

May 15, 2023

Dear East Meadows Neighbor,

In past years, KVFD provided emergency services primarily through volunteers. Unfortunately, KVFD is facing a significant decrease in active and locally available volunteers. Even with increased volunteer stipends, the department has been unable to attract volunteers willing to cover shifts and undergo the fire and EMT training required under state law. The Fire Chief covers many shifts, taking calls 45 minutes away. It is an illusion to assume KVFD is our first line of defense.

KVFD provides two types of emergency services: fire suppression and emergency response services such as medical aid and search and rescue. Services are funded through an assessment based on building size, (set in 1988). While fire suppression is related to the size of buildings, medical aid is more closely associated with the maximum populations. The Community Facilities District (Measure E) will establish additional funding more closely related to maximum population.

A Yes vote on Measure E will enable hiring trained firefighters with EMT certifications and enable training for volunteers that meets state guidelines. With adequate staffing, the department will be able to respond to emergencies reliably and possibly resume ambulance service in Kirkwood. Without proper funding, the Department will be forced to reduce services and even consider closing its doors entirely.

We support Measure E because we believe that combined with an increase in the existing building assessment fee, it will provide the critical source of funding needed to preserve Kirkwood's Fire Department. However, we advocate for the costs and the special tax enabled by Measure E to be kept as low as possible by implementing several essential strategies:

1. Hire the minimum level of paid firefighter professionals.
2. Improve volunteer recruitment focused on people willing to be certified EMT and Firefighters.
3. Partner with Vail to encourage volunteer participation.
4. Increase the current fire assessment fee that is based on square footage.
5. Continue fundraising at the annual Kirkwood Summer Festival and other events to help fund needed firefighting and emergency response equipment and vehicles.
6. Set the fire department budget annually, only after public discussion about desired level of service versus cost.

KMPUD has scheduled a Special Board Meeting on May 23 at 4pm via Zoom. The link is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87406468432>

They want to hear the level of service and funding preferences everyone in the Kirkwood community desires. We fully expect to hear about the strategies we have recommended. Please plan to attend and participate during the meeting.

As a community, it is essential that we work together toward a solution while prioritizing the safety and well-being of our residents. Together, we can ensure that our community remains safe and secure, and that the KVFD has the resources they need to continue their vital work. [Please join our efforts!](#)

Sincerely,

Sandy Goldberg | Eric Richert