

## CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA CITY COUNCIL AGENDA



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| Agenda Date:     | December 21, 2020   |
| Action Required: | Appropriation   |
| Presenter:       | Mike Rogers, Deputy Chief – Business Services, Charlottesville Fire Dept.                       |
| Staff Contacts:  | Mike Rogers, Deputy Chief – Business Services, Charlottesville Fire Dept.                       |
| Title:           | <b>Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program - \$3,498,300.00</b> |

### **Background:**

The Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grants (SAFER) was created to provide funding directly to fire departments and volunteer firefighter interest organizations to help them increase or maintain the number of trained, "front line" firefighters available in their communities.

The goal of SAFER is to enhance the local fire departments' abilities to comply with staffing, response and operational standards established by the National Fire Protection Association's 1710 (NFPA 1710) - Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments.

### **Discussion:**

This SAFER grant program award will allow the city to hire 15 firefighters to place into fire operations bringing the fire department closer in line with 1710 standards. These positions will allow the fire department to keep a minimum compliment of firefighters on fire apparatus while simultaneously allowing the department to staff two emergency medical transport units 24 hours day. The grant will allow for transport unit staffing without drawing down firefighters from fire apparatus, and will allow the department to not rely on overtime positions to cover transport unit staffing and/or backfill for firefighters staffing these two transport units.

Of the two transport units in service three personnel have been hired to date for staffing. With no available fire suppression staffing to address this staffing need presently, six firefighters are needed to offset the needed compliment on Fire Medic 10 at the Fontaine Ave. Fire Station, and nine firefighters are needed to offset the compliment needed to bring Fire Medic 1 online as a 24 hour unit at the Ridge Street Fire Station.

These 15 firefighters will be evenly dispersed across the department’s three shifts to accomplish this staffing and deployment model.

**Alignment with Council Vision Areas and Strategic Plan:**

The SAFER Grant Program award supports the City’s mission “We provide services that promote equity and an excellent quality of life in our community” by providing supplemental funding at 100% for the first three years of employment for the 15 firefighters. With this funding being put towards these additional firefighter positions we are better able to deploy our responders to more safely and efficiently deliver emergency services to the citizens, students, business community members, and guests of the City.

The monetary assistance from this grant also aligns with Goal 2.1, Reduce adverse impact from sudden injury and illness and the effects of chronic disease by allowing the department to fully staff two emergency medical transport units, as well as elements within Goal 5 - A Well-managed and Responsive Organization.

**Community Engagement:**

N/A

**Budgetary Impact:**

Under the FY20 SAFER grant award structure, the grant covers 100% of the base salary and benefits for 15 firefighters as outlined in the grant application for the first three years. On March 10, 2024 the city will fully assume the salaries and benefits initially covered by the SAFER grant program.

During the grants three year period of performance the annual breakdowns are:

| Base Salary/Benefits | 03/10/21-03/09/22 | 03/10/22-03/09/23 | 03/10/23-03/09/24 | 03/10/2024-Onward |
|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Federal              | 1,166,100.00      | 1,166,100.00      | 1,166,100.00      | 0                 |
| Local                | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 | 1,166,100.00      |

The breakdown for the base salary and benefits submitted at the time of the grant application are:  
Annual base salary = \$43,680.00  
Annual base benefits = \$34,060.00  
Total base per firefighter = \$77,740.00 (x15 = \$1,166,100.00/yr.)

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommends approval and appropriation of grant funds.

**Alternatives:**

If the SAFER grant program funding is not appropriated, the Fire Department will not be able to utilize this supplemental funding to hire any of the 15 firefighters allocated from the grant award.

**Attachments:**

Appropriation

**APPROPRIATION**

**Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program  
\$3,498,300.00**

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency has awarded a grant to the Fire Department, through the City of Charlottesville, specifically for firefighter hiring;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the City of Charlottesville, Virginia, that a total of \$3,498,300.00 be appropriated in the following manner:

**Revenues - \$3,498,300**

\$3,498,300    Fund: 211                    I/O:    3201005100                    G/L Account: 431110

**Expenditures - \$3,498,300**

\$3,498,300    Fund: 211                    I/O:    3201005100                    G/L Account: 519999

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this appropriation is conditioned upon the continual reimbursement for hours worked during the period of performance and shall be considered a continuing appropriation unless further altered by Council.