



RAPID CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Prepare, Prevent, Protect



To: Mayor Steve Allender
Members of City Council

From: Fire Chief Mike Maltaverne

Subject: SAFER Grant Application-Fire Department Staffing

Date: June 15, 2016

Mayor and members of Council,

During the budget processes for 2014, 2015 and 2016, the Fire Department has expressed staffing deficiencies. During those hearings, requests for additional staffing were made to address these deficiencies. Through an external and internal analysis of the Fire Department staffing levels, we have determined that we are in need of 15 additional personnel to meet national standards and the emergency response needs of the community. Potential sources for additional staffing are grants, the ambulance enterprise fund and the general fund. We have developed a tentative Fire Department plan to increase our staffing levels. The plan calls for an increase of 15 personnel:

- 9 from a SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire & Emergency Response) grant
- 2 from Ambulance Enterprise Fund
- 4 from General Fund in 2016

We were unsuccessful in our SAFER grant application in 2015 (2014 grant year). Of the 6 remaining positions requested from City Council, we were awarded 3 of these in our 2016 operational budget (2 from the ambulance enterprise fund and one from general fund).

To continue to address the staffing deficiency, we are again applying for a SAFER grant. If awarded, the grant would pay 100% of the salary and benefits for nine firefighters for a two year time period. The total amount requested is \$1,076,121.

Justification: Three forms of analysis (2 external and one internal)

- ISO (Insurance Services Office) reclassification - RCFD only received 71% of allowable credit under "staffing".
- NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) 1710-*Fire Department Response Standards*: states we will have 15 firefighters on scene of a confirmed building fire in 8 minutes or less, 90% of the time. In 2014, we could only achieve the standard 50% of the time. RCFD's average response time in meeting the standard was over 11 minutes.
- In 1995 we had 81 firefighters in the Operations Division. The Department's call volume was 3,600 or 44 calls per firefighter.



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- In 2015, we had 117 firefighters in the Operations Division, with a call volume of 17,012 or 145 calls per firefighter.
- 2006 to 2015 (10 years) we have experienced a 43% increase in call volume with no increases in operational staffing.

We have creatively been addressing this issue in the last 5 years. Examples include:

- Response to prone subjects-no response today (reduction of 500+ calls per year)
- Cross staffing stations 5 and 6 with Engine and Ambulance
- Mobile Medic Program-getting appropriate resource to medical call (JTV grant)
- Automatic Fire Alarm responses get 1 unit instead of 4 (helps NFPA 1710 by leaving other units to respond to other calls)
- Constant review of PRO QA dispatch protocols-assures the most appropriate response to emergencies
- Current reorganization of Department's management to better plan for future and manage department
- Currently seeking accreditation by Centers for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE)
- We have a five year CIP plan that has allocating funding for station renovations and vehicles to support increased staffing
- Inclusion in the City's Comprehensive Plan-SHIS 1.1: Continue to Provide High Quality Community Safety Services

In managing the Fire Department, indicators that are used for decision making are:

- Community needs-examples are the geographical and regional considerations (special events, weather, topography, economy)
- Response Data-what is our current reality and what are the trends both short term and long term
- National Standards-either mandated or benchmarked

In this staffing plan, all three indicators point to a staffing deficiency for the Fire Department. This staffing plan addresses the needs for today based on current reality. We are seeking authorization to apply for and accept a SAFER Grant in the amount of \$1,076,121 if awarded. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call me.

Mike Maltaverne, Fire Chief