



DATE: December 12, 2017

CATEGORY: Consent

DEPT.: Fire/Finance and Administrative Services

TITLE: **Authorization for Participation in FEMA California Task Force 3 and Payment of Associated Compensation**

RECOMMENDATION

1. Authorize the City Manager to execute an addendum to the Memorandum of Agreement with the Menlo Park Fire Protection District (sponsoring organization for FEMA California Urban Search and Rescue Task Force 3) and the City of Mountain View (participating agency) for the Canine Search Team.
2. Adopt a Resolution Authorizing the City Manager or His Designee to Provide Compensation Payments Related to the FEMA California Urban Search and Rescue Task Force 3 Agreement (Attachment 1 to the Council report).

BACKGROUND

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) operates the national Urban Search and Rescue Response System in conjunction with several states, including California. The Menlo Park Fire Protection District (District) is a contracting party (sponsoring organization) under a Memorandum of Agreement dated October 12, 1993 with FEMA and the State of California through the Office of Emergency Services (OES) to provide search and rescue activities for California Urban Search and Rescue Task Force 3 (CA-TF3).

FEMA CA-TF3 consists of 18 participating local government agencies and 60 civilians. In all, a total of 220 members are available to respond to emergencies such as fires, hurricanes, and earthquakes. The City entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) dated March 1, 2000, as approved by City Council, with the District (as the sponsoring organization) to be a participating agency. Currently, the City has seven (7) Firefighters that are part of the FEMA CA-TF3, including one Firefighter designated by FEMA as a Canine Search Specialist (CSS) who handles two canines for FEMA CA-TF3, one trained to locate live humans and the second trained to locate human remains. The agreement for Mountain View to house a FEMA CA-TF3 Canine Search Team was

entered into by staff in 2014. Although Council's action in approving the initial 2000 MOA with the District allowed for amendments at the City Manager's direction, staff has determined that an addendum to the MOA to add canine resources should be authorized by the City Council.

The City's continued participation in FEMA provides an opportunity to maintain regional cooperation with other emergency response agencies and enhanced experience and training opportunities for City of Mountain View personnel.

ANALYSIS

Since becoming a participating agency, Mountain View Firefighters have been deployed as part of FEMA CA-TF3 to national disasters. The most recent deployment was in September 2017 to Florida in response to Hurricane Irma. All deployments, inclusive of overtime backfill and training costs, are reimbursed to the City of Mountain View by FEMA CA-TF3 based on the MOA between the City of Mountain View and the District. The MOA provides that the participating agency shall be reimbursed in accordance with pay schedules and policies established by the FEMA MOA and Federal regulations. Current Federal regulations require participants be compensated based on a 40-hour workweek from the start of deployment. City of Mountain View Firefighters are compensated based on a 56-hour workweek. Any difference in compensation must be paid to the participating Firefighters prior to being reimbursed by the District. Since this 40-hour rate is not part of the Council-approved method of compensation, it must be approved by the City Council.

The addendum related to canine resources provides a Canine Search Team consisting of one Mountain View Firefighter to serve as FEMA's CSS and two canines. As of January 2017, FEMA compensates the CSS with a stipend of \$300 (Three Hundred Dollars) per canine per month to care for the dogs. Since the City's Firefighter provides two canines, he would be entitled under the current reimbursement rate established by FEMA to \$600 (Six Hundred Dollars) per month. This addendum provides authorization for the payment of the stipend to the CSS for his/her off-duty time spent in the care, feeding, grooming, and other needs of the assigned canine(s).

FISCAL IMPACT

The personnel and equipment costs associated with participation in the Agreement will be reimbursed by FEMA through the Menlo Park Fire Protection District. There is some potential cost exposure for the City in that it may be required to reimburse training and other costs of up to Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) incurred by FEMA

associated with establishing a Canine Search Team if the CSS does not participate in the program for a total of five years. Based on the timing the original training expenses were incurred, penalties for early discontinuation are not anticipated.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Do not continue to provide the California Task Force 3 with a Canine Search Team.
2. Provide other direction to staff.

Prepared by:

Juan Diaz
Fire Chief

Patty J. Kong
Finance and Administrative
Services Director

Approved by:

Audrey Seymour Ramberg
Assistant City Manager

JD/MP/4/CAM
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Attachment: 1. Resolution