



**THE CITY OF FIRCREST**

# TOWN TOPICS

FEBRUARY 1995

115 RAMSDALL STREET

FIRCREST, WASHINGTON 98466

(206) 564-8901

## CITIZENS SPEAK OUT ON FIRE DEPT. ISSUE

Nearly 200 residents turned out Jan. 11 for an informational meeting about the future of fire and emergency medical services for the City of Fircrest.

Faced with the higher costs of running its own fire department, the City Council will be considering proposals to contract fire services with Pierce County Fire District #3 (University Place) or the City of Tacoma to provide a higher level of emergency services at the same or less cost.

The Fire Task Force, made up of three Council members and four citizens, has studied the issue and recommended that the Council continue to explore options. The Council is still studying the issue and has not made any decisions.

The meeting began with a presentation by Otto Jensen, Director of the Washington State Fire Chiefs Association. Jensen gave an overview of options available to code cities such as Fircrest on providing fire services, and he talked about changes in the fire industry and increased requirements for staffing, training and equipment.

Presentations were given by fire officials from P.C. Fire District 3 and Tacoma on the services provided by their agencies. Also presented was a review of

services provided by the Fircrest Fire Department.

While members of the Fire Task Force had previously heard the presentations, the meeting was the first opportunity for the full City Council to learn about fire services options.

Following the presentations more than 20 residents spoke. Many speakers praised the past 50 years of service by the Fircrest Fire Department and said it is a key part of the community's small-town identity. The majority of speakers supported continuing with a small, city-run fire department despite any increased costs.

Other speakers requested that the City Council continue to explore other options for fire service, including contracting with University Place or Tacoma.

Besides the 20-plus residents who offered their views, several others had signed up to speak but decided not to because they would be repeating others. Prior to the meeting the City Council received a number of letters about fire services from residents unable to attend the meeting. Copies of the letters were distributed to each Council member.

On Jan. 17 the City Council set January 30 as a special study session to discuss options and alternatives.

## MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Another year of exciting new events, activities, and opportunities is here. My hope and expectation for 1995 is that your City government will be even more productive than in 1994.

As we begin this new year, your City Council will be working with staff to meet goals of completing the City's Comprehensive Plan along with development regulations and pocket annexations, determining the best way to provide fire and emergency medical services, implementing changes identified for 1995 in the water/sewer rate and services study,

developing a sidewalk policy and program, and completing re-construction of Electron Way.

As you can see, this is going to be a busy year. Your elected officials and staff are looking forward to resolving these challenges and meeting the community's needs. We appreciate hearing from you and seeing you at Council meetings the second and fourth Tuesday of every month.

Let's continue to work and gather information on town issues so we may collectively arrive at the best decisions for our community.

— David M. Viafore, Mayor



## THE CITY OF FIRCREST

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AUGUST 1995

115-RAMSDELL STREET

FIRCREST, WASHINGTON 98466

(206) 564-8901

### MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Nothing perks the spirit quicker than a walk through Fircrest Park on a beautiful summer evening. The picnics, baseball games, swimmers, and families laughing and playing together is a reminder that Fircrest is truly a fun place to live. Our outstanding parks and pool facility are definitely enjoyed by a great number of people. Attendance was monitored at Fircrest Park on Monday, June 26, and to our surprise, 1,222 people were counted.

The summer of 1995 is proving to be an extremely busy time for your Council. A contract with the Tacoma Fire Department for provision of fire services has been approved and we are nearing closure on the recruitment and selection of a new City Manager. With the announcement by the Volunteer Fire Department that their operations were ceasing at the end of July, arrangements were made to assure the proper provision of fire and emergency medical services to all citizens on our community through an interim agreement with Tacoma Fire.

We in Fircrest, for the past 52 years, have benefited from one of the finest and certainly, the most dedicated group of volunteer firefighters ever. There are no words that can properly capture the depth of appreciation for all the years of guarding lives and property while risking personal safety. The Council will be hosting events in August to acknowledge and commend all the individuals who have served us so well over so many years. I hope that every one of you will join us in this appreciation and recognition.

In other activity, work is under way to prepare information and set meetings for the residents of the Fircrest Acres area to learn more about the pending September annexation election. Staff is preparing reports for the 1996 Budget process and Council will be making that a priority this fall. Remember that your voice counts. Council encourages your participation in your government. If you have questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact your elected officials.

— David M. Viafore, Mayor

## Tacoma to begin providing fire services

The Fircrest City Council in July approved a contract with the City of Tacoma for the Tacoma Fire Department to provide fire and emergency medical services to all citizens and properties in the City of Fircrest. After approval by the Tacoma City Council, Tacoma will be moving their Station #17 operations into the Public Safety Building once the remodeling is completed, which is anticipated to be September 18. They will be sharing space with the Fircrest Police Department and the building will still be owned by Fircrest.

The Fircrest Volunteer Fire Department ceased their operations as of midnight July 31, after providing over 52 years of outstanding service to the community. With that announcement, arrangements were made with the Tacoma Fire Department to provide interim services until their move into the building in September. During that interim period, there will be three firefighters assigned to the Public Safety Building Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., and additionally, the complete resources of the Tacoma Fire Department will be available for coverage

24 hours a day, 7 days a week from Tacoma's existing facilities. Initially, the two career Fircrest firefighters will be at the station, plus one Tacoma firefighter. As of midnight July 31, 9-1-1 calls were switched over to the Tacoma Fire Department.

Residents will probably have a number of questions about the contract with Tacoma and the services that are being provided. With that in mind, more details will be available in the September edition of Town Topics. In the meantime, if you have questions or concerns about the changeover in fire protection and emergency medical services, please call City Hall, 564-8901.

### Community to honor volunteer firefighters

Arrangements are being made to honor all members who have ever served on the Fircrest Volunteer Fire Department since its formation in 1943. A number of activities are being planned to recognize the numerous volunteer firefighters who have been so important to the community's well being for over 52 years.

The City Council is sponsoring an open house at the Public Safety Building on Saturday, August 12, during the Fun Days event. There will be a formal ceremony starting at 2 p.m. at the Fircrest Park Pavilion. All residents are encouraged to stop by the Public Safety Building and personally thank the volunteers. The Council will also be holding a reception prior to their regular meeting in August.