

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS JANICE HAHN
AND HOLLY J. MITCHELL

March 7, 2023

Enhancing Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in the Los Angeles County Fire

Department

The Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACoFD) is dedicated to continuously moving forward progressive advances in Firefighting and Paramedic services, Wildfire Firefighting, Air Operations, Dispatch Services, Hazardous Materials Mitigation, Fire Prevention, Swift-Water Rescue, Lifeguard Rescue, and Urban Search and Rescue Teams. The LACoFD is made up of people from all backgrounds and ethnicities who share the common goal and love of serving others through their work. In the past, the Department has taken measures to increase diversity and inclusion efforts, including increasing the number of female Firefighters and Lifeguards. While these efforts have undoubtedly helped increase the diversity of the Department, the numbers continue to reveal that there is more work to be done to enhance opportunities for women and underrepresented candidates representing Black, Latino, and Asian Pacific Islander communities to gain employment in the LACoFD.

It is essential that the LACoFD personnel reflect the diversity of Los Angeles County, from recruitment and onboarding through promotion to leadership and crucial decision-making positions. Prioritizing a firefighter workforce that more closely mirrors the people

MOTION

SOLIS _____

MITCHELL _____

HORVATH _____

BARGER _____

HAHN _____

they serve will lead to more respected and trusting relationships with community members. It will also create more effective service delivery, as being able to relate to people when they are in crisis improves the quality of care.

This year, the California Firefighter Joint Apprenticeship Committee (Cal-JAC), a Labor - Management Committee, celebrates 40 years of commitment to recruiting and training the next generation of professional California firefighters. A subsidiary of the Cal-JAC, the Firefighter Candidate Testing Center (FCTC) is the gold standard for physical agility and cognitive ability assessment of entry-level firefighter candidates in California, and its Statewide Eligibility List (SEL) provides a streamlined and accessible solution that connects fire departments with some of the most qualified and desirable candidates. Cal-JAC and FCTC work diligently to recruit, prepare, and pre-qualify entry-level firefighter candidates that represent California's diverse communities. Since inception, Cal-JAC and FCTC have promoted fairness, inclusion, and representation in the fire service, and continue to develop innovative strategies, targeted programming, digital and print outreach material, and many other services to aid in the recruitment and retention of underrepresented candidates.

In 2015, a group of women within the LACoFD created the Women's Fire League (WFL), a non-profit that "advocates for and promotes the development of women in the fire and lifeguard professions through mentorship, training, and education." The WFL subsequently established a Girl's Fire Camp, the Women's Fire Prep Academy, and Women's Lifeguard Prep Academy, which inform and prepare interested through exposure to fire service tools and skills. Since the creation of the WFL and the concerted effort to recruit and retain more women to the field, the number of female firefighters in the LACoFD has more than doubled. Similarly, the Los Angeles County Stentorians, the association of African Americans in the fire service, offers mentorship programs,

scholarship opportunities, and community support for Black Angelinos interested in becoming firefighters. Los Bomberos does similarly for Latino/a fire employees, and there are recruitment efforts underway to support people from the LGBTQ community who are interested in working for the LACoFD.

The LACoFD supported these efforts by establishing the Community Outreach, Recruitment, Diversity, and Inclusion (CORDI) section in 2018 to promote the Department's mission to create a more inclusive workplace and to better represent the diverse communities the LACoFD serves. CORDI focuses on intentionally and actively reaching communities who may not know about the benefits of working for the LACoFD or how to apply. They recruit by attending community events and developing partnerships with educational institutions that serve underrepresented populations, prioritize diversity and inclusion efforts throughout the Department, and work internally to promote a positive culture change that embraces diversity and collaborates with leadership to ensure policies are inclusive of all members.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACoFD), in collaboration with Local 1014, to report back in 30 days with an analysis of developing a Labor-Management plan to move entry level testing for Firefighters and Firefighter Paramedics to the California Firefighter Joint Apprenticeship Committee (Cal-JAC) Firefighter Candidate Testing Center (FCTC) for the written portion of the exam with embedded recruitment and mentorship and pre-apprentice programs, in addition to the Women's Fire Prep Academy and other such recruitment programs that may feed the hiring lists for LACoFD, thereby increasing the numbers of underrepresented persons being hired. The analysis should include the possibility of immediate implementation for the next Fire Fighter and Fire Fighter Paramedic entry level test.

WE, FURTHER, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACoFD) to report back in 90 days with the following:

- 1) A plan to ensure that the preparatory academies and programs established and/or conducted through the Women's Fire League (WFL) and the Stentorians remain financially accessible to everyone, including an analysis of using California Firefighter Joint Apprenticeship Committee (Cal-JAC) funds for these programs;
- 2) A plan, in consultation with the Executive Director of the Anti-Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion (ARDI) Initiative, to develop a Labor Management Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee with appointed Labor and Management members including members from but not limited to the Women's Fire League, Stentorians, Los Bomberos, Asian American Pacific Islander Groups, and LGBTQ members to work on issues of diversity, equity and inclusion, cultural and implicit bias training, and make recommendations for policy and procedure changes directly to the Department and Local 1014 in a transparent and meaningful structure. This input will provide guidance regarding opportunities for advancement, training, examinations, promotional examinations, and transparency in hiring and promotions, to the extent legally permissible;
- 3) A plan, in consultation with the ARDI Initiative, to create a Labor-Management / CAL-JAC driven training on cultural and implicit bias and prejudice issues in the Fire Department to help move toward a more integrated and diverse workforce with a solidarity of understanding and mission together;
- 4) A process, in consultation with the ARDI Initiative, to generate data metrics that will be reported annually to the Board of Supervisors, County Counsel, Local 1014, the Los Angeles County Ocean Lifeguards Association (LACOLA), and all stakeholder groups, including, but not limited to, the following:

- a) Numbers broken down by race and gender at each of the following stages of the hiring and promotional process for firefighter trainees, firefighters, and fire suppression aids:
- i) LACoFD firefighter trainee, firefighter, and fire suppression aid applicants;
 - ii) People who receive a conditional offer of employment;
 - iii) People who enter a LACoFD Academy;
 - iv) People who graduate from a LACoFD Academy;
 - v) Firefighters and fire suppression aids who complete their probationary periods;
 - vi) Firefighters, firefighter paramedics, firefighter specialists, fire captains, battalion chiefs, assistant chiefs, deputy chiefs, chief deputies, and fire chiefs;
 - vii) Terminations, resignations, and retirements;
 - viii) Explorer programs applicants; and
 - ix) Explorer program participants.
- b) Numbers broken down by race and gender at each of the following stages of the hiring and promotion process for lifeguards:
- i) Junior lifeguard cadet program applicants (to the extent legally possible);
 - ii) Junior lifeguard program participants (to the extent legally possible);
 - iii) Ocean Lifeguard Candidate applicants;
 - iv) People who receive a conditional offer;
 - v) People who enter the Ocean Lifeguard Candidate Academy;
 - vi) People who graduate from the Ocean Lifeguard Candidate Academy;
 - vii) Lifeguards who complete their probationary periods;
 - viii) Ocean lifeguard recurrent, ocean lifeguard specialists, lifeguard captains, rescue boat captains, lifeguard section chiefs, lifeguard assistant chief, section chief, and chief lifeguard; and

- ix) Terminations, resignations and retirements.
- c) The timeline, stated reason, and demographics of applicants who rescind their applications prior to receiving a conditional offer of employment;
- 5) A plan, in consultation with the ARDI Initiative, to develop an applicant exit interview and process, in collaboration with the Department of Human Resources (DHR), for all applicants who rescind their applications prior to being assigned to a specific recruit academy. The process should involve DHR and should include, at a minimum, applicant demographics, timeline, and reason for withdrawal as stated by the applicant;
- 6) An analysis of moving Community Outreach, Recruitment, Diversity, and Inclusion (CORDI) to the Leadership and Professional Standards Bureau within LACoFD, including a proposed CORDI staffing chart, the timeline for filling positions, the process for selecting the CORDI leadership, and an analysis of current budget allocations and potential funding streams; and
- 7) An analysis, in consultation with the ARDI Initiative, of establishing a position for a new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Officer within the LACoFD. The analysis should include the associated class specification, proposed process for filling the position, and associated timeline, and an analysis of using Diversity, Equity and Inclusion subject matter guidance and expertise using CAL-JAC DEI and Recruitment Officers, and others to aid our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Labor Management Committee in their work.

#

JH:kc