



City Council Meeting Staff Report

Meeting Date: July 8, 2025

Subject: Consideration and Adoption of Resolution Approving Amendment No.1 to the First Amended and Restated Wheatland Fire Authority Joint Powers Agreement

Prepared By: Bill Zenoni, City Manager

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Wheatland City Council consider adoption of a resolution approving Amendment No. 1 to the First Amended and Restated Wheatland Fire Authority Joint Powers Agreement.

Discussion: The Wheatland Fire Authority provides critical fire protection and emergency response services to the citizens and businesses within the City of Wheatland. The Wheatland Fire Authority was formed in 2006 as a joint powers authority (JPA) that combined the City of Wheatland Fire Department with the Plumas-Brophy Fire Protection District. The original JPA agreement was amended in 2010 and has not been amended since that time. There are currently several sections in the JPA agreement which are outdated and in need of revision.

The City Council, on May 9, 2023 authorized staff to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for consulting firms to conduct an independent evaluation focused on identifying any changes in operations or structure that may be necessary to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Wheatland Fire Authority. In response to the City Council's direction, an RFP for consulting services to prepare a Wheatland Fire Authority Sustainability Analysis was issued on September 19, 2023. The City Council, on February 27, 2024, authorized execution of an agreement with Municipal Resource Group to prepare the Wheatland Fire Authority Sustainability Analysis. The scope of work for this project included a review and analysis of the current JPA agreement and of the Wheatland Fire Authority operating structure and its ongoing ability to meet the needs of the City. The consultant's report was to develop a strategic direction document that includes demographics of the region, a review of calls for service, and resource needs including personnel, apparatus, and physical facilities. The consultant developed a business plan for the organization that takes into account the items needed to provide fire and life safety services with estimates on long-term replacement costs, use of technology, comparisons of Cal OSHA requirements and their impact to the organization.

The consultant produced a written report with projections on future service delivery needs and costs associated with the Fire Authority including estimates for capital expenditures. The report also included a financial analysis identifying financial needs to maintain the Fire Authority's sustainability and a discussion of potential funding mechanisms including adjusting the annual contribution made by the City. The consultant presented the Wheatland Fire Authority Sustainability Analysis Report to the City Council on October 22, 2024.

The proposed Amendment No.1 to the 2010 First Amended and Restated Wheatland Fire Authority Joint Powers Agreement includes several minor administrative changes as well as an adjustment to the allocation of costs between the City of Wheatland and Plumas Brophy Fire Protection District in accordance with the recommendations included in the 2024 consultant's report. The proposed JPA amendments are summarized below.

- Section 3.9 – Authority Facilities

A sentence has been added clarifying that ‘any improvements or upgrades to a Party’s property that require a building permit shall be the responsibility of the owner of the property.’

- Section 5.2 – Budget

The current agreement provides that the City of Wheatland and Plumas Brophy Fire Protection District shall be provided with a copy of the Fire Authority proposed budget at least 20 days prior to the Authority Board’s approval. That time period has been increased to 30 days. A sentence has also been added to this section stating that the Authority Board will not adopt a budget which commits either party to a contribution which exceeds the annual contribution amount budgeted by each party.

- Section 5.3 – Party Contributions

The 2010 agreement identifies the City’s annual percentage contribution as 49.3% and Plumas Brophy Fire District contribution as 50.7%. The Wheatland Fire Authority Sustainability Analysis Report (page 5) recommends that the cost sharing should be changed to 61% for the City of Wheatland and 39% for Plumas Brophy Fire District based upon the emergency call volume generated by each agency. The proposed amendment increases the City’s contribution to 50% in FY 2025-26, to 58% in FY 2026-27 and to 61% in FY 2027-28. Beginning in FY 2028-29, each party’s share will be calculated based upon the number of calls received in the prior calendar year.

The current agreement provides that payment to the Authority will be made every three months “or at such other intervals as determined appropriate by the Board.” The amendment provides that each party will determine whether it will pay its proportionate share in either one annual payment (due in July) or two semi-annual payments (due in July and January).

The proposed Amendment No. 1 to the First Amended and Restated Wheatland Fire Authority Joint Powers Agreement will be considered by the Plumas Brophy Fire Protection District Board of Directors on July 10, 2025.

Fiscal Impact: The City’s budgeted General Fund contribution for operation of the Wheatland Fire Authority for Fiscal Year 2025-26 is \$315,499 which represents 50% of the Fire Authority budget. If the City were to contribute the recommended 61% this fiscal year, the cost would increase by \$69,410 to \$384,909. Phasing the contribution formula in over a three-year period provides the City time to plan for this increased cost.

Attachments:

1. Resolution
2. Amendment No.1 to the First Amended and Restated Wheatland Fire Authority Joint Powers Agreement
3. First Amended and Restated Wheatland Fire Authority Joint Powers Agreement
4. Consultant Report