



LEGISLATIVE MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

FROM: Suzanne Sherman, City Manager

THRU: Richard E. Stover, Fire Chief

DATE: September 5, 2024

RE: Consideration of appropriating General Fund Undesignated Fund Balance for equipment and training for new hire firefighters (\$324,628).

SUMMARY:

Palm Bay Fire Rescue is requesting the use of Undesignated Fund Balance in the amount of \$194,628 for equipment, uniforms, portable shower/bathroom rentals for 8 weeks, and training supplies for 26 new hire firefighters; \$50,000 for Nomex Hoods; and \$80,000 for PPE cleaning, maintenance, and repair. The total amount requested is \$324,628.

New Hire Firefighter Equipment - Palm Bay Fire Rescue is hiring 26 Firefighters. Fifteen (15) firefighters will be at new Station 9 which will be constructed in the near future. The other 11 new hire firefighters will replace firefighters who are retiring or departing Palm Bay Fire Rescue. Items needed for new hires include Bunker Gear, SCBA equipment, uniforms, training equipment, portable shower/bathroom rental for 8 weeks, tent for new hire training, etc., in an amount up to \$194,628. There is a 10% contingency built into the cost estimate. Any funds unexpended will be returned. New hire firefighter equipment and training is essential for preparing them to safely and effectively respond to various emergency scenarios and for safe and efficient operations. New firefighters undergo extensive training to develop the essential skills and knowledge required for the job. The training covers a wide range of topics, including fire suppression techniques, emergency medical procedures, hazardous materials handling, safety protocols, teamwork, communication, and leadership development.

Nomex Hoods – Palm Bay Fire Rescue is requesting the use of Undesignated Fund Balance in the amount of \$50,000 for Nomex Hoods. The new hoods are required to meet revised NFPA 1851 standards on carcinogens. Due to the NFPA 1851 standard changing, all Nomex hoods will have to have particulate blocking properties by the year 2025. Our current hoods do not have this property thus making them obsolete. Fire Rescue is putting into place a replacement procedure to help reduce the risk for cancer.

PPE Maintenance, Cleaning, and Repair - Palm Bay Fire Rescue is requesting the use of Undesignated Fund Balance in the amount of \$80,000 for PPE cleaning, maintenance and repair. This is an estimated figure based on past use. Any funds unexpended will be returned. Per NFPA 1851, this standard suggests an annual advanced clean/inspection/repair of all bunker gear to remain NFPA compliant. During this advanced inspection process the following can be identified: contamination, residue, damage, and failure throughout the layers of equipment. Following this current standard will help maintain the effectiveness of our PPE and extend its longevity. This inspection is vital to keep our firefighters safe in gear that meets the minimum standards.

If the purchases cannot be completed before the end of FY 2024, these funds will be reappropriated on Budget Amendment #1 for FY 2025.

REQUESTING DEPARTMENTS:

Fire

FISCAL IMPACT:

The total amount requested from undesignated fund balance is \$324,628 and will be transferred, upon approval, to Fire Rescue operational accounts on the next scheduled amendment. This estimate includes a contingency to cover potential cost inflation for all necessary equipment. Any savings will be returned.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Motion to approve appropriating Undesignated Fund Balance in the amount of \$324,628 for equipment, uniforms, portable shower/bathroom rental, training supplies for 26 new hire firefighters, Nomex Hoods, and advanced maintenance and repair of PPE.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. List of new hire Firefighter needs