

# 2013-2014 GRAND JURY REPORT

## Idyllwild Fire Protection District

### Background

The Idyllwild Fire Protection District (IFPD) was founded in 1946 to provide fire protection to unincorporated mountain communities in the proximity of Idyllwild, Riverside County. Today the IFPD serves a population in excess of 6,000.

Services provided by IFPD include fire protection, basic life support, emergency medical services, advanced life support, rescue, public assistance, fire prevention, fire suppression and public safety education.

Presently, the IFPD employs the following:

- 1 Fire Chief
- 1 Administrative Captain/Paramedic/Engineer
- 1 Administrative Assistant part-time
- 3 Captains
- 2 Engineers
- 3 Firefighters
- 4 Reserve Paramedics
- 14 Reserve EMTs
- 2 Ambulance Attendants
- 1 Mechanic

Idyllwild Volunteer Fire Company (IVFC) 621 from Garner Valley joined the IFPD July 1, 2011, when the Riverside County / Cal Fire dropped the volunteer paid call program. The IVFC currently has 14 volunteers, with 2 engines housed at the IFPD station, along with the IFPD's six vehicles.

The IFPD provides ambulance service for Zone I (Fern Valley), Zone II (Idyllwild and Pine Cove), and Zone III (surrounding mountain areas adjacent to Idyllwild.)

A board, consisting of five elected Fire District Commissioners (Board), governs the IFPD. The Board meets twice a month, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday. The meetings are open to the public and held at the Idyllwild Fire Station Training Room.

The IFPD is funded through an annual assessment of properties within the IFPD boundaries. Additionally, IFPD receives funding from Riverside County Emergency Medical Services (EMS), various grants, state aid, payments received for services rendered, including charges for ambulance service to Pine

Cove only, and other miscellaneous funds. The IFPD budget for Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2013, was \$1,671,245.

## Methodology

The 2013-2014 Riverside County Grand Jury conducted its investigation as follows:

Obtained testimony from:

- Idyllwild community residents
- Pine Cove community residents
- IFPD Fire Chief
- Former Administrative Assistant to the Chief
- Current Administrative Assistant to the Chief
- Two Board Commissioners

Reviewed the following documents:

- IFPD Audit reports
- Board of Commissioners agendas and minutes
- IFPD Rules and Regulations
- IFPD Budgets
- Compensation reports
- Past Riverside County Grand Jury reports
- Memorandums of Understanding
- Organizational Chart
- Policy and Procedure Manual

Toured Idyllwild Fire Station.

## Findings

### Administrative Captain/Paramedic/Engineer

1. The Administrative Captain is the highest paid firefighter based on salary and overtime. This position was created to ensure smooth operations of the IFPD, due to frequent turnovers of Fire Chiefs.

According to sworn testimony, "The Administrative Captain has too many responsibilities."

The 2012 Compensation Report recorded a total overtime calculation of \$142,047.48. The Administrative Captain received \$56,757.91, 48 percent of the total overtime budget.

Sworn testimony states, "The Administrative Captain prepares the payroll, and assists in preparing the budget."

The Administrative Captain's responsibilities, as stated in the job description include:

- *Serves as adjutant to the Fire Chief in the areas of operations, communications, personnel and support services.*
- *Assists in coordination and processing of new hires.*
- *At the direction of the Fire Chief, performs research, develops and recommends policies and procedures for existing and new programs, reviews existing policies and procedures, makes necessary recommendations and rewrites policies and standard operating procedures and general orders.*
- *Coordinates in-service training between fire department personnel and the communications section of the IFPD dispatch provider.*
- *Assists the Fire Chief with development and determining accurate budgets and accounting issues of the fire department.*
- *Responsible for coordinating the repair and maintenance of the department's radio systems and equipment, and the radio battery maintenance program.*
- *Responsible for the submission of completed fire reports to the State Fire Marshal in a timely manner.*
- *May be designated as the departmental Training Officer.*
- *Serve as a member of the fire department command or general staff during incidents.*
- *Will work a regular duty schedule subordinate to the on duty shift Fire Captain, unless working for the regular duty shift Captain and then will work as shift Captain during that duty tour.*
- *Will work at Engineer Paramedic wage unless otherwise approved for an increase by the Fire Chief.*

### Political Activities/Uniform Policy

2. Sworn testimony revealed IFPD Firefighters have attended political forums while in uniform. In 2011 uniformed IFPD Firefighters attended a political event at the Nature Center. In August 2013 uniformed IFPD Firefighters attended a political candidate's forum. California Government Code §3206 (2011) states:

*No officer or employee of a local agency shall participate in political activities of any kind while in uniform.*

### Overtime

3. The 2013-2014 Riverside County Grand Jury learned through sworn testimony that the two main reasons for overtime are vacation relief and fire assignments, such as campaign fires. A campaign fire is when Career Firefighters respond to large fires outside the District.

IFPD Career Firefighters are assigned to fill in during vacations and campaign fires, creating overtime for the IFPD Career Firefighters.

On the 2012 Compensation Report, vacation time is not a separate line item. See Attachment "A".

## **Recommendations**

### **Idyllwild Fire Protection District Board Idyllwild Fire Protection District, Fire Chief**

1. Both the Board and Fire Chief shall reassign some Administrative Captain duties to other paid staff. This would reduce excessive use of overtime for the Administrative Captain.
2. The IFPD shall conform to California Government Code §3206 by not participating in political activities of any kind while in uniform.
3. The IFPD Board shall look into hiring Career Firefighters outside the District who would be paid straight time wages, during campaign fires and for vacation relief. This would save the IFPD overtime expenses.

The IFPD Board shall put vacation time as a separate line item on the IFPD Compensation Report.

## Idyllwild Fire Protection District 2012 Compensation Report

Classification	REGULAR	OVERTIME	OTHER	CAFETERIA	2012 Earnings
Fire Chief	\$7,700.00	\$0.00	\$7,005.13	\$750.00	\$15,455.13
Interim Fire Chief	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$62,355.00
Fire Chief	\$28,644.00	\$0.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$31,644.00
Captain	\$69,495.00	\$17,820.94	\$11,720.46	\$9,000.00	\$108,036.40
Captain	\$69,495.00	\$2,673.34	\$14,518.56	\$9,000.00	\$95,686.90
Captain	\$69,495.00	\$24,828.73	\$14,848.75	\$9,000.00	\$118,172.48
Admin. Captain	\$61,878.80	\$56,757.91	\$15,504.70	\$9,000.00	\$143,141.41
Engineer	\$61,878.80	\$10,220.74	\$9,893.96	\$9,000.00	\$90,993.50
Engineer	\$61,878.80	\$4,218.81	\$12,346.60	\$9,000.00	\$87,444.21
Firefighter	\$37,855.00	\$9,861.21	\$3,804.36	\$5,400.00	\$56,920.57
Firefighter	\$39,776.00	\$2,702.14	\$4,529.38	\$5,400.00	\$52,407.52
Firefighter	\$37,855.00	\$12,409.03	\$3,804.56	\$5,400.00	\$59,468.39
Mechanic	\$10,985.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$10,985.00
Admin. Assistant	\$22,533.50	\$554.63	\$0.00	\$4,200.00	\$27,696.13
Chaplain	\$58.75	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$58.75
Reserve/Paramedic	\$262.50	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$262.50
Reserve/Paramedic	\$2,287.50	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,287.50
Reserve/Paramedic	\$2,764.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,764.00
Reserve/Paramedic	\$1,581.47	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,581.47
Reserve	\$768.78	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$768.78
Reserve	\$8,108.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$8,108.00
Reserve	\$767.16	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$767.16
Reserve	\$6,576.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6,576.00
Reserve	\$8,027.80	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$8,027.80
Reserve	\$3,171.68	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,171.68
Reserve	\$2,070.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,070.00
Reserve	\$1,987.45	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,987.45
Reserve	\$4,138.75	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4,138.75
Reserve	\$7,671.07	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$7,671.07
Reserve	\$1,428.42	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,428.42
Reserve	\$434.47	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$434.47
Reserve	\$450.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$450.00
Reserve	\$75.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$75.00
Paid Call	\$704.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$704.00
Paid Call	\$1,363.50	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,363.50
Paid Call	\$1,143.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,143.00
Paid Call	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$200.00
Ambulance	\$1,072.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,072.00
Ambulance	\$2,345.63	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,345.63
Board Commissioner	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Board Commissioner	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Board Commissioner	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Board Commissioner	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Board Commissioner	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

### Attachment "A"

Report Issued: 12/18/2013

Report Public: 12/20/2013

Response Due: 03/18/2014