FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CITY OF UKIAH ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENT OF JUSTIN BUCKINGHAM AS FIRE CHIEF; Community Invited to November 4 Swearing-In Ceremony

Ukiah, CA. October 27, 2026. – The City of Ukiah and Ukiah Valley Fire Protection District (District) are pleased to announce the appointment of Justin Buckingham as Fire Chief of the Ukiah Valley Fire Authority, following his service as Acting Fire Chief. A formal swearing-in ceremony will be held on Wednesday, November 4, at 5:00 p.m. in the Ukiah City Council Chambers, located at 300 Seminary Avenue. Members of the community are invited to attend.

Buckingham brings 28 years of fire service experience to the position, including nearly 17 years serving the City of Ukiah and District. Since assuming the role and throughout his tenure, he has provided steady leadership, supported department personnel, and maintained the organization's commitment to delivering high-quality emergency services throughout the Ukiah Valley.

"Over the past three months, Justin has demonstrated the leadership, professionalism, and sound judgment needed to guide our fire service into the future," said City Manager Sage Sangiacomo. "He brings not only extensive technical expertise and operational experience, but also a genuine commitment to his team and the community we serve. We are fortunate to have someone of Chief Buckingham's caliber within our organization, and I am confident in his ability to lead the department."

Buckingham holds a bachelor's degree in Fire Administration and has extensive experience in emergency response, fire investigation, and specialized rescue operations. He serves as Lead Fire Investigator for the Ukiah Valley Fire Authority and is a licensed paramedic with specialized training in hazardous materials response, technical rescue, swiftwater rescue, and numerous other emergency response disciplines.

"I am grateful for the opportunity to continue serving this community and our team as Fire Chief," said Buckingham. "I've been fortunate to work alongside some incredible people, and I firmly believe our greatest strength is our team. I'm proud of the dedication, compassion, and professionalism they bring to serving our communities every day. My focus is on supporting our people, strengthening the trust

we've built with our communities, and continuing to provide the exceptional service they deserve. We will do that by living our commitments: Be Kind. Be Accountable. Be Better. I look forward to building on our strong foundation and continuing to serve alongside this incredible team."

As Fire Chief, Buckingham will oversee fire protection, emergency medical response, rescue operations, and other emergency services provided by the Ukiah Valley Fire Authority, which serves the City of Ukiah and surrounding communities.

Swearing-In Ceremony
Date: Wednesday, November 4, 2026
Time: 5:00 p.m.
Location: Ukiah City Council Chambers, 300 Seminary Avenue, Ukiah

The public is welcome and encouraged to attend as the City and Ukiah Valley Fire Authority formally recognize Chief Buckingham's appointment.



Shannon Riley, Deputy City Manager

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