



Memorandum

To: Mayor Nelson and Members of the City Council

From: Daniel R. Buchholtz, MMC, Administrator, Clerk/Treasurer

Date: April 5, 2024

Subject: SBM Fire Department Update

Chief Retka, SBM Fire Department, will be attending the April 15, 2024 work session to provide the City Council with an update on the Fire Department operations.

Chief Retka will provide an update on the implementation of the Duty Crew model, as well as staffing challenges resulting from this transition. The duty crew model has dramatically reduced response times due to having firefighters staffing the stations between the hours of 5am and midnight each day. One of the challenges the Department is facing since transitioning to the duty crew model is that crews are not coming back for larger events that require more staff or for overlapping incidents. While crews are making their required percentages, they are not going above and beyond. In addition, with a number of fire departments across the Twin Cities transitioning to career, those departments have hired our trained duty crew volunteers, resulting in significant turnover.

To address this, Chief Retka would like to apply for a federal Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant to fund 12 positions to address the staffing need. The grant, if awarded, would fund these positions for at 100% of the cost for 3 years. After that point, the cities of Blaine, Mounds View and Spring Lake Park will need to pick up the cost of these new positions. If six positions were funded, I anticipate Spring Lake Park's share of the cost to be approximately \$120,000 for year 4, growing by an annual inflation rate each following year.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 763-784-6491.