



City of La Quinta

CITY/ SA/ HA/ FA MEETING DATE: September 16, 2014

ITEM TITLE: APPROVE ADDITION OF AN EMERGENCY SERVICES COORDINATOR TO THE AGREEMENT FOR FIRE PROTECTION, FIRE PREVENTION, RESCUE, AND MEDICAL AID WITH THE COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

AGENDA CATEGORY:

BUSINESS SESSION:

CONSENT CALENDAR: 6

STUDY SESSION:

PUBLIC HEARING:

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Approve the addition of an Emergency Services Coordinator to the agreement for fire protection, fire prevention, rescue and medical aid with the County of Riverside and establish the necessary City funds for the position.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- On June 6, 2014, the City's Building Official/Emergency Manager retired, which left the City without qualified emergency services management.
- The Riverside County Fire Department (RCFD), through its Office of Emergency Services, provides for emergency management services to cities.
- The addition of an Emergency Services Coordinator (ESC) to the City's current agreement with RCFD will address the City's need for active management regarding the prevention, preparedness, recovery and response to emergencies.
- If an ESC is approved, RCFD's Office of Emergency Services will provide the City with additional service to support La Quinta's emergency services programs at no additional charge until the position can be filled (approximately 3 to 4 months).

FISCAL IMPACT:

The annual cost of an ESC will range from \$72,000 to \$102,000, based on qualifications; however, the cost is offset by an annual fire tax credit of approximately \$5,695,000. Approximately \$5,470,000 is currently budgeted for Fire and Emergency Services in the Fiscal Year 2014/2015 budget of which \$91,000 is allocated to emergency services management.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

By law, public employees are disaster service workers during an emergency. In the event of an emergency, the City and its employees must do everything possible to protect and preserve resident safety. The former Building Official managed the City's emergency services operation but when he retired in June 2014, staff evaluated the City's options and elected to engage RCFD. The City contracts with RCFD to provide fire services. In addition to fire services RCFD, through its Office of Emergency Services, provides regional emergency management services.

RCFD is recommending that a full-time ESC be retained who would be dedicated to the City; this person would be responsible for the following:

- Emergencies – In an emergency, facilitate and assist City's disaster service workers and supporting residents.
- Training – conduct regular training with City employees on incident command structure and facilitate mock emergency response exercises.
- Preparedness Plans – Update and maintain City's emergency operations plan, standard operating procedures, federally required local hazard mitigation plan and continuity of operations plans in the event of an emergency.
- Volunteer Programs – Manage City's emergency services volunteer programs including Disaster Corps, Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service, the Community Emergency Response Team, and Shelter Specialists.
- Community Outreach – Conduct presentations for local schools, community groups, and businesses.
- Grants Management – Seek and administer emergency services/fire related grants including grant writing, accounts receiving, and audit tracking.

The ESC would be located at City Hall and work a 40-hour week. The position would be integrated into the Fire Support System, which allows for coordinated response with public safety personnel and assist fire services as needed.

ALTERNATIVES:

As RCFD is a qualified service provider with superior knowledge of emergency management response and the City must provide emergency service management, staff does not recommend an alternative.

Report prepared by: Chris Escobedo, Assistant to City Manager

Report approved for submission by: Frank J. Spevacek, City Manager