



PRESS RELEASE



Kim Mohr
Communications Manager
Irvine Police Department
949-724-7112 (o)
949-299-6887 (cell)
kmohr@cityofirvine.org

Colleen Windsor
Director of Communications
OCFA
714-573-6028 (o)
949-205-6129 (cell)
ColleenWindsor@ocfa.org

City of Irvine Approves Deal to Remain with Orange County Fire Authority

Irvine, Calif. (April 9, 2019) – At its meeting Tuesday, the Irvine City Council agreed to a proposed settlement with the Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) that will keep the City with the fire authority through 2030. The \$50 million agreement represents a collaborative effort by the City and OCFA to come to terms over differences that led the City to give notice of withdrawal from OCFA in June 2018. The Council voted 4-0 to approve the deal.

Under terms of the deal, Irvine will receive considerations including construction of a joint police-fire training facility; a state-of-the-art drone program that enhances fire mitigation efforts; improved public safety services; a pension pay-down; and funds to install bi-directional amplifiers to boost radio signals at locations where emergency communications had been unreliable.

“I’m pleased to see that in one of my first actions as Mayor of Irvine, we have resolved our differences with the Orange County Fire Authority,” said Irvine Mayor Christina Shea. “This deal answers some of the outstanding equity issues that Irvine faced due to the substantial funding it provides to OCFA. The agreement provides additional services and direct benefits to our Irvine community.”

For OCFA, the settlement provides continuity of service and improves regional fire services for all members of the fire authority. The OCFA Board of Directors approved the agreement at its meeting March 28.

“This agreement has been long in the making,” said OCFA Board Chair Joseph Muller. “We are pleased to reinstate Irvine as an official partner of the Authority in order to best serve the region.”

As part of the deal, OCFA will contribute \$20.5 million to a police-fire training facility that will be utilized by the Irvine Police Department and OCFA to meet separate and joint training needs. The establishment of a drone program as part of the settlement allows monitoring of open space areas with the objective of detecting, monitoring, assessing, and preventing fires and other hazards.

“This agreement allows for seamless service by the local fire stations to neighboring cities so response times can be maintained and level of service high,” said OCFA Fire Chief Brian Fennessy. “It’s all about continuity and regionalization.”

Additionally, OCFA will pay \$2 million per year for a total of \$22 million over 11 years into an irrevocable pension trust that can be used only for payment of employee pension liability. Approximately 58% of those funds will be earmarked to pay down any portion of OCFA’s unfunded pension liability that is attributed to Irvine.

“The safety of our residents has always been a top priority for Irvine. It’s encouraging to reaffirm our partnership with the Orange County Fire Authority so the agency can continue to provide exemplary service to our community. This agreement cements Irvine as a regional leader in matters of public safety,” said Irvine Mayor Pro Tem Anthony Kuo.

The full settlement agreement is available at <https://www.cityofirvine.org/government/city-council/city-council-agendas>.