

AGENDA ITEM REPORT**DATE:** October 21, 2025**DEPARTMENT:** Public Safety**REQUESTER:** Benjamin Abes**TITLE:** Authorize the Chair to Execute a Notice of Withdrawal for the Southwest Florida USAR Team

I. MOTION REQUESTED

Authorize the Chair to execute a Notice of Withdrawal on behalf of the Board of County Commissioners.

II. ITEM SUMMARY

Authorizes the Chair to execute a letter to the Board of the Southwest Florida Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Team, Inc., also known as Florida Task Force 6, to initiate the withdrawal process under the standing Interlocal Agreement (ILA). The Board approved the ILA in 2004 in conjunction with the Fire Districts serving the communities of Bonita Springs, Estero, Fort Myers Beach, Iona McGregor, San Carlos Park, and South Trail. The notice to the agencies will provide a year for the transition of property and assets owned and/or titled to the County to another member agency under the ILA. The County will also manage the existing grants on behalf of the team, but will not accept new funding. This funding will be managed by another governmental member of the team, without disrupting the team's finances.

Employees of Public Safety serving on the team will continue to do so under an "Affiliate Membership" described in Section Five of the ILA. Public Safety will continue to provide staff and resources to support this vital regional asset.

III. BACKGROUND AND IMPLICATIONS OF ACTION

In 2004, Lee County Public Safety joined six Independent Special Districts in executing an Interlocal Agreement for the formation of the Southwest Florida Urban Search and Rescue Team. This team is recognized by the State of Florida as Florida Task Force 6 (FL-TF-6). The team responds to requests for search and rescue assistance through local and statewide mutual aid processes, as well as interstate missions through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact.

The County has served in various capacities over the years with the team. In addition to supporting employees from EMS who respond as part of the medical and logistical support for the operation, the County has managed state subgrants and appropriations on behalf of the team. These grants are managed as part of the County's ledger under separate subgrant accounts.

The Director of Public Safety and the County Manager's Office have been reviewing the County's role and nature of participation for more than a year. The recommendation of the Director of Public Safety is to issue notice to the team of the intent to withdrawal from the team.

IV. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Current Year Dollar Amount: No funding required.

Included in the Current Budget?: N/A

Fund: N/A

Comments:

Is this a revenue or expense item? N/A

Is this Discretionary or Mandatory? Discretionary

Will this item impact future budgets? No

Program:

Project:

Account Strings:

Fund Type?

V. RECOMMENDATION

Approve

ATTACHMENTS:

2004 USAR ILA, USAR withdraw

REVIEWERS:

Samantha Westen, County Manager
Benjamin Abes, Public Safety
Anne Henkel, Budget Services
Peter Winton, County Manager
Andrea Fraser, County Attorney
Christine Brady, County Manager

Created/Initiated - 10/8/2025
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