



City of Placentia Press Release

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JOHN PONO VAN GIESON TAKES THE REINS AS PLACENTIA'S INAUGURAL, LOCAL FIRE CHIEF

PLACENTIA, CA – Following a nationwide search, John Pono Van Gieson has taken the reins as the inaugural Fire Chief of Placentia's new, local Fire and Life Safety Department.

"A US Army Veteran with combat medic experience, Fire Chief Van Gieson comes to Placentia with over three decades of firefighting and 911 emergency response expertise, most recently leading these services as part of award-winning departments and teams serving over one million residents," said Damien Arrula, City Administrator. "We are thrilled to have him lead our City's newly established local, homegrown Fire Department."

Nearly 77% of 911 emergency calls in Placentia are for medical emergencies. The Placentia City Fire Department will increase capacity to dispatch ambulances quickly, saving lives, time and money. Residents have prioritized public safety services including reducing 911 emergency response times and maintaining police officers, firefighters and paramedics.



"I am looking forward to meeting the Placentia community and taking the reins on the important work to enhance 911 emergency response times and provide the level of local fire safety and emergency response services residents expect and deserve," said Fire Chief Van Gieson.

In 2018, Placentia voters enacted Measure U to maintain the City's public safety and essential City services. Measure U ensures rapid response to 911 medical emergencies and enough police officers to keep our community safe. Measure U funding has prevented the City from facing millions in cuts to public safety services including reductions to firefighters, paramedics and police officers and increasing 911 emergency response times.

Mr. Van Gieson will be formally introduced as the new Fire Chief for the Placentia Fire and Life Safety Department at the March 3, 2020 City Council meeting.

For more information and continual updates on the new local fire department, the community is encouraged to visit www.placentia.org/fireems.

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