

Meeting Date: 06/09/2015

Information

Title:

Discussion Regarding Public Safety Administrative Support

Purpose/Background:

The purpose of this discussion is to request the City Council's direction for staff to proceed with a recruiting effort to fill the immediate and long-term administrative support needs in both the Fire Department and the Police Department.

As a result of two recent staffing changes in the Police Department, both the Police and Fire Departments currently have greatly reduced administrative support capacity. As the City Council is aware, two part-time Police Technicians (one 20-hour and one 25-hour) are no longer working in that capacity. One of the Police Technicians is now working as a Ramsey Community Service Officer and the other is no longer employed with the City. This change has left the Police Department short by 40 hours per week and the Fire Department short by 5 hours per week. The interim support needs are being handled by the Police Department Office Supervisor and a Police Captain, taking turns working at the front desk area taking calls and assisting customers; as well as the Fire Chief & Fire Marshal picking up as much of the work as they can.

City's Recruiting Policy:

For previously approved/budgeted positions, it is the City's policy to conduct needed recruitment and to bring a case forward to the City Council to request authorization to hire. However, in this case, staff would like to discuss alternative staffing options (rather than conducting recruitment based on the current vacancies) in order to restructure; best meeting the needs of the City and the goals of the Strategic Plan.

Fire Department:

Staff would like to begin a recruitment for a 20-hour per week Fire Technician to fill the administrative support role within the Fire Department. For the last couple of years the administrative support functions for the Fire Department have been handled in the Police Department at just 5-hours per week (5-hours of the 25-hour per week technicians's schedule under the direction of 2 supervisors). The 5-hour weekly schedule came about in response to the need to reduce personnel costs; prior to that the position was 40-hours per week for several years. There have been many changes in the Fire Department that speak to the need for additional hours of administrative support (including but not limited to payroll processing changes and other record keeping needs); along with a need to better utilize the Fire Chief's and the Fire Marshal's time to be more specifically focused on higher level public safety activities, and to provide more responsive customer service. In addition to the attached documentation, staff is prepared to discuss the needs of the Fire Department with the City Council as part of this case.

Police Department:

Staff would like to begin a recruitment for a 40-hour per week Lead Records Technician. Changing from two part-time employees to one lead full-time employee will help to provide consistency and continuity of service. In addition, it is the City's goal to operate under a 3-deep staffing plan and to practice proactive succession planning. Employing a lead support person will provide a link between the front desk support staff and the Police Department Office Supervisor. Currently, a Police Captain must serve as the Police Department Office Supervisor's back-up. In addition to the attached documentation, staff is prepared to discuss the needs of the Police Department with the City Council as part of this case.

In summary, City staff continues to be cautiously prudent with regard to maintaining a reduced personnel budget and have carefully considered the staffing needs of both departments, and have determined that the City would be

better able to meet the goals of the strategic plan, especially with regard to strategic imperative of "Smart Citizen-Focused Government" and providing for a more "An Effective Organization".

Timeframe:

10 to 30 minutes.

Funding Source:

The 2015 funding required for a part-time Fire Technician is estimated to be approximately \$9,508 (\$23,418 on an annual basis in 2016). The 2015 funding required for a full-time Lead Police Records Technician is estimated to be approximately \$30,506.00. (\$67,183 on an annual basis in 2016). However, with the savings from earlier Police Department staffing changes, the 2015 difference with adding a part-time Fire Technician and a full-time Lead Police Records Technician comes to a savings of \$17,116 over what was originally budgeted for 2015.

Responsible Party(ies):

Colleen Lasher, Human Resources Manager in cooperation with Dean Kapler, Fire Chief and Jeff Katers, Police Chief.

Outcome:

For the City Council to direct staff to conduct recruitment as outlined above in order to fulfill the City's staffing needs.

Attachments

[Fire Technician Justification](#)

[Lead Police Records Tech Justification](#)

Form Review

Inbox	Reviewed By	Date
Dean Kapler	Colleen Lasher	06/03/2015 10:29 AM
Colleen Lasher (Originator)	Colleen Lasher	06/03/2015 10:30 AM
Dean Kapler	Jo Thieling	06/03/2015 10:32 AM
Jeff Katers	Jeff Katers	06/03/2015 10:45 AM
Colleen Lasher (Originator)	Jo Thieling	06/03/2015 10:47 AM
Dean Kapler	Dean Kapler	06/03/2015 11:10 AM
Colleen Lasher (Originator)	Colleen Lasher	06/04/2015 09:29 AM
Kurt Ulrich	Kurt Ulrich	06/04/2015 03:12 PM
Kurt Ulrich	Kurt Ulrich	06/04/2015 03:17 PM
Form Started By: Colleen Lasher		Started On: 06/01/2015 11:46 AM
Final Approval Date: 06/04/2015		

Evaluation Criteria for Vacant and New Positions

Fire Technician – New Position

By: Dean Kapler, Fire Chief

1. Is the position essential?

As with other departments, record keeping is an activity that will continue through time. The Public Safety Data System (PSDS) has given public safety an incredible tool to capture and analyze data, but the data entry portion remains.

2. Is the position critical?

- **Explain how this position is key to achieving the strategic goals identified by the City Council.**

As part of the city's Strategic Plan, this key position will ensure that we continue to be an effective organization through proper documentation kept for incident reports, details of responses, periodic reporting, insurance premium information, staff certifications, payroll entering, time off/vacation leaves and other general administrative duties.

- **Can the duties be re-engineered or automated? Please explain.**

With the PSDS, the original goal was to substantially reduce the efforts of entering data. Although there are many "hands free" data gathering tools available, there still remains a substantial amount of entry, gathering and analysis that needs to happen on a periodic basis.

- **Can the duties be reassigned temporarily or permanently? Please explain.**

Police and Fire did combine these efforts in the past and the end results were favorable. With the PSDS, a more specialized effort is needed in both departments rather than a general Public Safety presence. Currently fire command staff (Fire Marshal and Fire Chief) are completing these tasks, keeping in mind that the PSDS is only partially implemented at this time.

- **Can the position remain unfilled temporarily or permanently? Please explain.**

The position cannot remain unfilled without management staff completing the work assignments. Staff feels the management positions need to concentrate more efforts on higher level activities (code enforcement, preplanning, public education, recruitment, etc.)

- **Can the position be filled internally?**

Staff would recommend an internal recruitment to see if a qualified individual on staff would apply.

- **What is the impact (i.e., to residents, business owners, employees, and/or operations) if the position is not filled?**

With Ramsey's business community continuing to grow, it is essential to have consistent code compliance efforts in place. The current structure is limiting the amount of "field time" the Fire Marshal can spend on code compliance.

- **Can the service provided be reduced, eliminated, or contracted out?**

The level of involvement this position would provide would be considered the average to complete the needed activity. As far as contracting out, this proposal is a part-time request, thus greatly limiting the cost to the city.

- **What is the budgetary impact if the position is not filled (e.g., additional overtime/compensatory time off costs)**

Some overtime by the Fire Marshal position. Note the "What is the impact if the position is not filled".

- **What are the circumstances that warrant the creation of this new position?**

History of this position: This position was first proposed as a 20 hr./week in April 2005. It was changed to a full-time position in December 2005. Through a layoff, a qualified person was "bumped" in an effort to eliminate another administrative position. The reassignment was eventually changed to a shared position within the Police department to provide assistance to both Police and Fire Departments.

3. What is the total annual cost of the position (e.g., salary, taxes, benefits, equipment, etc.)?

2015 -- \$9,508.00 using funds budgeted for positions that have been vacant

2016 -- \$23,418.00 budgeted as part of the initial 2016 budgeting process

No additional equipment necessary

Evaluation Criteria for Vacant and New Positions

Lead Police Record Technician – New Position

by Jeff Katers, Chief of Police

1. Is the position essential?

This position is essential to maintain our staffing level and to provide direction to clerical staff. A Lead Records Technician will assist the Office Supervisor in day to day work assignments, balancing workloads between staff members. This position will increase the clerical staffing levels by four (4) hours per day, ensuring that there is leadership throughout the workday for staff.

2. Is the position critical?

- **Explain how this position is key to achieving the strategic goals identified by the City Council.**

As part of the city's Strategic Plan, this key position would effectively ensure sustainable staffing at a supervisory level for the clerical unit in the next three to five years.

- **Can the duties be re-engineered or automated? Please explain.**

The clerical staff needs direction on a daily basis. The Office Supervisor is required to perform more complex duties that cannot be delegated or redirected. This reduces the opportunity to assist with work assignments and balancing the workload for the clerical staff.

- **Can the duties be reassigned temporarily or permanently? Please explain.**

In the very short term, the duties of this position have been temporarily reassigned to the Police Department Office Supervisor along with a Police Captain providing some customer service at the counter and over the phone. The duties cannot be permanently reassigned. Additionally, the amount of software training required to fill this position is not conducive of temporary employees filling the vacancy.

- **Can the position remain unfilled temporarily or permanently? Please explain.**

The position cannot remain unfilled, as there are state and federal reporting requirements that the police department is obligated to provide. Without adequate staffing the city could be subject to sanctions by the FBI.

- **Can the position be filled internally?**

Unlikely, the required certifications for this position can only come from someone currently working in a law enforcement agency; staff is not aware of current employees working for another agency (firefighters, reserve officers, active seasonals, etc.). Also, this position's minimum qualifications include three (3) years experience in a police records environment, including one (1) year supervising or leading staff. However, an internal recruitment will be conducted for five days.

- **What is the impact (i.e., to residents, business owners, employees, and/or operations) if the position is not filled?**

Police reports are made available for insurance purposes when there is a car accident or another type of loss. Without adequate staffing, there would be delays in providing this information to our residents.

- **Can the service provided be reduced, eliminated, or contracted out?**

This service cannot be reduced, eliminated or contracted out.

- **What is the budgetary impact if the position is not filled (e.g., additional overtime/compensatory time off costs)**

We would have to provide overtime hours to the full-time records clerk and medical benefits to the part-time records clerk.

- **What are the circumstances that warrant the creation of this new position?**

This position is essential to maintain our staffing level and to provide direction to clerical staff. A Lead Records Technician will assist the Office Supervisor in day to day work assignments, balancing workloads between staff members. This key position will ensure that there is leadership throughout the workday and this position would be part of the police department's succession plan.

3. What is the total annual cost of the position (e.g., salary, taxes, benefits, equipment, etc.)?

- The 2015 wages and benefit costs for this position are 30,506.00; however, including the cost of hiring a Fire Technician, there is a savings of \$17,116.00 over what was originally budgeted for 2015 due to staffing changes.
- The 2016 preliminary budget amount is \$67,183
- No additional equipment necessary