

Municipality of Anchorage



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Dan Sullivan, Mayor*

*GIRDWOOD VALLEY SERVICE AREA BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Erin Eker/David Chadwick, Co-Chair
Tommy O'Malley, Robert Snitzer, Sam Daniel*

Resolution 2015-02 Of the Girdwood Board of Supervisors

The following RESOLUTION was passed by the Girdwood Board of Supervisors on May 11, 2015.

RESOLVED THAT:

WHEREAS, the projected State Public Safety Budget will eliminate the Girdwood Alaska State Trooper (AST) Post on January 1, 2016.

WHEREAS, Anchorage Police Department (APD) and Municipal Attorney have presented Girdwood with two alternatives for police protection:

- Join the APD Service Area and be assessed 2.97 mils (estimated minimum cost). This option requires an area wide vote and would add 75% to Girdwood individual property tax bills for city services.
- Create a local Girdwood Police Service Area and be assessed 7.17 mils, almost doubling property taxes in Girdwood. This option requires only a vote by Girdwood residents.

WHEREAS, the time frame for this transition does not allow time for complete public process as the next area wide voting opportunity is the Anchorage Municipal election in April 2016, four months after the Girdwood AST Post is scheduled to close.

WHEREAS, the voters of Girdwood will be hesitant to raise the area tax cap of 6.0 mils to accommodate and approve a rise of 2.97 mils, creating a gap in public safety protection.

WHEREAS, the voters of the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) have never approved a Girdwood specific measure in the time since unification (1975), even when these measures are paid for only within the Girdwood Service Area and approved overwhelmingly by Girdwood voters. It would be highly unusual for them to change course and sanction Girdwood's entry into the APD Service Area, eliminating Girdwood's only reasonable alternative.

WHEREAS, Girdwood's lifeblood and largest property taxpayer, Alyeska Resort, has stated at a public meeting that a few more bad snow years, combined with a doubling of property tax might cause them to rethink their business model. Though unlikely, this change in their economic risk profile would have a negative effect on the local economy and property valuations.

WHEREAS, the APD model necessarily includes coverage on the Seward Highway, ameliorating the State's responsibility at the expense of local property tax payers, creating an unreasonable burden on the Girdwood community.

WHEREAS, the isolation of the Girdwood community from the population center of the MOA provides unique law enforcement challenges, it will be very difficult or impossible to scale down the APD model to achieve small town efficiencies due to staffing and liability issues that come with municipal policing.

WHEREAS, APD and the MOA have made no attempt to include Bird Creek, Indian, Rainbow, Crow Creek, and Portage in the mil rate increase, thereby forcing the Girdwood Service Area to assume police patrol costs for the entire Turnagain Arm Community.

WHEREAS, AST reports indicate that most criminal incidents occur on the state highway, the percentage of incidents involving residents or incidents within the town is very low.

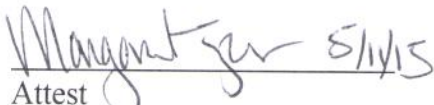
WHEREAS, information must be gathered to determine the best options available to preserve a continuum of public safety in Girdwood. In light of this the Girdwood Board of Supervisors has appointed a public safety taskforce to gather information for stakeholders, investigate alternatives and provide guidance to the Board of Supervisors.

WHEREAS, while the taskforce sees the necessity of a continuum of public safety services, it is not confident that its vision is currently supported by a majority of voters.

THEREFORE, it is resolved by the Girdwood Board of Supervisors to ask the State Department of Public Safety, through its Commissioner and the Department of Administration to find options for the Girdwood Service Area to provide law enforcement services that may include contracting directly with the Alaska State Troopers; or contributing by some other means to retain State Trooper services in our area.

THEREFORE, it is resolved by the Girdwood Board of Supervisors to ask the State of Alaska Department of Public Safety for a time extension in their budget to provide law enforcement services of at least an entire election cycle, plus a reasonable time for implementation, so Girdwood can safely transition with full public process, buy-in and an opportunity for a vote of the people.

 5/11/15
Erin Eker, Co-Chair, GBOS Date

 5/11/15
Attest