

 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Council Communication</b> Office of the City Manager</p>	<b>Date:</b> August 12, 2013
	<b>Agenda Item No.</b> 24 <b>Roll Call No.</b> <u>13-1273</u> <b>Communication No.</b> <u>13-415</u> <b>Submitted by:</b> John F. TeKippe, Fire Chief

**AGENDA HEADING:**

Approving application for funding through the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant program.

**SYNOPSIS:**

Recommend the City Council authorize the Fire Department to submit a DHS, Fiscal Year 2013 Staffing for SAFER grant application. The final decision on acceptance of any grant funds awarded will be made at a future date after Council has resolved FY2015 and 2016 budget amounts and staffing levels.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Amount: If awarded, this SAFER grant program will pay for the salary and benefits of firefighters hired under SAFER funding during a two (2) year performance period. There is neither a City match nor requirement to maintain the positions following the performance period. Please note, grantees must agree to maintain the number of firefighting positions throughout the performance period by taking active and timely steps to fill any vacancies.

- Total cost of three (3) new firefighters through FY16                      \$554,700
  - First year cost is \$269,175
  - Second year cost is \$285,525
- City contribution    \$0

Funding Source: The SAFER Grant Program following award and designation of the performance period.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

The grant obligation to maintain staffing levels is not applicable until after the acceptance of the grant funds. The City Council can proceed with an application at this time and continue with the budget planning process as normal. The grant awards are not anticipated until next summer, which is after the approval of the two-year budget plan. The City is under no obligation to accept an award if so offered.

SAFER was created to provide funding directly to fire departments and volunteer fire fighter interest organizations to help them increase or maintain the number of trained “front line” fire fighters available in their communities. The goal of SAFER is to enhance the local fire department’s abilities to comply with staffing, response, and operational standards established by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA); NFPA 1710 and/or 1720.

The purpose for SAFER funds would be to fill three (3) currently unfunded fire fighter positions. The newly funded positions would be assigned to increase the percentage of time that fire apparatus in the northeast portion of the City have the number of personnel required to initiate interior fire attacks. A minimum of four (4) personnel are required by Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to initiate interior fire fighting, regardless of whether they arrive in one or more apparatus/vehicles. The goal is to have sufficient personnel on the first arriving apparatus to begin fighting the fire inside the building versus having to wait for a second arriving apparatus. Having to wait for a second apparatus delays fire suppression, searches, and other activities that impact responder and citizen safety. During the performance period, the department would measure the effectiveness of the program and report its findings to program administrators as a part of the grant program.

In order to initiate an interior fire attack, there must be four (4) personnel on scene. When fewer than four (4) personnel are on scene, fire fighters must wait for additional personnel to initiate fire attacks within a residence or structure. While supervisors currently make assignments to keep fire engines and trucks in service in the northeast portion of the City by making daily adjustments to staffing, Engine 3 and Truck 3 are staffed with four (4) personnel approximately 25 percent of the time. There are not additional personnel currently to shift more towards these units as the result would be to replicate the problem to another location in the City. During FY13, each responded to the northeast corner of the City for structure fires without the other, one-third of the time. On those responses, they required additional arriving fire fighters to enter the structure and extinguish the fire.

Geographically, Engine 3 and Truck 3, located at Station 3 at 2458 Easton Boulevard, are isolated in that they have no other stations to their east or north. Responses to the northeast from Station 3 may exceed four (4) miles, over twice the distance used for Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating purposes. When responding together to this area, they exceed the four (4) person minimum for initiating interior structural fire attacks, regardless of the number of personnel assigned to each apparatus. The goal of the SAFER grant funding is to staff each apparatus with four (4) personnel 50 percent of the time.

The Fire Department has an authorized strength of 283 personnel. Of these, 280 positions are funded and 270 are sworn. Over 89 percent of all personnel are in-station responders. The 11 percent includes the Fire Chief/Administration, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Training, Prevention, Special Operations, Technical Services, and Maintenance sections. Including the Fire Chief, there are 12 supervisors total on the department.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S): NONE**

**BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE**

**ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:**

Should the application receive approval and funding is awarded, Council would be required to approve acceptance or refusal of the funding.

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