

UPCOMING ELECTION FOR WHITEFISH FIRE SERVICE AREA BOARD

NONRESIDENT LAND OWNERS MUST REQUEST A BALLOT TO BE PERMITTED TO VOTE

The upcoming Whitefish Fire Service Area (WFSA) Board election (5/4/21) could be very important in determining the quality and extent of fire and EMT services that will be provided to those with property within the Whitefish Fire Service Area. Recently, the City of Whitefish and the WFSA agreed on a new contract for fire and EMT services. The terms allow WFSA to end the contract with the city of Whitefish Fire Department in 2023 if they can create a volunteer organization. As recently as 3/16/21, the current Board expressed interest in continuing to pursue creating a volunteer fire department in 2023. The decisions that are made by the WFSA Board will likely impact home insurance, fire response time, and the professionalism of the fire service received by those within the Fire Service Area (see map on website).

The Whitefish Fire Service Area Board is a five member unpaid volunteer board that is responsible for providing fire service within their area of jurisdiction. Members include: Mark Carlson, James Deats, Calvin Dyck, James Dyon, and Dennis Oliver. There are two vacancies on the board and to date there are six candidates. The two incumbents, who supported replacing the Whitefish Fire Department with a volunteer fire department (James Dyon and Calvin Dyck) and new candidates: **George Losleben and Ed McGrew, who support keeping the 24/7 365 professional career firefighters and EMTs through the Whitefish Fire Department, as opposed to moving to a volunteer department.** The other two candidates who will be listed on the ballot (WFD firefighters Dave Mangold and Mike Zorn) have publicly stated that they wish to withdraw from the race, and reportedly support **George Losleben and Ed McGrew.**

The election is a mail-in ballot only. On April 14, 2021 ballots will be mailed to all homeowners within the Fire Service Area who are registered voters in Flathead County. **However, there is also a process in place so NON-RESIDENT LAND OWNERS CAN VOTE.** If you are a nonresident, but own property within the Fire Service Area despite having your primary residence elsewhere, you are legally permitted to vote in this election PROVIDED you apply for a nonresident ballot within the time required

(4/14/21). You and anyone listed on the deed are eligible to apply for a ballot. **Where a wife and husband are listed together on the deed, each is legally entitled to submit a ballot, PROVIDED THEY EACH APPLY FOR A BALLOT. IMPORTANT: IT'S ALSO NECESSARY TO INCLUDE A COPY OF YOUR PROPERTY TAX RECORDS SHOWING THAT YOU'RE UP TO DATE ON THE PROPERTY TAXES IN ORDER TO RECEIVE A BALLOT. THOSE RECORDS ARE SENT TO YOU WITH YOUR PROPERTY TAX BILL.** The ballot request form is available for download on this site. Complete the information requested and include proof of paying taxes and then return the **form** as soon as possible. You will then receive a ballot to be completed and returned by May 4. **BALLOTS WILL BEGIN TO BE MAILED OUT BY THE ELECTION DEPARTMENT ON APRIL 14, 2021, SO IT'S IMPORTANT TO REQUEST A BALLOT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO AVOID BURDENING THE FLATHEAD ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT AT THE LAST MINUTE. THIS REQUEST MAY BE MADE BY EMAIL. AS INDICATED EARLIER, COMPLETED BALLOTS MUST BE RETURNED AND RECEIVED BY THE ELECTION DEPARTMENT NO LATER THAN MAY 4, 2021.**

A COPY OF THE [APPLICATION FORM FOR A NONRESIDENT BALLOT](#) IS AVAILABLE ON THIS SITE.

THIS REQUEST MAY BE MADE BY EMAIL. electionweb@flathead.mt.gov