

CITY COUNCIL

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APPROVED

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DENIED

Reso No. _____

File No. _____

Ord No. _____

Agenda Item No.: 19

Date: November 14, 2012

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

FROM: Michael Lowry, Fire Chief

SUBJECT: Approve Staffing the Seventh Engine Company, the Purchase and Staffing of One Additional Ambulance and the Cost to Hire Non-Safety Personnel

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Adopt Resolution No. 2012-179 approving an increase in the Fire Department Operating Budget for FY 12/13 of \$847,355 to hire three (3) additional safety personnel to staff the Seventh Engine Company, twenty-four (24) non-safety personnel to staff additional ambulances and the associated start-up and operational costs; and to increase the Fire Department Operating Budget for FY 13/14 of \$1,204,330 to maintain personnel and on-going operational costs.

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

Understanding the current economic climate, Fire Department staff developed a staffing model which would achieve the Fire Department and City Council's goal of staffing the Seventh Engine Company. In addition, the plan provides for additional ambulance transport resources to handle the high call volume of emergency medical calls within the City of Escondido and the Rincon del Diablo Fire Protection District.

The staffing model was presented to the Escondido Firefighters Association, Senior Management and Council Members for comment and direction.

The staffing model includes the addition of a Seventh Engine Company and adds two additional ambulances during the day and one additional ambulance at night for a personnel cost of \$1,204,330 in annual personnel and operational costs.

Given fiscal constraints and the difficulty to hire personnel by the opening of Fire Station 4 on December 15, 2012, staff is recommending placing the Seventh Engine Company into service on March 16, 2013. This affords the Fire Department the ability to hire and train the new personnel to be operationally ready without placing further burden on an already stretched workforce. This however will require the Fire Department to close Fire Station 6 on December 15 and move personnel back to Fire Station 4. District 4 has been severely impacted by delayed response times due to the distance of the next due unit and the geographical features of the district. While not ideal, District 6 is much better suited to be served by next due units from Fire Stations 1, 3, and 5. Fire Station 6 would be fully staffed on March 16, 2013.

The implementation of the Seventh Engine Company and hiring non-safety personnel to staff the additional ambulances, including operational costs will be \$847,355 for FY 2012/13.

Proposed Staffing Costs FY 2012/13

\$506,800	Personnel Costs
<u>\$340,555</u>	Operational Costs
<u>\$847,355</u>	Total

It is anticipated that the Ground Emergency Medical Transport (GEMT) program, formally known as Assembly Bill 678 (AB 678), has been signed by Congress and is waiting on the final details by both the State and Federal agencies. This action would provide the City of Escondido the ability to receive supplemental federal funds retroactive to January 2010 for all Medi-Cal transports. Although the actual amount of supplemental payments is unknown, it is an anticipated source of additional revenue in the near future. It is also anticipated that additional funding would be realized by not losing transport fees to neighboring cities. These projected revenue sources will help off-set the use of General Fund Reserves.

If Council desires to implement the Seventh Engine Company earlier than March 16, the approximate cost would be an additional \$100,000 per month.

For comparison purposes, if the Escondido Fire Departments current staffing model remained status quo and increased in the same fashion (7 engines, 5 ambulances) the personnel cost to staff the Seventh Engine Company and add two additional ambulances would be approximately \$2,593,545 in annual personnel and operational costs.

PREVIOUS ACTIONS:

In February 1993 The City Council adopted the Fire Service and Facilities Master Plan. The foundation for the Fire Service Master Plan was based upon service level standards previously identified and adopted in the City's General Plan. The intent of the Fire Service Master Plan was to identify station and staffing expansion requirements necessary to achieve and maintain service levels.

In July 2000 the Fire Department completed and presented to City Council the results of the Fire Service Standards of Response Coverage Study (SORC). The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) and the International City Management Association (ICMA) developed the SORC model to assist fire departments in conducting a comprehensive review of service standards and performance levels. One area the SORC recommended change was with the Quality of Life (QOL) standard that City Council adopted in the early 1990's. The recommendation was to change the standard to reflect total response time for service delivery instead of just the travel time thereby increasing the need to construct and staff additional fire stations.

On November 2, 2004, Voters approved Proposition P, which provided funding for the acquisition, construction, repair and replacement of certain public safety facilities. Two of the public safety facilities funded by Proposition P were for the construction of additional Fire stations (6, 7). Both fire stations were completed in 2008. Engine 6, which at the time was providing service from Fire Station

1, moved to Fire Station 7. Fire Station 6 was staffed with an ambulance. At the time when voters approved Proposition P it was the intention of Council to approve additional funding to the Fire Departments Operating Budget in order to staff the Seventh Engine Company. However due to the economic downturn, the funding has not been available.

BACKGROUND:

The July 2000 Standards of Response Coverage Study covers many areas, such as how, why and where fire companies are located; what are the staffing capabilities of those companies; historical measures of emergency incident workload in our city and the use of GIS capabilities for computer mapping and time travel analysis.

Given an objective to control a fire or mitigate a medical emergency before it has reached its maximum intensity requires a "distribution" of resources and a cost effective "concentration" of resources for maximum effectiveness for the greatest risks. Distribution is the "speed" of the first due fire companies for initial intervention. Concentration is the "massing" of stations or companies close enough together that incidents can receive enough multiple company help to stabilize serious emergencies. Therefore, creating standards of response coverage goals frequently consist of the decisions made regarding "distribution" and "concentration" of resources (Fire and EMS) in relation to the potential demand placed upon them by the level of risk found in the community. For most communities, the goal is to have the fire department arrive on scene with enough resources, in a timely manner to stop the escalation of the emergency as they find it.

In February of 1991 the Sixth Engine Company and third ambulance were placed into service at Fire Station 1. The total call volume in 1991 was 6,987. Twenty-one years later in 2012, the Escondido Fire Department is on pace to break 12,500 calls, utilizing the same number of personnel and an additional 11-hour ambulance. Because of this 85% increase in call volume, the Fire Department experiences stacked or simultaneous incidents, which delays response times and the number of ambulances are not sufficient to transport all patients.

In 2009 the Fire Department laid off Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT's) and closed down one full-time ambulance due to budgetary constraints placed on the City by the economic downturn. Since that time, the Fire Department has placed a heavy reliance on the use of automatic aid requests from our neighboring communities to transport the citizens of Escondido. While the fire service utilizes automatic aid frequently for major incidents, an over reliance on automatic aid increases response times and reduces the associated revenue to the City of Escondido for these calls.

Respectfully submitted,



For:

Michael Lowry
Fire Chief



CITY OF ESCONDIDO
BUDGET ADJUSTMENT REQUEST

Date of Request: November 5, 2012
Department: Fire Department
Division: Administration
Project/Budget Manager: Michael Lowry 5400
Name Extension
Council Date (if applicable): November 14, 2012
(attach copy of staff report)


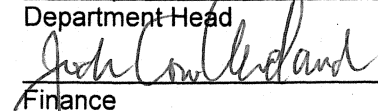
For Finance Use Only	
Log #	_____
Fiscal Year	_____
_____	Budget Balances
_____	General Fund Accts
_____	Revenue
_____	Interfund Transfers
_____	Fund Balance

Project/Account Description	Account Number	Amount of Increase	Amount of Decrease
Ambulance	5208-001-600	165,000	
Paramedic Equipment	5105-001-600	70,000	
Mentorship	5001-001-600	27,000	
Uniforms	5101-001-600	10,500	
Personal Protective Equipment	5105-001-600	25,000	
Water	5171-001-600	740	
Electricity	5170 5173-001-600	6,610	
Acadamy (Overtime)	5020-001-600	5,000	
Computer Equipment	5206-001-600	21,000	
Minor Office Equipment	5194-001-600	6,455	
Other Telephone	5173-001-600	1,750	
Building Maintenance	5125-001-600	1,500	

Explanation of Request:

It is requested that Council adopt Resolution No. 2012-179 approving an increase in the Fire Department Operating budget of \$506,800 to hire 3 additional safety personnel to staff the seventh engine company, 24 non-safety personnel to staff additional ambulances, \$340,555 for start-up and operational costs.

APPROVALS

 Department Head	<u>11/6/12</u> Date	_____ City Manager	_____ Date
 Finance	<u>11/6/12</u> Date	_____ City Clerk	_____ Date

Distribution (after approval):

Original: Finance

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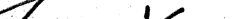

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Department Head	Date
	11/6/12
Finance	Date

City Manager _____ Date _____

City Clerk _____ Date _____

Distribution (after approval):

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RESOLUTION NO. 2012-179

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF
THE CITY OF ESCONDIDO, CALIFORNIA,
MODIFYING THE CITY OF ESCONDIDO
GENERAL FUND RESERVE AND
INCREASING THE FIRE DEPARTMENT'S
OPERATING BUDGET

WHEREAS, the Governmental Accounting Standards Board ("GASB") has issued its Statement No. 54 entitled Fund Balance Reporting and Governmental Fund Type Definitions, with the intent of improving financial reporting by providing fund balance categories that will be more easily understood; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Escondido has adopted Resolution No. 2011-151, the Fund Balance Policy; and

WHEREAS, the Fund Balance Policy provides that the City Council may commit a portion of the General Fund balance for specific purposes by taking formal action and these committed amounts cannot be used for any other purpose unless the City Council removes or changes the specific use through the same formal action taken to establish the commitment; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has determined that the General Fund Reserve balance be established at \$ 22,648,330; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has determined that the specific purposes for which the General Fund Reserve can be used is to fund any capital project that assists the City in emergency response; and

WHEREAS, the Fire Department needs to increase the Fire Department Operating Budget by \$847,355 to (1) hire three additional safety personnel to staff the Seventh Engine Company; (2) hire twenty-four non-safety personnel to staff additional ambulances to meet the service demands of the community; (3) purchase an additional ambulance to provide operational resources to deliver service; and (4) fund ongoing operational costs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Escondido, California, as follows:

1. That the above recitations are true.
2. That the City Council hereby establishes and approves the new balance of the General Fund Reserve at \$ 21,800,975 as of the date of this Resolution.
3. That \$847,355 will be added to the Fire Department's Operating Budget to fund the personnel, start-up and operational costs.