



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Lee Wilcox

**SUBJECT: WORKING PARTNERSHIPS
USA'S ESTABLISHMENT OF
A VTA SOLIDARITY FUND**

DATE: June 10, 2021

Approved

Date

6/11/2021

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a resolution of the Council of the City of San José approving Working Partnerships USA's establishment of a Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) Solidarity Fund to collect and distribute donations for victims of the VTA Rail Yard mass shooting.

OUTCOME

Approval of the recommendation will assist Working Partnerships USA in its establishment, operation, and oversight of a VTA Solidarity Fund. A supplementary resolution also aligns with this recommendation.

BACKGROUND

This memo is in response to the mass shooting in the City of San José on May 26, 2021.

On May 26, a mass shooting occurred in the City of San José where an armed VTA employee opened fire on his colleagues, killing nine people before taking his own life. This senseless and horrific act was deplorable and unconscionable; the consequence of its inhumanity is a pain many of us will never know. The lives of the victims' families are forever changed, and they will never again know the feeling of their loved ones coming home from work.

The City of San José mourns with the families of:

- Abdolvahab Alaghmandan, 63
- Adrian Balleza, 29
- Alex Ward Fritch, 49
- Jose Dejesus Hernandez III, 35
- Lars Kepler Lane, 63
- Michael Joseph Rudometkin, 40

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- Paul Delacruz Megia, 42
- Taptejdeep Singh, 36
- Timothy Michael Romo, 49

ANALYSIS

The VTA tragedy on May 26, 2021 resulted in the death of nine (9) VTA employees, and caused physical injuries and trauma to those present, first responders, and the City of San José community as a whole. The need for increased public safety personnel, first responders, public health professionals, neighborhood development, and other officials to work long hours both in direct response to the shooting, as well as for investigating the crime scene and dealing with the aftermath has stressed City resources.

Individuals, including residents of San José, residents of California, and others, as well as numerous businesses, exhibited extraordinary generosity in seeking to help those who were most impacted by the VTA tragedy. The City of San José recognizes the burdens that would be imposed on the organization if it were to field inquiries for community support, collect gifts and monetary donations, ensure appropriate distribution of funds, assist the victims in receiving both financial and other restitution, and provide a vehicle to centralize the community's efforts to assist those affected by the VTA tragedy. The City of San José is appreciative and supportive of Working Partnerships USA's establishment of a VTA Solidarity Fund to collect and distribute contributions to cover emergency needs of impacted individuals and families who lost loved ones. Working Partnerships USA's VTA Solidarity Fund lessens the City's governmental burdens by serving as a centralized vehicle for receiving and distributing those gifts and contributions, fielding inquiries for community support, assisting victims in receiving both financial and other restitution, ensuring appropriate distribution, and providing a vehicle to centralize the community's efforts to assist those affected by the VTA tragedy. The City anticipates that all of the funds collected and pledged to date will be distributed to those individuals and families most affected by the VTA tragedy. The City anticipates that a VTA Solidarity Fund will receive a continuing stream of contributions thereafter to continue to provide support for those affected by the VTA tragedy.

CONCLUSION

To decrease the likelihood of people and organizations inadvertently donating funds to fraudulent charities, the City of San José approves of Working Partnerships USA's establishment, operation, and oversight of a VTA Solidarity Fund as the single vehicle where donations could be channeled that would address the loss suffered by victims and thereby lessen the City's governmental burdens.

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EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

No additional follow-up will be needed with the approval of this memorandum.

CLIMATE SMART SAN JOSE

The recommendation in this memo has no effect on Climate Smart San José energy, water, or mobility goals.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The Administration will post this memorandum on the City's Council Agenda website for the June 15, 2021 Council Meeting.

COORDINATION

The Administration coordinated this memo with the City Attorney's Office.

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION/INPUT

No commission recommendation or input is associated with this action.

CEQA

Not a Project, File No. PP17-010, City Organizational and Administrative Activities resulting in no changes to the physical environment



LEE WILCOX
Deputy City Manger

For questions, please contact Sarah Zaraté, Director, City Manager's Office of Administration, Policy and Intergovernmental Relations at sarah.zarate@sanjoseca.gov.