

CITY OF CAMPBELL
Police Department

FILED

SEP 19 2011

DAVID H. YAMASAKI
Chief Executive Officer/Clerk,
Superior Court of CA County of Santa Clara
BY D. ALDYCKI

September 6, 2011

Honorable Richard J. Loftus, Jr.
Presiding Judge
Santa Clara County Superior Court
191 North First Street
San Jose, CA 95113

Dear Judge Loftus,

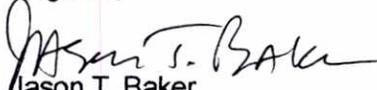
I am writing to you on behalf of the Campbell City Council which approved the attached responses to two Santa Clara County Civil Grand Jury reports, "Can You Hear Me Now?, Emergency Dispatch in Santa Clara County" and "Fighting Fire or Fighting Change? Rethinking Fire Department Response Protocol and Consolidation Opportunities"

Regarding emergency dispatch, the City of Campbell generally agrees with the Grand Jury's findings and both dispatch consolidation and radio interoperability are a high priority for the City. We are, in fact, already exploring a possible dispatch consolidation with the Los Gatos/Monte Sereno Police Department.

In response to the fire services report, the City of Campbell generally agrees with the Grand Jury's findings and works very closely with Santa Clara County Fire to ensure that we are providing effective emergency services to the community.

Please feel free to contact me or Interim City Manager Al Bito at (408) 866-2125 if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Regards,


Jason T. Baker
Mayor

Cc: Councilmembers
Interim City Manager

Attachment 1: City Response – Emergency Dispatch
Attachment 2: City Response – Fire Services

***Fighting Fire or Fighting Change?
Rethinking Fire Department Response Protocol and Consolidation Opportunities***

City of Campbell Response to Finding/Recommendations:

Finding 1:

It is extremely costly to equip a fire department for only the occasional fire response; the County and fifteen towns/cities have not been proactive in challenging fire departments to adopt changes that are more cost effective and that better serve their communities. Further, unions are more interested in job preservation than in providing the right mixture of capabilities at a reasonable cost, using scare tactics to influence the public and fostering firefighter unwillingness to collaborate with EMS.

Response: The City of Campbell partially agrees with the finding. The City of Campbell works closely with the Santa Clara County Fire Department and is aware that the Fire Department is constantly striving to provide effective emergency services in the most cost-effective manner. For example, many times the Santa Clara County Fire Department only deploys three firefighters per engine unlike other surrounding agencies that require a minimum of four firefighters. We recognize that the cost for employee services is high. However, we have been working with County Fire to help them ensure that they maintain control of these costs.

Recommendation 1B:

All fifteen towns/cities – Campbell, Cupertino, Gilroy, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Morgan Hill, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Clara, Saratoga, Sunnyvale – and the County (for CCFD and SCFD) should determine the emergency response service they want to achieve, particularly as to the result, then determine how to best achieve that.

Response: The City of Campbell agrees with the recommendation.

Finding 3:

Whether the emergency responder is a firefighter-paramedic or an EMS paramedic matters little to the person with the medical emergency; using firefighter-paramedics in firefighting equipment as first responders to all non-police emergencies is unnecessarily costly when less expensive paramedics on ambulances possess the skills needed to address 96% of calls that are not fire related.

Response: The City of Campbell partially agrees with the finding. It is understood that paramedics on ambulances are less expensive than firefighter-paramedics and may be able to handle most medical emergencies. However, firefighter-paramedics possess additional skills that are essential on many non-fire emergencies such as extrication of victims of auto collisions, rescues, and hazardous materials. While it may be true that on average only 4% of calls involve actual fires, many other calls require specialized training, skills, and equipment that paramedics on ambulances may not possess.

***Fighting Fire or Fighting Change?
Rethinking Fire Department Response Protocol and Consolidation Opportunities***

Recommendation 3A:

All fifteen towns/cities – Campbell, Cupertino, Gilroy, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Morgan Hill, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Clara, Saratoga, Sunnyvale - and the County (for CCFD and SCFD) should adopt an emergency services department mentality and staff or contract accordingly to meet demand.

Response: The City of Campbell agrees with this recommendation.