adjustments as outlined in the fiscal impact.

Dear Supervisors:

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1) Accept the update to the Fall 2018 Report “Lessons Learned: 2017 North Bay Fire Siege.”

2) Approve $80,000 allocation from the Emergency Preparedness set-aside to support FIRESafe Marin community outreach

3) Approve the creation of an additional vegetation management Fire Crew in the Marin County Fire Department funded by one-time Parks and Open Space Measure A funds

SUMMARY: In the Fall of 2017, the North Bay suffered devastating wildfires that left nearby communities concerned and have highlighted the necessity for fire prevention and preparedness. In November, your Board created a subcommittee to study lessons learned from the North Bay Fires. The subcommittee included Supervisors Judy Arnold and Dennis Rodoni, leaders from fire, law enforcement, and land management agencies, and representatives from Marin’s cities and towns.

The subcommittee’s task was to analyze three primary areas associated with wildland fire protection: 1) Wildland Fire Prevention and Protection, 2) Vegetation Management, and 3) Emergency Notifications and Evacuations. The subcommittee held an extensive interview panel with Sonoma officials to learn from their experiences; hosted a public forum to gather community input; and inventoried Marin’s existing programs and identified gaps.

In September 2018, the Lessons Learned report was presented to your Board. The report outlined the main findings and areas for improvements to further decrease the County’s vulnerability and increase fire preparedness. The report is guiding improvements to Marin’s ability to prevent and respond to natural disasters, many of which can only be accomplished with the help of our residents, community partners and various stakeholders.
In June 2018, your Board approved a one-time set-aside of $500,000 for Emergency Preparedness Initiatives to be used for high priority projects or programs to build safer communities. To date, your Board approved the following allocations from these one-time funds:

- $15,000 to support Senior residents and those with functional needs to accomplish defensible space improvements.
- $7,500 to match the Marin County Fire Department Local Hazard Mitigation Plan grant for the break out mapping of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan by fire agency.
- $50,000 in each of the next two years ($100,000 total) for the County’s contribution toward a Disaster Coordinator contract position. The Marin County Fire Department will work with local jurisdictions to secure additional funds to expand the scope of the position.
- $10,000 additional allocation to support programs managed by FIRESafe Marin
- $50,000 for the purchase of a truck with a chipper bed
- $30,000 to enter into a contract to improve GIS mapping regarding structures in Marin
- $10,000 contract for Disaster Coordinator services

The attached document provides an update on the subcommittee’s recommendations to better prepare our community and government for a disaster. To support the implementation of the sub-committee’s Land Management recommendations, Marin County Parks and Open Space is recommending an enhanced partnership with Marin County to use Measure A funds for a dedicated vegetation management crew on Park and Open Space lands. In addition, we are recommending that your Board authorize an additional $80,000 from the Emergency Preparedness set aside to support FIRESafe Marin community outreach and to explore a Countywide fire prevention and fuel reduction program.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** There will be no increase to the General Fund Net County cost as a result of your Board’s action. With your Board’s approval, General Fund expenditure appropriations for the Marin County Fire Department will be increased by $80,000 to support the FIRESafe Marin community outreach initiatives. The remaining balance of $197,500 will be reserved for future allocations as determined by your Board.

We will return to your Board in April with a more formal partnership agreement with Marin County Parks and Open Space, as well as the related staffing recommendations.
Respectfully Submitted,

Jason Weber  
Fire Chief

REVIEWED BY:  
County Administrator [X]  N/A  [ ]  
Department of Finance [ ]  N/A  [X]  
Human Resources [ ]  N/A  [X]  
County Counsel [ ]  N/A  [X]