
MEMORANDUM TO COUNCIL

To: Mayor and City Council Members
From: William Homka, City Manager
Date: March 26, 2024
Re: FY25 Additional Staff Position Requests

SUMMARY: Following several years of reductions in the number of full time equivalent (FTE) employees, we are requesting the addition of 4.29 FTE employees for FY25. I have evaluated the requests from PCR, Public Works, Public Utilities, and the Fire Department and I support their requests and believe the financial impact is much less than the positive impact these new positions will have on City operations and services.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION: There has been no previous Council action related to the current requests for additional staff positions.

BACKGROUND: On February 14, 2024, Council adopted Resolution 2024-05, their goals for preparation of the FY25 Budget. As to personnel, the stated goal is that any proposed increase to the total number of full-time equivalent positions will be fully evaluated and justified during the budget approval work sessions.

We had a trend of decreasing the number of FTE positions each year from FY21-FY23; the number rose slightly for FY24:

- FY20 budget – 174.96 FTE positions
- FY21 budget – 173.96 FTE positions
- FY22 budget – 172.96 FTE positions
- FY23 budget – 171.96 FTE positions
- FY24 budget – 172.21 FTE positions (0.25 increase due to addition of student intern)

There remain two positions that are approved, but unfunded, which has been the case since at least FY19. These unfunded positions are Natural Resource Analyst and Building Inspector. The city retains a consultant to provide the services of a Natural Resource Analyst; and no action has been taken as to the Building Inspector position.

The last time a significant number of jobs was added was during Fiscal Years 2019 and 2020, with an increase in 6.79 FTE. The positions added were:

- Electrical engineering technician
- Power plant operator
- Water operator (2)
- Solid waste operator
- Temporary library assistant (2)
- Head lifeguard added; reduced 2 PT lifeguards
- Administrative specialist (now Risk Management Assistant)

DISCUSSION: I have been preparing an organizational plan to address many issues. Some solutions are staffing related, such as adding positions to the four departments in this memo. Though my draft is nearly complete, I need to engage the directors and ensure the issues are addressed appropriately and strategically. I will present the plan to Council thereafter, which should a few weeks from now.

The Title 3 Compensation Study is just one source I am evaluating in terms of the plan. The Assistant City Manager and I meet with the directors weekly to hear about their operations, projects, and issues. We discuss possible solutions as well.

The City also has Utility Master Plans filled with recommendations. Each department deals with a variety of regulations and compliance requirements, and we all share in addressing the numerous state and federal laws that seem to always be changing. Some solutions, such as additional staff, have budgetary implications and require Council approval. Thus, I believe it's worth the time to evaluate how our organization is operating and, when we need to address a lot of issues, bring a plan to City Council.

This staffing request is a result of working with Directors on their issues and are included in my organizational plan. I've listed reasons for support under each of the following requests and would like them to take effect in FY25.

1. Parks, Culture & Recreation: Add two Student Interns, one for the Library and one for PCR; and add three less than part-time Lifeguards at the Aquatic Center.

Student Interns - City Manager (CM) Comments:

I requested that directors assess whether their departments could benefit from such positions. Student interns, in general, offer significant value to the City for several reasons. Initially, these roles are typically filled by community members returning home from college during summer and winter breaks. Interns specializing in relevant disciplines enhance the department's capabilities at a minimal overall cost, providing a substantial financial return to the City. Additionally, interns are temporary and often have housing on the island, a challenge frequently faced by regular employees. Lastly, in certain cases, the work can attract local graduates back home to work for the City, establishing a mutually beneficial arrangement.

Lifeguards - CM Comments:

There is a need for more part-time lifeguard positions. The current staff is frequently hindered by the number of hours lifeguards are able to work. Most of our lifeguards are high school students who like the pool and obtain lifeguard certification. However, coverage can be impacted due to student schedules, extracurricular activities, and labor laws limiting the number of hours minors can work each week. The pool is open for a set number of hours per week, with some special event rentals like birthday parties. Three more lifeguard positions will increase the pool of guards available for scheduling during the pool's operational hours.

2. Public Works: In the Facilities Maintenance Division, combine two part-time temporary groundskeeper positions into one full-time Maintenance Mechanic position.

CM Comments:

It has been challenging to fill these positions consistently for several years because we hire temporary employees on six-month terms. Combining the positions into one full time position should make the position more attractive for applicants and enhance reliability to the work schedule for this position and the facilities maintenance division.

3. Public Utilities: Addition of a second Heavy Equipment Mechanic at the Powerhouse.

CM Comments:

The City's 2018 electric utility master plan recommended we hire people to work alongside our experienced employees. We need to anticipate retirements to avoid losing the institutional knowledge and spending significant time and resources training new hires. In particular, the plan identified two positions to consider for the overlap strategy – this request is to add a heavy equipment mechanic at the powerhouse.

The heavy equipment mechanic position is important for reliable plant operation. The position is responsible for performing and tracking general maintenance and repairs throughout the Powerhouse. The City is shifting from contracting and/or hiring out major engine maintenance and completing as much work as we can in house. Candidates will have the skill set and knowledge necessary to complete this level of maintenance.

4. Fire & EMS: Add two Firefighters and one Administrative Assistant.

Fire Fighters - CM Comments:

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) recommend 12-16 Certified Firefighters for a community of Unalaska's size to ensure the safety of both emergency responders and the public during a structure fire. Increasing the paid firefighter staff from four to six (a 33% increase) might seem like a large ask, but consider these factors: the department responds 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; Trident's new processing plant adding structures and employees; and scheduling and coverage issues for vacations, trainings, and other travel. This increase will have a greater impact on readiness and community perception, even though we will still be below NFPA and OSHA staffing recommendations.

Administrative Assistant - CM Comments:

The Administrative Assistant position has been needed since the Department of Public Safety split into Police and Fire Departments. One administrative employee previously covered both departments. Advocates for splitting DPS claimed it would not cost more after the split, and the administrative position was lost. After more than 5 years, the workloads have increased and the addition of an Administrative Assistant is necessary.

Attached are the justification memos provided by each Department Director relative to their requests, which contain additional information.

ALTERNATIVES: Council may choose to approve and fund the requests, or not. Funding approval will be accomplished through adoption of a non-code ordinance for the FY25 Budget.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: The requests will add an additional 4.29 FTE to the FY25 budget, for a total of 176.5 FTE employees. The additional positions will cost the City \$653,587.18 overall. Here is the detail:

FY25 Proposed Position Requests Budgetary Impact					
FIRE & EMS					
	FTE Change	Base Wages	Benefits	Total	Fund(s) impacted
Fire Fighter	1.00	79,313.60	63,489.61	142,803.21	
Fire Fighter	1.00	79,313.60	63,489.61	142,803.21	
Administrative Assistant	1.00	75,299.20	59,308.25	134,607.45	
FIRE & EMS Total Proposed Increase	3.00	233,926.40	186,287.47	420,213.87	General Fund
PLANNING					
	FTE Change	Base Wages	Benefits	Total	
Planning Student Intern (.50)	(0.50)	(26,000.00)	(2,249.00)	(28,249.00)	
Planning Student Intern (.25)	0.25	13,000.00	1,124.50	14,124.50	
Planning Total Proposed Decrease	(0.25)	(13,000.00)	(1,124.50)	(14,124.50)	General Fund
PUBLIC WORKS - Facilities Maintenance					
	FTE Change	Base Wages	Benefits	Total	
Groundskeeper 1 - Temp	(0.50)	(23,982.40)	(2,950.06)	(26,932.46)	
Groundskeeper 1 - Temp	(0.50)	(23,982.40)	(2,950.06)	(26,932.46)	
Maintenance Mechanic 1	1.00	67,700.80	58,369.75	126,070.55	
DPW Total Proposed Increase	0.00	19,736.00	52,469.63	72,205.63	ALLOC ALL FUNDS
PARKS CULTURE & RECREATION					
	FTE Change	Base Wages	Benefits	Total	
Student Intern PCR	0.25	5,000.00	432.50	5,432.50	
Student Intern Library	0.25	5,000.00	432.50	5,432.50	
Lifeguard 1 (.23)	(2.30)	(109,080.00)	(9,435.00)	(118,515.00)	
Lifeguard 1 (.18)	2.34	110,951.00	9,597.00	120,548.00	
PCR Total Proposed Increase	0.54	11,871.00	1,027.00	12,898.00	General Fund
PUBLIC UTILITIES - Powerhouse					
	FTE Change	Base Wages	Benefits	Total	
Heavy Equipment Mechanic	1.00	93,950.40	68,443.78	162,394.18	
DPU Total Proposed Increase	1.00	93,950.40	68,443.78	162,394.18	Electric Fund
RECAP					
	FTE Change	Base Wages	Benefits	Total	
Change in FT Permanent	5.00	395,577.60	313,101.00	708,678.60	
Change in PT/LS Permanent	0.04	1,871.00	162.00	2,033.00	
Change in Temp	(0.75)	(50,964.80)	(6,159.62)	(57,124.42)	
Total	4.29	346,483.80	307,103.38	653,587.18	

I am confident these positions can be funded while still presenting City Council a balanced budget for FY25.

LEGAL: None required.

CITY MANAGER RECOMMENDATION: I support the new positions outlined in this memorandum, citing the reasons specified under each request. I propose incorporating these additional positions into the FY25 budget for Council's funding approval.

PROPOSED MOTION: None. This is a work session discussion.

ATTACHMENTS: Justification for each request provided by the Department Director

1. Parks, Culture & Recreation
2. Public Works
3. Public Utilities
4. Fire & EMS

To: Marjorie Veeder, Assistant City Manager
From: Roger Blakeley, PCR Director
Date: December 14, 2023
Subject: Request for New Positions

Marjorie,

As a part of the annual budgeting process, Directors are invited to bring forward their requests and rationale for additional staffing for consideration. I'd like to discuss the need for new positions within the PCR, Library, and Pool facilities, an incremental step towards accommodating the ever-evolving dynamics witnessed across the island.

Lifeguards:

I am advocating for the inclusion of three part-time Lifeguard positions. These positions bear solely the burden of taxes and workman's compensation costs, pivotal in overseeing lifeguard management during school-related activities. It's paramount to note that this augmentation will not wield a significant impact on the overall budget. Many of our lifeguards are students involved in sports and extracurricular activities, making it challenging for them to commit to a 10-hour workweek let alone a 25-hour work week.

Work Load increase:

- We have increased hours to the facility 37.5 hours per week. This is providing the residents of the community more access to the facility. Currently we are able to staff 10 lifeguards. However, even when fully staffed, we grapple with insufficient coverage due to various reasons. Some of the reasons are:
- Sports and practices. Students are involved in many sports and school activities that they have to balance with work. Over the years the pool administration has developed a great procedure for the lifeguards to be able to communicate their availability with upper management and organize their school, sports, extracurricular activities and work schedule.

However, the majority of staff are all involved in something year-round. So, no matter how well they manage their schedule, when we are making the pool schedule for the month we have gaps because all of our employees are unavailable. Then you have the one or two lifeguards that are not as involved in sports or other extracurricular activities and work all the shifts, they get burned out and quit. Another burnout that we experience is that we have 127+ hours that we need covered each week which requires the lifeguards to work an average of 12 hours a week and for students that is a lot.

Furthermore, during winter, spring and summer breaks we have a lot of lifeguards off island, requiring those who are intown to pick up a lot of hours and the Head Lifeguard and Aquatics Coordinator to do a great amount of over-time.

- We have increased our Sauna and Fitness Center hours so we need to have someone in the facilities at all times.

- We are trying to increase our swimming program and this year working with the school we have increased our swim lessons. We already have difficulty covering lifeguard shifts we definitely cannot increase our swim lessons with no staff to teach them.
- We are not able to operate the slide as much as we should. We need to have 3 lifeguards on deck to run the slide and we have only been managing to have 2 Lifeguards in the evenings and weekends.

The annual cost to fund 3 new Lifeguard positions would be \$2,034. By creating these new positions, we gain the flexibility to schedule some lifeguards for as little as five hours per week.

Request: Add three part-time lifeguard positions. Cost \$2,034 (for the FTE increase from 2.3 to 2.34).

Interns:

Every year, we receive requests from students looking to gain work experience for their degrees. An intern from the University of Washington recently spent three months with us, with the university covering their costs. She was a local student and she stayed with her family. Some interns require a stipend in addition to college credit. Over the past two years we have had requests to hire an intern and we did not have the capacity to allow them to work. I propose including a \$5,000 stipend for each intern position in the budget. This allocation will only be used if we actually have an intern.

Request: 2 Intern Positions, one for PCR and one for the Library.

Allocate \$10,000 in the budget for wages and an additional \$865 for payroll burden.

I believe these new positions and intern stipends will greatly benefit our operations and contribute to our continued success. Please let me know if you have any questions or require further information.

Thank you for your attention to these requests.

Sincerely,

Roger Blakeley
PCR Director

MEMORANDUM

To: Bil Homka, City Manager
From: Scott Brown Public Works Director
Date: February 2, 2024
Re: DPW Proposed Position Change

I am writing to propose combining two part-time groundskeeper positions into one full-time Maintenance Mechanic 1 position. Currently, the groundskeeper positions are filled by temporary employees on six-month terms. Our experience over the past several years indicates challenges in filling these positions on a consistent basis.

The utilization of these positions fluctuates throughout the year, with their primary functions being lawn care during the summer months and snow removal during the winter months. In the summer we like to hire college students on leave, but they are only available for about two months, which isn't sufficient. Additionally, these positions serve as cover for personnel on leave, ensuring that city properties remain well-maintained and operational year-round.

Despite our best efforts, we have encountered difficulties in consistently filling both temporary positions. In many instances, we have struggled to find suitable candidates, often leaving one position unfilled or only partially filled for extended periods. Converting these two temporary positions into one full-time position presents several advantages:

1. **Increased Attractiveness for Recruitment:** A full-time position is more appealing to potential candidates than a temporary or seasonal role. By offering stability and benefits associated with full-time employment, we can attract a wider pool of qualified candidates.
2. **Enhanced Service Delivery:** Having a dedicated full-time employee will ensure continuity and consistency in service delivery throughout the year. This individual can focus on maintaining city properties, including lawn care in the summer and snow removal in the winter, without interruption.
3. **Improved Coverage for Vacations and Leaves:** A full-time position provides better coverage for vacations and leave, minimizing disruptions to essential services. With one full-time employee, we can ensure that city properties remain well-maintained even when other staff members are on leave.
4. **Efficient Resource Allocation:** Consolidating two temporary positions into one full-time position allows for more efficient resource allocation. We can streamline recruitment, training and supervision processes, optimizing the use of city resources.

In light of these benefits, I request your approval to change the existing two temporary groundskeeper positions into one full-time Maintenance Mechanic 1 position. This strategic change will not only address our staffing challenges but also enhance our ability to provide high-quality services to the community.



MEMORANDUM

TO: Bil Homka, City Manager
THRU: Marjorie Veeder, Assistant City Manager
FROM: Erik Hernandez, Acting Director of Public Utilities
DATE: March 8, 2024
SUBJECT: Additional Position Request for Electric Production: Heavy Equipment Mechanic

The powerhouse has historically operated with 8 full time employees, one of those positions being the supervisor and the other two consisting of an electrical engineering technician (EET) and a heavy equipment mechanic. In 2019 a second EET position was added as recommended by the Master Plan. Unfortunately, the city was unable to fill both EET positions, and the second EET position was eventually removed. The Master Plan (delivered by EPS) also recommends the following: *“Rather than continuing to lose the institutional knowledge that the more experienced operators have, the city should look into hiring people earlier and training more operators...”* *“One example of an alternative staffing plan is to hire a mechanic and an electrical technician. These positions would fill some of the voids already mentioned and could also serve as back-up operators in the event of problems or sickness.”* Over the last year the powerhouse has made a shift from contracting and/or hiring out major engine maintenance to completing the work in-house, this is mostly due to new staff having the skill set and knowledge to complete the necessary maintenance. In years past, most of the work completed by powerhouse staff was non-intrusive, due to lack of equipment and mechanical experience.

I attached a list for you to reference of all the new maintenance our current heavy equipment mechanic, Steve Walker, is able to complete with the assistance of other powerhouse operators. Although this list includes the majority of the tasks, it is not a complete list. This system seems to make it possible to complete the majority of the work and maintenance needed at the powerhouse, however, after considering the powerhouse operator’s regular duties, the amount of time the heavy equipment mechanic has available with a powerhouse operator can be limited, which can lead to additional overtime. In the first half of FY2024 the powerhouse worked 353 hours of overtime, or 54 hours per month, 27 hours bi-weekly based on a 4-week month, in FY2023 the powerhouse worked 655 hours of overtime, or 60 hours per month, 30 hours bi-weekly based on a 4-week, 11-month year. Not all overtime is a result of maintenance at the powerhouse, due to low staffing numbers other operators may need to cover additional shifts if other operators take personal leave and if emergencies arise additional operators may be called in.

The Electric Utility Master Plan recommends the following summary:

- Hire additional powerhouse staff. Two positions suggested.

- Perform detailed personnel Staffing Study to further evaluate powerhouse and Utility staffing levels.
- Hire Systems Electrical Engineer.

A job analysis has been started and suggests an additional position is needed at the powerhouse. This is based on man hours, operators/mechanics needed to complete certain tasks and leave coverage. Although the master plan suggests two positions, we are requesting one at this time. Our second alternative for major maintenance is hiring out labor. It would be in the City's best interest to consider an alternative to hiring out labor considering the cost alone for travel and lodging for person is roughly \$5,000-8,000 for a 5-day trip, in many cases 7 days is the minimum number of days someone is needed on island, additionally the crew sizes can vary from 2-6 members.

The Departments request for an additional heavy equipment mechanic is based on the following key factors:

- Total overtime worked by powerhouse staff.
- Overlap coverage needs during shifts, and leave by other powerhouse operators.
- Additional staff needed to complete major maintenance.
- Ability to retain the skill set available by passing that knowledge on to another operator or mechanic.
- Overall cost to keep the powerhouse engines in good operating condition as required by State and Federal regulations.

Based on current costs, the annual cost to fund this position would be \$162,394.18, including all applicable benefits.

Heavy Equipment Mechanic	Salaries & Wages	Benefits	Total
2080 hours x \$44.92	\$93,950.40	\$68,443.78	\$162,394.18

Thank you.



Heavy Mechanic Duties

1. Disassemble and reassemble Tube & Shell Heat exchangers, valves.
2. Rebuild pumps for oil, water, and fuel systems.
3. ORC units servicing. Such as belts, enclosures, sensors, and seals.
4. Servicing and repairing compressors and air lines.
5. Servicing fuel filters and pumps.
6. Changing engine lube oil, oil filters, air filters on all units.
7. Servicing Wartsila Gensets
 - a. Charge air cooler rebuilds.
 - b. Valve adjustments.
 - c. Exhaust seals.
 - d. Injectors
 - e. Water jacket pump rebuild.
 - f. Candle oil filters
 - g. Turbo wash and vent line fittings.
 - h. Cylinder head replacement.
 - i. Fuel rack adjustments
 - j. Turning gear service.
 - k. Fuel line and jacket water hoses and piping
 - l. Start air system and valves rebuild.
 - m. Generator oil service.
8. Servicing 280-C Caterpillar Gensets
 - a. Exhaust gaskets
 - b. Fuel oil lines.
 - c. Starter air systems.
 - d. Thermocouples and other sensors/
9. Servicing 3500 Caterpillar Gensets
 - a. Valve adjustments
 - b. Air starters
 - c. Fuel and oil piping.
10. All engines and plant equipment have a regular and planned maintenance and repair as needed.
11. Assisting Contracted maintenance during major work or overhauls.
12. Being on call for other departments such as Landfill, Wastewater, etc.

ACCUMULATOR TOTALS REPORT

LOC/ORG INFORMATION	PAY/ DED	DESC	YEAR	QTR	HRS	EMPLOYEE AMOUNT	EMPLOYER AMOUNT	GROSS AMOUNT
REPORT TOTAL:	200	OT	2023	FYTD	248.75	0.00	0.00	15577.05
	201	ACTOT	2023	FYTD	49.50	0.00	0.00	3792.45
	207	SD50T	2023	FYTD	163.00	0.00	0.00	10832.96
	209	SD100T	2023	FYTD	105.50	0.00	0.00	7105.47
	250	DBL	2023	FYTD	74.00	0.00	0.00	6526.78
	251	ACTDT	2023	FYTD	15.00	0.00	0.00	1435.86

** END OF REPORT - Generated by Jennifer Van Deventer **

ACCUMULATOR TOTALS REPORT

LOC/ORG INFORMATION	PAY/ DED	DESC	YEAR	QTR	HRS	EMPLOYEE AMOUNT	EMPLOYER AMOUNT	GROSS AMOUNT
REPORT TOTAL:	200	OT	2024	FYTD	118.50	0.00	0.00	8492.08
	201	ACTOT	2024	FYTD	1.00	0.00	0.00	81.81
	207	SD50T	2024	FYTD	156.00	0.00	0.00	11429.23
	209	SD100T	2024	FYTD	48.00	0.00	0.00	3787.82
	250	DBL	2024	FYTD	27.00	0.00	0.00	2376.64
	251	ACTDT	2024	FYTD	3.00	0.00	0.00	327.23

** END OF REPORT - Generated by Jennifer Van Deventer **

Fiscal Year	Wartsila	MSHS	NC Machinery	
FY19	\$ 300,916.98	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 300,916.98
FY20	\$ 675,199.67	\$ 1,010,235.74	\$ 155,352.34	\$ 1,840,787.75
FY21	\$ 153,320.47	\$ -	\$ 804,678.20	\$ 957,998.67
FY22	\$ 48,307.71	\$ -	\$ 235,660.26	\$ 283,967.97
FY23	\$ 122,267.93	\$ -	\$ 778,870.49	\$ 901,138.42
FY24	\$ 59,760.01	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 59,760.01
Total by Vendor	\$ 1,359,772.77	\$ 1,010,235.74	\$ 1,974,561.29	\$ 4,344,569.80



CITY OF UNALASKA

FIRE DEPARTMENT

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To justify the need for two additional firefighters and one administrative assistant, it's important to consider various factors that contribute to the efficient and effective functioning of a fire department. Here are several reasons to support the need for these additional personnel:

Two Additional Firefighters:

1. Emergency Response and Public Safety:

- The fire department has been grappling with insufficient staffing levels of volunteer firefighters and EMTs. Nationwide, recruitment and retention challenges persist, and our remote location exacerbates the issue by limiting the available pool of potential volunteers. Introducing additional full-time staff will provide a reliable and guaranteed response to emergencies, eliminating uncertainties associated with the varying availability of volunteer responders for any given service call.
 - One notable initiative undertaken by the fire department during this period has been the organization of three State of Alaska EMT I classes, resulting in the graduation of a total of 23 students. However, the retention rate of these graduates within the fire department has been disappointingly low, with only 2 out of the 23 students remaining actively involved. Similar challenges have been observed with the State firefighter and hazardous materials academies conducted by the department.

The investment of several hundred hours of combined effort from both full-time staff instructors and volunteer members underscores the commitment of the fire department to training and developing new talent. However, the low retention rates highlight the need for a comprehensive approach to address underlying retention issues beyond recruitment efforts alone.

- Other initiatives include attempting to create a volunteer base within the city organization leveraging employees with mechanical aptitude that align with skillsets of firefighters. That initiative yielded no results.
- The department has prepared and participated in numerous recruitment investments. Events included information sessions at industry partners' campuses and health and career fairs. These events brought in a few dozen applications. However, the applicants were unavailable during times of weekly training, limited hours of availability, some as low as two days per week, and most notably almost all candidates had no means of transportation which made it difficult to respond to the fire stations to get on apparatus to respond to emergencies.
- As the department focuses on improving the life safety of the community, as well as, our advancements in broadband connectivity, items such as our local "DACT Bypass" will expire. This will then bring our community up to par with industry standards on fire alarm reporting. One local business has already transitioned to ensuring the proper notification of fire alarms to our communications center and this alone has increased our monthly calls significantly. We anticipate the same results when the requirement becomes city wide.
- According to NFPA standards and OSHA guidelines, it is crucial to deploy an adequate number of firefighters to ensure the safety of both emergency responders and the public during a structure fire incident. The specific recommended minimum number of firefighters recommended according to NFPA 1710 is 12-16 certified firefighters. Adhering to these recommendations helps optimize firefighting efforts and enhances overall safety outcomes in challenging emergency situations. NFPA 1500, which addresses fire department occupational safety and health programs, recommends that fire departments conduct a risk assessment to determine the appropriate staffing levels based on the hazards present in their service areas.



CITY OF UNALASKA

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- Our department currently has 5 career staff and 7 volunteer members. This means the department would need every member to show up to every call and require all members to spend hundreds of hours to gain certification. It is also important to recognize that we do not have mutual aid partners to call on in times where additional certified firefighters are required to handle major events.

2. Workload Distribution:

- At present, fire staff members find themselves shouldering additional administrative responsibilities, detracting from essential daily operational duties and dedicated training sessions. Expanding the full-time staff will facilitate a more equitable distribution of workload and enable the redirection of staff to areas that may have been neglected.
- The capacity to reallocate staff focus to areas such as training will have a direct impact on the ISO rating. Please refer to Attachment B for a concise summary of ISO ratings and their associated benefits in relation to insurance premiums.

3. Specialized Training:

- The community faces various hazards requiring specialized rescue capabilities. The fire department bears the responsibility of ensuring preparedness to address these unique emergencies. By augmenting the full-time staff, the department can concentrate on the identified areas of concern, enhancing its ability to deliver a more robust and readily available response to specialized rescue situations.
 - The department still lacks in many aspects of our duties and responsibilities. Areas like a marine division have been identified as a priority but with current staff and responsibilities, the Department lacks the bandwidth to focus.

4. Community Engagement:

- More firefighters allow for increased community engagement through educational programs, fire prevention initiatives, and community outreach efforts, contributing to overall public safety awareness.
- Pre-incident planning stands as a foundational element for the success of emergency response. Furnishing essential information, such as the quantity of hazards present at a business, key locations of fire department connections, alarm panels, and emergency contact details, is vital. It ensures a continual focus on and updates to this information on an annual basis. Crafting pre-incident plans can be a time-intensive process, ranging from several hours to days, especially given the complexity of certain facilities within the town.
 - Until this year, the fire department had only documented 16 records of pre-incident plans. However, as of December 2023, that record has increased significantly to encompass 187 pre-incident plans.

One Administrative Assistant:

1. Operational Efficiency:

- An administrative assistant will offer vital support in managing paperwork, scheduling, and various administrative tasks. This includes handling travel authorizations, tracking certifications, and preparing ANFIRS and NEMSIS reports required by the state. By taking care of these administrative functions, firefighters can direct their attention to core responsibilities, thereby enhancing overall operational efficiency.

2. Resource Coordination:

- The administrative assistant can play a key role in coordinating resources, equipment maintenance, and inventory, ensuring that the department has the necessary tools and materials for effective firefighting and emergency response.

3. Communication and Documentation:



CITY OF UNALASKA

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- Improved communication and documentation processes help maintain accurate records, streamline information flow within the department, and enhance overall organizational effectiveness.
4. **Community Relations:**
 - An administrative assistant can also contribute to community relations by managing public inquiries, coordinating events, and supporting public relations efforts, thereby fostering positive relationships with the community.
 5. **Grant and Funding Assistance:**
 - The fire department has placed a significant emphasis on enhancing funding for equipment, supplies, and capital improvement projects through grant initiatives. Managing this challenging task with just one person has proven to be demanding. The addition of an administrative assistant is crucial to improving management and oversight, ensuring that deliverables and reporting periods are handled in a timely and organized manner.
 - The administrative assistant will play a pivotal role in researching and applying for grants and funding opportunities. This support will aid in securing additional resources to fulfill the diverse needs of the fire department.

In summary, the addition of two firefighters and one administrative assistant is an investment for the community, justified by improvements in emergency response capabilities, operational efficiency, community engagement, and overall organizational effectiveness within the fire department. These additional resources would contribute to a safer and more resilient Unalaska. Attached you will find a breakdown of the cost to fund these additional positions. (Attachment A)



CITY OF UNALASKA

FIRE DEPARTMENT

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Attachment A

FY25 COSTS FOR PROPOSED FIRE POSITIONS					
New Position			New Position		
Admin Asst II	110 - Min		Fire Fighter	B23 - Step 1	
Salaries & Wages		\$73,299.20	Salaries & Wages		\$77,313.60
Airfare		\$2,000.00	Airfare		\$2,000.00
		\$75,299.20			\$79,313.60
Total Wages		\$75,299.20	Total Wages		\$79,313.60
Health Insurance		\$33,236.00	Health Insurance		\$33,236.00
PERS		\$19,614.87	PERS		\$20,689.12
FICA/MEDI		\$5,760.39	FICA/MEDI		\$6,067.49
AES		\$497.00	AES		\$497.00
WCOMP		\$200.00	WCOMP		\$3,000.00
Total Benefits		\$59,308.25	Total Benefits		\$63,489.61
Total Position Cost		\$134,607.45	Total Position Cost		\$142,803.21
Totals for (1) Admin Asst & (2) Fire Fighters					
Salaries & Wages		227,926.40			
Airfare		6,000.00			
Total Wages		233,926.40			
Health Insurance		99,708.00			
PERS		60,993.10			
FICA/MEDI		17,895.37			
AES		1,491.00			
WCOMP		6,200.00			
Total Benefits		186,287.47			
Grand Total		420,213.87			



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Attachment B

ISO (Insurance Services Office) ratings, now part of Verisk Analytics, provide a measure of a community's fire protection capabilities and are used by insurance companies to assess the risk associated with providing coverage in a particular area. The ISO rating is expressed on a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being the best and 10 indicating a minimal level of fire protection.

The ISO rating considers various factors, including:

1. **Fire Department Performance:** Evaluates the fire department's equipment, personnel, training, and response times.
2. **Water Supply:** Assesses the community's water supply, including hydrant locations, water pressure, and availability.
3. **Emergency Communications:** Examines the effectiveness of the communication systems used to report fires and summon emergency services.

These factors are analyzed to determine the overall fire protection capabilities of a community. A lower ISO rating typically results in lower insurance premiums for property owners, as it indicates a higher level of fire protection and reduced risk. Many insurance companies use ISO ratings as one of several factors to calculate property insurance rates for homes and businesses in a given area. Improvements in fire protection services and infrastructure can lead to a better ISO rating, potentially benefiting the community through lower insurance costs.