



VALLEJO FIRE DEPARTMENT

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October 7, 2011

Ms. Barbara A. Morris, Foreperson
Solano County Grand Jury
Hall of Justice
600 Union Avenue
Fairfield, CA 94533

Re: Grand Jury Final Report - Public Safety Volunteer Programs - Fire Emergency Services

Dear Ms. Morris:

As a follow up to my letter to Ms. Strickland dated June 23, 2011, I would like to respond to sections II. G. and IV. G. of the Final Grand Jury Report regarding the use of volunteers in the Vallejo Fire Department as follows:

The Vallejo Fire Department does have a volunteer fire cadet program which has been in existence for over 30 years. This program provides weekly training to educate youth ages 15-21 and allows them to volunteer their time to the Fire Department. This program has been effective in mentoring our young people and providing them direction to become firefighters. We have had several of our fire cadet explorers move on to become full time paid firefighters for the City of Vallejo.

The Vallejo Fire Department also initiated a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program for the citizens of Vallejo. The CERT program educates volunteers about disaster preparedness for hazards and disasters that may impact their community. We train them in basic disaster response skills including fire safety, search and rescue, emergency medical operations and other emergency areas. The City of Vallejo's Fire Department has certified over 50 Vallejo residents with an additional goal of 50 residents per year to be certified members.

These are volunteer programs that were overlooked by the Grand Jury and were specifically outlined in my June 23, 2011 letter before the findings of the final report were released.

Additionally, during the years 2001-2004 we had a Firefighter Trainee program. Trainees were paid a small hourly wage to allow them continue their education needed to become firefighters. During their Trainee time they received hands on training at the Vallejo Fire Department and were afforded the opportunity to volunteer as often as their schedule allowed.

We are currently working towards researching the viability of starting our own reserve program as well as attempting to identify funding for the program.

Ms. Barbara A. Morris
Grand Jury Final Report
October 5, 2011

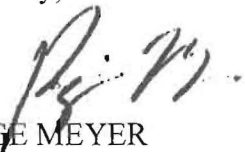
Page Two

We are also currently working with Solano Community College in providing ride-a-long opportunities where students volunteer their time; as well as hosting Solano Community College's Introduction to Fire Science class at our department.

For clarification, the Vallejo Fire Department is not concerned about displacing career firefighters. We are concerned with the potential workers compensation and liability issues based on the volume of emergency medical calls and structure fire calls our department currently responds to.

Thank you for your attention to correcting the final Grand Jury report on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paige Meyer", is written over the typed name.

PAIGE MEYER
Fire Chief

cc: Phil Batchelor, Vallejo City Manager