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Madeira Beach may outsource fire services

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MADEIRA BEACH - Residents of Madeira Beach may no longer have their own fire department if city leaders have their way.

City Manager W.D. Higginbotham proposed to contract out for fire rescue services during a city commission workshop Tuesday.

According to the city manager, the fire department is the city's largest and most expensive service. So far, one neighboring department says it can save Madeira Beach a couple of hundred thousand dollars a year. Two other fire departments are still preparing proposals for the city commission.

But some beach residents at the workshop were not happy about the proposal.

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"I feel as if it's kind of a little absurd to have a Madeira Beach Fire Department and be selling it off to somebody else for money purposes," said 20-year-old Mora Kudari.

June Mohns told commissioners how two of her relatives received emergency medical care in about one minute.

"I don't think there's any way that anybody could provide that kind of service. I mean the FD is a mile away from us at the farthest," Mohns said.

City manager W.D. Higginbotham said he is doing his job.

"I'm looking at all possibilities to reduce our costs for providing the same level of service, and the fire department is no exception," he said.

The final recommendation in the proposed budget will be delivered to city commissioners by July 1st.

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