



*From the Office
of the
Fire Chief*

To: Mr. Tom Stevenson, Interim City Administrator **Date:** 06 February 2014

 **From:** Richard A. Hoppes, Chief of the Department

Subject: Supplemental Budget Request – FY15

Attached please find information regarding the FD supplemental budget requests for FY15. The purpose of the supplemental budget request is to allow the department to adhere to the FY15 budget preparation instructions and still make requests for budget consideration that are needed to meet the department's demands for service. Included are the individual requests, justifications, budget impacts, and supporting documentation for stakeholder deliberations.

The first request is to include funding for the creation of a newly formed Fire Prevention and Code Enforcement division within the FD. An in depth presentation was previously sent to the City Administration and Council for future consideration but has been tabled for a future time. However, pending favorable consideration during the FY15 budget year would require either consideration for inclusion in the FY15 budget process or a budget amendment during the year. The total budget impact is projected to be revenue positive with a net gain of \$149,056.00. The supporting details for this project are attached as Appendix A.

The second request is to fund the S.A.F.E.R. grant project. As you know, the current performance period for the S.A.F.E.R. grant funding is set to expire on October 17, 2014. There are several options to consider as they relate to the continuation of benefits from the S.A.F.E.R. funded positions. Specifically the options are well defined in Appendix B attached herein; but briefly stated they are: 1.) the City fully fund the S.A.F.E.R. positions, 2.) the City fund a gap between grant expiration and renewal, 3.) the City fund and retain half of the S.A.F.E.R. positions, 4.) unfreeze (2) positions and increase overtime (return to FY2007 staffing levels), and 5.) do nothing.

After weighing all of the stated options and understanding that the demand for fire department services has continued to increase annually for the past several decades, the department believes that Option #1 is ultimately the best option for the department and the City. While we understand the fiscal restraints this places on the City, maintaining these positions is essential to the overall success and effectiveness of the department. If Option #1 is unobtainable, then the department would request the City fund Option #2 and provide additional funding which will allow the department to apply for another S.A.F.E.R. grant.

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2/27/2014

As a department we are accountable to the citizens we serve to provide the very best and most effective and efficient public protection service that they both want and deserve. We are also accountable to the members of the department that so bravely endure the conditions they face and in so doing complete their tasks under greater risks than they should have to endure. This accountability also requires a commitment to the Salisbury Fire Department in accordance to best practices set forth by the industry as models for service. Choosing any other option exposes the entire community to unacceptable risks and decreases the level of service currently being provided.

We look forward to presenting and advancing this request and are excited to engage in the sharing of information as it relates to this important topic. The need for further information or questions should be directed to me at 410-548-3120 X 103 or rhoppes@ci.salisbury.md.us .

FY 14 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET REQUEST FORM

Department: Fire Department
 Department Priority: 1
 Organization: Fire Department
 (24035)
 Project: Fire Prevention and Code Enforcement

REQUESTED SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING

Fire Prevention and Code Enforcement Project			
Type	Description	Amount	Totals
Revenue	Plans Review / Permitting	\$ 222,950.00	
	Inspection Fees	\$ 120,000.00	
	Municipal Fines	\$ 0.00	
			\$ 342,950.00
Expense	Capital & Equipment (FY15 only)	\$ 37,450.00	
	Personnel Services (on-going)	\$ 156,444.00	
			(\$ 193,894.00)
	Net Gain / (Loss)		\$149,056.00

PURPOSE/DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST

This request is proffered to provide stakeholders in the City Government with the information necessary to make an informed decision on the importance of effective code enforcement. The primary purpose of any code enforcement effort is to decrease community risk. This means eliminating potential sources of ignition or fire spread, as well as assuring proper and safe egress for occupants in the event of an emergency. These efforts can only be effective if the individuals conducting the inspections have the proper combination of training, experience and motivation. Without an effective program for regular formal fire inspections and code enforcement, hazardous conditions go unnoticed and uncorrected. Each and every one of these code violations represents a situation in which a building, accessible and open to the public, contains a significantly increased risk of fire ignition, fire spread, ineffective protection systems, or other life safety hazards. In simplest terms, it is better to prevent a fire than to have to fight a fire. The City of Salisbury and the Salisbury Fire Department are failing to take full advantage the intent of the Code. Thus, risk mitigation within the jurisdiction is severely handicapped. As the Fire Chief for the City of Salisbury and the citizens we are sworn to protect, there is not a more important endeavor than this.

This budget request is projected to be revenue positive. This request will increase the City's revenue by simply taking over a service that is already in the City's Code but is handed off to the County. This request is to create a new division within the fire department that will

perform all of the essential duties for fire prevention and code enforcement to include; plan reviews and permitting as it relates to the fire and life safety codes, inspections for existing commercial and industrial occupancies to ensure that each remains code compliant, and enforcement for violations, when needed to ensure compliance.

This project cost estimate is very conservative and dependent on the staff needed to execute each of the assignments to receive the revenue. The department has tried to increase the workload for operations personnel to conduct inspections but the return is very small due to the crews needing to cover emergency calls for service and not able to complete the inspections as needed.

SERVICE IMPLICATIONS

(Quantify program/service enhancement that this supplemental budget will provide.)

The prevention of loss of life and property is the highest priority and presents a great efficiency and effectiveness above response to and mitigation of these hazards. It must be accepted that there are two target groups that are the reason the Fire Prevention and Life Safety codes were established; the general citizenry and public safety personnel. It then stands to reason that the organization that is charged with protecting both of the target groups is most likely to be in the best position to promulgate, interpret, and enforce the Fire and Life Safety Codes.

The completion of the project will require several action steps to fully meet the needs for service delivery for this initiative. Primarily there will be a need to make some staffing adjustment within the current structure which will require one position reclassification (Assistant Fire Chief to Deputy Fire Chief), one internal promotion (Fire Marshal), and for the department hire three civilian positions (one Administrative Asst. & two code enforcement officers) to be phased in as need to meet demand.

The City has already accepted and placed within its Codes the fire and life safety codes but does not perform the necessary duties of fire prevention and code enforcement. This project corrects this issue. A more detailed formal presentation to the Mayor and Council are required and is currently on the pending list for Council consideration. This request is to discuss as a part of the FY15 budget process the needed revenue and expenses associated with this initiative.

FY 14 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET REQUEST FORM

Department: Fire Department
 Department Priority: 1
 Organization: Fire Department (24035)
 Project: S.A.F.E.R. grant

REQUESTED SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING

Fire Prevention and Code Enforcement Project				
Type	Description	½ FY Amount	½ FY Amount	Totals
Revenue	None	\$ 0.00		\$ 0.00
Expense	Personnel Services (on-going)			
	Option # 1	N/A	N/A	\$ 817,550.02
	Option # 2	\$ 172,172.10	\$ 344,044.25	\$ 516,216.35
	Option # 3	N/A	N/A	\$ 408,775.01
	Option # 4	N/A	N/A	\$ 286,115.94
	Net Gain / (Loss)			(Loss)

PURPOSE/DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST

This request is to fund the S.A.F.E.R. funded positions for the fire department. The current performance period for the S.A.F.E.R grant funding is set to expire on October 17, 2014. There are several options to consider as they relate to the continuation of benefits from the S.A.F.E.R. funded positions.

Option #1

- Maintain current staffing levels of the Department by continuing to fund all S.A.F.E.R positions.
 - Unfreeze the two (2) current frozen positions (salaries & benefits)
 - Firefighter/Paramedic \$73,057.97
 - Firefighter/Paramedic \$73,057.97
 - Hire the additional 10 positions (salaries & benefits)
 - Firefighter/EMT (8) \$525,318.15
 - Firefighter/Paramedic (2) \$146,115.94
- Total Cost \$817,550.02**

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS), through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provided the funding opportunities and funded the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant. They established that the goal of the SAFER Grants is to assist local fire departments with staffing and deployment capabilities in order to respond to emergencies, assuring communities have adequate protection from fire and fire-related hazards. The specified objectives of the SAFER program was to: 1.) augment or restore local fire departments' staffing and deployment capabilities so they may more effectively respond to emergencies, 2.) with the enhanced or restored staffing, a SAFER grantee's response time will be reduced sufficiently, and 3.) an appropriate number of trained personnel will be assembled at the incident scene. While the Department understands that this option comes with a substantial cost, this option provides the City, community, citizens and Department with the highest level of protection and service possible. (See attached sheet for performance measures)

Option #2

- Maintain current staffing levels of the Department by continuing to fund all S.A.F.E.R positions at current pay rate from October 17, 2014 till June 30, 2015.
 - Fund the current 12 positions

▪ Firefighter/EMT (18 pay periods)	Total Cost	\$516,216.35
▪ Costs for 1 st half of FY (Oct. – Dec.)		\$172,172.10
▪ Costs for 2 nd half of FY (Jan. – Jun.)		\$344,044.25

The current performance period for the S.A.F.E.R grant funding is set to expire on October 17, 2014. When the department originally applied for the S.A.F.E.R grant, the application submission deadline was in February of 2012. Due to closures of the Federal government and other budgetary issues, the application submission deadline for the FY13 S.A.F.E.R grant was moved until August 30, 2013 with award funding starting no later than September 30, 2013. If the current trend continues and the department is approved to reapply for funding, the potential exist that the current funding would expire before the department is awarded any additional funding. This option bridges the funding gap, allowing the department to maintain the current employees being funded through the S.A.F.E.R grant. The amount associated with this option is a worst case scenario based on delays in awarding any federal grant funding. If awarded the S.A.F.E.R grant quickly, this option can be significantly decreased.

Option #3

- Fund and retain half of the positions
 - Unfreeze the two (2) current frozen positions (salaries & benefits)

▪ Firefighter/Paramedic	\$73,057.97
▪ Firefighter/Paramedic	\$73,057.97

- Hire the additional 4 positions (salaries & benefits)
 - Firefighter/EMT (4) \$262,659.08
- Total Cost \$408,775.01**

This option allows the department to keep all stations opened and the currently staffed units in service; however, it will directly impact the number of personnel readily available to respond to emergencies. Simply stated, any number of personnel authorized will allow the department to maintain its effectiveness only to the degree that is afforded by the number of positions authorized.

Option #4

- Return to FY2007 staffing levels
 - Unfreeze the two (2) current frozen positions (salaries & benefits)
 - Firefighter/Paramedic \$73,057.97
 - Firefighter/Paramedic \$73,057.97
 - Increase overtime account from \$110,000.00 to \$250,000.00 \$140,000.00
- Total Cost \$286,115.94**

This staffing model allowed the department to keep units in service to meet the demands for service; however, it comes at a price. The price paid for not having the appropriate number of personnel can be seen in many ways including:

- Increase in the amount of time that staffing levels on fire apparatus is below safe levels,
- Increase in sick leave and workers compensation usage,
- Lack of commitment of employees to work overtime needed to staff the positions requiring the department to occasionally place units out of service on a temporary basis.

In CY07 sick leave usage increased by 61% and workers compensation increased by 222% or in terms of total hours was 10,746. This time away is significant because in these situations, overtime had to be used to staff the department's apparatus with minimum staffing standards.

Option #5

- Do nothing and return to FY2011 staffing levels
 - Maintain frozen positions
 - Maintain the reduction in overtime

This option will have a significant impact to the delivery of services to the community and citizens we are charged to protect. Without the appropriate amount of staffing on-duty, the department will be forced to shut down an EMS unit and close Fire Station#2. The assigned personnel to these units will be reallocated to another station. The impact of this option will have profound effects to our service delivery and our personnel including:

- Inequality of services being provided to all citizens of the fire district,
- Increase in response times,
- Decreases in patient survivability rates due to the increased response times,
- Increase in the amount of time that staffing levels on fire apparatus is below safe levels,
- Increase in sick leave and workers compensation usage,
- Perpetuates hiring and retention issues caused by an excessive workload.

SERVICE IMPLICATIONS

(Quantify program/service enhancement that this supplemental budget will provide.)

After weighing all of the options and understanding the demand for fire department services have continued to increase annually for the past several decades, the department believes that Option #1 is ultimately the best option for the department and the City. While we understand the fiscal restraints this places on the City, maintaining these positions is essential to the overall success and effectiveness of the department. If Option #1 is unobtainable, then the department would request the City fund Option #2 and provide additional funding which will allow the department to apply for another S.A.F.E.R grant. As a department we are accountable to the citizens we serve to provide the very best and most effective and efficient public protection service that they both want and deserve. We are also accountable to the members of the department that so bravely endure the conditions they face and in so doing complete their tasks under greater risks than they should have to endure. This accountability also requires a commitment to the Salisbury Fire Department in accordance to best practices set forth by the industry as models for service. Choosing any other option exposes the entire community to unacceptable risks and decreases the level of service currently being provided. It is ultimately up to you on what level of service and protection you are willing to pay for.

While writing this document, the department responded to a working house fire with two (2) occupants trapped. The first engine arrived on location within six (6) minutes of dispatch and encountered a large volume of fire and a confirmed entrapment of two (2) adults. Because of the S.A.F.E.R funded positions, this engine was staffed with adequate personnel that afforded the crew an opportunity to engage in both fire suppression and search/rescue activities. As a result, the first arriving engine was able to remove both occupants from inside the house and perform fire suppression activities simultaneously before the next piece of fire apparatus arrived on the scene five (5) minutes later. Without this adequate number of personnel, the first arriving crew would

Appendix B

have had to make a decision on whether to enter the structure without the protection of a hoseline in order to perform rescue operations or to wait for additional personnel. This situation places fire service personnel in extreme risk of personnel injury or death. Additional staffing creates a more efficient, effective and safe emergency scene. Tasks can be conducted more efficiently thereby minimizing high risk hazards associated with emergency operations. Both firefighter and civilian safety increases. Thus, risk mitigation within the jurisdiction is severely handicapped. As the Fire Chief for the City of Salisbury and the citizens we are sworn to protect, there is not a more important endeavor than this.