

AGENDA



Thursday, September 24, 2009

**Fire
RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL ACTION****Item No. 37**

Subject: Approve an ordinance establishing classifications and positions in the classified service of the Fire Department, eliminating and creating positions in certain ranks, establishing pay rates, repealing Ordinance No. 20090914-006 relating to Fire Department classifications and positions and declaring an emergency.

Amount and Source of Funding: Funding is available in the Fiscal Year 2009-2010 Operating Budget of the Austin Fire Department.

Fiscal Note: There is no unanticipated fiscal impact. A fiscal note is not required.

For More Information: Rhoda Mae Kerr, Fire Chief, 974-0131; Amy Singer, Chief Administrative Officer, 974-4120

Prior Council Action: Classification Ordinance No. 20090914-006 adopted by Council on September 14, 2009.

This ordinance increases the number of Assistant Chiefs by one, increases the number of Battalion Chiefs by two and decreases the number of Firefighter positions by three. These Firefighter positions are vacant and there is no active list from which to fill these positions.

Currently, two Battalion Chiefs are off work for an extended period of time due to significant injury and will not return to work in the foreseeable future. This is causing both an operational and financial hardship. AFD is paying overtime and higher classification pay so that lower ranking individuals can accomplish the duties of the two Battalion Chiefs. Additionally, the creation of these two new positions will allow for the promotion of much needed personnel who sit on promotional lists set to expire on October 1, 2009. After list expiration, promotional candidates must have 90 days notice before the civil service commission can test and formulate new promotional lists. When the two injured Battalion Chiefs retire, it would be the Fire Chief's intent to reduce the number of Battalion Chiefs by two.

Additionally, this ordinance increases the number of Assistant Chiefs by one for a total of five. Currently, AFD - an organization of over 1,100 members- has four Assistant Chiefs. With five Assistant Chiefs, the Fire Department can develop a succession plan for an additional highly tenured chief officer and can more effectively utilize the chief of staff model.

The result of these additional positions, and resulting promotions, will be a substantial improvement in the distribution of management workload. Furthermore, these actions will allow AFD to better meet the current challenges of fire fighting: increased population and density, wild-land interface with developed areas, fire fighting in high-rise apartment buildings and the like. This ordinance will result in substantially improved municipal services by providing a more efficient management team.

Council is asked to declare an emergency on the parts of this ordinance that pertain to eliminating and creating positions. This is because of the immediate need to better distribute workload among managers and because of the operational efficiency associated with making promotions from certain promotional lists before they expire on October 1. Council is asked to make effective the part of this ordinance that

pertains to the pay scales on October 1, 2009 so that the pay scales will go into effect with the remainder of the City budget on that date.

This ordinance maintains AFD pay scales, used in developing the approved AFD budget in the absence of a contract between the Austin Professional Fire Fighters' Association, Local 975, and the City. The pay scales will be amended if, and when, a new contract is approved.

Assistant Chiefs 5
Division Chiefs 5
Battalion Chiefs 33
Captain 69
Lieutenant 177
Fire Specialist 196
Firefighter 589