



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 383
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012
(213) 974-1411 • FAX (213) 620-0636

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SACHI A. HAMAI
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

January 9, 2007

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

RECOMMENDATION REGARDING ALLOCATION OF REWARD FUNDS
IN THE MATTER OF THE ARSON FIRE AT EMPEROR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
(ALL DISTRICTS)
(3-VOTE)

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:

Approve the recommendation of the Reward Committee to distribute reward funds in total amount of \$2,000 to Claimant No. 1 and \$8,000 to Claimant No. 2 for a total amount of \$10,000, to be paid from the Board's discretionary funds to the individuals who provided information to law enforcement that led to the arrest and conviction of Kevin Michael Patten, the person responsible for the arson fire at the Emperor Elementary School located in the City of San Gabriel on January 11, 2006.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

On January 17, 2006, your Board offered a \$10,000 reward on motion of Supervisor Antonovich relating to an arson fire at Emperor Elementary School in the City of San Gabriel. The filing period to submit a claim to the Executive Office for the reward money expired on June 16, 2006. Prior to the June 16, 2006 claim filing period, the Executive Office of the Board received two claims from individuals who wish to remain anonymous, for the \$10,000 reward. In accordance with provisions of the County Code, Title 4 – Revenue and Finance relating to rewards, your Board must now consider the claims and make a final determination for distribution of the reward funds.

A panel made up of individuals representing the Sheriff, Chief Administrative Officer, County Counsel and the Executive Officer of the Board met and reviewed the two claims filed for the reward funds. The panel has recommended that the reward funds in total amount of \$10,000 be awarded as follows: \$2,000 to Claimant No. 1 and \$8,000 to Claimant No. 2.

The chronological events in this case are as follows:

- On January 11, 2006, at approximately 11:00 p.m., there was a structure fire at Emperor Elementary School in the City of San Gabriel that was deemed to be an arson fire.
- On January 17, 2006, the Board, on motion of Supervisor Antonovich, approved the establishment of a \$10,000 reward to encourage citizens to come forward and assist law enforcement in the investigation of the case.
- On May 2, 2006, an individual (Claimant No. 1) filed a claim with the Executive Office of the Board. Claimant No. 1 indicated that around February 20, 2006, and the weeks following, contact was made with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Arson Explosive Unit who was provided with the names of all parties present at Emperor Elementary School when the arson fire started.
- A second claim was received in the Executive Office of the Board on May 31, 2006. Claimant No. 2 indicated that personal contact was made with the suspect Kevin Michael Patten, and that Mr. Patten described in detail how the fire was set. Claimant No. 2 also indicated that contact was made with Sgt. Anderson of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Arson Explosive Unit who was provided with the name and whereabouts of Mr. Patten. Claimant No. 2 maintained contact with Mr. Patten and provided Sgt. Anderson with information as it developed.
- Mr. Patten, while in custody on an unrelated charge, was arrested at the Rio Hondo Lock-up facility on March 28, 2006. The arrest was made based on information provided by Claimant No. 2.

- On July 28, 2006, Mr. Patten was convicted on arson to a school [Penal Code Section No. 451(b)] and sentenced to five years, eight months in state prison.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

Approval of the above recommendation supports the County Strategic Goal of Service Excellence. Publication in local newspapers and posting of reward notices on the County website may encourage persons to provide information to law enforcement, which could lead to the arrest and conviction of the individuals who commit crimes, thereby improving the quality of life to residents of Los Angeles County by removing such individuals from the community.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

The Board of Supervisors established a \$10,000 reward fund. Pursuant to provisions in the County Code, the reward is to be paid from the Board of Supervisors' discretionary funds in equal shares of \$2,000 from each member's account.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

In 1993, the Board of Supervisors adopted an amendment to the County Code establishing procedures for offering cash rewards for information leading to the apprehension and/or conviction of persons guilty of criminal acts. Your Board, from time to time has offered such rewards to encourage citizens to come forward and assist law enforcement with their investigations.

The action recommended is in compliance with the County Code, Title 4 - Revenue and Finance relating to rewards; and specifically Section 4.50.010B which states, "conviction of the person or persons responsible for the crime shall be required for payment of a reward unless the Board of Supervisors makes a finding of impossibility of conviction due to the death or incapacity of such person or persons."

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The attached notice was posted on the Board of Supervisors' web site and published in *La Opinion* Newspaper. In addition, copies were provided to the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

There is no impact on current County services.

Respectfully submitted,


SACHI A. HAMAI
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Attachment

R:\Reward Letters\Reward letter regarding Emperor Elementary School.doc

c: District Attorney
Sheriff
Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Auditor-Controller