



RAPID CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Prepare, Prevent, Protect



To: Mayor Sam Kooiker
Members of City Council

From: Fire Chief Mike Maltaverne

Subject: SAFER Grant Application-Firefighter Staffing

Date: March 11, 2015

Mayor and members of Council,

During requests for 2014 and 2015 budgets, I expressed staffing deficiencies and that a request was coming in 2016 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 firefighters 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 Fire Department Staffing Plan. The Fire Department Staffing Plan calls for an increase of 15 firefighters:

- 9 from SAFER grant
- 2 from Ambulance Enterprise Fund
- 4 from General Fund in 2016

In preparation of the Department's 2016 budget request, we are applying for a federal firefighter staffing grant called a SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response) GRANT. In January of this year, AC Chief Seals participated in a peer review process for SAFER Grants (FEMA funded) to better understand the application process thus bettering our chances for a successful application. The grant funds 9 firefighters for two years for \$935,055.

Justification: 3 Forms of analysis (2 external and one internal)

- ISO (Insurance Services Office) classification-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 2014, we had 117 firefighters, with a call volume of 15,452 or 132 calls per firefighter.
- 2004 to 2014 (10 years) we have experienced a 47% increase in call volume
- Year to date increase is 13.3% (over this time last year)

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

- Response to prone subjects-no response today (reduction of 400-500 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 I use 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 \$995,055 if awarded. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call me.

Mike Maltaverne, Fire Chief