

MESSAGE FROM FIRE CHIEF DARYL L. OSBY

July 2016



Summer continues to uphold its reputation as a busy season for us all as our personnel battle wildfires, respond to increased calls for emergency medical services and ocean rescues, and put the finishing touches on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2016–17 budget.

The Department's core value of teamwork comes to mind when I think about how we collectively band together—on the front lines and behind the scenes—to confront and manage our day-to-day operations. It takes an entire Department to make sure our communities are protected and well served by us.

In this month's message, I will provide an overview of the Department's FY 2016–17 adopted budget, follow up with an update on the eHR Task Force and share the Department's latest achievements—the highly regarded International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC)/Motorola Solutions Ben Franklin Award for Valor and the National Association of Counties (NACo) Achievement Award.

FY 2016–17 ADOPTED BUDGET

Recently, the Board of Supervisors adopted the Department's FY 2016–17

budget, totaling \$1.1 billion—an increase of \$35 million from the FY 2015–16 budget.

This year's budget includes:

- 21 positions for the opening of Fire Station 143 in the Santa Clarita Valley and for Fire Station 51 to staff a quint in Universal City;
- Three grant-funded positions to support the Grants and Cooperative Agreements Division;
- Four grant-funded positions in Homeland Security to enhance preparedness and response capabilities to all-hazard incidents;
- Two grant-funded positions in Technical Operations to enhance urban search and rescue response and deployment capabilities;
- Six support positions, including three in Payroll, to improve efficiencies and help generate revenue;
- Funding for salary and employee benefits related to the recent Board-approved cost of living adjustments (COLA); and
- Funding for services and supplies and capital assets, primarily related to the carryover of funding from the FY 2015–16 budget.

The adopted budget also includes:

- Restoration of \$2.6 million from the County General Fund to reinstate lifeguard curtailments and COLA-related increases from previous years;
- Use of \$35.9 million from the Department's reserve funds in order to meet operational needs and bridge the gap between revenues and expenditures; and
- An overall increase of \$23 million in property tax revenue from the FY 2015–16 projection.

The Department will continue to focus its FY 2016–17 efforts on fiscal sustainability, exemplary services, workforce development, operational effectiveness and emergency preparedness. As we move forward, I will keep the Department and Board of Supervisors informed of our progress and financial outlook.

eHR TASK FORCE UPDATE

Since the eHR Task Force formed earlier this year, each member has been committed to improving and streamlining the overall payroll process. Their diligence has paid off, decreasing their concerns from 26 issues to eight.

Among those issues addressed are the noticeable changes and improvements to the County employee paystubs. Thanks to the eHR Task Force, a new Countywide paystub design was implemented July 15. The new design allows employees to better read and understand their earnings statements. Key changes include:

- Separate earnings sections for the current and any prior pay periods with adjustments;
- Consolidation of detail earnings for similar pay events;
- Elimination of four columns of unnecessary information; and
- Separate totals for current and prior pay period earnings.

And, the eHR Task Force has also clarified Department guidelines for coding overtime when 40-hour personnel work on a County holiday.

The eHR Task Force continues to discuss the development of an alternate timekeeping system (i.e., replacing IPFIRS) as well as address other issues as they arise.

As more progress is made, I will keep you posted on those developments and any other news related to the payroll process.

VALOR AND ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

On Aug. 18, California Task Force 2/ USA Task Force 2 (USA-2) members Fire Captain Gerald Gonzales, Fire Captain Daniel McKeen and Fire Fighter Paramedic Matthew Prasch, as well as three individuals from the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Virginia Task Force 1/USA Task Force 1 (USA-1), will receive the prestigious IAFC/Motorola Solutions Ben Franklin Award for Valor for their heroic, brave and lifesaving actions during last year's Nepal earthquake response.

Named after Benjamin Franklin, one of the first fire chiefs in the nation, this prestigious award recognizes the spirit of service, courage and heroism that is a tradition among the world's fire and emergency service. Presented annually at the Fire-Rescue International conference by the IAFC and Motorola, the award honors firefighters for their expert training, professional service and dedication to the duty displayed in saving human life.

Faced with split-second, life-and-death decisions and armed with minimal tools, these USA-1 and USA-2 members saved multiple lives, including that of a 60-year-old woman pinned by a 400-pound piece of concrete.

And, on July 24, the Department will receive a 2016 Achievement

Award for the CPR Anytime initiative from NACo in the category of Civic Education and Public Information. CPR Anytime has proved itself to be an innovative program as well as a positive community resource.

NACo is the only national organization that represents and advocates for county governments. Every year, NACo presents awards to government initiatives that help residents.

Through CPR Anytime, the Department has trained tens of thousands of County residents on Hands-Only CPR, so they can go on and teach their friends and family how to perform CPR, too. The CPR Anytime initiative supports the annual Sidewalk CPR Day and the PulsePoint app, which notifies CPR-trained bystanders when a sudden cardiac arrest occurs nearby in a public place.

Congratulations to all the recipients for awards well deserved!

THANK YOU

When we work together, we achieve amazing results. I hope we continue to carry on this spirit of leadership and commitment in our jobs and in the interactions we have with our residents every day.

It makes us who we are—and focuses us on why we do what we do.

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