



FRESNO COUNTY FIRE

PROTECTION DISTRICT

Honor, Integrity, Cooperation & Professionalism

MEMORANDUM

Date: 10/14/2021

To: Board Directors

Attn: John Arabian
President

From: Fire District Staff

Subject: 3-4 Schedule position changes

BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S BRIEFING PAPER

ISSUE: Firefighter II's in the Fire District are promoting or leaving faster than we can keep up with training. The turnover is leading to increased overtime costs due to vacancies and continuous training. In addition, the continuous attrition reduces our operational effectiveness on the fireground and undermines crew continuity and familiarity. The District needs to pursue a cost-effective strategy to stabilize and correct this deficiency.

BACKGROUND: Data from October 2019, indicates that the District had 28 Firefighter II's assigned at the time. Today, only four of the original 28 remain in those positions. Thus, representing an 85.75% turnover rate over a two-year period. Additionally, CAL FIRE Local 2881 members that are assigned to District stations/apparatus recently voted to switch from their current 2 on, 2 off with Kelly shift to the standard CAL FIRE 3 on, 4 off shift pattern. This shift pattern change will result in a minor improvement in District coverage and provide an opportunity to strategically address the Firefighter II attrition issue further.

DISCUSSION: This year, the District has substituted Firefighter II positions for Engineers at Station 82 (Del Rey) and Station (Clovis Lakes) with the implementation of hard covered Water Tenders, at these locations, and the need for driver qualified personnel. In addition, the District recently approved a new contract with Table Mountain Rancheria that calls for Station 72 (Friant) to be staffed with three personnel daily with funding provided at the Captain and

Engineer ranks only to stabilize our work force and provide the most effective and efficient response force possible. CAL FIRE Engineers must participate in and complete the three-year Joint Apprenticeship Committee (JAC) training curriculum, before they can promote or transfer thus reducing attrition pressure in this rank.

The pending shift pattern change in the District, provides further opportunity for the Board of Directors to consider eliminating one Firefighter II position at a savings of \$156K. This savings could be used to fund the upgrade of six additional FFII positions to the rank of Engineer. The upgrade for all six positions would cost approximately \$114K. Thus, resulting in a net savings of \$42K and an operational gain of having higher qualified driving personnel at the equivalent of three additional stations. This proposed strategy will further improve our FFII attrition rate issue by 40% (total of 6 stations upgraded since Jan 2021), reduce overtime pressure since the engineers can fill both the driver and non-driver seat assignments, reduce daily relief time-lags and associated travel costs, and significantly reduce hard/soft training costs associated with reduced attrition.

The change in schedule also identifies one Fire Captain that can be moved to add further efficiency. Moving the Fire Captain to the training center increases operational depth for emergency response, provides leadership on the fire ground, allows for relief PIO duties, and reduces overtime costs associated with utilizing instructors from the field. Furthermore, this position will enhance the number of billable training opportunities that will be taught at the training center.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. The District authorize staff to eliminate one (1) FFII position to fund the upgrade of six (6) Firefighter II positions to Fire Apparatus Engineer positions.
2. Make no changes and direct staff to develop additional strategies to address this issue for consideration at a later date.

IMPACTS *(Consider potential consequences related to each of the following areas of concern for proposed alternatives):*

- Fiscal – The cost difference for the classification upgrade is approximately \$19K each. This would be funded by eliminating one FFII position from the budget resulting in a \$42K net savings.
- Operational – The Fire District will have more operational flexibility with company officers and increased level of fireground supervision.
- Legal – No known impact.
- Labor –The upgrade will provide promotional opportunities and allow greater depth for future Fire Captain vacancies.
- Sociopolitical – No known impact.

- Policy – No known impact.
- Health and safety – No known impact.
- Environmental – No known impact.
- Interagency – No known impact.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff is recommending the Board of Directors authorize the budgetary elimination of one Firefighter II position to fund the upgrade of six additional FFII's to Engineer positions as they become vacant.

APPROVED:



Dustin Hail, Fire Chief

10-14-21

Date