



FRESNO COUNTY FIRE

PROTECTION DISTRICT

Honor, Integrity, Cooperation & Professionalism

MEMORANDUM

Date: 05/13/2020
To: Board Directors
Attn: Mike Del Puppo
President
From: Fire District Staff
Subject: Senior Fire Inspector position

BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S BRIEFING PAPER

ISSUE:

Improve staffing, customer service and organization of the District's protection/planning program by hiring a Senior Fire Inspector (Supervisor).

BACKGROUND:

The Fresno County Fire Protection District established a Senior Fire Inspector position in 2013 and it was vacated in March 2016. The position was used as a plan reviewer for all plans submitted to the District. When the position was vacated, a contractor was hired to conduct all plan reviews for fire and life safety requirements.

DISCUSSION:

This plan includes the hiring of a Senior Fire Inspector (Supervisor) and maintaining the current staffing of three Fire Inspectors. The three inspector positions are paramount to maintain and improve the level of service we are currently providing to the public.

With the past organizational structure, workload and regular changes in personnel, we have determined the program needs a direct supervisor to maintain consistency. The supervisor is needed to manage the program to provide a better level of service and support to the public and the County Building Dept., on a daily basis. We found during

the analysis of this program, there are tasks being completed by the Fire Inspectors that is taking time out of their day that could be better spent conducting additional inspections. These tasks are better suited for the role of a supervisor and in doing so the supervisor can better manage the distribution of tasks and assignments to be completed by the Fire Inspectors. The supervisor will be a direct conduit to respond to the public's needs and requests and be more proactive with the County. The supervisor will oversee the electronic permitting process implementation. This will streamline our program, make the inspection process both in the office and the field more efficient and free up the Fire Inspectors to complete additional inspections to improve customer service.

Additionally, the supervisor will be able to handle the following Issues/Processes:

1. Project comments (conditioning letters) specific to each new project. We currently send out generic requirements. The program should have a solid review process that includes site visits when needed and a specific set of comments for each new project. We've found, basic comments do not provide the applicant with clear requirements which causes delays during plan submittal, the applicant needs real expectations. We constantly find water storage and flow issues during commercial additions, this would be reduced with onsite consultation during the project proposal phase. The supervisor will be available to conduct onsite consultations to provide specific requirements for each new project and work directly with the County to ensure our comments are communicated to the applicant.
2. Plan review comments that are sent between the plan reviewer and the applicant has caused some issues, when the applicant calls and wants to know the status of their plans and we have no idea here in the office. This process gets backed up when the inspector is too busy conducting field inspections and cannot return calls, timely. The supervisor needs to improve this process to alleviate stress to the applicant and reduce unnecessary calls made to the plan reviewer to determine the status of their plans. The supervisor needs to develop a process of tracking the plans status from start to finish to better serve the applicant.
3. Inspections are not always completed in the proper sequence. The supervisor needs to ensure inspections are not scheduled out of sequence and a better process to track inspections will be implemented.

ALTERNATIVES:

If the Senior Fire Inspector position is not approved, the program will continue to struggle to provide an appropriate level of service. Staff will not have the organization it needs to improve daily operations, implement an inspection program or have time to work with the County to improve the electronic permitting and inspection process.

Current workload will continue to be impacted as the inspectors must continue to complete many projects that would be assigned to the Senior Fire Inspector.

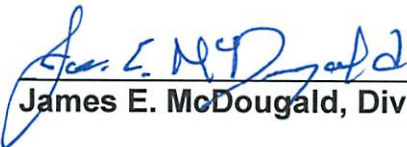
IMPACTS:

- ✓ Fiscal – Staff would revise the fee schedule to include the Senior Fire Inspector and the position will need to be added to the future budget. Senior Fire Inspector salary range is \$67,475 to \$82,016.
- ✓ Operational – There will be a redistribution of workload between the Fire Inspectors and the Supervisor position.
- ✓ Legal – No known impact
- ✓ Labor – Unknown
- ✓ Sociopolitical – No known impact
- ✓ Policy – New policies will be needed initially and in the future
- ✓ Health and safety – No known impact
- ✓ Environmental – No known impacts
- ✓ Interagency – More proactive interaction and integration with the County Building Dept.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Board of Directors approve the hiring of a Senior Fire Inspector.

APPROVED:



James E. McDougald, Division Chief

5/14/2020
Date