



Council Agenda Report

From: Thomas Frutchey, City Manager

Subject: Recruitment of Fire Chief and Battalion Chief

Date: February 7, 2017

Facts

1. Battalion Chief Keith Aggson assumed a position with the City of San Luis Obispo; his last day with the City was December 31, 2016.
2. Chief Ken Johnson has announced his retirement, effective March 3, 2017.
3. Atascadero's Chief retired last year. Atascadero is in the middle of its second recruitment process for a Fire Chief, as the first effort was not successful. Atascadero does not have any Battalion Chief positions.
4. The Mayor and City Manager have conducted in-depth discussions with the Atascadero Mayor and City Manager, to see what options going forward might meet the needs of both communities. (The two city managers have also scheduled a meeting with the Templeton Community Services District General Manager to explore cooperative options). Thus far, there have been no staff-sharing options identified that would meet the needs of both cities during the near term.
5. We do not have a fully qualified in-house Chief candidate; we believe we have several qualified in-house Battalion Chief (BC) candidates. It is appropriate and ideal to fully involve the new Chief in the selection of a BC, whether or not the successful candidate is currently on staff.
6. We are completing our recruitment for interim personnel now, assisted on a pro bono basis by Avery & Associates.
7. Some of the candidates for interim assignments are retirees from CalPERS agencies. New CalPERS regulations preclude the City from contracting with them, as annuitants, until recruitments for the regular appointees are "actively underway." This compels us to move forward with the Chief and BC positions earlier than is ideal, as we have not had the opportunity to fully explore all of the personnel/operations options we need to consider going forward.
8. Avery & Associates has a long history of conducting successful executive director recruitments for the City, and understands the City's needs, culture, and preferences. In addition, Avery & Associates has conducted numerous fire management recruitments throughout the state of California, and is knowledgeable of many likely candidates.

Options

1. Take no action;
2. Authorize the City Manager to enter into agreement with Avery & Associates for the Fire Chief and Battalion Chief recruitments, in an amount not to exceed \$42,000;
3. Provide alternative direction.

Analysis and Conclusions

It is important to initiate these recruitments now, to meet CalPERS requirements, to ensure that we have the needed level of fire management personnel on duty at all times, and to prevent delays in moving forward with the long-term service improvements currently being addressed by the City Council and community. Interim appointments generally cannot last longer than six months, so we will need the new Chief and Battalion Chief on board by mid-July. Given all the steps necessary to run a full recruitment, it will likely take that long before the new personnel is/are available. We will run the recruitments so as to

meet all CalPERS requirements, without unnecessarily precluding our ability to select the service and operational options that best address our long-term needs.

Fiscal Impact

The actual cost is likely to be significantly under the not-to-exceed amount. As this was not an expense anticipated during the budget process, this requires an appropriation from reserves.

Recommendation

Authorize the City Manager to enter into agreement with Avery & Associates for the Fire Chief and Battalion Chief recruitments, in an amount not to exceed \$42,000, and appropriate the necessary funds from reserves.

Attachments

None