



NEWS



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Upland outlines terms for laying off 47 Fire Department employees

Liset Márquez, Inland Valley Daily Bulletin

Posted: March 14, 2017, 2:40 PM



A fire engine pulls out of Upland Fire Station 163 on Benson Avenue November 27, 2013 for an assignment. FILE PHOTO

UPLAND >> The move to disband Upland's fire department continued Monday night as city leaders unanimously approved an agreement with employee groups outlining the terms for layoffs.

Upland began the process to annex its fire department into **San Bernardino County Fire's** service area in November.

All 47 fire department employees would be guaranteed employment as long as they meet the county's hiring requirements, Deputy City Manager Jeannette Vagnozzi said.

"In order to move forward with the annexation, there's a number of things that have to be put in place," she said.

In December, Upland sent an application to the Local Agency Formation Commission — the agency that oversees annexations — to begin the transfer process of 10,000 acres of property, employees, assets, liabilities and responsibilities to county fire.

Monday's side letter agreement with the Upland Fire Management Association, Upland Firefighters Association and Upland City Employees Association had to be approved before the March 23 commission hearing in San Bernardino.

As part of the terms of the agreement with the three bargaining groups, Upland estimates it will have to pay out \$680,000. At its Feb. 13 meeting, the City Council committed \$450,000 for labor negotiations and another \$1.3 million for fire annexation costs.

On Monday night, the council also agreed to appropriate these funds into the current budget so staff can pay for any necessary expenses, including \$680,000 for the agreements, as part of the transition, Vagnozzi said.

"There's a great deal of appreciation for the effort made by the fire employees, all levels, and the city staff in reaching this point," Councilman Gino Filippi said.

Mayor Debbie Stone said the annexation of the fire department has been a lengthy and complex process.

“It goes without saying that we are thankful for all the efforts that have been put into this process to reach this agreement,” she said. “It’s not been easy for this council at all. ... Thank you for everyone involved and understanding.”

The letter agrees to the following:

- **Benefits:** Employees were concerned there would be a gap in their health coverage between leaving one agency to the other. Upland has agreed to work with county fire to ensure there are no gaps.
- **Paid absences:** In a layoff situation, employees are entitled to receive their accrued vacation time. But other benefits, such as sick leave, are not entitlements, and it is not mandatory that the city pay out those benefits employees have accrued, she said.

County fire has agreed to allow Upland fire employees to transfer their vacation leave as either sick, vacation or holiday time. A maximum of 96 hours can be transferred for each category. If an employee has vacation time left over, it will be cashed out as part of the final paycheck.

- **Personnel file review:** Upland has agreed to expunge any disciplinary actions from its personnel files prior to 2012 even though employees asked for anything prior to 2015.

- **Injuries/disabilities:** Any employees who may be injured or have an industrial disability that would prevent them from going to the county would be allowed to file for industrial disability retirement. If any retiring employee doesn’t meet the requirements for industrial disability retirement, then they will be laid off, according to the staff report.

- **Severance:** Employees of the Upland Firefighters Association and the one employee who belongs to the Upland City Employees Association will be entitled to the equivalent of a two months’ severance package. Members of the management association will receive the equivalent of a three months’ severance package, Vagnozzi said.

- **Waiver:** Employees from all three bargaining groups have agreed to waive all claims and future litigation with the city over the annexation process.

“If they meet the qualifications and they want to work for the county, they have a job,” Vagnozzi said.

<http://www.dailybulletin.com/government-and-politics/20170314/upland-outlines-terms-for-laying-off-47-fire-department-employees>

Arson suspected in structure fire to vacant building

Highland News

Posted: March 14, 2017 4:45 PM

Arson is suspected in a fire at a vacant duplex Tuesday.

At about 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, March 14, firefighters responded to a structure fire at the vacant duplex in the 200 block of East Sharon Road.

A coordinated aggressive interior attack and ventilation of the roof resulted in the fire being rapidly extinguished within approximately 10 minutes. Crews remained on scene for approximately an hour for salvage, overhaul operations and investigation.

No injuries were reported. **San Bernardino County** and Loma Linda Fire departments and American Medical Response also responded and staged crews to provide support.

The cause of the fire was determined to be arson. Anyone with information about this fire can contact the Redlands Fire Department Investigation Unit at (909) 798-7693 or We-Tip at (800) 782-7463 or (800) 78CRIME.

http://www.highlandnews.net/news/crime_and_fire/arson-suspected-in-structure-fire-to-vacant-building/article_57b7ea86-0910-11e7-b611-c77397c1288d.html

Family displaced in Monday afternoon structure fire

Highland News

Posted: March 14, 2017 4:48 PM

The Redlands Fire Department responded to a structure fire Monday afternoon. A family of five was displaced but no injuries were reported.

At about 3:30 p.m. Monday, March 13, firefighters responded to reports of a structure fire in the 1600 block of Sheffield Lane. Arriving units discovered a large two-story house well involved with fire in the attic and on the first floor.

Firefighters initiated an aggressive interior attack to quench the stubborn blaze. Approximately 10 minutes after their arrival, firefighters were evacuated from the residence when the second story began to collapse. Heavy caliber hose streams eventually brought the fire under control.

Redlands Firefighters were assisted by units from San Manuel, **San Bernardino County** and Loma Linda Fire departments.

There were no reported injuries and the cause remains under investigation.

The fire displaced a family of five and the Red Cross was called to provide assistance. Estimated loss to the structure and contents is more than \$400,000.

http://www.highlandnews.net/news/crime_and_fire/family-displaced-in-monday-afternoon-structure-fire/article_b2cc2478-0910-11e7-8e12-e314215c353b.html

Boarded-up San Bernardino restaurant goes up in flames, the cause is suspicious

Doug Saunders, The Sun

Posted: March 14, 2017, 5:23 PM



Fire gutted a vacant boarded-up building Monday night, leaving just its shell in the aftermath. PHOTO BY DOUG SAUNDERS

SAN BERNARDINO >> Once a gathering spot for locals, the former J's Restaurant is now just a shell of a building after fire gutted the boarded-up, A-frame structure late Monday night.

Shortly before 11 p.m., firefighters received multiple 911 calls citing heavy smoke and fire coming from a structure at 250 E. Highland Ave.

They found the former diner fully involved and began to attack the blaze from all sides. Flames lit the night sky and could be seen from as far as City Hall.

A second alarm rang out, sending firefighters from all over the city to assist the units first on scene.

It took firefighters approximately 30 minutes to knock down the flames and put the fire out.

Investigators on the scene said the cause of the fire is under investigation but it appears to be suspicious in nature.

No injuries were reported.

<http://www.sbsun.com/general-news/20170314/boarded-up-san-bernardino-restaurant-goes-up-in-flames-the-cause-is-suspicious>

2 shot driving in opposite directions on 210 Freeway in Rialto, gunman still at large

Doug Saunders, The Sun

Posted: March 14, 2017, 9:05 PM

RIALTO >> Two people were shot as they drove on the 210 Freeway Tuesday night.

Shortly after 6:30 p.m. California Highway Patrol Dispatchers received calls regarding two shootings on the 210 Freeway between Riverside Avenue and Alder Avenue, according to dispatchers.

The first driver was shot as they passed Alder Avenue going westbound on the 210 Freeway. Once that driver neared Citrus Avenue they pulled over and called 911.

The second driver shot was driving eastbound on the 210 Freeway. Just as they passed Ayala Drive from out of nowhere they came under fire as well, officials said. That driver pulled over just before Riverside Avenue and called 911.

San Bernardino County Fire paramedics treated the first victim who was transported to a nearby hospital. Rialto firefighters treated the second shooting victim who was also taken to a nearby hospital.

Their conditions were unknown at the time of this report.

The shooting suspect is described as a White or Latino man with long blonde hair and a goatee beard. CHP officials said the man was driving an early model dark sedan.

Rialto Police detectives are taking charge of the case. Police didn't release a motive for the shooting.

Anyone with information is asked to call police at 909-820-2578.

<http://www.sbsun.com/general-news/20170314/2-shot-driving-in-opposite-directions-on-210-freeway-in-rialto-gunman-still-at-large>