



Efrain Agosto Jr

Fire Chief

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Dear Council Members,

Here are our responses to your questions:

Personnel: Explain all personnel changes – inclusive of additions, deletions, changes in paygrade, etc. and provide a justification. For all new positions and upgrades please provide job descriptions and list of deliverables as a result of this position budgeted for 2024.

Deputy Fire Chief

PT Clerk

12 Firefighters

For 2024, the Fire Department had several enhanced requests. The current Fire Administration is severely understaffed. It is lacking the necessary non bargaining and non-uniformed staff required to adequately oversee and support our bargaining personnel who deliver our Fire Suppression, Fire Prevention, Emergency Medical Services and Emergency Management. Restoration of the Deputy Chief of Administration and the addition of a part time clerk will have a tremendously positive impact on the delivery of fire department services. The positions will enhance oversight of department operation, increase public outreach, and enhance continuity of operations. To measure performance, we would look at output of the fire administration office in its entirety. We have identified three immediate areas where we can focus our effort on improvement:

1. Reviewing current rules, regulations, and operating guidelines is overdue and necessary to ensure we are using modern best practices.
2. Injuries and accidents are currently tracked but we lack the time and manpower to conduct thorough investigations. With more resources, we would be able to identify root causes of accidents and injuries and identify trends. With causes and trends identified, we could determine corrective actions and proactive methods to decrease accidents and injuries. Increasing prevention and mitigation will lead to future cost savings.
3. Community engagement will be improved in in two ways. First, the part time employee will enable us to keep our office open more regularly. Currently, when our sole office manager is away, we often need to lock our doors when the fire chief's and deputy chief's duties require



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them to leave the office. A part time employee will help us limit those instances and keep our doors open and our office accessible to the public. Secondly, the addition of another non bargaining uniformed manager will enable us to increase our public outreach. Our collective bargaining agreements makes it difficult to assign our bargaining unit members to events outside their regular schedule without compensating with a premium pay. With a great deal of community outreach opportunities occurring on nights and weekends our ability to engage the community is greatly increased when we can utilize a more flexible non bargaining member.

Explain and justify any substantial changes in your budget from previous years.

1. The 12 additional FFs are grant funded for 3 years. For 2024 the city will be reimbursed \$1,367,316.00.
SAFER Grant Analysis: The SAFER grant funds 12 firefighter positions for 3 years. The grant award is just over 4.1 million which breaks down to 1.39 million a year through 2026. In accepting the grant, we are adding 12 firefighters and reducing our premium pay. The net savings to the budget is \$376,000 in 2024 and 1.1 million in 2025. The reduced savings in year 1 is due to the initial training & new hire equipment costs.
2. The addition of the Deputy Fire Chief and the PT Clerk are justified in the explanations above.

How would you deal with a 10% reduction in your budget?

1. The Fire Department Budget for 2024 only increased by 3.31% from the previous year. The US inflation rate remained steady at 3.7% in September 2023. Reducing the budget by 10% would reduce our budget to less than what was budgeted for 2023. I would not be agreeable to reducing the budget by 10%.

Respectfully,

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