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*For immediate release  
August 22, 2022*

***PRESS RELEASE***  
**City of Indian Rocks Beach**  
**Pinellas Suncoast Fire and Rescue District Public Forum**

The Pinellas Suncoast Fire and Rescue District will be holding a Public Forum on Monday, September 19, 2022, at 6:00 P.M. at the City of Indian Rocks Beach City Hall Auditorium, to educate the public on the November Referendum Question concerning proposed ad valorem tax.

**"WORKING TOGETHER"**

City of Indian Rocks Beach, Florida  
727/595-2517

**The District is projected to run out of money by September of 2025**



**Proposed Funding Change**

	Fiscal Year Begin	10/1/22	10/1/23	10/1/24
	Fiscal Year End	9/30/23	9/30/24	9/30/25
<b>REVENUES</b>				
<b>Assessments (Non-Ad Valorem)</b>		4,896,985	4,896,985	4,896,985
<b>EMS Funding Income:</b>				
2.5 Seats plus 1.9% Overhead Funding		1,759,211	1,811,987	1,866,346
CME Instructor Reimb & Other		75,000	75,000	75,000
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>		6,731,196	6,783,972	6,838,331
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
<b>Operating Expenses</b>				
3.5% Personnel - Compensation		3,848,979	3,983,693	4,123,122
6.5% Personnel - Benefits		2,313,485	2,463,861	2,624,012
3.0% Operating Expenses		936,612	902,911	929,998
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>		7,099,076	7,350,465	7,677,132
<b>Net Operating Income / (Loss)</b>		(367,880)	(566,493)	(838,801)
<b>Capital Expenses</b>				
Capital Expenditures - Rolling Stock		334,065	355,514	181,684
Capital Expenditures - Equipment		40,000		
<b>Total Capital Expenses</b>		374,065	355,514	181,684
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		7,473,141	7,705,979	7,858,816
<b>Net Income / (Loss) Projection</b>		(741,945)	(922,007)	(1,020,485)
<b>FUND BALANCE PROJECTIONS</b>				
Total Fund Balance, Beginning of Year		2,096,414	1,354,469	432,462
Total Fund Balance, End of Year		1,354,469	432,462	(588,023)
Operating Expense to Fund Balance Ratio		19.1%	5.9%	-7.7%

**Referendum to Approve a New Pinellas Suncoast Fire and Rescue District Ad Valorem Tax**

To improve fire, emergency medical, and rescue services, including but not limited to construction of and improvements to new and existing fire stations and facilities, and the purchase of apparatus and equipment, shall the District be authorized to levy an annual ad valorem tax at a millage rate not to exceed 0.67 mills (\$0.67 for every \$1,000.00 of taxable value), with the authorized millage currently being 0 mills?

The Pinellas Suncoast Fire & Rescue District (PSFRD) is primarily funded through a flat fee. Residents pay \$360 a year, no matter how big or small the home. Because the flat fee is fixed, it has never kept up with rising expenses. The PSFRD Commission determined the District needs a revenue source that will adjust with property values and create a permanent solution to funding issues.

**The Fire Commission voted to place the above question on the November 8 ballot.**



### **Does the Fire District really need more money?**

The District is projected to run out of money by September of 2025. Without additional funding, District reserve levels will eventually trigger a State takeover and the District will likely dissolve.

### **How will the money be used?**

First, it will keep our Fire Department solvent and provide a long-term funding solution. Additionally, the 0.67 mills will allow us to maintain firefighter personnel, purchase needed equipment, and finally address our station needs. Our only station in a non-evacuation zone is made of corrugated metal and can't be used in a hurricane. With this funding we'll be able to replace our 50-year-old main station, put a proper station on the southern end of the beach, and build a safe station with an Emergency Operations Center in Oakhurst to serve our district during storms.

### **How do I know PSFRD has been frugal with taxpayer money?**

Firefighters have voluntarily given up raises. We've sold off assets and bought used equipment from neighboring fire districts. Our south beach station is actually a rented office in a bank building. The Fire Department has done what it can to control costs, but funding has never kept up with expenses.

### **Instead of more money - why don't you reduce expenses?**

We can't cut our way out of this. The only expense large enough to make a difference is firefighter pay and benefits. We analyzed a 25% cut in personnel expenses (which would cause a significant reduction in services) and the District still runs out of money.

### **Couldn't we get more money from the County?**

We've been working on that and it appears County funding will improve this year. However, if the County fully funds our EMS seats and authorizes reimbursement for our truck, the District would still run out of money - in 2027 instead of 2025.

### **What does 0.67 mills mean?**

\$67 a year per \$100,000 in taxable value.

### **What's this going to cost me?**

It depends on the taxable value of your home. Based on 2022 values, the average additional cost for residential properties will be:

<b>Belleair Beach</b>	<b>\$337.21</b>
<b>Belleair Shore</b>	<b>\$2,319.66</b>
<b>Indian Rocks Beach</b>	<b>\$269.18</b>
<b>Indian Shores</b>	<b>\$284.28</b>
<b>Oakhurst</b>	<b>\$108.39</b>

### **Will the 0.67 mills be in addition to the flat fee?**

Yes. By using both a flat fee and a millage, everyone pays something and homes that are worth more pay more.

### **Do voters keep authority over the millage rate?**

This proposal allows up to 0.67 mills. The Fire Commission could lower the rate without voter approval but cannot raise it.

### **Are you going to ask for another increase in a few years?**

This is a 20-year plan. We've analyzed expected needs and planned for their costs. If the voters authorize 0.67 mills, we project PSFRD's needs will be met through at least 2043.

## **Questions?**

✉ [info@psfrd.org](mailto:info@psfrd.org)

☎ 595-1117 ext. 100

🌐 [www.psfrd.org/referendum](http://www.psfrd.org/referendum)

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Federal law requires this information be provided in Spanish.  
Para obtener esta información en Español, visite [www.psfrd.org/referendum](http://www.psfrd.org/referendum)