

Consent Calendar Item: Municipal Code – Reassignment of Director of Emergency Services from Fire Chief to Police Chief

The proposition that the Police Chief should be the emergency coordinator should be revisited for several reasons.

1. First, if the Fire Chief was the appropriate place for this responsibility, then why are we not placing that responsibility with Gold Ridge. Citizens are paying twice the price for fire service, and Gold Ridge cannot be in charge of emergencies.
2. Second, during daylight hours on weekdays we have 2 officers, a sergeant and captain and chief on duty. In an emergency there are only 5 people available to be on the streets to assess issues, manage traffic, direct emergency responders, and make initial welfare responses. If you put the Police Chief in the EOC then you reduce your first responders by 20%. The impact at night would be even greater.
3. One advantage of outsourcing Gold Ridge is the fact that they are a larger organization. It seems likely that Gold Ridge has many more resources for staffing EOC. It may be that they actually would already be staffed if the emergency was wildfire, extensive flooding or an earthquake affecting more than Sebastopol. The Police EOC then becomes a communications hub with Gold Ridge and the County. Police and other city staff focus on responding to needs within the city.