

August 23, 2011

Hon. Robin Appel
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
222 East Weber Avenue, Room 303
Stockton, CA 95202

CITY OF STOCKTON RESPONSE
STOCKTON FIRE DEPARTMENT MINIMUM STAFFING
2010-2011 SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY GRAND JURY CASE NO. 0610

The following is a response to the Grand Jury, County of San Joaquin, Final Report, Case No. 0610, Stockton Fire Department Minimum Staffing.

GRAND JURY FINDING

1. Tracy, Manteca and Lodi Fire Departments safely staff engines and trucks with three firefighters each. Stockton staff engines with four firefighters and trucks with five firefighters.

CITY RESPONSE

The City partially agrees with this finding. The issue of safety is a term that is not easily defined. The word safely, as used in the Findings is equally hard to define as the job of firefighting assumes a wide variance of risk at any level of staffing in any community. Given our resources at the City, we believe a more accurate term for 'safely' would be 'adequately'.

Assessing the safety of a community is best defined after conducting a thorough risk analysis of a communities target hazards; age and construction of its community; the adopted general plan of the community; the infrastructure (roads and water system); a time/distance/and travel time study based on past emergency response data; and with the knowledge of the capabilities of the existing or proposed workforce. Of course, all of this must be viewed through the lens of the community's willingness to pay for services.

The relative safety provided to a community by emergency response staff is determined by many factors beyond that of staffing levels alone. Ultimately, the final decision on staffing and deployment is in large part based upon what a community can or desires to afford, relative to the risks and levels of services it may wish to provide. In the end, our recently adopted budget includes similar reduced staffing levels.

GRAND JURY FINDING

2. The cost savings by eliminating one position from each of the Stockton Fire Department Engine and Truck Companies on all three shifts would be a savings of \$5,000,000 - \$7,000,000.

CITY RESPONSE

The City partially agrees with this finding. The adopted 2011-2012 City of Stockton Annual Budget reflects a reduction in staffing and employee benefits for the Fire Department of approximately \$19,000,000 less than the baseline budget estimate of \$59,000,000 for 2011-2012.

Stockton Fire Department General Fund Budget	
2009-10 Actual	\$47.5 million
2010-11 Adopted Budget	\$46.9 million
2011-12 Baseline Budget	\$59 million
2011-12 Adopted Budget	\$40 million

Budgeting for personnel and other costs associated with providing fire safety service is complex. The ultimate outcome of the reduced staffing, if modeled solely on the recommendation of the report, would fall within the projected range of 5 to 7 million dollars. The reduced staffing level implemented by the City, due to the fiscal crisis, reduced staffing by more than what was recommended by the Grand Jury and taking into account multiple factors is intended to achieve closer to \$10,000,000 in savings. Historically, the issue of staffing was controlled by the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Stockton and the Stockton Fire Fighters' Union. As a result of recent negotiations, the minimum staffing language in the MOU that is pending ratification has now been eliminated and as of July 1, 2011 decisions on staffing levels rest with the City alone. Negotiations are still pending on other cost and resource allocation issues which may bring additional savings to the City.

GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATION

1. Reduce the staffing on Stockton fire engines to three firefighters and trucks to four firefighters.

CITY RESPONSE

The City of Stockton has implemented this recommendation. The Stockton Fire Department reduced staffing to three firefighters on engines and four firefighters on trucks as of July 1, 2011 after the amended Memorandum of Understanding was tentatively in place between the City and the Stockton Fire Fighters' Union.

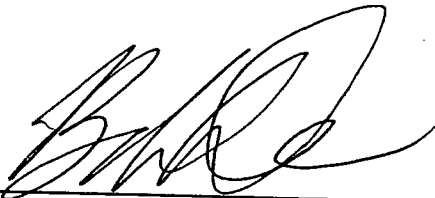
GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATION

2. Create a relief pool from the staffing reduction that would cover firefighters on leave rather than pay overtime.

CITY RESPONSE

This recommendation has been partially implemented. The Stockton Fire Department has operated a relief pool for several years as an augmentation to daily staffing to reduce overtime. This relief pool has recently been expanded to further reduce overtime, but will not eliminate all overtime. Although staffing levels are now managed by the City, the City must also manage the financial and safety risks associated with staffing an adequate number of fire apparatus on a daily basis throughout the City.

The size and number of a relief pool is a daily staffing cost to the city and if all members of the relief pool are not utilized, then the daily staffing cost is higher than what it might have to be on any given day. Therefore, the City of Stockton has found that a strategy that balances the use of a relief pool and reduced overtime dollars is the most cost effective means to maintain an acceptable level of staffing throughout the city on a daily basis.



BOB DEIS
CITY MANAGER

Cc: City Council

11-0234

Resolution No.

STOCKTON CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION APPROVING THE CITY OF STOCKTON'S RESPONSE TO THE 2010-2011 CIVIL GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT AND DIRECTING THE CITY MANAGER TO SIGN THE RESPONSE ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF STOCKTON AND TRANSMIT THE RESPONSE TO THE PRESIDING JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT OF SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY

The 2010-2011 Civil Grand Jury for the County of San Joaquin issued its findings and recommendations for the following case: Investigation Case No. 0610 relating to Stockton Fire Department/Class I Rating; and

California Penal Code section 933.05 requires the City Council of the City of Stockton to respond to the Presiding Judge of the San Joaquin County Superior Court within 90 days of the publication of the Final Reports; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF STOCKTON, AS FOLLOWS:

1. The City Council approves and adopts the City of Stockton's response to the 2010-2011 San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury Final Report regarding Investigation Case No. 0610 relating to Stockton Fire Department/Class I Rating, a copy of which is attached as Exhibit 1 and incorporated herein.
2. The City Manager is authorized to sign the response and transmit it to the Presiding Judge of the San Joaquin County Superior Court.
3. The City Manager is authorized and directed to take such actions as are appropriate to carry out the intent of this resolution.

PASSED, APPROVED, and ADOPTED August 23, 2011

Ann Johnston

ANN JOHNSTON, Mayor
of the City of Stockton

ATTEST:

Bonnie Paige
BONNIE PAIGE, City Clerk
of the City of Stockton



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City Atty: GDP
Review _____
Date August 17, 2011