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To: [Holbrook, Marcia](#)
Subject: SOC Comments, Item 10.2 on 1-21-26 Agenda
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Greetings to the Directors of the MOFD governing board. For those who may need reminding, I am a silverback denizen of the southwest corner of this fire district.

I wish to say that, were my boss to ask me to look in the mirror and write a head to toe self-assessment, I expect the result would also look like the outcome of a beauty pageant with only a single contestant. It would exhibit my good points, present ample fluff and talk past everything else. Why would I analyze my capabilities to the extent of discussing my limitations, for example, when I was not directly asked to do so?

To put this another way, when you receive a quarterly financial report, you might expect headlines and updates, such as, "so much money came in" and "so much went out over the past three months." We're on track or we're off track. But for an annual review you would expect a long range forecast considering trends in applicable County policies or anticipated trends in tax revenues or anticipated large expenditures, all of which would give you some better sense of the overall steadiness, or lack thereof, of the District's financial standing.

My point is that this standards of coverage document reads much more like a quarterly update than an annual review. It states what is here now, but offers little analysis, little thought towards the future of things. And gentlemen, let's be abundantly clear, this document is supposed to look forward on a decennial level.

One specific illustration is the absence of a discussion of a potential future need for an additional truck in the District, which would be a very big expense. If T44 is protecting firefighters on SR24 when a fire breaks out in a St. Mary's dormitory and ConFire's nearest trucks are already in service, should T44 leave the firefighters exposed to traffic on the freeway, or should the firefighters at the college have to wait an extended time for the services of a ladder truck? Will this hazard not be compounded when Orinda has three-story buildings downtown? At what point should the District consider adding a second truck?

How many other questions of operational capability are out there, would you say? This is where a professional, o-b-j-e-c-t-i-v-e view of the District could be useful. This is where a deeper dive into the data and consideration of overarching trends, *beyond what staff has time to do while simultaneously keeping the operation running*, could be helpful to Directors who care about such things.

I am quite sure that each of you understands the reasoning behind why the District changes auditors every so many years. But how many are sufficiently savvy to understand that the same principle applies to an assessment of operational capabilities? Fresh eyes may see new things.

If you see a problem here, you could simply ask for help.

My first suggestion is that you choose a director to informally shop this document around to some professionals and ask them what more they could do and how much that might cost. Secondly, create an RFP for the kind of document that will give you an understanding of the District's overall operational capabilities comparable to your understanding of its financial workings.

If you do this well, it will serve not only yourselves, but also your successors who will come to this job knowing little or nothing about the larger picture. Please consider that, instead of judging the beauty contest, you could be taking your job a bit more seriously.

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