

AGENDA



Thursday, May 14, 2009

**Fire
RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL ACTION**

Item No. 13

Subject: Approve an ordinance establishing classifications and positions in the classified service of the Fire Department, eliminating and creating certain positions, and repealing Ordinance No. 20081120-020 relating to Fire Department classifications and positions and declaring an emergency.

Amount and Source of Funding: Funding is available in the Fiscal Year 2008-2009 Operating Budget of the Austin Fire Department.

Fiscal Note: A fiscal note is not required.

For More Information: Jim Evans, Assistant Fire Chief/Chief of Staff 974-0132

Prior Council Action: Classificaion Ordinance No. 20081120-020 adopted by Council on November 20,2008

This action approves an ordinance establishing classifications and positions in the classified service of the Fire Department, eliminating and creating certain positions, and repealing Ordinance No. 20081120-020 relating to Fire Department classifications and positions and declaring an emergency.

AFD currently has three Assistant Chiefs for a department of 1,079 firefighters. In 2002, the Fire Department had five Assistant Chiefs. In 2005, there were four Assistant Chiefs. With an Assistant Chief retirement in 2008, a decision was made to temporarily reduce the number of Assistant Chiefs from four to three. This was to allow time for a new Fire Chief to be appointed, provide an opportunity for that individual to determine the appropriate size of his/her management team, and then allow the Fire Chief the opportunity to personally appoint members to the management team.

With this new executive structure, the Fire Chief plans to address two key areas. First, distribution of workload, with an emphasis on Combat Operations will be improved. Emergency response is our major activity, comprising 80 percent of the total budget and 92 percent of the department's personnel. With the growth in the city, the challenges of wildland interface, high rise and high density development, and annexations, have risen to the level where increased executive attention and oversight are necessary. Second, a succession plan for executive positions will be developed. The two current Assistant Chiefs have 29 and 32 years of experience, respectively. Of the 38 current chief officers in the department, 35 have twenty or more years of service with AFD. Even with the downturn in the economy, these additional issues make now the appropriate time to increase the executive team in conjunction with formulating a succession plan.

The prior classification ordinance is being amended to increase the number of Assistant Chief positions by two and reduce the number of Firefighters by one and the number of Battalion Chiefs by one. This action results in no change to the overall authorized strength of the Department.

The following civil service classifications of the Fire Department, and the number of positions in each classification, are as follows:

Assistant Chief 5

Division Chief 5
Battalion Chief 30
Captain 69
Lieutenant 177
Fire Specialist 196
Firefighter 597