CITY OF
SAN JOSE
CAPITAL OF SILICON VALLEY

Chuck Reed
MAYOR

August 22, 2012

Bobby Lopez
President
Silicon Valley FOP Lodge 52

Dear Mr. Lopez,

I received your recent letter asking for short and long term plans to increase police department staffing levels. I agree with you that SJPD staffing should be increased. Despite the fact that the police department budget has increased by nearly $100 million in the last decade, we have less officers than we had ten years ago because costs have gone up dramatically.

We already have both short-term and long-term plans in place to increase department funding. The short-term plan is underway and we are currently recruiting and hiring for two academy classes. More than 60 recruits have been hired for the September 2012 cycle. Three hundred candidates have been cleared for backgrounds for the March 2013 cycle. Unfortunately, we have to pull officers off patrol to do the backgrounds, which make staffing problems worse. We could have the background work done by others, which is what many agencies do, but the SJPOA has refused to agree to that approach. Nevertheless, we will continue to recruit and hire to increase our total staffing in the short run.

In the long run, we are committed to restoring services in the police department that we were forced to cut in recent years due to skyrocketing retirement costs. The Fiscal Reform Plan, adopted by the Council in March 2011, will allow us to restore police department services to January 2011 levels. Implementation of that plan depends on getting savings in pension costs from the reforms included in Measure B and Measure W (which authorized a new tier of benefits for new employees). Despite the efforts of the SJPOA and others to block the implementation of Measures B and W, we anticipate getting savings in 2013. My highest priority for use of the savings is to rebuild the capacity of the SJPD, and that includes increasing staffing levels.

Sincerely,

Chuck Reed

Chuck Reed

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