

April 19, 2019

Dear Editor,

I want to thank members of the Lake Stevens community who participated in our recent public meetings about a potential merger with Snohomish County Fire District 7. The Lake Stevens Board of Fire Commissioners unanimously approved a resolution asking voters to consider the proposal on the August 6 Primary Election ballot.

The merger would formalize an existing partnership we already have with Fire District 7. We share fire marshal services, training programs, a medical services officer, and a community resource paramedic. We also have been working towards integrating management and administrative teams to share those costs.

Most importantly, it would improve emergency services for the communities we serve. As one fire district, we can better position emergency personnel to respond to calls. The combined financial strength of the districts also would improve our ability to fund stations, apparatus and equipment.

The levy rates are comparable. Taxpayers in Lake Stevens Fire and Fire District 7 have previously approved a combined levy rate of \$2 per \$1,000 of assessed property value for emergency services.

We are guided by our vision to provide the highest level of service to our community, and appreciate the opportunity to serve. Call volumes are increasing for both our agencies as our population grows and ages. Merging with Fire District 7 provides a way to improve service and manage higher costs.

Kevin O'Brien, Fire Chief
Lake Stevens Fire
kobrien@lsfire.org
425.212.3044