

TO: Mayor & Council

FROM: Ana Urquijo, City Manager 

DATE: March 31, 2025

SUBJECT: Professional Firefighters of Douglas Local 2128 (PFFD)

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Douglas Municipal Code 2.68 allows employee representatives, in this case PFFD, to meet and confer annually with the City Manager on employment issues. PFFD submitted a timely proposal for consideration with the upcoming budget process for FY2026. Attached is my review of their proposal along with my recommendations.

PFFD may submit exceptions to the recommendations to the City Clerk's office by April 10, 2025. The City Manager's recommendations, along with PFFD's written exceptions, will be placed on the Council agenda for the April 23, 2025, meeting at which time you may accept, reject or modify the recommendation of the City Manager. Your action at this meeting would be the final step in the annual meet and confer process.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Cc: Alma Andrade, City Clerk  
Joel Gonzales, PFFD President  
Kevin Lomeli, Fire Chief  
Rocio Garcia-Pedroza, Human Resources Manager  
Denis Fitzgibbons, City Attorney

City of Douglas  
Review of Recommendations Presented by  
Professional Firefighters of Douglas Local 2128  
2025

The City Manager has reviewed the proposal submitted by the Professional Firefighters of Douglas Local 2128 (PFFD) as part of the annual meet and confer process provided in DMC 2.68. The City Manager also met with PFFD board members to discuss their proposal.

The City Manager's response to the two issues raised by the meet and confer process are as follows:

- **Increase Firefighter's wages**

During the presentation to the City Manager, PFFD requested an increase of 10% for Fire classifications and to consider adding six fire certifications to our incentive pay policy as eligible.

*Although we addressed all classifications in our 3-year CMR plan recently completed, certain classifications have once again fallen below market. The Firefighter classification is below market 11.2% based on comparable cities in the state. When looking solely at Cochise County entities, it is 4.7% below market. The Captain classification is 10.9% below market based on comparable cities in the state and 0.75% below market when looking at Cochise County entities.*

*The City Manager recommends considering the wage changes for Douglas Fire Department (DFD) during the budget process and not as a factor of the meet and confer process. This is in alignment with all past meet and confer requests that relate to salaries. A classification maintenance review as part of the budget process will be handled to ensure its sustainability. The Fire certification process is an administrative policy modification and also a budget consideration. The administrative incentive pay policy will be modified based on budget capacity.*

- **Schedule Change**

PFFD is requesting a schedule change for shift personnel to be done effective January 2026 on a trial basis. DFD currently works a 3/4 schedule, where they are on for one 24-hour shift, off one shift, on one shift, off one shift, on one shift and then off 4 shifts and then the sequence starts again. The new schedule being requested is called 48/96, where they are on for 2 consecutive 24-hour shifts and then off for 4 consecutive days and the sequence is repeated. The union did a survey of staff and 16 (70%) were in favor of the 48/96 schedule, 4 (17%) were unsure, but willing to try it and 3 (13%) were against the schedule change.

*The City Manager is recommending moving towards this type of schedule starting January 2026 as long as there is a commitment from staff to continue to meet*



*expectations to not affect our community response. We are going to test its impact on the department, taking precautions to not lose staff availability. In making this recommendation it should be noted extensive research was done by Fire union members, the Fire Chief, and management. Management pursued a subject matter expert and found that this schedule is a preferred schedule for small communities with manageable call loads; most importantly this schedule is also a positive recruitment tool. The Fire Chief and Fire union members met to analyze the initial expectations; the schedule will be assessed along the way to determine if it is beneficial to continue with it or to determine what operational changes will be needed.*



## Local 2128 Professional Firefighters of Douglas

3000 9<sup>th</sup> St. Douglas, AZ 85607

TO: City Manager Ana Urquijo

FROM: Professional Firefighters of Douglas Local 2128

DATE: 11/25/2024

REF: MEET AND CONFER

This letter is in reference to our request for a meet and confer. We, as representatives of the firefighters of the City of Douglas, would like to have the opportunity to meet with you so that we may discuss the following topics.

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With the amount of turnover we have had in the past few years, we have discussed with past and present firefighters, and have found that one of the common causes for turnover is our current pay rate. We have multiple personnel who commit themselves to helping our city, not only during their regular scheduled hours, but also during their days off. We have found that although they are proud and happy to serve their community, they feel as though they are living paycheck to paycheck. Our firefighters are finding that they can do the job they love but earn a better wage at many neighboring departments. This has hurt morale, as the firefighters who work hard to serve our community, feel that they have to choose between doing what they love or being able to provide for their families. We want to retain the great men and women we have working for us, so we would like to have the opportunity to discuss increasing our firefighters' wages.



## Local 2128 Professional Firefighters of Douglas

3000 9<sup>th</sup> St. Douglas, AZ 85607

Along with the increase in wages, we would like to discuss a change in our current work schedule. We currently work a 3/4 schedule, but we are looking to switch to a 48/96 schedule. Our current schedule has us working as follows, day on/day off/day on/ day off/ day on/ 4 days off. With a 48/96 we would work 48 hours on and have 4 days off. 85% of the department wants to either work the 48/96 schedule or at least try it. With this schedule, we would help decrease the amount of fatigue that is experienced by firefighters, not only in our department but nationwide. Our firefighters feel this schedule would help reduce fatigue and give our personnel more time to be home with their families. This schedule would also help attract more applicants to work for us as it makes it easier for people who live outside the city to work. It will reduce travel to and from work, making outside applicants more likely to apply for our vacancies. This would also help increase morale as many of our current firefighters have worked this schedule and would prefer to work it again.

We would love to have the opportunity to discuss the above topics with you and would be more than happy to provide any insight, research, or answers that you may request from us. We are looking to build a better fire department for our city, and we are always striving to be the best we can be for our city. We appreciate you taking the time to hear our concerns and we look forward to being able to meet with you to discuss this further. Thank you!

With Regards,

IAFF Local 2128