



City of Arts & Innovation

City Council Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL **DATE: OCTOBER 6, 2015**

FROM: FIRE DEPARTMENT **WARDS: ALL**

SUBJECT: NATIONAL FIRE PREVENTION MONTH AND SPECIAL RECOGNITION

ISSUE:

In recognition of October being designated as National Fire Prevention Month, the Fire Department will present a brief update on planned activities, recent accomplishments and will recognize Battalion Chief Thomas Jay for his role as Commander of the City of Riverside Fire Department Honor Guard and Unit Bugler.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the City Council receive and file this informational report.

BACKGROUND:

October is National Fire Prevention Month. While the campaign lasts the entire month, most fire departments designate the second week of October as Fire Prevention Week, during which demonstrations and expos are held in various cities. In recognition of Fire Prevention Month, on October 10, 2015, all fourteen of Riverside's fire stations will be open to the public between 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. to encourage the community to meet their neighborhood fire crews, tour the fire stations, and enjoy light refreshments while learning about fire and life safety. On October 24, 2015, the Downtown Fire Station will host a Fire Expo on University Avenue in front of the Fire Station, featuring specialty firefighting apparatus, rescue demonstrations, and refreshments. All residents are encouraged to attend these upcoming events and learn more about how to protect their homes and families from fire.

In addition, the Fire Department is pleased to highlight the following recent accomplishments in the areas of non-emergency ambulance regulation, technology enhancements, strategic planning, mutual aid assistance, labor relations, succession planning, grants administration, and employee teambuilding.

Non-Emergency Ambulance Regulation

At the direction of the City Council, the Fire Department recently implemented a process to inspect and permit authorized non-emergency ambulance providers to operate within the City limits. Care Ambulance, Mission Ambulance, Cavalry Ambulance and AmeriCare Ambulance have been operating since January, offering the healthcare community stakeholders more options for non-emergency medical transport.

Technology Enhancements

The Fire Department recently completed migration to a new FIREHOUSE Records Management System (RMS). The RMS provides an automated tool allowing Fire personnel to collect, manage and access critical information for incident response and resource allocation. The new system replaced an outdated RMS which was no longer supported by the vendor, and offered limited emergency medical services (EMS) data collection and reporting capabilities. The new web-based system offers many advantages, including more robust EMS data collection and reporting, automated fire inspection module, pre-fire planning capabilities, and asset management inventory module.

Strategic Planning

Community outreach efforts are well-underway to solicit input for the Fire Department's five-year strategic plan. Numerous community groups and individuals have participated in sessions held in public venues throughout the City, and/or completed the online customer satisfaction survey. The input provided by the community will prove invaluable as the Fire Department moves forward with crafting a long-range strategic plan to better serve Riverside's residents.

Labor Negotiations

New Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) were successfully negotiated with both the Riverside Fire Management Group and the Riverside Firefighters' Association. The new MOUs are in effect until June 30, 2017.

Succession Planning

Identifying and developing staff to fill key leadership positions within the Fire Department is an ongoing priority. Great progress was made recently with the promotions of two Deputy Chiefs, three Battalion Chiefs, six Captains, and eight Engineers. In addition, a total of eleven new Firefighters were hired.

Grant Administration

The Fire Department aggressively seeks grant funding opportunities to replace aging equipment and improve firefighter safety. Recent grant awards include \$229,399 for purchase of new extrication tools, commonly referred to as "Jaws of Life," \$350,699 for retrofit fire sprinkler system installations at the Arlington, Magnolia and La Sierra Fire Stations to protect these critical City assets and personnel, and \$875,435 for new Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus equipment. In addition, the Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) and Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) programs continue to be funded solely through grants, at \$2,400,000 and \$1,000,000 respectively.

Team Building

Fire personnel have engaged in several teambuilding events, including reinstatement of the annual all employee holiday party, the biennial Family Day held at the Training Center, and an inaugural Family Beach Day. Each of these events was sponsored by the Riverside Firefighters' Association and well attended by staff.

Mutual Aid

California has experienced an unprecedented wildfire season this year, with many thousands of acres burning across the state. The Fire Department sent over 60 personnel in various capacities (Line Emergency Medical Technician, Strike Teams, Task Forces, Technical Specialist Teams, and Management Assistance) to help protect lives, property and natural resources from the ravages of fire. In turn, the hands-on wildland fire training and experience afforded to our personnel strengthens our capabilities to protect our own City and maintain response readiness.

Special Recognition

The Fire Department is pleased to honor Battalion Chief Thomas Jay for his role as Commander of the City of Riverside Fire Department Honor Guard and Unit Bugler. Battalion Chief Jay, fondly known as TJay throughout the fire service, has been a firefighter with the City of Riverside Fire Department for 27 years, the past year as a Battalion Chief. On numerous occasions both state and nationwide, he has been called on to organize, facilitate and participate in memorial services for area dignitaries and individual fire departments as they honor their fallen firefighters. Over the years, TJay has been instrumental in organizing extensive funeral/memorial services representing the City of Riverside's own fallen and retired firefighters.

The Honor Guard participates in many funeral services, vigils, parades, color presentations, and memorials, both at home and throughout the county, state, and national venues. Battalion Chief Jay plays a key role at three yearly memorial events held to honor firefighters who have fallen in the line of duty: the International Association of Fire Fighters' Memorial, held in Colorado Springs, Colorado; the California Professional Firefighters' Memorial, held in Sacramento; and the National Firefighters' Memorial, held in Emmetsburg, Maryland. For the past three years, Battalion Chief Jay has been the "Master Sergeant at Arms" and Bugler at the National Firefighter Memorial Service and the overall "Honor Guard Commander" at the California Professional Firefighters' Memorial. Each of these ceremonies includes hundreds of bagpipe players and color guard and honor guard members from across the United States and Canada, which he commands during the individual ceremonies. These unforgettable memorials are attended by numerous family members, fire service personnel and dignitaries, including at times the President of the United States.

Battalion Chief Jay has an extensive background in music as a trumpet player. Because of his musical expertise, TJay is often called on to play "Taps" at firefighter and law enforcement funerals and memorial services across the nation. A veteran of the United States Air Force, TJay continues to give back to the military community through volunteering his bugling services in a specialty group called "Bugles Across America" at the Riverside National Cemetery and other locations throughout the state. In this capacity, he helps to honor our nation's fallen veterans and soldiers killed in action in Iraq and Afghanistan. In addition, TJ actively supports burn survivors. He currently serves as a member of the Board of Directors for the Burn Institute – Inland Empire, an organization he has been involved with for 16 years. During this time, he has provided transportation for the children to "Camp Beyond the Scars" (summer and winter camps), served as a camp counselor, participated in numerous fundraising events, the Spirit of Courage Awards, pancake breakfasts, and the "Burn Relay" in San Diego County.

Battalion Chief Jay represents the very best of the fire service, and it is a pleasure to recognize

him for his outstanding contributions to the Fire Department and community.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this presentation.

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