



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: January 31, 2017

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Water Resources Division, Public Works Department

SUBJECT: California Emergency Management Agency - Designation Of Agent To Close Zaca Fire Disaster Assistance Claim

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council adopt, by reading of the title only, A Resolution of the Council of the City of Santa Barbara Designating Robert Samario, Finance Director, as the City of Santa Barbara's Agent for California Emergency Management Agency Disaster Assistance for three (3) years, expiring January 31, 2020.

DISCUSSION:

The Zaca Fire started on July 4, 2007, and was declared controlled on October 29, 2007. This wildfire burned over 240,207 acres in the San Rafael Mountains, northeast of the Santa Ynez Valley. At the time, the Zaca Fire was California's second largest fire in recorded history.

The San Rafael Mountains serve as the watershed for both Lake Cachuma and the City's Gibraltar Reservoir. As a result of the Zaca Fire, the City's Water Resources Division suffered many fire-related impacts, such as:

- Excessive fine ash, organic carbon and nutrients, which impacted Lake Cachuma, Gibraltar and Lauro Reservoirs, and the Cater Water Treatment Plant (Cater Plant).
- Degraded water quality and diminished water storage capacity at Gibraltar Reservoir.
- Increased chemicals used for water treatment at the Cater Plant.
- Increased solids produced as a result of contaminant removal at the Cater Plant.
- Increased solids and debris in Gibraltar Reservoir, which buried the lower intake discharge valves.
- Increased potential for the water system to violate the Environmental Protection Agency's annual allowable average for trihalomethanes.

In response to the Zaca Fire, staff applied for and received emergency funding from the California Emergency Management Agency (Cal EMA), designating Robert Peirson, the City's Finance Director at the time, as the City's agent for Cal EMA Disaster Assistance.

At the time, it was unknown when the fire-related impacts would subside or reach a status quo; therefore, the City's Zaca Fire claim was left open. Staff believes it is now time to close the City's Zaca Fire claim with Cal EMA. Cal EMA has requested the City designate, by resolution, a current City agent for closing out the Zaca Fire claim.

Staff recommends that Council designate Robert Samario, Finance Director, as the City of Santa Barbara's Agent for Cal EMA Disaster Assistance, for all open claims and any future disasters that may occur during the next three (3) years.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

Between Fiscal Years 2009 and 2010, the City received a total of \$1,388,257 from Cal EMA for Zaca Fire disaster assistance. A final disaster assistance payment of at least \$125,000 for Zaca Fire-related administrative expenses is anticipated from Cal EMA.

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SUBMITTED BY: Rebecca J. Bjork, Public Works Director

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office