

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS SHEILA KUEHL AND  
KATHRYN BARGER

November 19, 2019

**Building State-of-The Art Emergency Operations for Los Angeles County**

On November 8, 2018, the most devastating wildfire in modern Los Angeles County (“County”) history occurred in the Santa Monica mountains. This fire, known now as the Woolsey Fire (“Woolsey Fire”), originated in Ventura County near the Santa Susana Field Laboratory, moved into the County, crossed the 101 freeway, and burned all the way to the Pacific Coast Highway in the City of Malibu in just 6.5 hours. Driven southwest by strong Santa Ana Winds and fueled by dry brush and very low humidity, the fire took three lives, destroyed 1,643 structures, consumed 96,949 acres, forced a quarter of a million people to evacuate and cost over \$50 million dollars to extinguish.

On December 18, 2018, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (“Board”) approved a Motion by Supervisor Kuehl to convene a task force made up of county, state and federal agencies and community representatives, and to retain an independent consulting firm with subject matter expertise, to do a thorough analysis of the Woolsey Fire and to prepare a report of findings and recommendations to the

MOTION

SOLIS \_\_\_\_\_

RIDLEY-THOMAS \_\_\_\_\_

KUEHL \_\_\_\_\_

BARGER \_\_\_\_\_

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Board. The Board has received this report entitled, "After Action Review of the Woolsey Fire Incident," from Citygate Associates, LLC, ("Citygate"), and will now undertake a process of ensuring that the County creates, and then implements, an After Action Plan ("AAP"), which considers the findings and recommendations detailed in Citygate's November 17, 2019 report.

The process of developing an AAP is at the heart of creating a robust process and strategy that will tie lessons learned, needed improvements and revisions to the County's current operations in order to effectuate needed changes. The development and implementation of this AAP will include our relevant County departments and will ultimately benefit the full spectrum of future emergency response and recovery operations for the entire County.

The County's current "emergency ordinance" is found in Chapter 2.68 of the County Code (Emergency Services), which was adopted in an era focused on civil defense, and had its last substantive revision in 1993. The emergency ordinance establishes the emergency organization of the County and variously allocates response and recovery responsibilities to the Chair of the Board, the Chief Executive Officer ("CEO"), the Sheriff, the County departments, and the County Emergency Management Council.

Emergency response practices have changed significantly since 1993, and these changes should be reflected in an updated emergency ordinance. Given the complexity of current disaster related events and lessons learned from the Woolsey Fire, we should enhance the County's emergency organization and ensure that it is one rooted in inter-agency collaboration and coordination.

**WE, THEREFORE, MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Direct CEO to amend and extend the current contract with Citygate, and specifically its Public Safety Principal Stewart Gary, to act as the Board's independent consultant to do the following:
  - a. Work with, and provide subject matter assistance to our CEO and involved County departments in preparing an AAP based upon the findings and recommendations of the November 17, 2019 After Action Review report;
  - b. Facilitate the prioritization of the recommendations contained in the AAP, which priorities should include but not be limited to the following:
    - i. A comprehensive, culturally competent, modern and multi-layered communications plan;
    - ii. Area specific warning and evacuation plans; and
    - iii. A plan for collaboration and coordination across jurisdictions.
  - c. Present the AAP and the prioritized recommendations to the Emergency Management Council ("EMC") for review within 90 days; and
  - d. After review by the EMC, present the proposed AAP to the BOS for approval.
2. Direct Citygate to independently oversee the implementation of the approved AAP and provide ongoing monitoring and reporting to the Board every 90 days until the Board determines the AAP's elements are significantly implemented; and at such time, the CEO will work with Citygate to prepare a final report to the Board regarding the completion of the implementation of the AAP elements.

**WE FURTHER MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors direct the CEO, in consultation with County Counsel, Sheriff, Fire, Public Works, Public Health, Regional Planning, Agricultural Weights and Measures, Animal Care and Control, and any other involved departments, to return to the Board within 90 days with a revision of the County's emergency ordinance, as reflected in Chapter 2.68 of the County Code (Emergency Services), which should include but not be limited to the following changes:

1. Assign the Chief Executive Officer responsibilities for coordinating disaster preparedness, response and recovery, including the maintenance, management, activation and operation of the County Emergency Operations Center;
2. Enhance the roles and responsibilities of the County Emergency Management Council and expand its membership to include the Board, a broader array of County Departments and organizations; and
3. Make additional revisions, as appropriate, to reflect changes and best practices in applicable disaster and emergency services laws and requirements.

S:LM/Building State-of-The Art Emergency Operations for Los Angeles County