

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: SCOTT WESTROPE, BATTALION CHIEF
FIRE DEPARTMENT
SUBJECT: ANNA MCAULIFFE, RESEARCH & PROGRAM COORDINATOR
AUTHORIZING THE SUBMITTAL OF A GRANT APPLICATION
TO THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY
(FEMA) FOR A FUNDING STAFFING FOR ADEQUATE FIRE AND
EMERGENCY RESPONSE (SAFER) GRANT IN THE AMOUNT
OF \$1,542,180.

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Santa Rosa Fire Department (SRFD) that the Council, by resolution, 1) authorize staff to submit a grant application to FEMA for the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) program in the total amount of \$1,542,180 for three years of cost shared salaries and benefits for six (6) FTE firefighters.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This item relates to City Council Goal # 6 – Commit to Making Santa Rosa a Healthy Community Where People Feel Safe to Live, Work and Play. This grant will provide funding to enhance emergency response within the core area of the City. This grant will partially fund six (6) FTE firefighters to staff a 24-hour, advanced life support squad.

BACKGROUND

In the 2016 SRFD Standards of Cover and Deployment Plan (SOC), it was identified that an additional resource was required in the core area of the City to respond to emergency events. Specifically, the SOC states, "Improvement Goal F: Add a peak period response unit as Station 11. There is a significant amount of response workload in the Station 1 and 11 areas. Engine 1 and 11 are currently beyond target unit utilization. Adding a two-person quick response unit only during the high workload period is recommended." The core area of the City (covered by Engine 1 and 11) has the highest population density and infrastructure risk, thus this area also has the highest number of emergency responses and service demand.

Total response workload has increased 35.3 percent over the ten years, primarily driven by the increase in emergency medical responses. A review of workload by response unit can reveal much about response time performance. Although fire stations and response units may be distributed in a manner to provide quick response, that level of performance can only be obtained when the response unit is available in its primary service area. If a response unit is already on an incident and a concurrent request for service is received, a more distant response unit will need to be dispatched. This will increase response times. In 2016, Engine 1 responded to 5,072 calls for service, and Engine 11 to 4,421 calls for service out of the total 26,468. Unit hour utilization is an important statistic to monitor for those fire agencies using percentile-based performance standards, as does SRFD. In SRFD's case, where performance is measured at the 90th percentile, unit hour utilization greater than 10 percent means that the response unit will not be able to provide on-time response to its 90 percent target even if response is its only activity. Engines 1 and 11 already exceed 10 percent unit hour utilization.

The National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) 1710 recommends that fire departments are staffed in a manner that in the instance of a structure fire, the first arriving resource arrives within four (4) minutes of the time of call, the entire first alarm firefighting force arrives within eight (8) minutes of the time of call, and that the first alarm firefighting force consists of 15 personnel. Currently, the SRFD is not able to meet the personnel requirements of NFPA 1710 with a standard first alarm assignment. The addition of this resource to all first alarm assignments will increase the number of personnel assigned to a fire and meet NFPA 1710 requirements.

The addition of this resource would significantly improve the response capabilities in the core area of the City. Results would be realized in reduced response times to all incidents, increased firefighting force, increased safety factors on the fire ground, and increased service delivery to all citizens of Santa Rosa.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

Not applicable.

ANALYSIS

The grant funds, if authorized by Council and awarded by FEMA, will be used for the hiring of the six (6) firefighters in Fiscal Year 2017/18. The SRFD maintains a current eligibility list that would affect rapid hiring of new employees to immediately utilize this needed resource.

This grant is funded by cost sharing with FEMA. FEMA will fund the salaries and benefits of these personnel in the following manner:

- Year 1 – FEMA 75% (\$619,716)
- Year 2 – FEMA 75% of a step-one firefighter (\$619,716)

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- Year 3 – FEMA – 35% of a step-one firefighter (\$302,748)

The City would be responsible to fund the cost share difference of the salaries and benefits of these personnel in the following manner:

- Year 1 – City 25% (\$206,568)
- Year 2 – City 25% including salary step increase (\$245,280)
- Year 3 – City 65% including salary step increase (\$601,824)

FISCAL IMPACT

If awarded this grant, the City would realize a cost savings of \$1,542,180 over three years. The SRFD would fund the cost share difference by utilizing funds from unstaffed, vacant positions on the position control list.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guideline foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guideline section 15378.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

N/A

NOTIFICATION

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

- Resolution

CONTACT

Scott Westrope, Battalion Chief swestrope@srcity.org 707-543-3533
Anna McAuliffe, Research and Program Coordinator amcauliffe@srcity.org
707-543-3523