



**DATE:** February 23, 2021

**CATEGORY:** Consent

**DEPT.:** Fire

**TITLE:** Approve the City's Draft Response to the 2019-2020 Santa Clara County Grand Jury's Final Report, "*Why Aren't There More Female Firefighters in Santa Clara County?*"

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Approve the City's draft response to the 2019-2020 Santa Clara County Grand Jury's final report, "*Why Aren't There More Female Firefighters in Santa Clara County?*" (Attachment 1 to the Council report).

### **BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS**

The City received a copy of the 2019-2020 Santa Clara Grand Jury's final report, "*Why Aren't There More Female Firefighters in Santa Clara County?*" (Attachment 2) and a letter from Karla Fukushima, Foreperson (Attachment 3), on December 17, 2020.

California Penal Code Section 933(c) requires that a governing body of the particular public agency or department which has been the subject of a Grand Jury final report shall respond within 90 days to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court on the findings and recommendations pertaining to matters under the control of the governing body. The deadline for the City to submit its comments is March 17, 2021.

In its report, the 2019-2020 Santa Clara County Civil Grand Jury took a broad look at the fire service in Santa Clara County and why there are not many female firefighters. The report evaluated recruitment efforts, or lack thereof, for entry-level female firefighters, the living conditions of female firefighters, and the overall culture in the fire service towards female firefighters. The report specifically focused on the City of Mountain View Fire Department (MVFD) as well as the Palo Alto Fire Department, Santa Clara County Central Fire District, and San Jose Fire Department.

The Grand Jury reported six "findings," of which five "recommendations" are relevant to the City of Mountain View. These recommendations address areas to improve recruitment, mentoring, promotions, living accommodations, and work environment for female firefighters.

Prior to the publication of the Grand Jury report, MVFD had already taken a number of steps to recruit female firefighters, established a mentoring program, promoted women, proactively improved privacy in the fire stations, and improved the overall work environment for all employees. In fact, the report highlights that MVFD has the highest percentage of female firefighters (10 percent) in the Santa Clara County region and "applauds" MVFD's efforts, citing MVFD as a "Best Practice." The report also points out the "historic moment when MVFD had an all-female crew of firefighters for the first time in the City's history."

The City appreciates the opportunity to respond to the Grand Jury's findings and recommendations and commends the work of the Grand Jury members. The City's response is included in this report as Attachment 1 and will be transmitted to the Presiding Judge by a letter from the Mayor, which is included as Attachment 4.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact directly associated with approval of the City's response to the Grand Jury report.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

1. Do not approve City's draft response to the 2019-2020 Santa Clara County Grand Jury's final report, *"Why Aren't There More Female Firefighters in Santa Clara County?"*
2. Provide other direction.

**PUBLIC NOTICING** – Agenda posting.

Prepared by:

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100-02-23-21CR  
200908

- Attachments:
1. Response to the 2019-2020 Santa Clara County Grand Jury's Final Report, *"Why Aren't There More Female Firefighters in Santa Clara County?"*
  2. Copy of the 2019-2020 Santa Clara County Grand Jury's Final Report
  3. Letter from Karla Fukushima and 90-Day Notice – MVFD – Why Aren't There More Female Firefighters in Santa Clara County?
  4. Letter from Mayor Ellen Kamei