

Date: January 20, 2026

To: Common Council

John Weidl, City Manager

From: Rachelle Blitch, Director of Financial and Administrative Services

Re: Clarification on City's Increase in Hired Staff

Concerns were brought during public comment that the city has hired a significant number of staff. This memo provides factual clarification regarding staffing changes since 2022 and explains why these adjustments were necessary and appropriate.

Clarification of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Changes Since 2022

Since 2022, the City's total Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) count has increased by 17.5 FTEs. However, nearly all of these additions are the result of major organizational changes—not discretionary hiring.

A breakdown is as follows:

- **9.0 FTEs – Fire/EMS Department**

These positions were created because the Fire/EMS Department became a full-time, fully staffed municipal department in 2023. Prior to this transition, the City relied heavily on a volunteer/paid-on-call model that was no longer sustainable for service demand and emergency response requirements.

- **7.5 FTEs – Police Department**

These positions reflect staffing needed to meet operational requirements, ensure officer safety, improve response times, and address increasing service calls. Public safety staffing levels are routinely reevaluated to ensure the City meets industry standards and community expectations.

- **1.0 FTE – All Other Departments Combined**

Outside of Fire/EMS and Police, the entire City organization has added only one net FTE in the past two years. This demonstrates that the City has not engaged in broad, organization-wide hiring, but instead has focused on staffing increases where they were operationally essential.

Organizational Reclassifications and Workflow Adjustments Are Normal

It is also important to note that staffing changes do not always indicate new hiring. Cities routinely:

- Rework department structures

- Realign job duties
- Reclassify positions
- Update job descriptions
- Shift workloads between departments

These adjustments are standard practice in municipal operations and are done to:

- Improve efficiency
- Adapt to changing service demands
- Respond to modern legal and regulatory requirements
- Ensure positions align with actual duties being performed
- Support retention and recruitment in a competitive labor market

Rather than representing unnecessary growth, these changes help the City operate more effectively, eliminate bottlenecks, reduce risk, and provide better service to residents.

Conclusion

The claim of hiring a significant amount of staff [outside the approved referendums] does not reflect the factual staffing changes since 2022. Of the 17.5 FTEs added:

- 16.5 FTEs were necessary to properly staff the Fire/EMS and Police Departments
- Only 1 FTE was added across all other City operations

The majority of staffing changes have been driven by essential public safety needs and the transition of Fire/EMS to a full-time department. Organizational adjustments are a normal and responsible part of improving municipal operations and ensuring the City can meet evolving service demands.