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September 5, 2017

Honorable José L. Alva, Presiding Judge
San Joaquin County Superior Court
180 West Weber Avenue, Suite 1306
Stockton, CA 95202

Re: Response to San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury Report "County Dispatch for Fire-Two Are Not Always Better Than One" 2016-2017 Case Number 0616

Honorable Judge Alva:

This letter responds to the above-referenced Grand Jury Report and is submitted in accordance with California Penal Code Sections 933 and 933.05.

The City of Tracy (City) contracts with the South County Fire Authority (SCFA) to provide fire protection services within city limits and the rural community within the jurisdiction of the Tracy Rural Fire Protection District.

The City's response relates to the findings and recommendations contained in the Grand Jury Report.

Finding F1.2 - The vast majority of fire agencies are in favor of a single countywide emergency fire dispatch center; they agree it would be in the best interest of the citizens and the County of San Joaquin.

The City agrees with this finding. The City also believes that the single countywide center should be staffed, operated and managed by public safety agencies and the center should be located in San Joaquin County. The City would not support creating a regional dispatch center located in another county operated by American Medical Response (AMR), a for-profit ambulance company. If that were to occur, San Joaquin County public safety decisions would be made and/or influenced at AMR's corporate headquarters in Aurora, Colorado. Also, the City would have concern about future labor workforce actions (strikes) by AMR employees. In 2013-14 AMR employees in Northern California threatened to strike and significant contingency plans had to be put in place that allowed local government to assume dispatch and ambulance services. The City would also have concern about how

AMR would utilize the data collected from public agencies. Recently, AMR conducted a public campaign that misrepresented SCFA response data to discredit the SCFA.

Finding F1.3 - There is disagreement as how to organize, operate and fund a single countywide fire dispatch capability. This has led to a failure to pursue creation of a single countywide fire dispatch center.

It is difficult for the City to comment on the merits of this finding. The City has not been involved in any recent discussions concerning a single, countywide fire dispatch capability.

Finding F2.1 - Automatic Aid Agreements between neighboring agencies can reduce response times.

The City agrees with this finding if there is a single, countywide fire dispatch center. Transferring calls between multiple dispatch centers can often negate any efficiency realized by automatic aid agreements. When multiple dispatch centers are involved, the closest resource is not always the fastest resource due to call processing and call transfer delays.

It should also be noted that SCFA has automatic aid agreements with agencies to its west (Alameda County Fire Department) and to its east (Lathrop-Manteca Fire District). The area to its north is unprotected by a fire district and the area to its south is in Stanislaus County and is open farm land without proximity to fire resources.

Finding F2.2 - AVL on all fire vehicles and AVL capability at dispatch centers can reduce response times.

The City agrees with this finding. The SCFA has AVL on all first-out fire apparatus and AVL will become fully functional when Stockton Fire Dispatch transitions to their new computer aided dispatch system later this year.

Recommendation R1.3 - By December 31, 2017, County EMS in collaboration with the City of Stockton, the Joint Radio Users Group and the San Joaquin County Regional Fire Dispatch Authority develop a task force and provide a plan to consolidate into a single countywide emergency fire dispatch center.

The City agrees with this recommendation and is committed to being an active participant in the task force as a member of the San Joaquin County Regional Fire Dispatch Authority. The City Fire Chief was one of the key architects of the Alameda County Regional Emergency Communication Center (ACRECC) and would bring that experience and expertise in the development of a transition plan to a countywide emergency fire dispatch center. ACRECC is a high performing regional fire dispatch center that provides dispatches to over 100,000 incidents annually and provides dispatch services for the contract county ambulance and most fire agencies in Alameda County.

September 5, 2017

Page 3 of 3

Recommendation R2.2 - By December 31, 2017, all county fire agencies develop a plan to fund, purchase and implement AVL on all emergency fire vehicles.

The City agrees with this recommendation. As stated above, the SCFA has AVL on all first-out fire apparatus and AVL will become fully functional when Stockton Fire Dispatch transitions to their new computer aided dispatch system later this year.

Thank you for providing the City of Tracy the opportunity to comment on this important report. Please let us know if additional information is required.

Sincerely,



Robert Rickman

Mayor, City of Tracy

