

CITY OF OAKLAND

AGENDA REPORT

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
OAKLAND

2005 MAY 26 AM 2: 34

TO: Office of the City Administrator
ATTN: Deborah Edgerly
FROM: Fire Department
DATE: June 7, 2005

RE: **A Resolution Authorizing the Oakland Firefighters Random Acts to Continue Its Services to the City of Oakland and the Community.**

SUMMARY

In August 2000, a dedicated and diverse group of Oakland firefighters created a 501 (c) (3) non-profit charitable corporation called Oakland Firefighters Random Acts to serve the citizens of the Oakland. The Oakland Fire Department on behalf of the Oakland Firefighters Random Acts Program requests the City Council approve a resolution authorizing Fire Department employees participating in the Oakland Firefighters Random Acts program to perform some of their services, as necessary, while on duty, as long as it does not interfere with normal fire department operations, and is approved through the chain of command. Additionally, it is being requested that personnel be permitted to perform the services of the Oakland Firefighters Random Acts program in their Oakland Fire Department uniforms. Approving this resolution will allow the Oakland Firefighters Random Acts to continue its services to the City of Oakland and the community.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact to the General Fund budget. The program operates on private donations of time and money. The program has successfully operated since August 2000, and is requesting no financial support from the City of Oakland.

BACKGROUND

The Oakland Firefighters Random Acts program works with businesses, corporations, Oakland Police Officers Association, Oakland Black Firefighters Association, Oakland Children's Hospital, and other agencies in the Oakland community to provide random acts of kindness to Oakland citizens in need, without regard to heritage, social or financial background.

Some examples of the contributions the program has made to the Oakland community include:

- provided food for an after-school mentoring program
- replaced stolen bicycles for children
- paid airfare for a terminally ill man to spend his last days with his family
- provided stipends for students to take college tours

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- distributed toys to Head Start Programs and local hospitals
 - answered “Dear Santa” letters
 - provided books and playground equipment to schools

Over the last year, Oakland Firefighters Random Acts has partnered with the National Federation of Fire Chaplains, to promote the program concept to other Fire Departments. These efforts and partnerships have been well received and the increased exposure has resulted in the program being replicated in other cities.

Future plans for the program include continuing to expand partnerships and relationships with businesses, corporations, schools, governments, churches, health care facilities and other agencies. In addition, efforts to present the Oakland Fire Department model on a national scale, positively reflecting the City of Oakland to other departments across the country will continue. Oakland Firefighters Random Acts members are encouraging other public safety departments to start their own Random Acts of Kindness program, with the ultimate goal being the formation of a national network of Random Acts programs, where people are working together on a national level to help and inspire one another.

KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS

Firefighters encounter people in need when responding to emergency calls in the Oakland community. One of the key positive aspects of the Random Acts program is that it is a channel where firefighters can request funds or resources from the non-profit to provide a random act of kindness when they encounter people in need. Such effort makes a positive impact in the lives of Oakland firefighters by allowing them to give something extra back to the community in which they serve and work. More importantly, by creating random acts of kindness, firefighters create for themselves, and those they serve, new positive memories to replace the memories of trauma. Thus, through these random acts of kindness the healer is healed.

The Oakland Firefighters Random Acts program will continue to operate autonomously, under the 501(c)(3) structure. The conduct of the Oakland Firefighter Random Acts program and its services involve City equipment and City personnel but because of the activities, the approval procedures and the benefits of the authorization, the City has minimal liability exposure. The Oakland Firefighters Random Acts 501 (c) (3) is in the process of obtaining professional liability insurance to reduce their exposure as an organization and the City’s liability exposure.

The Random Acts program has operated since April 2000, and has developed various programs to help the Oakland community. The Oakland Firefighters Random Acts Program positively affects the lives of Oakland citizens in need, and has become a national leader in this work.

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PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Oakland Firefighters Random Acts program provides firefighters with an opportunity to deal with the grief and loss embedded in their jobs by enabling them to give back to the citizens they serve.

The Oakland Firefighters Random Acts Program is in alignment with Mayor/Council Goals and city wide objectives, which include, developing a sustainable city; improving Oakland neighborhoods; ensuring that all Oakland youth & seniors have the opportunity to be successful); and inspiring creativity and civic engagement. The Oakland Firefighters Random Acts program works with local businesses and other agencies to respond to numerous requests for help from firefighters and citizens of the city of Oakland.

For example, the program sends firefighters to read to school aged children, as well as providing firefighters other opportunities to be positive role models to children in the Oakland community. With the Books and Balls Program, firefighters write inspiring messages on the inside covers of books that are donated to local schools. As a reward for reading the books, the children get to open the doors of a fire engine and watch 80 new playground balls come rolling out.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic- The economic benefit is received by the citizens of Oakland that the program serves, enabling them to attain services and equipment that may not be financially feasible or easily accessible to them through other channels, with no impact to the General Fund budget.

Environmental- There are no environmental opportunities associated with this report.

Social Equity- The Oakland Firefighters Random Acts program is a valuable organization to the City of Oakland and its community. The program creates opportunities for employees and the organization to give back to the community, while providing citizens in need with services, financial support, and equipment that may not be affordable or easily accessible, regardless of ethnic, social or economic background.

DISABILITY AND SENIOR CITIZEN ACCESS

There are no direct ADA or senior citizens access issues associated with this report.

RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE

It is recommended that the City Council strongly support and encourage the services provided by the Oakland Firefighters Random Acts Program for the Oakland community. The City Council also recognizes that there is minimal liability exposure to the City as a result of these worthwhile civic efforts and significant contributions to the community.

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ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Oakland Fire Department requests that the City Council accept this report and approve the resolution authorizing the Oakland Firefighters Random Acts to continue its charitable services that benefit the Oakland community, and is developing to a national philanthropic model for the fire services.



DANIEL D. FARRELL

Fire Chief

Prepared by: Renee' A. Domingo &
Nina Morris
Personnel, Safety &
Liability Division

APPROVED FOR FORWARDING TO THE
CITY COUNCIL:



OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR

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OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
OAKLAND

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Oakland City Council

Resolution No. _____ C.M.S.

INTRODUCED BY COUNCILMEMBER _____

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE OAKLAND FIREFIGHTERS RANDOM ACTS TO CONTINUE ITS SERVICES TO THE CITY AND TO THE COMMUNITY.

WHEREAS, the City of Oakland confirms its support and appreciation for the activities of Oakland Firefighters Random Acts in continuing to positively affect the lives of Oakland citizens in need, and its role as a national leader in this work, and

WHEREAS, the City of Oakland confirms the continued autonomous nature of Oakland Firefighters Random Acts, and

WHEREAS, Oakland Firefighters Random Acts agrees to abide by all rules, regulations, policies and procedures of the City of Oakland when performing services of Oakland Firefighter Random Acts while on duty, to obtain appropriate approvals from Chief Officers, follow the chain-of-command, and

WHEREAS, Random Acts does not have a liability insurance policy, and is a not-for-profit corporation, it cannot indemnify nor hold the City harmless from its conduct, and

WHEREAS, the nature of the conduct of Random Acts and its services to the community involve City equipment and City personnel and indemnification is not possible, the City has minimal liability exposure, now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the City of Oakland finds and determines that it is in the best interest of the City and the community for Oakland Firefighters Random Acts to continue its services to the City and community; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED: That the City of Oakland agrees that firefighters are permitted to perform the services of Oakland Firefighters Random Acts while on duty, so long as it does not interfere with normal fire department operations, and is authorized through the chain-of-command, and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED: That the City of Oakland agrees that firefighters are permitted to perform the services of Oakland Firefighters Random Acts in uniform.

In Council, Oakland, California June 7, 2005

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES-

NOES-

ABSENT-

ABSTENTION-

ATTEST: _____

LATONDA SIMMONS
City Clerk and Clerk of the Council
of the City of Oakland, California

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