

To: Mayor Marco A. Salvino, Sr.  
Vice Mayor Albert C. Jones  
Commissioner Chickie Brandimarte  
Commissioner Paul A. Fetscher, Sr.  
Commissioner Bobbie H. Grace

From: Robert Baldwin, City Manager 

Date: April 20, 2016

RE: SAFER Grant / Public Safety

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Two years ago the City received another SAFER Grant used to fund nine (9) firefighter/paramedics that comprise the third paramedic on our two three-paramedic med units at Station 1 and Station 17. Our original SAFER Grant had previously expired, and we were operating with two-personnel units at that time (memo 3/25/14 attached).

Our current SAFER Grant expires in May, and by agreement (attached), the City will revert to two-paramedic med units unless you choose to fund additional paramedics from the General Fund for the balance of FY 2015-2016. The cost of funding the additional personnel to maintain the current SAFER personnel (BSO 2/25/16 letter attached) until October 1, 2016, is \$424,910. To fund the five (5) firefighter/paramedics for Station 1 only is \$249,826.

As you can see from the attached correspondence from Chief Anthony Stravino, Station 1 has the highest call volume of any station in BSO's fire rescue system. Station 17 is ninth.

As pointed out in past correspondence to the City Commission, about half of the cities in Broward County use two-paramedic med units and about half use three-personnel units. I believe the three-paramedic-unit system is the preferred system, if one can afford. The national standard is a two-paramedic unit system. BSO currently operates both systems successfully around Broward County.

We will soon begin budget deliberations for FY2016-2017. At that time the City Commission will need to make decisions on the funding of a two-paramedic or three-paramedic system for next year. At this stage, we are not in a position to know our revenue projections nor the cost of the system alternatives. BSO has indicated that the cost of fire rescue services may be increasing significantly next fiscal year.

Additionally, the City Commission has indicated a desire to increase law enforcement services next year. The cost of additional deputies next year must be considered in conjunction with our fire rescue and other costs. Increased law enforcement presence creates a perception of safety that enhances the development and revitalization of businesses and neighborhoods. The need is increasing, and I believe it now makes sense to set the stage for next year and add additional deputies.

Because Station 1 is such an active station and our financial picture for next year is still unclear, the Administration is recommending we use General Fund Reserve of \$249,826 to retain five (5) firefighter/paramedics previous in the SAFER Grant for the balance of this fiscal year. We are also recommending the addition of (2) road deputies also paid from the General Fund Reserve at a cost of \$102,474 for the balance of the fiscal year.

The City Commission can consider annual funding of these positions for next fiscal year during our upcoming budget discussions. This action will allow the City the opportunity to temporarily staff the most active station until such time the fiscal position of the City becomes clearer for FY 2016-2017.