



CONTRA COSTA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

January 18, 2022

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Lewis T. Broschard III, Fire Chief

RE: Fire Chief's Report

- Annexation Update. The annexation initiative with East Contra Costa Fire continues to move through the LAFCo process. We are expecting the sphere of influence change to be considered by LAFCo on January 12 and the annexation application to be considered at a LAFCo hearing in February. We continue the ongoing planning process and have held two organization-wide webinars to keep our members informed. Support from Measure X funds is assisting with both fire station construction and reopening, apparatus procurement, and staffing which will further support annexation.
- Pinole Fire Contract for Service Initiative. We held an initial discussion with the City Manager, Fire Chief, and LAFCo staff early this month. Additional steps in pursuing a contract for service are in process. Measure X funding is providing critical support for this initiative. We will continue to work closely with Pinole's Council, City Manager, and Fire Chief to pursue this option which will enhance fire service capabilities in this West County community and serve to better support the Battalion 7 arrangement there.
- EMS Update. The spike in Omicron variant COVID cases early this month put considerable strain on the entire emergency medical system from dispatch to response and transport and emergency rooms. This resulted in increases in demand for service at a time during which staffing challenges were being experienced as a result of employee infections. The EMS Division considered and implemented a number of mitigating factors to ensure continuity of EMS operations during this challenging period which we expect to moderate in the coming weeks.

We obtained approvals by the LEMSA to utilize Basic Life Support (BLS) ambulances as augmentation to Advanced Life Support (ALS) units to provide much needed additional transport capacity. The LEMSA authorized a revised policy to treat and refer certain patients at the scene without transport to the hospital. We received authorization to use non-911 system BLS resources from other providers, as well as authorization to use our firefighter-paramedics as the primary patient care provider, as needed, to effect transport to the hospital in the absence of normally

available ALS resources. Similarly, we continue our efforts to reduce Ambulance Patient Off-Load Times (APOT) at hospital emergency rooms while we implement stopgap measures, including dispatching EMS supervisors, to mitigate this problem. The LEMSA, Alliance, and Hospital Council continue to discuss this problem; and the Alliance is requesting a follow-up meeting with hospital representatives to identify solutions to this continuing crisis.

We need the public's assistance to only use the 911 system for medical emergencies and not for routine requests or non-emergency transport to the hospital. The emergency ambulance system is under considerable strain with historic levels of demand at a time when there are significant staffing shortages as a result of COVID.

The EMS Division has also been working nonstop to maintain adequate levels of PPE to keep frontline personnel protected. Supply chain issues have complicated these efforts, especially when it comes to COVID testing kits which are in high demand. In early January, we were able to place an order for 5,000 kits which should be delivered later this month.

- Fire Prevention Update. The new Amanda software that supports issuing permits, scheduling inspections, and organizing all the inspection reports went live in December. We are still working on cleaning up the database and ensuring all the current records with active permits were successfully migrated into the system.



Fire Inspector I recruitment began the first week of January to fill four current Bureau vacancies.

Fire Inspector II vacancies were filled by two internal Contra Costa Fire Inspector I promotions in early January. Inspectors Taylor King and Joe Burgueno were promoted.

- Logistics Update. Four fire engines from previous orders are due to be received this year. Based on expected need, we have placed an additional order for six Type I engines to be delivered in late 2022 or 2023.
- Training Update. Academy 56 is now in week 14 of its 19 week course of instruction. Recent major training elements have focused on intensive and realistic fire control and petrochemical fire activities. The Training Division is prioritizing health safety in an effort to maximize completion of the academy by all recruits.
- Communications Update. The Communications Center is monitoring the current spike in COVID cases and working hard to keep staff safe and healthy to ensure adequate staffing at the center.

Recruitment efforts continue for a number of key positions. The Fire Communications Manager recruitment will be relaunched in the next few weeks, and we hope to see

an increase in the number of qualified candidates. Conditional offers have been made and accepted for one of the two vacant Fire Dispatcher positions and the vacant IS Tech II position. Background investigations are in progress for both.

The design phase of the pending Communications Center remodel continues with good progress toward the eventual new center being located in the old administrative building.